

**A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON MINISTERIAL FORMATION
OF CLERGY MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN
ZIMBABWE IN RESPONSE TO TRADITIONAL WESLEYAN
TEACHINGS ON THE ORDER OF SALVATION [ORDO SALUTIS]
WITHIN A RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCED BY
PROSPERITY GOSPEL SINCE 2000**

By

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**



Pietermaritzburg Campus

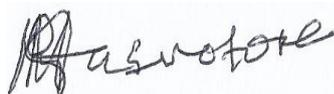
2018

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**, in the Graduate Programme in **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**, University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

I, **Peter Masvotore**, declare that the research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research. I also declare that this thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. In addition, I declare that this thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons. I further declare that this thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then, their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced and where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.

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15/06/2018

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As Candidate Co-supervisor I hereby approve this Thesis for Submission

Professor Roderick Hewitt

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15/06/2018

EDITING CERTIFICATION

4 June 2018

Re: Language editing of the doctoral thesis

This letter confirms that the doctoral thesis **Ministerial Formation of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) Clergy in Response to the Wesleyan Teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within the Religious Environment Influenced by Prosperity Gospel** by Rev Peter Masvotore, was copy edited for language, completed in June 2018.

Cordially


Dr Karen Buckenham (PhD)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father, Lazarus Mudzvova Mudekunya Masvotore, who succumbed to cancer and did not live to see me acquire a doctorate, my mother Nyengetera and to my wife Juliet and son Tatenda Nyasha who are my pillars of strength for this great achievement in my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis could not have been what it is without the support of my mentors and Supervisors; Dr Xolani Sakuba as main Supervisor and Professor Roderick Hewitt as my Co-Supervisor. I want to thank them for their guidance, encouragement, words of wisdom and motivation throughout the project. I also want to thank the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) for granting me permission to take study leave and being there for me since I started my studies. The MCZ sought scholarship for my studies through the Methodist Church in Britain. I am humbly indebted to the leadership. I also want to convey my profound gratitude to the Methodist Church in Britain for granting me the SALT scholarship for three years that enabled me to pay for my fees and all required resources for my studies. May I also extend my deepest appreciation for the support rendered by colleagues, MCZ clergy and laity for affording me time to interview them? This thesis could not have been what it is had it not been for the tireless work of the editors (Karen Buckenham and Rose Unwin) who proofread the document to perfection. Last but not least, I feel so much indebted to my mother, my dear wife Juliet and my son Tatenda Nyasha for their time, patience, understanding and shouldering some responsibilities in my absence during the writing of this thesis.

ABSTRACT

This study explores and investigates how MCZ clergy experience ministerial formation related to Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes, interacting with the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), in the context of prosperity gospel. The study is inspired by an academic, contextual and pastoral concern with ministerial formation of MCZ. Review of scholarly work confirms that attention has not previously been given to the ecclesial context of the MCZ in relation to the topic of this study. The attitude towards religio-cultural practices that are different from those bequeathed to the church by its Euro-centric missionary heritage constitute part of the motivation that triggered this study, as the researcher sought to discover the root cause of resolutions made by the MCZ at Conferences. It is to these research gaps that this study gives its attention.

The research problem of this study emerges out of theological reflections that seem to call into question the religio-cultural ways in which the MCZ clergy are formed. Specifically, how do they appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the doctrine of salvation and does it adequately equip them to address the challenges and opportunities posed by prosperity gospel that has taken root and spread within the Zimbabwean society since 2000. This call for an investigation into the question: how has the ministerial formation strategy within MCZ been able to equip the clergy for effective engagement with the challenges posed by the prosperity phenomenon within Zimbabwe?

The data for the study was collected using empirical and non-empirical research methods. In addition to written sources, individual interviews with selected MCZ clergy and lay leaders were conducted and observations made. In examining the responses to the research question, the study concludes that teaching on health and wealth as reflected in Wesley's *Ordo Salutis*, at the theological colleges, is inadequate to prepare MCZ clergy to respond to influences of the prosperity gospel. The study also concludes that the health and wealth responses initiated by John Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism were neglected in ministerial formation, as a resource that could empower its clergy to respond to challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel. The following are key terms related to this study: ministerial formation, Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and the prosperity gospel.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AMEC	African Methodist Church
ATR	African Traditional Religion(s)
AU	Africa University
BSAC	British South African Company
DRS	Diploma in Religious Studies
ELCZ	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Zimbabwe
ETC	Epworth Theological College
IMC	International Missionary Council
IOU	I Owe You
IRTG	International Research Training Group
LMS	London Missionary Society
MCZ	Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
MCSA	Methodist Church of Southern Africa
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
PHD	Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministries
UCCSA	United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
UFI	United Family International
UMC	United Methodist Church
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
UTC	United Theological College
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAOGA	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God
ZEGU	Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education
ZIMTEE	Zimbabwe Theological Education by Extension
ZINTEC	Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

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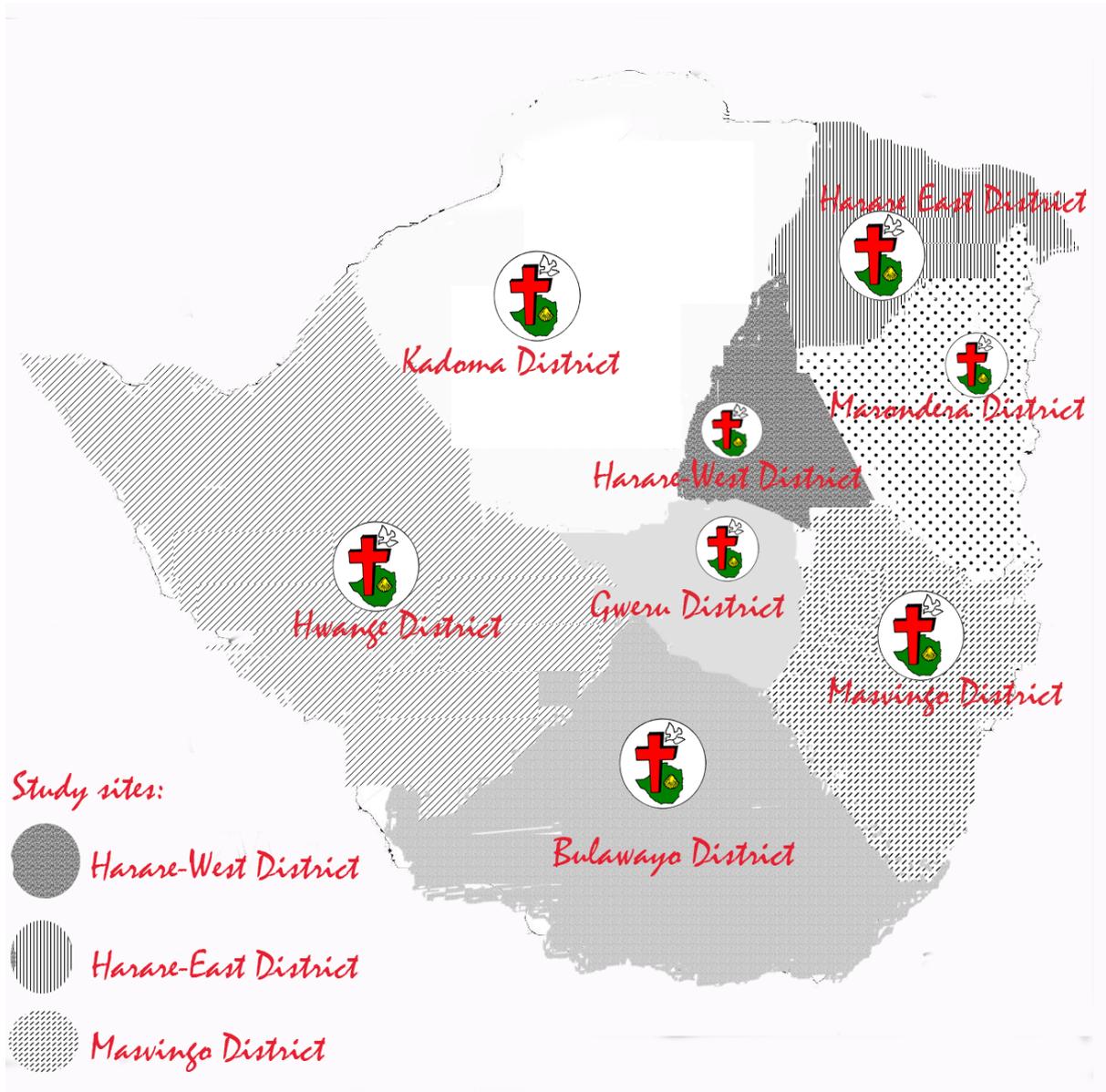
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The Map of Zimbabwe Showing MCZ District Boundaries and Study Sites



The map modified from the Zimbabwe Information Centre-maps files.¹

¹<http://www.worldatlas.com> accessed 5 November 2017.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCING THE STUDY: ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Christian theology involves a variety of activities; hence it has become a complex discipline because of the increase of new denominations and theological schools since reformation which caused a great deal of misconstructions in Christian theologies (Jarvis 2001). Currently, theological education focuses on a curriculum that centres on the development of the whole person. This means that both spiritual and character formation as well as relational skills is as important as academic achievements in preparing people for a thriving Christian ministry. Jarvis further argues that education is not envisaged in terms of function, transmission and absorption of information. It is an ontological activity aimed at human development (2001:229).

The experience of mission within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (hereinafter called MCZ) has necessitated vigilance and awareness of the end purpose of formation, and the kind of formation needed in its programmes of study to meet these needs. At the same time, the aim of scholarly approach to theological studies in colleges and universities normally excludes character formational elements, regardless of the fact that students in these courses enrol for formational reasons (Jarvis 2001). In some universities and colleges in Zimbabwe, such as Catholic University (Catholic), Africa University (AU), Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU), Living Waters Theological Seminary (Pentecostal), and United Theological College (Protestant), just to name a few, they each use denominationally-influenced models of training. However, it is crucial to employ contextual and recognised models for ministerial formation, to equip the clergy holistically.

Theological training is a polygonal activity that requires critical pedagogical skills, the acquirement of knowledge, skills development, religious identity formation, and the growth of the ministerial and spiritual ripeness expected of church clergy. Education is not simply the accrual of a known set of scholarly credits but includes the holistic development of all aspects of the individual. For Kaunda (2013) the aim of theological education is to raise

awareness and create a new liberated society where humanity celebrates life in all its fullness. He also discovers that not all forms of theological education liberates, instead its intention is to raise consciousness and bring true freedom.

Therefore this study employs a framework of theological reflection to interrogate how clergy personnel of MCZ experience ministerial formation related to Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes conveyed in the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), within a religious environment that has been influenced by the prosperity gospel since 2000. This chapter is divided into ten parts. The first part gives the introduction to the chapter. The second part outlines the approach to the study. The third part states the location of the study. The fourth part underlines the motivation and background of the study. The fifth part deals with the central key question and sub-questions, including the objectives of the present study. The sixth part delineates the review of literature in the study. The seventh part is a theoretical consideration. The eighth part is the research design, methodology and methods used in the study. The ninth part is the limitations of the study. The tenth part brings this chapter to a conclusion.

1.2 Approach to the Study

The study interrogates issues that are intricately linked to theological formation of MCZ clergy leaders within the context of Zimbabwe. The ecclesial identity of the MCZ is shaped by Wesleyan theology. In this study, attention is given to one aspect, the *Ordo Salutis* (order of salvation), with a specific focus on health and wealth as dominant themes. The study reflects on the key research question, how do MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges² posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe? This is examined in relation to Wesleyan teachings on salvation that include health and wealth motifs, in the contemporary religio-cultural environment. In other words, how does the curriculum that embraces the teaching of *Ordo Salutis* in the seminary, including health and wealth themes, equip MCZ clergy to offer life-affirming responses to the challenges and opportunities posed by the religio-cultural understanding and practice of the prosperity gospel?

² In referring to challenges posed by the prosperity gospel, it does not mean that the researcher is oblivious of what some may consider as opportunities or positive spinoffs of the prosperity gospel. The study will also address the opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel (challenges points to threats and opportunities).

This uncertainty in theological understanding and practice has raised concerns about the need for a systematic examination of how the church and its theological institutions educate and equip its clergy leadership to understand and bear witness to this core doctrinal identity. The study has therefore employed the theoretical framework of theological reflection as a strategic tool to examine the nature of the curriculum and the different modules that are used to equip clergy, to examine how they understand and appropriate *Ordo Salutis*, and to critique and propose alternative strategies that can influence the prosperity gospel in the Zimbabwean context.

1.3 Location of the Study

This study belongs in the field of systematic theology in general and African Christian theology in particular, specifically the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The study investigates the responses of contemporary clergy in the MCZ to the opportunities and challenges of the prosperity gospel, and their understanding of the Wesleyan order of salvation and its health and wealth teaching, as resources to equip them to effectively respond to the prosperity gospel.

The study was conducted in Harare (urban) and Masvingo (semi-urban), with MCZ clergy who were trained and some who are still training at UTC and Zimbabwe Theological Education by Extension (hereinafter called ZIMTEE) as case studies. UTC was established in 1954 and is situated 11km East of Harare. UTC is the oldest and largest Protestant Ecumenical Seminary in sub-Saharan Africa (Matikiti 2009:3). ZIMTEE has its centre in the city of Gweru but the MCZ ZIMTEE students are currently coordinated from Sandringham High School situated 65km from Harare. For the lay leadership, the study was conducted at Parktown society (medium density area) and Budiro society (high density suburb). The study was conducted within a context of economic and political instability that has resulted in the general population suffering from all kinds of socio-economic hardships. This unstable situation has also affected the church in an adverse way. The study was conducted in three out of eight districts of the MCZ, namely Harare East (UTC), Harare West (urban) and Masvingo (semi-urban). These were chosen because the phenomenon of the prosperity gospel is dominant among some clergy in some circuits belonging to these districts; however the location within the districts were purposively chosen.

1.4 Motivation and Background to the Research Problem

This study is motivated by concern with how MCZ clergy are formed through Wesleyan teaching on salvation that includes health and wealth as a dominant motif and its capacity to respond to the urgent challenges and opportunities posed by the gospel of prosperity. The motivation is informed by two key factors, namely, academic significance and my contextual pastoral environment where I serve as a Methodist clergy³.

1.4.1 Academic Significance

This study is driven by an academic research gap identified during my Master of Arts dissertation on the topic: *Prosperity Gospel: To Save or Enslave?: The Case of United Family International* (hereinafter called UFI) in Zimbabwe (Masvotore 2012:1). This is an area that requires an in-depth study. The second academic impetus in this study is the need to engage in research on how MCZ clergy are engaging with the challenges posed by the influences of the prosperity gospel, a religio-cultural phenomenon that is shaping expressions of Christianity within the Zimbabwean society. This academic need is supported by Gondongwe (2011:19) who argues that “the history of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is grossly understudied”. Makoti (2012) further submits that there is very little extensive academic study on evangelization and Methodism from an African point of view hence it is a virgin area to be explored.

To date, few books and articles have been written on the influence of the prosperity gospel on the MCZ ministry and the formation of its clergy within the local context. Scholars like Chitando (1998), Maxwell (2000), Bishau (2013), Togarasei (2011), Masvotore (2016) and Shoko (2015) have written about the prosperity gospel phenomenon from a Pentecostal and charismatic movement point of view. Other scholars such as Matikiti (2009) and Gundani (2008) have reflected on ministerial formation as a contribution to ecumenism. Banana (1991), Zvobgo (1991), Hallencreutz (1998), Gondongwe (2011), Makoti (2012), Mawire (2015) and Mujinga (2017) have given attention to the historical development of MCZ but without theological reflection. The work of these scholars confirms that attention was not

³ In as much as the researcher is an insider, in which case the direct involvement may compromise the objectivity of the study, the use of reflexivity was employed to mitigate bias, as explained in detail in the methodology.

given to the ecclesial context of the MCZ in relation to the topic of this study. This study addresses the above mentioned research gap.

1.4.2 Contextual and Pastoral Concerns as a Methodist Clergy

According to the minutes of the MCZ Conference⁴ (2015), where the researcher was present as a delegate, the church noted with concern the challenges posed by the prosperity gospel. The conference recommended that the clergy should be proud of their brand of Methodism and should exercise their ministry within the confines of Methodist beliefs and practices. It further recommended that clergy should desist from using borrowed phenomenon, like the use of oil, handkerchiefs and other symbolic objects denoting anointing in the name of prosperity (2015:4, 29). This attitude towards religio-cultural practices that are different from those bequeathed to the church by its Euro-centric missionary heritage was part of the motivation that triggered this study to try to discover the root cause of the resolution.

The research problem of this study therefore emerged out of theological reflections that seem to call into question the religio-cultural ways the MCZ clergy are formed, their appropriation of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes in the doctrine of salvation. The research asks whether the formation adequately equips the clergy to address the challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel that has taken root in Zimbabwean society since 2000. This then calls for investigation of the question: to what extent has the ministerial formation strategy within MCZ been able to equip the clergy for effective engagement with the challenges posed by the phenomenon within Zimbabwe?

1.5 Key Research Question

The study seeks to answer the key research question:

How do MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000?

⁴The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. The Conference shall be the final authority within the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe for the interpretation of the doctrinal standards of the church. It shall meet in Ministerial Session and Representative Session. The Conference in Ministerial Session shall transact such business only concerning to ministers. All other business of the Conference shall be transacted in Representative Session (Standing Orders MCZ. (2011:6, 12, 13) *Deed of Church Orders and Standing Orders*. Harare: Research and Publications.

In an attempt to respond to the above key question, the following five sub-questions serve to guide the study. First, what constitutes the Wesleyan theology of the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs? Second, how is the contemporary model of ministry formation used for MCZ clergy? Third, how is prosperity gospel's concept of salvation both a challenge and an opportunity in the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe? Fourth, how are the selective society leaders responding to the prosperity gospel advanced by their clergy? Fifth, how are the contemporary MCZ clergy, who have been formed to appropriate the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), able to respond the challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel?

1.6 Objectives

This study will address the following five objectives: First is to discuss the Wesleyan theology on the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs. Second is to assess how the contemporary model of ministerial formation is used for MCZ clergy in relation to their polity studies. The third objective is to study how prosperity gospel's concept of salvation both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. Fourth is to evaluate how selective society leaders are responding to prosperity gospel ministry practiced by some of their clergy. Fifth is to explore how the contemporary MCZ clergy have been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of Wesleyan theology of *Ordo Salutis* that includes themes on health and wealth.

1.7 Review of Literature

Substantial research has been undertaken on the key concepts reviewed in this study. The literature review is informed by selected works of scholars linked to the key concepts identified in this study, namely: ministerial formation; the MCZ; traditional Wesleyan view of *Ordo Salutis* (order of salvation); the prosperity gospel and theological contextualization. Not every book and article written on the key concepts is reviewed, only those that are deemed to be significant for the study. The literature review helped in narrowing the scope of this study. It also enabled the researcher to clearly identify the gap that was to be addressed

through the research. Selection of scholars was done systematically through identifying key scholars. If the scholars were international (for example, from the Global North) the researcher blended the scholars voices with African scholars and feminist (Global South) voices. A continuous blending of scholars was designed to give a diverse scholarly perspective of the subject under review. The study has intentionally embraced, as far as possible, an intentional bias towards literature from the Global South that is grounded in the African context and Zimbabwean soil in particular.

1.7.1 Ministerial Formation

A great deal has been written about ministerial formation by scholars such as Naidoo (2012), Zvobgo (1991), Mombo and Galgalo (2002), Pobee (1990), Mugambi (2013), Matikiti (2009) and Gundani (2008). Different approaches have been used by these scholars to look at this multifaceted term. Naidoo⁵ (2012) defined ministerial formation as a multifaceted activity that relates to thinking critically, knowledge acquisition, development of skills, formation of religious identities, ministerial development and spiritual maturity expected of church clergy (2012). This perspective affirms that education is not only the accumulation of a prescribed set of academic credits but includes the formation of all aspects of the individual holistically. In as far as Naidoo looked at the broader context of ministerial formation; she did not address how the clergy should be equipped to respond to issues of salvation in a religious environment influenced by the prosperity gospel.

What Naidoo defines is reflected upon by Zvobgo⁶ (1991), who assessed ministerial formation using Methodist lenses when he said, all candidates for ministerial formation were required to have studied Wesley Sermons (Numbers 1-44) and understand the doctrine contained in these sermons and the Rules and Regulations of the MCZ. It was also required that probationers were supposed to pass an examination in Methodist law and discipline before they were recommended for acceptance into full connexion.⁷

⁵Marilyn Naidoo (South Africa), Associate Professor for Religious Education at the University of South Africa in the Department of Practical Theology; Specialized Researcher on Ministerial Formation and Training, Spirituality.

⁶C.J.M. Zvobgo is a former Professor in the History Department at the University of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and a member of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

⁷ Standing Orders (2011) 101, The expression “acceptance into Full Connexion” it is used in relation to a clergy in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe to mean that such a clergy has been admitted and ordained as clergy of the MCZ.

He pointed out that in 1944; Andrew Ndhlela studied Theology, New Testament, Church History, Christian Ethics, History of Methodism and Homiletics, among other courses at Waddilove Theological Training (1991:120). This gave the researcher an idea of how those recruited for ministry are formed from candidature at college and as probationers until they have completed their studies. A common feature among all course outlines is the study of Methodism. I observed, however, that Zvobgo only provides a historical narration of the curriculum without engaging in theological reflection to see how the church and its theological institutions educate and equip its clergy leadership to understand and bear witness to the core doctrinal identity of *Ordo Salutis*. This study has therefore employed the theoretical framework of theological reflection as a strategic tool to examine the nature of the curriculum and the different modules that are used to equip the clergy on how to understand and appropriate *Ordo Salutis* and to critique and propose alternative strategies that can influence the prosperity gospel inside the Zimbabwean context, a gap that was not filled by Zvobgo.

Scholars such as Mombo and Galgalo also examine some of the limitations of the current designs of ministerial formation. They argue that a number of graduates from theological colleges find themselves secluded from the laity because the theological education they acquired has been too academic more scholarly and a photocopy of Western culture that is focused on maintenance of church structures and theological jargon (2002). The reason for this state of affairs lies in the content of the curriculum which is not centred on praxis, people and issues; a curriculum is needed which is oriented towards inclusion of these concerns. While the contribution of the above scholars is useful for this research, their context is not situated in Zimbabwe in general and MCZ in particular, a gap this study aims to fill.

Some suggestions on how ministerial formation can be redesigned or restructured are presented by Anglican scholar John Pobee (1990) who suggested that churches and theological colleges should have second thoughts about theological education context and methodology and to focus on contextualized curricula, bibliographies, including books and commentaries. One of the selected scholars, Mugambi (2013), offers views on how theological education through colleges should prepare its clergy to respond adequately to emerging challenges. He argues that for Christian churches to be sustainable, they depend greatly on the effectiveness of pastoral training. On the African continent, theological education is facing problems because most of the pastoral training has been conducted by

missionaries, the majority of whom know little or nothing about the inner dynamics of the African culture and religious heritage (2013:117). He further states that the high cost of residential pastoral formation and deficiency in contextualization of the training curriculum worsen the situation. More so as long as the syllabus of African theological colleges are imported from elsewhere, ministerial training will remain out of time with cultural and religious dynamics of African societies where graduates are expected to execute their duties after graduation.

The above synopsis indicates how the issue of curriculum has been of great importance in theological colleges. Mugambi also calls for an urgent review of the curriculum for theological education in Africa as a prerequisite and not a choice, that deals with training African clergy without distancing them from their culture and equip them to cope with the current divide between Christian identity and practice as characterized in much of African Christianity today. Though Pobe and Mugambi wrote from an African point of view, they did not address particularly a theological reflection on the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis* and health and wealth themes to identify how the clergy are prepared to respond to the influence of the prosperity gospel. Therefore, this study necessitates an assessment of the theological colleges' (UTC and ZIMTEE) curriculum to determine whether the content is relevant and adequate to prepare MCZ clergy for the challenges of ministry posed by the gospel of prosperity, a gap that was not addressed by the above scholars.

Last but not least, Matikiti (2009) and Gundani (2008), both Zimbabwean scholars, reflected on ministerial formation as a contribution to ecumenism. But they did not pay attention to the ecclesial context of the MCZ in relation to the topic under study.

1.7.2 The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

What is the identity, vocation and witness of the MCZ? The Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders has defined the MCZ as an autonomous community of Christian believers that values its place in the Holy Catholic Church, which is the body of Christ. Its missional foundations began with British Methodist mission activity that emerged out of the pioneering work of John and Charles Wesley and their followers (Deed and Standing Order, 2011:11). The MCZ is sometimes referred to as Wesleyan Methodist. In addition, the research also draws on some literature on Methodism and Wesleyan heritage in Southern Africa in order to have a broader understanding of the transportation and transplantation route of the MCZ. A

detailed overview of the origin, missionary activities, transportation and transplantation of Methodism in Zimbabwe will be presented later in the thesis.

There is another important component of the church's theological identity that deals with what the church believes and teaches (doctrines). The Deed and Standing Orders (2011) further states that Methodism is anchored on the doctrine of Evangelical faith that is based on Divine revelation as recorded in the Scriptures. It is to this belief that the Methodist church regards this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice. Preachers both clergy and laity are pledged and contained in Wesley's notes on the new Testament and the first four volumes of his 44 sermons as enshrined in the doctrines.

Bequeathed by the Wesleyan sermons, the Methodist Church from its inception has given the MCZ its missional identity and is based upon biblical doctrinal teachings. The third key component of the church is its ability to deal with social and political issues of its time. According to Masvotore (2012:5), one cannot speak about theology and the church without examining its role in addressing social and political realities in society. This is strengthened by Makoti (2012) when he states that Christians will continue to live by syncretism if their physical and social needs are not addressed.

In light of the above realities in society, Gondongwe (2011) assessed the degree of political consciousness of the Zimbabwean Wesleyan Methodist indigenous clergy from 1891 to 1980. He documented the nature of how some European missionaries exercised autocratic leadership models that kept local clergy in a subservient state. He also analysed how the indigenous clergy responded to the domination. Gondongwe further explained that members of the church were required to make contribution towards the running expenses of the church. Anyone who was found wanting in this respect risked having his or her membership suspended (2011:57). It was not meant to enrich the clergy but was used for rentals of equipment on mission farms. In his analysis Gondongwe argued that money created problems particularly to those Christians who converted and were accommodated in Christian villages. In search of money young people ended up migrating to town looking for employment to enable them to pay dues linked to Christian villages. While in urban areas they met challenges to the detriment of their newly acquired faith and this also destroys African identity amongst urbanites.

Although Gondongwe is an insider who addressed historical elements related to the MCZ clergy, he did not go a step further to offer a critical assessment on how MCZ clergy are theologically equipped in Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes interacting with *Ordo Salutis*, in relation to the topic under review. Another dimension similar to Gondongwe's allusions above is shared by Simangaliso Kumalo (2015) who proposed a code of conduct for religious leaders and an opportunity for them to be registered as members of a professional body like other professions, in a bid to create a conducive environment for denominations as well as protecting ordinary people from being exploited by dubious church organizations and their leaders. This is because of the proliferation of new denominations and ministries that masquerade as churches. They have reduced the credibility of the church by becoming a business or money-making religious industry. Kumalo questions the authenticity of clergy that seek to earn some money by starting a church without even going through what he called structures of accountability (2015).

It is from Kumalo's perspectives that this study explores measures being taken by the MCZ to address challenges faced by individual members of its congregation as a result of the gospel of prosperity adopted by some of its clergy. Although Kumalo addressed the Methodist Church context in general, his emphasis is on the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA). The limitations are that he did not employ theological reflection as a framework on the Wesleyan teachings of *Ordo Salutis*, particularly on health and wealth aspects, to see how the clergy are equipped to respond to the prosperity gospel in the context of MCZ.

1.7.3 Wesleyan View of *Ordo Salutis* (Order of Salvation)

The theme of the Wesleyan view of the order of salvation is a hotly debated subject by various scholars such as James (2014), Collins (2010) and Mawire (2015). They view Wesleyan studies from different theological angles, outside of the Wesleyan tradition. Those outside the tradition view John Wesley as a focal point for ecumenical relationships while those inside the tradition regard him as a guide in matters of faith and practice. The concept of *Ordo Salutis* in Wesley's theology provides an important lens for the understanding of Wesley's thought. As already indicated in the doctrinal section of the MCZ, the Standing Orders (2011) clearly state that the evangelical doctrines to which the preachers of the Methodist Church, both ministers and laity are pledged, are contained in Wesley's notes on the New Testament and the first four volumes of his 44 sermons (2011:1). From this, it is

understood that Wesley's theology is grounded in his sermons, particularly the sermon on "Salvation by Faith." Here he outlined the "Four Alls," the traditional summary of Wesley's teaching which forms his order of salvation (James 2014:13). It is from this teaching that we learn that, the theme of health and wealth is embedded in Wesley's holistic approach to salvation.

A closer look at the sub-themes of Wesley's sermon gives the reader insight into his understanding of salvation. According to James (2014:11), the sermon was preached at St Mary's Church at Oxford before the University on 18th June 1738. This was just three weeks after John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed on 24th May 1738. Wesley's teachings are summarized as follows:

...all people are sinners and in need of salvation. All people can be saved, if they respond to God's offer of salvation. All people can know that they are saved. This is the doctrine of assurance. All people can be saved to the uttermost (2014:11).

From Wesley's understanding of grace, he developed the health and wealth themes with a preferential option for the poor. James also outlined that Wesley's economic thrust in his sermon on the use of money led him to emphasize the need for a positive work ethic that can lead to prosperity. Margaret James, the first female minister in the MCZ with her roots connected to England, further argues that:

...we call ourselves Methodists and claim to be the spiritual descendants of John Wesley and yet most of our preachers know very little of what Wesley actually taught. At one time all local preachers were expected to have read the official forty-four Wesley sermons before they were accepted into full plan. Wesley's sermons and his notes on the New Testament form the official doctrinal standard of our church, and we would benefit from studying them more closely (2014: 4).

James serves as a key scholar in the study of Wesley's theology because she has managed to synthesize the teachings of John Wesley for use by clergy in training colleges at UTC and ZIMTEE. The shortcoming of James' paraphrased version is that it is just a duplicate of the missionaries' understanding of *Ordo Salutis* it is only re-written in simpler and understandable English for the benefit of non-English speaking clientele. However she did not appropriate this key concept into the African context, where Africans have an understanding of the here and now as well as an eschatological perspective of salvation. She did not employ theological reflection as a framework to see how the clergy are formed to

understand salvation in an environment influenced by the prosperity gospel. This is a gap this study aim to fill.

Another scholar worth mentioning is Collins (2010) who also studied Wesley's sermons, among them, 'The Scripture Way of Salvation'. Like James (2014), he argues that, "The Scripture Way of Salvation" is Wesley's critical sermons where he,

...explores the soteriological content of his entire literary corpus (sermons, letters, theological treatises, journals and the notes on the Old and New Testaments) (2010:153).

Collins presents a lucid argument of Wesley's emerging scrutiny of the growth and maturation of Christian life and in doing so he underscores the indispensable structure that undergirds and makes available the framework for Wesley's way of thinking about the processes of salvation. Although this scholar explores the doctrine of order of salvation, he does not do it in the context of how it has shaped the clergy and ministry of the MCZ a gap this study aims to fill.

The third important writer who looked at factors in the growth of Methodism is Mawire (2015: 35) who suggests that:

It was the religious, political and economic situation that offered the fertile soil in which the seed of Methodism was to germinate through John Wesley in England.

Trained as an Anglican minister, John Wesley stressed on the order, discipline, ministry and Sacraments of the church. Mawire further highlighted that among some distinctive features brought by John Wesley, 'salvation for all' featured most. For Wesley, salvation is a gift but a gift extended to all (2015:36). God offers the greatest of all blessings, the blessing of salvation, as a free gift. Cieslukowski and Colyer (2005:107) view salvation to be a grace-filled empowering process. This underlines that sinners can do nothing to deserve God's favour.

From this centre of theological discussion on soteriology, this study examines the basis for ministerial formation of Methodist clergy. The study will establish whether the curriculum at theological colleges (UTC, ZIMTEE) embraces this fundamental doctrine as one of its teachings, an issue that was never explored by Mawire. Hence it is a gap that this study addresses. A more detailed descriptive analysis of this doctrine is given in chapter three of the thesis.

1.7.4 The Prosperity Gospel

The phenomenon of the prosperity gospel has drawn the attention of academics in a quest to understand the theological roots, transportation and transplantation of this phenomenon into Africa as a whole and within Zimbabwe in particular. To date, a few books and articles have been written on the influence of the prosperity gospel on the MCZ ministry and the formation of its clergy within the local context. Scholars such as Chitando (1998), Maxwell (2000), Withrow (2007), Bishau (2013), Togarasei (2011, 2014), Asamoah-Gyadu (2014), Gbote (2014), Schliesser (2014), Masvotore (2016) and Shoko (2015) have written about the prosperity gospel phenomenon from the point of view of Pentecostal and charismatic movements. Scholars like Chitando, Maxwell, Gyadu, Schliesser and Togarasei have looked at its origins, transplantation and transportation, and try to describe what it is. Scholars such as Gbote, Shoko and Masvotore have looked at its authenticity in relation to biblical authority while Bishau and Withrow delve into the pros and cons of prosperity theology. These scholars are selected because they extensively looked at this phenomenon holistically, tracing its emergence, how it was transported and transplanted to Africa, its impact on society, both positive and negative, and biblical support.

A Zimbabwean Methodist scholar, Bishau (2013), argues that prosperity gospel can be defined using different terms that denote various set of meanings and characteristics of the gospel. Sometimes it is known as health and wealth gospel or prosperity theology. The above terms bring out certain features of the gospel. Bishau argues that to refer to the term as ‘gospel’ could give problems with identifying the prosperity phenomenon with ‘good news’ – rather he prefers to regard it as an ideology. He further argues that the teaching constitutes a narrow interpretation of the Bible that embraces ideas of a particular group of Christians. Another scholar in the Methodist tradition and a feminist voice who has written extensively on prosperity gospel is Withrow (2007). She also defines success and economic prosperity as a gift from God provided individuals and churches are appropriately faithful. It is a notion that has been propagated as a personal approach for economic gain. She further argues that in prosperity gospel, churches claim that it is a right of a Christian that covers all areas of one’s life hence the slogan ‘God will meet you at the point of your need’ (: 5).

Both Bishau and Withrow approach the study of this phenomenon from a negative perspective, especially where Bishau refuses to appreciate prosperity teaching as a gospel

(2013). On the other hand, Withrow views it as a gospel propagated as a personal approach to economic gain. They tend to label prosperity gospel without approaching it from a holistic perspective, a gap this study addresses.

As mentioned above, scholars like Chitando, Maxwell, Asamoah-Gyadu, Schliesser and Togarasei have traced the transportation, transplantation and conditions that allowed the growth of the prosperity gospel in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. Interestingly, the gospel of prosperity arose in the time of economic and political crisis and religious hybridity in Zimbabwe and has since gained momentum. One is prompted to find out whether this gospel is a survival strategy in churches, particularly MCZ, or a form of empowerment to its members, since the nation has also called for indigenization and empowerment of its citizens (Act14 of 2007).

African scholars like Wright and Asamoah-Gyadu (2008/9), have argued that the presence of the prosperity gospel within Africa is linked to the decline of traditional religions – a new feature that has created space for the emergence of Pentecostalism and the accompanying prosperity gospel, predominantly in countries of Southern Africa, particularly Zimbabwe. The prosperity gospel is described as the teaching that emphasize that Christians have been bestowed with the right to the blessings of health and wealth which are obtainable through their positive confession of faith and faithful giving of their payments of tithes and offerings (Lausanne 2010: 99-102).

Writing on the prosperity gospel in Africa, Schliesser (2014) states that, prosperity gospel is a product of Pentecostalism that came into Africa through Christianity that interacting with elements such as belief in spirits, healing and exorcism that is common in African traditional religions. The dialectic link to key African traditional concepts along with other features such as the importance of charisma and ecstasy, plus the effective use of new media technology are key elements that helps to explain the incredible rise of prosperity teaching in the Zimbabwean context.

Another key scholar who has examined the prosperity gospel as a way to alleviate poverty in Africa is Togarasei (2011) who argues that two realities prompted the growth of charismatic Pentecostal Christianity in Africa namely, extreme poverty that makes the gospel of prosperity more appealing hence Pentecostals engages in poverty alleviation through

encouraging entrepreneurship in Africa, see also (2014: 9). This aspect of the prosperity gospel helps its adherents to discover wealth creation and financial intelligence that can make their lives prosperous. Both Togarasei (2011) and Schliesser (2014) have applauded Pentecostalism as an ideology that religious practitioners have used to motivate their adherents to create employment-generating opportunities instead of advocating their seeking employment. Togarasei further argued that the gospel of prosperity instils a positive mind-set to Christians as well as believing in themselves to equip believers to graduate from the donor syndrome.

The contributions by Togarasei and Schliesser confirm that the gospel of prosperity has the potential to offer a holistic approach that addresses spiritual as well as physical needs of its members. From the above ideas, positive dimensions of the gospel of prosperity can be identified. The fusing of both positive and negative dimensions of the gospel of prosperity is intended to give a balanced perspective to the study. However, a disadvantage noted is that the above scholars focus on Africa in general. This present study gives attention to the specific context of Zimbabwe with reference to MCZ clergy.

Gbote (2014) argues that, the prosperity gospel presents wealth and riches as fulfilment of God's divine promises and a covenant with His people which they are entitled to obtain. This fundamental teaching of the gospel of prosperity is that God wants believers to get rich or healthy on condition that one has to first send money known as 'seed-faith' to their spiritual leader or pastor who in turn tells them about the plan of God. This approach has now spread to other parts of the world, including Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. Gbote did not go further to examine whether prosperity can be a challenge or an opportunity to the believers, which leaves a gap to be filled through this study.

Another scholar who has questioned the doctrinal teachings of prosperity is Reed (1997). According to him the context and nuances of prosperity are new, but the central issue that revolves around human relevance and divine transcendence remains the same. In this case, the central issue of the prosperity gospel revolves around human relevance and divine transcendence. The question to ask is how MCZ clergy can make the worship relevant to human experience in a prosperity context without replacing the transcendence of God? In other words, how far can MCZ clergy go in designing its worship of God to suit human situations prior to fitting God to individual situations? Hence, theological introspection into

this gospel is needed with particular reference to MCZ clergy, a question that remains to be researched.

Shoko (2015) has also equated the pastor and prophet of UFIC's gospel of prosperity, his *modus operandi* and his activities to those of *n'anga* (traditional healer). For him, the practitioner builds his economic empire through manipulation of his clients by magic that earns him his fortune. He held a comparative analysis of prophet Makandiwa's healing with that of the *n'anga*. This means that the pastoral ministry of the church is disguised as *n'anga* clothed in white. Both Shoko (2015) and Reed (1997) have questioned the authenticity of the practitioner (clergy) of the prosperity gospel.

This study argues that Shoko's analysis is not balanced because he has demonised the prophets by only looking at the dark side without looking at their positive contribution. The other disadvantage is that he did not examine theological discourses of soteriology, which this study will attempt to discuss. Further, his context is also different from that of MCZ since he is writing from an African Traditional Religion point of view.

In trying to make a theological assessment of prosperity theology, an important scholar in this discourse is Asamoah-Gyadu, who postulates that, by preaching prosperity message it raises challenges in the mission of the church particularly because many young people are attracted to its promises. Theological insights must be articulated in a bid to come up with solid responses to this gospel that is captivating but it remains alien to the values and mission upheld by Jesus Christ (2014: 4). Asamoah-Gyadu interprets Scripture to explain biblically-sanctioned richness by making an emphasis that the challenge for believers is not in the use of Scripture to empower them to change their situations in real life (2014:4). Without a doubt some parts of the message encourages entrepreneurship. However, they become insignificant compared with the sacrilegious aspects, such as extravagance that presents lavish and spendthrift living as the right of faithful Christians.

Asamoah-Gyadu offers insights for this study, especially by referring to the role of scripture, in which the Wesleyan view of salvation is rooted, as indicated in Wesley's sermon 'Scripture, the Way to Salvation' (Collins 2010:153). However the disadvantage is that he did not offer any in-depth theological insights nor address the pitfalls of the prosperity gospel. This may be so because of his bias towards contemporary understandings and practices of

African Christianity. The critique and insights by the above scholars serve to provide insights for analysing the appropriation of the prosperity gospel within the MCZ.

1.7.5 Theological Contextualization

The need to review works on contextualization of theology is that the church in the 21st century cannot follow teachings of Wesley blindly. As such it has to contextualize his teachings and appropriate them to suit their own context. Contextualization is one of the most important issues in mission today. Whiteman⁸ (1997:1) suggests that contextualization is not mere Missiological fact that will fade when another “hot topic” catches our attention. This is true because contextualization is concerned with how the Gospel and culture relate to one another across geographic space and down through time. It is such critical views that this study will explore in order to situate Wesley’s teachings in their context and how they can be applied in Zimbabwe. Although one can see the obvious need for contextualization, the actual practice of it is not easy. Blinded by one’s ethnocentrism and ecclesiastical hegemony, one finds it very difficult to cultivate the art of listening and learning from those different from themselves. But in a spirit of humility, this is a fundamental requirement for contextualization. The challenge that contextualization brings to us is, how do we carry out the Great Commission and live out the Great Commandment in a world of cultural diversity with a Gospel that is both truly Christian in content and culturally significant in form? Whiteman’s views are based on his experience in Central Africa but he has never been to Zimbabwe where the study is conducted which also brings into question the issue of context.

Another critical scholar to inform this study is Muzorewa (1985) who attests that African theology is the embodiment of the contextualization of Christianity. Muzorewa further clarifies that African theology is an “attempt to respond to a mandate to construct a biblically-based and relevant theology that speaks to the spiritual needs of the African people” (Muzorewa 1985: 96). Thus, the goal of African theology is to construct a biblically-based and relevant theology that can meet the spiritual needs of African people. The implications therefore, of African theology, are that imported theologies do not sufficiently touch the hearts of African believers because they are couched in a language that is foreign to them (Muzorewa 1985:96–97, Mokhoathi 2017: 2). It is a fact that the building of

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communication between Christianity and the African cultural and religious heritage is best left for African theologians because they know how best to contextualize Christianity in a manner that can fully communicate with their African cultural and religious heritage (Muzorewa 1985). Thus, in this argument, Christianity needs to assume a local and Africanised temperament, where it can be communicated in a language that Africans can understand and appreciate; and be articulated in a manner that can touch the hearts of Africans. In its reproduction, it is exclusively the task of African theologians to contextualize Christianity so that it may fully communicate with the African cultural context. What is apparent is that the contextualization of Christianity has resulted in the emergence of African Christianity. Although Muzorewa speak of contextualization from a general perspective and not addressing ministerial formation specifically his insights are still valuable for this study as a Zimbabwean scholar. Using insights from the above scholars will inform the study not to follow the teachings of Wesley blindly. As such, one has to contextualize his teachings and appropriate them to suit their own context.

1.8 Theoretical Framework upon which the Research Project is Constructed

The theoretical framework is an indispensable ingredient of any modern research. As such, this study employs theological reflection as a framework to interrogate how MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000. A number of scholars such as O'Connell Killen and de Beer (1994), Kinast (1996), Phiri (2013), Seals and Pyle (1995), and Whitehead and Whitehead (1995) have written on theological reflection from different perspectives. The selected scholars have written extensively about theological reflection as a framework in Christian ministry. This is relevant to this study because the study focuses on theological reflection as a framework to interrogate the study.

According to Kinast⁹ (1996), theological reflection was stimulated by the impact of liberation theology in Latin America in the 1960s. It is a result of small groups of Christian communities gathering together to reflect on their social, economic, political and cultural

⁹Dr Robert L. Kinast is a pastoral theologian who specializes in the work of theological reflection. Through the publications and services of the Centre for Theological Reflection, Indian Rocks Beach, Florida, he contributes to the ministry training programs of many denominations in the United States, Canada and elsewhere.

lives from the perspective of their religious life (1996:xi). Kinast advanced the concept further by arguing that theological reflection is a means for “religious literacy” (1995:6), and that, people who participate in reflection basing on their experience are inspired to explore and learn the tradition as they try to understand their situations and sought for an appropriate action. A review of experience allows an entry point for participants to explore tradition and gain knowledge and acquire religious literacy. Theological reflection therefore entails learning from one’s own experience (Kinast, 1996: vii). While any event can be reflected on theologically, Kinast focuses on experiences related to the practice of ministry. The three stages of theological reflection are experience, reflection, and action.

Malawian theologian Phiri¹⁰ (2009) postulates that, theological reflection begins with the experiences of people in their local community. While introducing the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians she writes, the circle of African women theologians came together to reflect on what it means to them to be women of faith within their experience of religion, culture, politics and socio-economic structures in Africa. Exploring theological reflection from another angle, of action and experiences of reality, Seals and Pyle (1995) suggest it as an examination process of actions done in order to come up with hypothesis behind the actions and verify the accuracy and validity of the hypothesis and draw new insights that are more integrative to the experience of reality. Authentic theological reflection therefore leads to maximum growth in terms of one’s “personhood” (1995:110), a process that enables the clergy to bring life experiences into dialogue with the Christian tradition, which then promises to bring wisdom and guidance.

O’Connell Killen and de Beer¹¹ (1994), who serve as the key scholars in this theoretical framework, also viewed theological reflection as:

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¹¹Patricia O’Connell Killen is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Religion at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington. She is primary author of the “Art of Theological Reflection” (Crossroad, 1994) and has written numerous articles on theological reflection, women in the church, and Catholicism in the United States. For over a decade she has been involved in training leaders of theological reflection groups in the USA and the Caribbean.

...the discipline of exploring individual and corporate experience in conversation with the wisdom of a religious heritage. The conversation is a genuine dialogue that seeks to hear from our own beliefs, actions and perspectives, as well as those of the tradition. It respects the integrity of both (1994:vii).

Theological reflection therefore serves to validate, challenge, elucidate and expand how we understand the religious tradition. The outcome becomes the new truth and meaning for living. They refer to what is called the “movement toward insight” (1994: vii), which builds on the ordinary human process of constructing meaning. The movement from experience to feelings, images, and insights to action is a precursor to the framework of theological reflection.

Theological reflection therefore provides a simple design for reflecting on life events. O’Connell Killen and de Beer leave the reader with the sense that doing theological reflection at the personal and group level is worthwhile and manageable because it involves the experiences and actions of the community as they reflect on who they are. James and Evelyn Whitehead (1995) see theological reflection as an essential tool in the discernment of contemporary ministry. The aim of just beginning this framework in Christian life is not merely to aid believers to comprehend more but to assist them to take action more efficiently and become skilled in proclaiming the gospel in their own time.

As a framework theological reflection becomes a tool to discern the contemporary ministry of MCZ clergy in terms of how they are formed in light of traditional Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as enshrined in the doctrine of salvation, and its capacity to equip them to respond to the urgent challenges and opportunities posed by the gospel of prosperity. Theological reflection confirms challenges, clarifies and expands how we understand the religious traditions (such as *Ordo Salutis*). The outcome of this interrogation can lead to new truth and meaning. As a framework, theological reflection becomes the source of information that is critical in pastoral decision making, Christian tradition, personal experience as well as cultural resources that allows the community of faith to draw religious information from these sources in search of new insights that illuminates and shapes pastoral responses (Kinast, 1995).

Theological reflection as a framework is employed to interrogate the model of ministerial formation used to equip MCZ clergy and their understanding and practice of the Wesleyan teaching of health and wealth issues as reflected in *Ordo Salutis* and how these converse with

the phenomenon of the prosperity gospel within the society. As shown in *Figure 1* below, the theological reflection is utilised as the intersection where all components of Wesleyan tradition, ministerial formation and prosperity gospel are interrogated and are in conversation with each other. It also shows Wesleyan tradition conversing with both the prosperity gospel and ministerial formation. The prosperity gospel on the other hand converses with both ministerial formation and Wesleyan tradition. Also, ministerial formation converses with both Wesleyan tradition and the prosperity gospel. The illustration also shows that the three concepts of Wesleyan tradition, ministerial formation and prosperity gospel meet at the intersection where each one benefits from the other.

In this study, the theological reflection framework is used in order to see where the Wesleyan tradition of *Ordo Salutis* converses with the Bible and contextual challenges and opportunities posed by prosperity theology, as the MCZ clergy journey from a faith they already know (Wesleyan order of salvation) to a faith they are questioning (prosperity theology), particularly in issues of health and wealth.

As indicated by Phiri (2009), theological reflection seeks to construct the competence of African women to have a say through critical thinking and analysis, and to move forward current knowledge using this theoretical framework that is based on religion, theology and culture. It gives power to African women to aggressively work for social justice in their communities and to reflect on their actions (2009:106). Kinast (1996) argues that Christianity began with an experience, that of Jesus, through His teachings and His deeds, that culminated in His experience of his death and resurrection. Experience remains the goal of theological reflection.

Confronting theological experience as a source for theology are the custodians of normative theology and the institutions in which it exist. It can be extremely opposed to theological assertions which come from experience, especially when they assess critically or interpret the established theology.

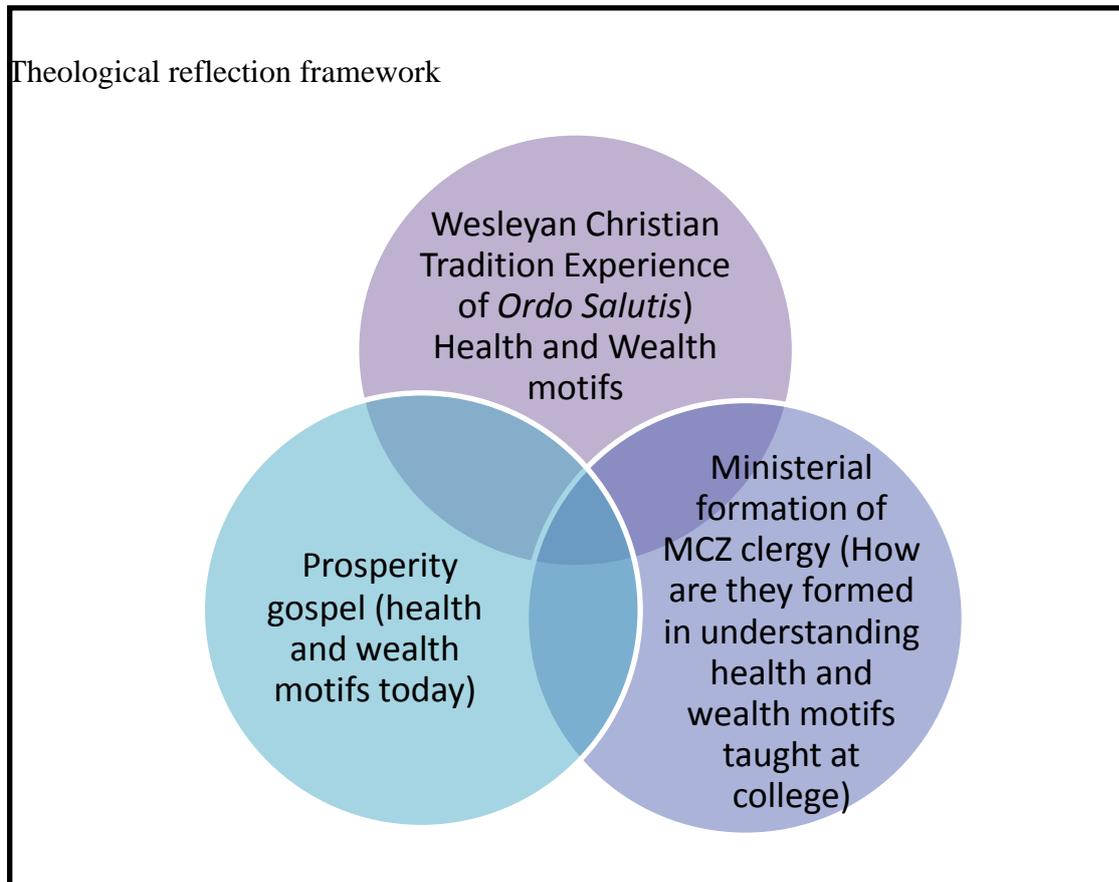


Figure 1. Venn diagram showing the interconnectedness of *Ordo Salutis*, ministerial formation and prosperity gospel

Kinast further argues that “theological reflection takes its place right in the middle of this tension”(xiv). This framework is advantageous in that the theory speaks to a wider audience in a favourable manner. This theory favourably speaks to and provides a framework that is flexible and practical and serves to interrogate models for training men and women for ministry, because it relates directly to their experiences and attempts to balance experience with formal, theoretical theology. This framework also helps to focus on ministry and fosters a personal, practical interpretation of tradition in the context of a person’s ministerial formation. It is used in this study as a framework to make sense of the ministers’ circumstances as they grapple with challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in the discharge of their ministerial duties.

Be that as it may, theological reflection as a framework has disadvantages in that it takes too much time and energy to do it. There is too much variation in beliefs and people

become offended and alienated when we do theological reflection. Theological reflection is too exposing. Last but not least Graham, Wilson and Ward (2005:34) state that understandings of theological reflection are largely under-theorized and narrow and too often fail to connect adequately with biblical, historical and systematic scholarship.” Though demerits are noted, theological reflection is an indispensable resource for teachers of practical theology, contextual education, and theological reflection as well as for those teaching systematic, historical, and biblical theologies. It provides a framework for discussing both the relevance of religious practices to theology and the relevance of theology to life and practice. Seminary students, ministers and others struggling to draw links between their theological studies and everyday work in a congregation or community will also find it invaluable. Therefore when analysing the advantages and disadvantages one can deduce that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Hence it is proper to use theological reflection as a framework to reflect on how MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of *ordo Salutis* and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe.

1.9 Research Design Methodology and Methods

Having looked at the theoretical framework in the above section, this section focuses on the methodology used in the study, presenting the detailed procedures used to collect data through interviews, observations, posters and DVDs. The chapter presents the process of organising the data into thematic areas, to prepare for the analysis presented in chapters seven and eight. Terms like interviewee, respondents and participants are used interchangeably, while researcher, interviewer and writer refer to the same person.

1.9.1 Research Method and Design

For Creswell (2003:4), doing research is more than engaging philosophical assumptions. In research philosophical ideas should be shared with broad strategies to research (approaches) and executed with specific methods (procedures). Several scholars, such as Hill (2012), McLeod (2011), Patton (1990), Creswell (2003), Mueller (1984), Canale (2001) and Lonergan (1979), reveal different schools of thought concerning the term ‘method’. These schools of thought represent different angles and disciplines. The following views are given

from a theological perspective. Generally, a method is a tool used to collect and analyse data. According to Mueller (1984:1), “it is ... a procedure that allows others to see how we have arrived at our conclusions.” Fernando Canale (2001:370) interprets the word method as “a way we follow to reach a goal.” Bernard Lonergan (1979:5) argued that “a method is a normative pattern of operations yielding progressive results.” From the above one can deduce that a method becomes a way, procedure or pattern that is followed in order to arrive at a conclusion, goal or a result.

This study uses qualitative research methods to collect data to answer the following research question: *How do MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation (Ordo Salutis), and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000?* McLeod (2011:3; see also Hill 2012:7) states that qualitative research entails discovering the meaning of an area of human experience; and the initial focus of qualitative research is to widen an understanding of how the social world is created. Qualitative methods consist of different types of data collection that involves in-depth open ended interviews, observation and written documents (Patton 1990:10). If the aim is to investigate why something happens, then the researcher has to interview people; and if the objective is to look at behaviour of people or events, then the researcher uses observation (Hair et al. 2007:193). In this study, both interviews and observation methods were used. They augment each other and help to fill the gaps left by other methods, hence adding credibility to the study.

The qualitative research method has advantages over the quantitative approach in that it permits the researcher to study selected issues of the research question – how clergy are equipped in Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth issues as portrayed in the doctrine of salvation, in order to withstand the opportunities and challenges exerted by prosperity gospel in the MCZ – in depth and detail. Hill (2012:8) argues that this research method gives the researcher time to learn about the phenomenon through allowing participants to discuss and talk openly rather than asking to what extent participants agree or disagree with the researcher’s thoughts. Furthermore, qualitative data does not only produce deeper understanding of the phenomenon but participants’ feeling are revealed for a political action (Patton 1990: 19).

1.9.2 Preliminaries to the Research Project

Formalities undertaken before starting the research project is critical because they help the researcher to design the methodology. It is worth noting that in the course of writing the project proposal, the researcher sought permission from the gatekeepers. Crowhurst and Kennedy-Macfoy (2013:457) state that gatekeeping is critical in the whole process of conducting research as a result, it warrants both methodological and theoretical consideration and reflection. As such, the gatekeeper's permission becomes the access door for a researcher to conduct research. For Kawulich (2011:58), gatekeeping means the process by which investigators gain access to the research setting under study and to the participants in that setting. This is in line with the general guidelines for the ethics review process which also regards gatekeeper-permission as necessary for gaining access into an institution or organisation. In this case, the access could be either physical or informational.

In order to get access to the MCZ respondents, the researcher wrote a letter on the 13th of June 2016 to the General Secretary¹² of MCZ seeking permission to access the church archives and to conduct interviews with clergy from Harare West and Masvingo Districts, lay leaders from Budiro and Parktown societies, as well as third year MCZ students and their tutors (see Appendix 2). This was done in cognisance of the fact that all institutions or organisations have the right to be alerted and have the opportunity to grant or decline permission to a researcher to conduct research in their sphere of influence. Permission to conduct research was granted by the MCZ on the 14th of June 2016 (see Appendix 3). Knowing that United Theological College (UTC) is an ecumenical institution that has its own jurisdiction (the researcher is an insider), and although the tutors and the third year students belong to the MCZ fraternity, the researcher also wrote a letter to the UTC Principal dated 19th September 2016 requesting permission to have access to their archives, curriculum and course outlines and to conduct interviews with the third year MCZ students and their tutors (see Appendix 4). The letter granting permission to conduct interviews and access UTC archives was received and permission was granted on the 22nd of September 2016.

It should be noted that gatekeepers are only mandated to give access permission and not to provide consent for individuals to participate in the study, because consent is only requested from the individual participant (Heath et al. 2007:405). Having done all the necessary documentation, the researcher submitted the documentation for ethical clearance

¹² The General Secretary is bestowed with the administrative duties for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe as enshrined in the Deed of the Church and Standing Orders (2011:23).

considerations on the 3rd of January 2017. Full ethical approval was granted on the 22nd of March 2017. According to Crowhurst and Kennedy-Macfoy (2013:459), researchers should be ready to adhere to the ethical requirements in order to protect participants during the research process. It also empowers and protects the researcher because he or she would have followed all the required and critical procedures that are indispensable for conducting the research. The receipt of ethical clearance gave the researcher the impetus and licence to engage in the field of study.

1.9.3 Research Methods and Instruments

Receiving ethical clearance allowed the researcher to engage in fieldwork. The research employed a case study approach of MCZ clergy and lay leaders in order to answer the research question. The study makes use of interview and observation methods to explore the phenomenon of prosperity gospel, particularly issues of health and wealth. Both written and oral sources were used to inform this study. The written sources include archival and published materials while oral sources include interviews and DVDs. For both written and oral sources, the researcher carried out a qualitative analysis of the data, because “qualitative approaches are on the whole more open and broader in the way they tackle problems than quantitative approaches” (Stake 2005:444). For originality and authenticity, data collection was done through interviews, DVDs, posters and participant observations.

1.9.4 Case Study

Case study is a method in research that focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon, entity or event at a specific time. As such, a case study is used in a way to examine a precise, or a set of, individual(s), organization(s) or event(s) (Willig 2008:74). Patton (1990:99) also states that case studies are mostly conducted to evaluate individualized client outcomes. “They focus on collecting information about a specific event or activity and the idea is to obtain a complete picture of the entire situation”(Hair et al. 2007:196). The choice of participants followed a sampling plan, which in this case is a purposive sampling. This was done by selecting participants from clergy in circuits, students in college – specifically third year students, lay leaders and clergy leadership. Among them are tutors, bishops and Connexional staff. It is critical to note that in this study “the research question, objectives and the scope of the study are central in defining the target population”(:73).

The target group for this case study were individual clergy and lay leaders of the MCZ selected purposively from Harare West and Masvingo districts. They are relevant to this study because they possess the information the research is designed to collect (:173). Harare East district has a selection of third-year students in training at UTC. Ma. Dalores Tongco (2007:147) states that “purposive sampling technique is also called judgment sampling. It is a deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses”. It is a technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Ma. Dolores Tongco 2007:147, Bernard 2002). Purposive sampling is especially exemplified through the key informant technique (Palys 2008: 697-8, Bernard 2002). Therefore third-year students were selected because they are in their final year of learning at college and ready to be stationed in circuits to execute their duties. The assumption is that they have gone through the process of ministerial formation. Parktown and Budiro societies in Harare West district were also chosen to hear responses from lay leaders on the impact of the prosperity gospel. For Stake, case studies reveal data that has been gathered using a multiplicity of means, including, but not limited to, interviews, observations, video, audio and document collection. The aim of gathering data through a diversity of means is done to boost the theory-generating capabilities of the case, and to give additional validity to claims made by either the researcher or the participants in the case itself. There is also debate in the field of research about the involvement of the researcher as part of any particular presentation of a case study, as well as to let the case speak for itself (Stake 2005:443-446).

As noted by Stake, the researcher can be part of the organisation and this may compromise objectivity of the study. The researcher is a minister of religion in the MCZ under study. In order to mitigate the effects of my personal position¹³ within the church and within

¹³ As has already been indicated the researcher is an ordained clergy in the MCZ. It should be noted from the outset that the role of the researcher has no influence on the collection of data because he has no jurisdiction in terms of power over the informants for example the researcher has no control or influence over the 3rd year students at college, he has never worked in circuits where the lay leaders are drawn as interviewees. The researcher is an ordinary clergy who is also a subordinate to the Bishops, Superintendents and Connexional officers who are the majority of the interviewees serve for a few clergy who are also at par with the researcher as ordinary clergy. The involvement of the researcher as an insider is more of one who has knowledge about the MCZ and not about position of power.

Zimbabwean society in general, reflexivity¹⁴ is employed as espoused by George Soros (2003) when he said:

I call the interference between the two functions “reflexivity”. I envision reflexivity as a feedback loop between the participants’ understanding and the situation in which they participate (Soros 1987:2).

By using reflexivity, one can let the phenomenon speak for itself and maintain a gap between being an insider and an outsider in order to answer the following research question:

How do MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation (Ordo Salutis), and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000?

In using reflexivity, the researcher acknowledges that he is an insider who can be biased by preconceived ideas about the health and wealth issues taught at college by MCZ, since the researcher went through the training process. However this method will try and mitigate bias in the process of inquiry and analysis. Focus was therefore on the experiences of the clergy in Harare West and Masvingo districts, third-year students in college, tutors and lay leaders of

¹⁴ A technique that I argue to be important to all types of research, and is of particular importance to the insider researcher, is the practice of reflexivity. Within sociology, Pierre Bourdieu’s work on the notion of reflexivity is highly regarded and well cited. He calls for an active engagement of the self in questioning perceptions and exposing their contextualized and power driven nature (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). According to Van den Hoonard (2002:88), “Self-reflexivity involves the researchers taking into account his or her own consciousness.” Of particular relevance to the insider researcher are the relations between researcher and participants, one of several diverse sets of reflexive relationships explored by Doucet (2008). The extent of reflexivity that is called for in insider research is perhaps not addressed nor practiced to the degree it is or should be in qualitative research; particularly so in outsider research. Discussions of reflexivity to date have focused on the social location of the researcher and the ways in which the researcher’s emotional responses to participants may influence the analysis of their narratives; certainly situating oneself socially and emotionally in relation to participants is a crucial part of reflexivity (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Establishing and maintaining an appropriate degree of both social and emotional distance is also an important element of the reflexive process; of course this requires the researcher to determine what that appropriate level of distancing is, which no easy task is. It is suggested that researchers consider the interplay between their multiple social locations and how these intersect with the particularities of their “personal biographies...at the time of analyzing data” (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003: 419). The tedious process of separating out the narratives of the researcher and the researched is summed up by Taylor (2011:9) as follows: Where the researcher-self is a part of the other’s narrative, the narrative of the researched and the researcher become entwined. The researcher, then, is forced to look both outward and inward, to be reflexive and self-conscious in terms of positioning, to be both self-aware and researcher-self-aware and to acknowledge the inter-textuality that is a part of both the data gathering and writing processes. In my research proposal, I included a section to acknowledge my position as an insider researcher, identifying the methodological and ethical implications and ways in which reflexivity could be practiced. Van den Hoonard (2002:123) writes “If we are to take self-reflexivity seriously, we must recognise that we are always producing two works- a research biography and an autobiography.” This is an interesting alternative way of viewing the subject/object and researched/researcher dichotomies. Instead of worrying over whether one is too much of an insider or outsider, researchers should strive to be both. There is much to be gained from being close to one’s research, as there is much to be gained from keeping one’s distance and having an outside perspective. “...Ideally the researcher should be both inside and outside the perceptions of the researched” (Hellawell, 2006: 487).

MCZ in a bid to understand how MCZ clergy are theologically formed to appropriate Wesleyan teachings of health and wealth as motifs in salvation, in order to respond to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel. Accordingly, the researcher employed reflexivity attitude that involved a different way of looking at the investigated subject matter of the prosperity gospel and health and wealth issues. By doing this, “the phenomena was imbued with meaning, and experience gains a deeper meaning”(Patton 1990:407).

The researcher was also able to use observation approach during an Easter crusade that was held in Mbare Circuit to augment interview findings. Six of the interviewed clergy were giving sermons and teachings on different subjects among which healing, deliverance and giving were taught. The researcher attended the Easter crusade to observe the phenomenon as it unfolded, as shall be explained later in this chapter under observation. In order to produce unbiased research the researcher will be using the lived experiences of the respondents.” In this case, it is the lived experiences of clergy who have undergone training at UTC and ZIMTEE, the third-year students who are training, and the lay leaders receiving the teachings from the trained clergy on issues of health and wealth, as Wesley taught, in response to the prosperity gospel that has been flourishing in Zimbabwe since 2000.

In using interviews and observations, the aim is to provide a very rich and detailed description of the human experience in the selected case study of the MCZ. In the interview method, the results of the study emerge from the data instead of being imposed by a structured statistical analysis. It allows the interviewees to provide the answers rather than imposing solutions on it. In using interviews and observation, the experiences of the selected Methodist society leaders and interviewed clergy shape and give originality to the study.

Through using observation it gives room to the researcher to observe the phenomena as they appear rather than as they are understood through opinion prior to the observations. Since the researcher is an insider, i.e. being a Methodist clergy, observation helps to suspend the researcher’s knowledge and lets the experiences of the phenomenon of the prosperity gospel, as understood by the selected lay leaders of societies and clergy interviewed, unfolds. The believer became the primary source of data. The believer is understood, respected and credited, and the researcher refrains from imposing on them the researcher’s own values and judgments. In this case, the impact of the prosperity gospel gives the church insights as to how well MCZ clergy are equipped during their ministerial formation to appropriate issues of

health and wealth, as they preach and teach their members in an environment influenced by the prosperity gospel.

1.9.5 Interviews (Semi-structured Interviews)

The point of departure on this important aspect of qualitative research is to understand what is meant by interviewing. Patton (1990:278) demonstrates that, “the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone’s mind.” Open-ended interviews are conducted in order to access the point of view of the person being interviewed and not to put things in someone’s mind. Interviews are done to discover from people those things we cannot directly observe since we are limited, in one way or another, from observing everything. It is a fact that we cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We are limited to observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. The only way to have answers is to ask questions about those things; hence the aim of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s world.

The qualitative interviewing process starts with the hypothesis that the viewpoint of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. This clearly demonstrates that the major aim of an interview is to enable the person interviewed to bring the interviewer into his or her own world. It shows that the observation method is complemented by interviews in order to close the gaps that may be left during the research process. In this case, the interview method mitigates gaps left by observation and other secondary sources such as data from books and archives.

For this study, interviews were used to collect data that provide answers to the research question. This method is very useful as it closes various gaps left by archival sources. Personal interviews took the form of interactive conversational narratives, where open-ended questions were asked (see Appendix 6) and some follow-up questions were employed where there was need for clarification and probing further for quality findings. As earlier mentioned in the case study section, the choice of participants followed a sampling plan of purposive sampling. This was done by selecting the participants from clergy in circuits, students in college (in this case third-year student), lay leaders and clergy leadership. Among them were tutors, bishops and Connexional clergy staff.

A total of fifty participants were interviewed, where thirty-eight were full-time clergy (this is 21.5% of the total number (177) of full time MCZ¹⁵ clergy), while six were students in training, and six were lay leaders. Among these participants, ten were female and forty were male. Out of the forty-four clergy interviewed, six were in the leadership system of the MCZ; three were in the top leadership of the church including the Harare West district Bishop, while three were tutors at UTC and ZIMTEE. Six were third-year students in training at UTC. Twenty-five were clergy from Harare West district, where eleven trained with ZIMTEE while fourteen trained with UTC. Seven clergy were from Masvingo district, where four trained with UTC while three trained with ZIMTEE.

Having looked at the strategies used in determining the participants, it is critical to mention that the researcher began the interview process by engaging with individual respondents by phone, calling them to book appointment dates and advising them on the venue and time of the interview. For third-year students, a schedule was organised and agreed with the tutor to utilise their period for Polity classes on the 5th and 25th of April 2017. The researcher also made prior arrangements with Superintendents for Budiriro and Parktown circuits for them to identify lay leaders to be interviewed, three from each circuit. Budiriro society settled for the 23rd of April 2017 while Parktown was pencilled in for the 14th of May 2017. Likewise, the researcher also discussed with Masvingo District Bishop (Rev Chinhara) over the phone, the dates the researcher could visit to conduct the interviews. The Bishop agreed to avail time for the researcher on the 19th of April 2017 where he had a brief meeting with clergy in preparation for the Synod. The briefing ended around nine o'clock in the morning and the whole day was left for the researcher to interact with clergy in the interview process. Interviews were conducted individually in the church office.

For clergy in Harare West District, the researcher visited the District offices to seek permission from the District Bishop to conduct interviews in his district. He gave permission and asked the researcher to make arrangements with individual clergy. As a matter of procedure, the researcher also visited the Connexional office to book appointments with the leaders of the church for interviews. Dates, times and venues were agreed upon. Before the interviews began on the 29th of March 2017, the researcher made enough copies of consent

¹⁵According to The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Agenda of the 39th Conference held from 24-28 August 2016 at Kadoma Hotel hosted by Harare West District page R52. The 2016 statistics indicate that the total number of full time clergy was 177. In percentage, 21.5% of 177 gives 38.1 and to the nearest whole number is 38. The total number of clergy in training in both colleges is 47. In percentage, 13% of 47 = 6.11 and to the nearest whole number = 6.

forms. All the respondents were people who were literate in English. They ranged from those who were studying for their diploma in Theology and Religious Studies at theological colleges, while four had a PhD, four were PhD candidates, seven had a Master's degree, twenty-one had a first Degree and eight had Diplomas in various disciplines, including lay leaders. Hence there was no need to translate the consent form and interview questions into the vernacular language.

As already indicated above, gatekeepers are endowed to give permission to the researcher to conduct interviews in areas of their jurisdiction and not to give consent for individual willingness to be interviewed; that is the reserve of the individual person to be interviewed. On the day of engagement with respondents, the researcher started by explaining the purpose of the interview, the topic and the ethical considerations as enshrined in the consent form. This included, among others, the right of the interviewee to withdraw at any time he or she feels necessary to do so without being penalised. The researcher also assured participants that confidentiality was to be upheld, including keeping their names undisclosed by using pseudonyms, save for those who were in position of authority like the Presiding Bishop (Rev Dr Solomon Zwana), General Secretary (Rev Dr Jimmy Dube), Mission Director (Rev Dr Kennedy Gondongwe), Bishops (Revds Tawanda Sungai and Blessmore Chinhara), and Tutors (Rev Dr Levee Kadenge, Rev Manenji Munikwa, and Rev Clement Matarirano).

According to Patton (1990:213), "reports conceal names and other identifying information so that the people who have been observed or interviewed will be protected from harm or punitive action." The researcher used pseudonyms for participants who hold no positions of authority, for their protection. For third-year students in college, the pseudonyms or code names used are Student A, B, C, D, E and F. Pseudonyms or code names used for lay leaders who participated in the interviews are Laity 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. For clergy who took part in the interview process their pseudonyms or code names are M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10, M11, M12, M13, M14, M15, M16, M17, M18, M19, M20, M21, M22, M23, M24, M25, M26, M27, M28, M29, and M30. These code names or pseudonyms are used in all quotations and references in the course of writing the thesis. A list of all participants who took part in the interviews are given in Appendix 13, not in any order, thereby maintaining their anonymity in terms of who said what, which is only the preserve of the researcher. Having received full ethical clearance on the 22nd of March 2017, the researcher started conducting interviews from the 29th of March 2017 until 14th of May 2017.

Going into the field to conduct interviews was a central activity of this qualitative study. The researcher had direct and personal contact with clergy, student clergy and lay leaders under study in their own environment, to understand how MCZ clergy are theologically formed to appropriate Wesleyan teachings of health and wealth as themes enshrined in the doctrine of Salvation, in a religio-cultural environment engrossed by the prosperity gospel. This is supported by Patton (1990:46) who states that:

...qualitative approaches emphasise the importance of getting close to the people and situations being studied in order to personally understand the realities and minutiae of daily life.

This means that the data obtained from these interviews comes from direct quotations of clergy and lay-leaders about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge on issues of health and wealth in relation to the prosperity gospel currently being preached, vis-à-vis Wesleyan teachings on these aspects. Patton (1990:24) further indicates that, “direct quotations are a basic source of raw data in qualitative research revealing respondents’ depth of emotion, the ways they have organised their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences and their basic perceptions.” Some other open-ended questions derived from the broader research question were constructed and follow up questions were asked in a bid to get answers from respondents about the research question.

Furthermore, interviews in this study were used to complement the rich findings from archives and books. The weakness of interviews as a source of information is that memory slips and when it drops people have a tendency to fill the gaps in a way that might misrepresent reality; hence it has to be treated with care. The other risk is that people are mortal and once they pass on, that is, as the source or holder of these memories, knowledge and experience dies, the knowledge goes with them (Gondongwe 2011:20). For the purpose of this research, the results of the interviews are analysed in a bid to come up with a balanced testimony. In addition, information from the interviews is compared with the outcome from other sources such as observation, books and archives so as to present a reliable and factual academic account.

The strength of this method is that it can unveil what written sources fail to show. Denis contends that verbal sources are concerned about what normally is hidden. Not all information can be written down. As such, oral sources make the story become more vivid and, in the case of interviews, it gives room to the interviewer and the interviewee to revive

the experience (1995:32). In summary, this method revives memories and brings the emotions associated with the event back to life. This methodology is particularly in “sync with the African context because Africans have always preserved that which is important to them in oral form” (Gondongwe 2011:20). John S. Mbiti (1969:3-4) argued that “ATR does not exist in written form but it exists in the minds and hearts of the believers.”

Before interviews were conducted, all interviewees were requested to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix 7). The interview consent form was signed after the interviewer narrated all the facts concerning the interview to the interviewees. These included the right of the interviewee to withdraw from the interview at any given time if he or she deemed it necessary. The researcher also pointed out that there were no financial rewards for participating in the interview. Permission to record the interview proceedings was sought from the interviewees who later had to sign a consent form to that effect. All-important ethical issues were attended to before engaging in this study. This is authenticated by Jacob and Furgerson (2012:7) who warn that the interviewer should not proceed with interviews without collecting the signed consent form. One has to give participants plenty of time to read through the form and ask as many questions about consent as she or he needs to ask. Giving interviewees assurance that you will hold their confidence and that they may withdraw from the study at any time is an important aspect of building their trust in you. If they trust you, they will share their experiences with you. The interviews were recorded, where possible, using an electronic device and were later transcribed. For samples of interview questions, see Appendix 6.

1.9.6 Recording and Transcribing Interviews

Patton (1990:347) declared that if one fails to capture the words of the interviewee everything comes to nothing despite the type of interview used or the questions used to interview since raw data in interviews are the actual quotations derived from the interviewee and there is no replacement for this data. This is critical in the process of conducting interviews. Hence the researcher, after explanations and chat “backstage which are all the informal activity and chatting that happens before or after the interview” (Myers and Newman 2007:13) recorded the interviews. I had a voice recorder and the phone as a back-up in case the recorder failed in the middle of the interview. This is supported by Jacob and Furgerson (2012:7) who holds that when relying on a recording device instead of hand written notes, one should ensure that the equipment is in working order and make sure there is a backup plan if the equipment fails.

A voice recorder is an indispensable gadget used in qualitative research because it does not change what has been said. It increases the accuracy of data collection and allows the researcher to pay special attention to the respondents. This is unlike taking verbatim notes during the interview that may seriously affect the interactive nature of in-depth interviews (Patton 1990:348). When recording is done, it validates and removes biases to the study conducted. As such, a recorded “in-depth interview facilitates credibility and dependability of the data collection procedure” (Tuckett 2005:4). During the interviews conducted, all respondents allowed the researcher to record the proceedings of the interviews using the voice recorder and the phone as a back-up. After participants were informed of the purpose of the study, permission was sought to record the interviews. Participants indicated their consent by signing consent forms. As already stated, assurance of the anonymity of the interviewee was guaranteed in relation to the information they shared during the interviews. The interviewer was aware that the interviewee may share information that could jeopardise his or her position in a system; as such, that information should remain anonymous and protected from those whose interests conflict with those of the interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006:319).

The researcher did not encounter any challenges of failure of the equipment or running out of power in the interviewing process. The data in the voice recorder was then transferred to the Laptop and to the USB flash drive while the other recorded data was sent to my email for storage in different places as a back-up in case of failure of the gadget. After the interviews were recorded, they were then transcribed into readable manuscripts.

Wengraf (2001:221) defines transcribing as “an instrumentation practice, examining sound data from audio tape to create visual data for printing out on paper.” This process is demanding and needs high degree of concentration in terms of listening skills. The researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim, save for some incidents where the interviewee had some breath or expressions such as ‘Mmmm, ummm’, etc. This is in line with what scholars like Hill (2012:12) state, that “data collected through interviews are transcribed verbatim except for minimal utterances.” In the process of transcribing, the researcher discovered that the verbatim conversation with interviewees are interesting in that sometimes the interviewee does not complete the sentence and rushes to give another view or goes back to what he or she says in the beginning.

However, when transcribing it is not the duty of the transcribers to correct the conversational sequence, as demonstrated by Patton when he said, “the grammar in natural conversations is atrocious, sentences begin and then are interrupted by new sentences before the first sentences are completed” (1990:380). The transcripts of all the interviewees were also copied to the flash drive and email as a back-up system. In the process of transcribing, the researcher should admit that there were challenges that were encountered such as background noises in some recordings, especially those that were conducted on Sunday at the church. However, the researcher was able to use the back-up device of the tablet phone which eliminates noises in the process of recording. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006:318) admits that, there are challenges encountered by transcribers in the process of transcribing especially in capturing spoken word into text form due to several reasons that includes among others structure of sentence, use of quotations, omissions and mistakes in words or phrases for others. People in their nature speak in run-on sentences which forces transcribers to judge. Putting a full stop or comma alters the meaning of the sentence. Hence experienced researchers listen to audiotape whilst reading the transcription for accuracy during interpretation.

The above observation is true because those are some of the challenges encountered during transcribing, and the researcher had to constantly refer to the audio tape during the process of analysis to verify the authenticity of the quoted data. The method of analysis shall be explored later in this chapter.

1.9.7 Observation, Posters and DVDs

Observation was used in this study to complement other research methods such as interviews and secondary sources from books, journals and archives in order to increase reliability, rigour and validity of the research findings. Observation in this study was done to help answer the research question. Unstructured observation was done during an Easter gathering where the approaches to the phenomena of health and wealth were evident during teachings and of some clergy interviewed, verifying facts presented in some interviews and the reality on the ground. In this case, the researcher observed six interviewed clergy between 13th –16th of April 2017 during an Easter Crusade held at Vavambi society in Mbare circuit Harare West District. This crusade was observed because clergy of Budiriro and Parktown societies were guest preachers at this crusade. Crucial topics on sacrificial giving and healing and deliverance addressed at the crusade were relevant to issues of health and wealth, the topic under study. Second, some of the clergy observed were proponents of the prosperity gospel.

Observation was done in order to fully understand the complexities of situations surrounding the issue of health and wealth in prosperity messages in MCZ given by clergy today; hence direct participation through observation of the phenomenon becomes the best research method. Patton (1990) contends that, observation is the most inclusive type of research strategies because it allows the researcher to comprehend a program fully which is not entirely possible using the insights of others gathered through interviews. This really shows that one method is not enough to comprehensively come up with valid results. The researcher had an opportunity to look and listen to speakers as they taught on these topical issues of sacrificial giving, healing and deliverance. It also gave the researcher the opportunity to see the nuances and gestures of the speaker used and the behaviour from the congregants. These insights could not be obtainable using interviews only; hence the process of observation complemented the validity of this study.

Under the observation method, the information is obtained through the investigator's own direct observation without asking questions from the respondent (Kothari 2004:96). It was at this crusade where the researcher observed the healing and deliverance session and observed the following: Most of the people possessed by what look like demons or evil spirits, as the preachers were calling them, were young. Of all the girls, of particular interest were two young ladies. These two had vicious demons and when the demons were confronted by the clergy to speak, they could be heard saying a lot of things that connected to their families. The demon could not be delivered by the clergy performing healing and deliverance. Instead the speaker (clergy) had to excuse himself to go to another Easter gathering where he was going to give the same lesson. The demon-possessed girls were left lying on the ground with some lay people in the evangelism team praying for them. This situation left the researcher in a compromising state where he had to either choose to continue observing or participate to rescue the situation.

The researcher took two elderly leaders and upon enquiry from Mr ---, an elder from --- and Mr --- from --- (names withheld for ethical considerations), the researcher discovered that these demons were perennial demons that always came out on every session where there is healing and deliverance. The researcher instructed the elders to take the two ladies into the church where there were no crowds of people. It was then that the researcher and the resident clergy prayed for the young ladies and the demons left. At this time, I had changed the role to become a participant observer. The researcher had to counsel the young ladies in the presence

of the assistant resident clergy so that he would make a follow-up appointment. One of the possessed girl declared openly that she was ashamed to go back to the crowd and even to come to church where she would embarrass people. After counselling, we handed her to the elderly women who knew her, to accompany her and sit with her in the crowd and continue to offer her support. The researcher advised the clergy to make a follow-up appointment to go and discuss this with their parents. An analysis of the above observation shall be given in chapter eight in relation to issues of health.

The example of the above observational scenario demonstrates two sides of the coin where, on one hand, the information gathered using this method tells what is currently happening; it is not mixed by either the past behaviour or future intentions or attitudes. And on the other hand, sometimes unanticipated factors may interfere with the observational undertaking (Kothari 2004:96). This is true in the sense that the researcher unexpectedly ended up a participant observer, which was not his intention, to rescue the situation. This prompts the study to look at the merits and demerits of the observational method in doing qualitative research, based on the above example. By entering into the world of the phenomenon and observing it, one is able to experience and reflect on it. To gain an understanding of the phenomena, one has to “become part of that world while at the same time remaining separate, a part of and apart from” (Patton 1990:199). Second, by observation, the researcher is able to describe the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspective of the observed. According to Patton, it is invaluable because the researcher can be able to discover things that could not have been paid attention to during interviews because observation permits the researcher to access personal knowledge and direct experience as resources to aid in understanding and interpreting the programme being researched (Patton 1990: 204, 205).

On the demerits side, the method of observation is costly to undertake and the information obtainable may sometimes be limited for a comprehensive study. As such, this method is not used alone in this study but is used to complement other methods for gathering data, as already indicated in this chapter above. Video recordings on some sermons by clergy proponents of the prosperity gospel were recorded by the Research and Publication Department of the MCZ and were later viewed, on permission granted from the MCZ Presiding Bishop, for ethical reasons. The sermons were transcribed and translated from

Shona to English. Copies of transcribed sermons are in the possession of the researcher. Posters used to advertise crusades and conventions by prosperity proponents were also observed and used to inform this study (see Appendix 12).

1.9.8 Secondary Data

Secondary data means “data that are already available” or “data which have already been collected and analysed by someone else” (Kothari 2004:111). This study employs a number of useful materials from published books, academic journals, articles as well as unpublished sources to see how other scholars wrestle with issues of health and wealth in the context of prosperity in order to answer the research question.

1.9.9 Archival Records

Schultz (2008:vii) regards archives not as “sites of knowledge retrieval but as sites of knowledge production.” As a site of knowledge production, archival sources simply refer to written documents and information found in the archives that add to knowledge production through research. This study used the church archives known as Methodist Connexional Archives in Harare, Zimbabwe. It is under the control of MCZ Bookshop, previously known as the Research and Publications Department. The UTC archives were also used. In the MCZ archives, the researcher was able to access clergy individual files, diaries of individual clergy, minutes of Synods, minutes of Standing Committees, Ministerial Training Committee minutes and Conference minutes, bound volumes and other resources. These sources help to uncover the theological debates discussed regarding issues of prosperity gospel in relation to health and wealth as perceived in the doctrine of Salvation. They also provided information on clergy who were reprimanded due to teachings that are contrary to MCZ doctrine, and Conference resolutions passed regarding prosperity. UTC archives were used to view the evaluation reports, the curriculum used by the third-year students in college, and the course outlines on the Polity subject in order to see how clergy are theologically formed in relation to answering the research question. This was the source of data used to augment oral data from interviews and observation as complementary source, in order to produce a balanced, reliable, valid and informed analysis.

1.9.10 Process and Method of Data Analysis

According to Swinton and Mowat (2006:57) “data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the complicated mass of qualitative data that the researcher generates during the research process.” For the purposes of analyzing data, the researcher used thematic analysis where the transcribed interview statements from clergy and lay leaders were coded and classified into themes generated from the interviews in light of the focus of the study. Boyatzis (1998:iv) also observes that, “thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative information.” The researcher is cognizant of different methods applied to analyse qualitative research data, such as “content analysis, discourse analysis, comparative analysis and thematic analysis” (Dawson 2002:155). Thematic analysis was chosen because it is a flexible method of data analysis and was easily applied to the phenomenon of prosperity, particularly looking at health and wealth as dominant themes in salvation.

Braun and Clarke (2006:27) argue that “thematic analysis is a research method used to identify, group and record material within the interview transcripts into major themes that are common among participants.” Themes are viewed as summary statements, explanations or conclusions that explain why something happens or the meaning of something as well as how the respondent feels about the subject matter (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 194). In this study, conclusions are based on the data gathered; in other words, the researcher allowed the results to emerge from the data without imposing ideas on the respondents’ views. With this approach, researchers “remain open to learning new and unexpected things rather than setting out to prove what they had anticipated”(Hill 2012: 8). The data was then analysed and described in detail before moving on to the interpretation of various aspects of the topic under study. Once this was done, a presentation of the findings of the data was developed or constructed to tell the story of the respondents’ understanding of how MCZ clergy are theologically formed to appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in Salvation, in order to respond to religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since the year 2000. When the literature was interwoven with findings, the story that the interviewer constructed is one that stands with merit.

In the process of data analysis, two categories of responses were identified. The first category is the responses of the selected lay leaders to the prosperity gospel from their clergy, which is in line with answering the sub research question on how the selected leaders respond to prosperity gospel from their clergy. It also meets the same objective of evaluating how selected society leaders are responding to the prosperity gospel from their clergy. The second

category is how the contemporary MCZ clergy has been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes interacting with *Ordo Salutis*. This category is in line with the sub research questions: how are the contemporary MCZ clergy who have been formed to appropriate the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the order of salvation able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of prosperity gospel? It also addresses sub-questions on: how is the theology of prosperity both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe; and, what constitutes Wesleyan theology of *Ordo Salutis* and its interpretation through health and wealth as well as how is the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ clergy? After this account of the process and method of data analysis, the next section looks at validity, rigour and reliability.

1.9.11 Validity, Rigour and Reliability

In research, “the validity, rigour and reliability of qualitative research depend to a great extent on the methodological skills used in data gathering”(Patton 1990: 11). This study is a conceptual case study. Its general design is that of a literature study integrated with interactive and qualitative tools, with a practical aspect of data collection through observation and interviews. Most of the information is from books, journals, and websites. This literature study provides a scholarly background and the motivation for the specific study, hence it becomes reliable. This study not only relied on the literature as stated above, but it employed observational and interactional activities through interviews in order to close the gaps left by the literature.

This means the researcher was on site (in Masvingo district, Harare West District, Mbare Circuit Easter Crusade held at Vavambi society in Harare West District, UTC, Budiro and Parktown societies) where the programmes were happening, to observe, talk with interviewees and go through archival records. Thus multiple sources were used to collect data, thereby validating the study and ensuring its reliability. This is supported by Patton when he said various sources of information are required and used because no single source of information can be reliable to provide an all-inclusive viewpoint on the program (1990: 244). Through using a combination of interviews, observations, archival sources and books, the researcher collected data from different sources to validate and cross check the findings.

Each type of data source has strengths and weaknesses, so using them together increases validity because the strength of one method compliments the weakness of the other method. Hill recommends that the researcher continuously return to the raw data to check for the trustworthiness of emerging understandings of the data. He or she has to reread the words by listening to a recording of the interview and revisit the context of the case. This helps to check if the analysis is coming from the data or from one's biases and expectations, thereby improving rigour and reliability (Hill 2012: 11).

Data was collected through interviews with several clergy who are advocates of the prosperity gospel and those that are against it in order to provide an authentic and balanced basis for the research. The researcher observed (action research), used open-ended questions during interviews with both church clergy who propagate and oppose gospel of prosperity, and heard from the laity who are the recipients of the gospel to enquire into what is actually being taught in churches and theological seminaries. The reason for this practical approach is to provide an objective perspective on the subject of prosperity theology in MCZ, as there are no significant academic sources on the subject. This balanced representation in terms of laity and clergy gives credibility, reliability and validity to this study.

1.10 Anticipated Problems/Limitations

The limitations to this research are as follows:

(a) The research context is restricted to three districts out of seven districts representing the whole Methodist community of clergy, namely Masvingo, Harare East and Harare West. From these districts, a representation of clergy was randomly picked, especially from those who are advocates of the prosperity gospel, those on the fence, and the Bishops. The assumption was that these districts are the major centres of influence within MCZ.

(b) Prosperity gospel proponents by and large are aggressive to uncooperative voices and are reluctant to give information to researchers who write about their theology and practices in a critical manner.

(c) Due to the limited numbers of MCZ academic works on the subject of the prosperity gospel the researcher ended up using his personal experience as a clergy in MCZ and local resources produced by the prosperity gospel advocates.

(d) Financial limitation was a major setback in that some of the interviewed persons live in remote areas where there was need for enough money to cover travel costs. There was also a general tendency among some of the clergy to be interviewed to expect monetary gain after the interview, hence some cancelled scheduled appointments.

(e) The involvement of the researcher as a clergy in the MCZ may have indirectly or directly affected the respondents in responding to the interview questions. At the same time, this may have also compromised objectivity. However, a balance was struck through employment of the theory of reflexivity.

1.11 Outline of Chapters and Conclusion

This thesis has eight chapters. Chapter one introduces and gives the background of the entire project. It consists of the approach of the study, location of the study, motivation and background of the study. It deals with the central key question, including the objectives of the present study; it reviews the literature on key terms of the study, presents the theoretical framework, gives the detailed methodology used in the study and limitations of the study, as well as outlines the study chapters. Chapter two outlines a brief background, including the development and growth of Methodism in England and in Zimbabwe, exploring the political, religious, spiritual and economic contexts of the eighteenth century era in which Wesley's theology of salvation developed, with themes of health and wealth being dominant. The history also covers how the church was transplanted and transported from Britain via South Africa and planted in Zimbabwe, but remained accountable to the British Methodist Conference. The establishment of institutions of learning is emphasised in order to prepare the reader with the wider picture of ministerial training in the MCZ. Chapter three discusses the Wesleyan theology of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) with its portrayal of health and wealth as dominant motifs in Wesley's teaching. This chapter focuses on John Wesley's view of the doctrine of salvation as enshrined in the Standing Orders of the MCZ, outlining critical steps and his emphasis on health and wealth in his teaching of this doctrine. Chapter four assesses how the contemporary model of ministerial formation is used for MCZ clergy. It starts by covering briefly the establishment of theological training colleges and then assesses how the model is used in training the clergy in these colleges.

Chapter five presents how prosperity gospel's concept of salvation is both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. The chapter traces the transplantation and transportation of the prosperity gospel from America to Zimbabwe. It assesses its impact, opportunities and challenges to the MCZ. Chapter six evaluates how selective society leaders are responding to the prosperity gospel from their clergy especially in health and wealth matters. This chapter only gives a synopsis of the responses by the leaders from selected societies in order to see the views of the church members on prosperity teachings and assess its impact among the MCZ church members. Chapter seven explores how the contemporary MCZ clergy have been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes interacting with *Ordo Salutis*. Both chapters seven and eight present analysis of the data collected in the form of responses from interviewees. In chapter eight, the study presents a summary of analysis, a conclusion and final statement. The next chapter explores a brief background, the development and growth of Methodism in England and in Zimbabwe, exploring the political, religious, spiritual and economic contexts of the eighteenth century in which Wesley's theology of salvation developed, with themes of health and wealth being dominant.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 A BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF METHODISM IN ENGLAND AND ZIMBABWE

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduces the study and offers a background to the research problem of this study and the methodology used in the thesis presented. The study is geographically located. The population of the study, the theoretical paradigms which have informed the research design, the methods used in data collection and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations and methodological limitations, validity, rigour and reliability were specified. Outline of chapters were also presented. In keeping with the central theme of this thesis, namely health and wealth in the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis*, as well as to offer a broader picture of the Wesleyan frame of thought, this chapter takes a closer look at the background to this central feature of Wesley's theology. To accomplish this, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first part explores the political, religious, spiritual and economic contexts of the eighteenth century with a view to understanding the environment in which Wesley's theology of salvation developed. The second part offers a brief historical development of how Methodism prioritised education and training of the clergy. The third part covers a section that looks at how the church was introduced to Zimbabwe via South Africa and remained part of the British Methodist Conference until 1977 when autonomy was granted. Some episodes of the pre-autonomous church are critical to this study. The last part will offer an overview of some of the key features of the Methodist church in Zimbabwe, both before and after the phase of autonomy.

This study is not providing a detailed history of Methodism from England to Zimbabwe, since a number of studies have done this quite well (see Weller and Linden (1984), Zvobgo (1991, 1996), Gondongwe (2011), Madhiba (2000, 2011), Mujinga (2017)). Instead it will highlight important historical issues relevant to this study. This chapter is crucial for two reasons. First, it provides an entry point to an understanding of the thesis for readers who are not Methodists. Second, some fundamental insights provide the study with the context in which the Wesleyan teachings were 'born' and in which they developed. It also gives an

orientation to the reader on how Methodism was transported and transplanted in Zimbabwe through the activities of the Missionaries.

2.2 Exploring the Political, Religious, Spiritual and Economic Contexts of Eighteenth Century England

Since the relevance of this chapter has been outlined above, it inevitably explores the historical background and different conditions that gave rise to Wesley's theology. Methodism's foundations were laid by John (1703-1791) and Charles Wesley (1707-1788) around the late 1720s when they structured Holy Clubs that were designed to convey spiritual practices, and ethical teachings that had been abandoned by the Anglican Church in England. As they tried to retrieve the existence and thought of the early Christian church, the Wesley brothers did not envisage splitting from the Church of England but somehow to stir it to life. Not only was he known for his piety, but John Wesley was also a distinguished founding leader of the Methodist movement as he wrote extensively and ministered in the eighteenth-century as an Anglican priest who pursued the traditions of the English and Continental Reformers. He emphasised the grace of the supreme God who is active in the lives of the people. However, Wesley demonstrated that grace was at work through faith in the lives of the believers (Hiatt, 2008). Wesley's theology of salvation incorporated health and wealth issues that are central in his ministry and the mission of early Methodism (Maddox 2007), that are important for this study.

Wesley's theology and the execution of mission interacted with the political, economic and social environment that facilitated the spiritual decline of the clergy's spiritual status in the Church of England. As these conditions triumphed in John Wesley's time, "the light of Christianity was fading into dusky shadows as a gloomy spiritual darkness settled upon British landscape" (Hiatt 2008:40).

2.2.1 Political Conditions

The political condition in the time of Wesley was such that Parliament, specifically the House of Commons, gained power that was formerly reserved for the top authorities alone (Hiatt 2008). Despite this situation where Parliament gained more authority, they remained loyal to the Monarchy see also (Black, 2001). England changed from an agro-based economy to an industrial-based economy and it rose to power and dominance in Europe. This became a

catalyst for development regarding economy, ideology, politics and other spheres of influence in Britain. On the other hand, “the industrial revolution of 1760-1830 changed the economic relationships to a laissez-faire free market economy”(Kennedy 1989:72). This means that production and sale of goods and services was done with little or no control from the government. This situation has both advantages and disadvantages where on the positive side, producers produce what is demanded by consumers at a reasonable price due to competition on the market. Second, there is no red tape in the market that is guided by demand of goods and services. On the other hand, a free market economy produces poor quality products since profit maximization is the motivation for industry; they try to reduce their costs by exploiting workers.

During the time of Wesley in England, in this industrial-based economy, women and children were exploited and became vulnerable to the patriarchal society. Black observes that women were subjugated in terms of receiving miserable wages; they were suppressed in reading skills and were sexually at risk in domestic services. “The oppressive structures of society denied the poor the opportunity to progress beyond their status quo” (2001:90-91). Even though the economic development was simultaneously depriving women and children in England, it gave rise to a working class during the industrial revolution (Hiatt 2008). Wesley’s members and supporters came from “this working class,” as Heitzenrater states (1995:127). As a result of a peaceful environment where there was free movement, Methodism, through Wesley, expanded and spread far and wide with the rise of industry and the middle class people who carried the message overseas (Hiatt 2008). Britain during this time had gained its wealth through colonial enterprises and exploitation of new territories that they had colonized – one of which includes Zimbabwe. The political conditions in England worked as a catalyst in the development of Wesley’s theology. These and other conditions are similar to what is prevailing in Zimbabwe; a detailed explanation is given in the next section and chapters three and five.

2.2.2 Economic Conditions

Hiatt observes that in England, economics strongly affected the daily conduct of individuals in the eighteenth century and contributed immensely in shaping Wesley’s theology (Hiatt 2008). The eighteenth century industrial revolution ushered in a new change as England shifted from an agro-based economy to an industrialized economy where the use of money

was in the hands of the few and the market economy was now shaping the labour force. The focus for individuals was on how to create more wealth. England's aim economically was to stretch as far as possible into the wider market, for its products to obtain more resources. This economic system motivated individuals to acquire more wealth, which contradicted Wesley's ideas that Christians should desist from excessive wealth possession. The creation of more wealth is viewed in the eyes of Hiatt as a stepping stone to social recognition, and as a result, competition to obtain the currency arose (Hiatt 2008).

The rise of the Bank of England in 1694 as a result of the financial reforms of 1720 gave England a stable economy that allowed outside investors to trade with England. In Wesley's days, people moved from the countryside to industrial cities in search of employment. Poverty was thriving in both rural and urban areas but conditions were generally worse for the urban poor. During the rise in the economic status of England, Britain was a prevailing financial and military world power (Black 2001). These and other conditions engineered the rise of Wesley's theology on health and wealth as a remedy or alternative response to the way how people were living and how they ought to live in the society. The above economic scenario that motivated individuals to acquire more wealth are similar to the prevailing conditions in Zimbabwe, hence the need to evaluate the relevance of Wesley's theology of health and wealth in the MCZ.

2.2.3 Religious Conditions

As the Church of England was in its lowest ebb spiritually around 1700, the Protestant groups and the Methodist movement with the state church multiplied in the religious circles and garnered some political influence. There are other religious movements or reformations, like the Great Awakening, Moravians and Pietism, that were taking place alongside the Methodist movement, which, due to space and time, are not the focus of this study.

At the rise of the eighteenth century, crime, poverty and struggles constituted dominant features of the English society. Deism was the order of the day where some people viewed God of the Bible as either absent from daily activities or as a fantasy of the unenlightened (Hiatt 2008). With the decline of vital piety in the eighteenth century, the Church of England suffered spiritually and pastorally due to the clergy who were always absent from duty but continued to earn their salaries from their parishes despite their absenteeism. The clergy

could be seen spending their money on hunting, socializing with the gentry or on other entertainment while neglecting the needs of the poor parishioners (2008).

The church made available limited chances to those families who were born from low societal standing, but favoured the privileged or the cream of the crop with greatest opportunities. The social elite dubbed the “underprivileged as the vulgar, the mob, the rabble, gazed upon them as lazy and useless, and treated them unsympathetically,” as confirmed by Hiatt (:55). What is fascinating is that the clergy in the Church of England treated the destitute of the society in the worst manner, worse than non-religious leaders could do. Such circumstances in the Church of England contributed to “Wesley’s actions, implemented both unwaveringly and circuitously” (:56). Even though there was a generally negative picture of the poor, Wesley under no circumstances despised them but viewed the poor as hardworking, spiritually important and as bearing the image of God (Black 2001). In view of the fact that governing societies were in the habit of controlling their subordinates using medical attention, poor relief, charity and moral reproach, Wesley worked with intent to neutralize this hatred of the poor (Hiatt 2008 see also Heitzenrater 1995). An account of the health and wealth motif as a response to the above conditions will be given in chapter three. Now that we have explored the conditions that necessitated the development of Wesley’s theology, it is critical to view the historical trajectory of educational institutions that originated from the founder of Methodism, John Wesley.

2.3 The Origins and Development of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Educational Institutions

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Before we look at the role of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe educational institutions, a brief overview of the Methodist Church and its role in education in general might be necessary, dating back to Wesley’s time. The roots of Methodist educational institutions are traced back to the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, who was “born in 1703 and died in 1791” (Zvobgo 1991:1). Methodism began as a revivalist reform movement within the Church of England in the 18th century. Most of the key leaders were linked to student groups in Oxford in the late 1720s. They had high expectations regarding their own personal holiness and initiated “tremendous activities in social holiness, including education for poor children” (Streiff et al. 2010:676).

The criteria for selection and expectations for education continued to shape theological education in a Methodist perspective. Streiff et al. (2010) observe that it was in 1746 during one of the first Annual Conferences where three points for the examination of preachers were adopted, which became rules and regulations guiding recruitment of preachers and clergy. These are found in slightly revised versions in the *Books of Discipline* of most Methodist churches today. The three important questions address the following points:

1. Do they know in whom they have believed?

Have they the love of God in their hearts?

Do they desire and seek nothing but God?

And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work?

Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding?

Have they a right judgement in the things of God?

Have they a just conception of salvation by faith?

And has God given them any degree of utterance?

Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they success?

Do they not only so speak as generally either to convince or affect the hearers?

But have any received remission of sins by their preaching?

A clear and lasting sense of the love of God (Streiff et al. 2010:676)?

As long as these three marks were in agreement, one was considered as called of God to preach. This was sufficient beyond reasonable doubt to determine that a preacher is moved by the Holy Spirit. Receiving a call from God to join the ministry is important but not enough. It calls for examination and confirmation by the community of believers. The three questions for examination are made up of spiritual criteria, educational competence, and effectiveness. In other words, it seeks to find out the grace, gifts and fruits of the believer. These are the three basic guidelines for the outward confirmation of a personal call to pastoral ministry in Methodist churches today. Educational competence is among the three basics required by John Wesley who called himself '*homo unius libri*', meaning, the man of one book, which is the Bible (Streiff et al. 2010:677). As a movement, Methodism was born to spread scriptural holiness over the land and reform the nations, and high on Wesley's agenda was education of the illiterate and poor people.

The social context of England witnessed educational challenges for the people. Wesley came from a society that drew a dichotomy between intellectualism and spirituality. In response to this gulf, he proposed a middle path, maintaining that the two must not be opposed to one another, but rather they should complement one another (Kumalo 2005:116). In his view, Wesley refused to disconnect intellectualism from spirituality; instead he saw knowledge and vital piety working harmoniously. This is how Wesley resolved the problem between faith and reason for himself and his followers.

Education became an essential part of Wesley's theology as such Methodists valued education in their religious activities (Nascimento and De Souza Maia 2011:10). The strain among method and spirituality caused Wesley to introduce social and educational projects where theories were practised. It was from the Moravian community knowledge who used to gather in small groups (Wesley later called them class meetings) for teaching of the gospel and pietistic tradition where Wesley tapped the idea of class meetings. Wesley applied this model at Oxford. He also dwelt much on education particularly in his sermon 'On the Education of Children (Wesley 1989). Wesley began a school project linked with his mission work. As part of his theological and educational reflections, he started the Kingswood School in 1748 particularly for the children of poor miners. The situation in England at the time was such that education was reserved for the privileged.

The three levels of education provided by John Wesley were church-based education, school-based education and civic-based Christian education. The major focus of education for Wesley was church-based education, where he initiated and established the idea of the class meeting and used this method to minister and care for the rapidly growing members of the Methodist movement (Kumalo 2005). Williams argues that education was critical to those who are called to preach the word of God, as illustrated by Wesley when he said, he was more certain that preaching like an Apostle without making effort to join and train those that received an awakening in God's ways is bringing up children for disaster. In as much as preaching was done for over twenty years in Pembrokeshire no change in the societies was noticed in terms of discipline and order of connexion as a result nine out of ten of those once awakened were fast asleep than before (Williams 1993).

The focus of class meetings was for fellowship and social well being of the other human beings in times of joy, sorrow and challenges. The school-based education was effective in the Sunday school movement. Access to better schools was a preserve for the elite in

England. The initiative at Kingswood, Epworth, and other centres of learning became an extension of the Sunday school system, which provided not only church education, but also covered such subjects as mathematics, reading, writing and art. This initiative of schools marked the model for educational enterprise that was celebrated around the world starting from United States (Nascimento and De Souza Maia 2011:10).

It should be noted that Wesleyan studies took a great impact and reached its greater heights when Albert C. Outler published in 1964, as part of Oxford University Press's Library of Protestant Thought. It sold more copies than any other volume in the series, demonstrating growing interest in Wesleyan theology in Methodist circles and beyond (Maddox 2010:31). This interest fuelled the growth of Wesley Studies as a scholarly field through the second half of the twentieth century. Maddox states that,

The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies began gathering scholars for periodic conferences in 1958, with the Wesley's as a frequent focus of attention. A new scholarly journal on Methodist History was launched in 1962. The Wesleyan Theological Society was formed in 1965, issuing its own Wesleyan Theological Journal. A Wesleyan Studies Group was organized at the American Academy of Religion in 1982. In 1988 Abingdon Press launched the Kingswood Book series, dedicated to Wesleyan and Methodist scholarship. The Charles Wesley Society was added to the mix in 1990. And chairs of Wesley Studies have been established at such universities as Duke, Southern Methodist and Vanderbilt, as well as several research centres. This growing scholarly interest has been paralleled in many of the denominations in the Methodist family by increased expectation of studying the theological writings of the Wesley brothers in ministerial education (2010:31).

This seed of education initiated by Wesley in England extended to other continents with different contexts as part of the evangelical mission carried by missionaries, inclusive of Zimbabwe.

Since the above section has laid down the foundational background of educational institutions originating from John Wesley, it is fitting now to zoom in on the Zimbabwean context. The origins of MCZ are linked to South African and British Methodism. Gondongwe states that:

... Zimbabwean Methodism originated from Britain because Transvaal was under the British Conference and as a result the administration of the church in Zimbabwe was in the hands of the British Conference (2011:43).

This linkage is demonstrated by Zvobgo who argues that the expansion of Methodism in the Transvaal was largely due to the work of the Revd Owen Watkins. He was born in Manchester in 1842. His parents were of the Welsh Methodist background. He received training as a missionary candidate and offered to work overseas, meaning Africa. In 1880, he was appointed the first Chairman and General Superintendent of the Transvaal and Swaziland Mission (1991:17). Gondongwe (2011) emphasised that in 1891 the Wesleyan Missionary Society in London stationed Watkins and Isaac Shimmin who was young by then, to work as pioneer missionaries in Mashonaland. When they commenced their office they vigorously implemented a church planting programme, see also (Zvobgo, 1991: 18).

The accomplishment of the mission in Mashonaland is largely attributed to the benevolence of Rhodes whose British South African Company (BSAC) had just occupied Zimbabwe. On considerations of sending the two missionaries, Shimmin had an interview with Rhodes on 20 November 1890 where Rhodes guaranteed some substantial help if one of the Methodist missionaries was sent on a mission to Mashonaland. He recommended Shimmin to submit a formal application that later received a favourable response from Rhodes with a grant offer of £100 annually for five years towards the expenses of the mission (Mawire 2015; see also Zvobgo 1991:18). Watkins requested a further increase to the offer, to which Rutherford Harris responded on behalf of Rhodes and “promised them land on top of the £100 he had already been promised” (Zvobgo 1991:18,19). The journey to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) took seven months to complete but it was marred with difficulties as indicated by Shimmin who confessed that when they left Pretoria, they had sixteen bullocks and they lost some on the road which they had to replace along the way. They completed their journey with only ten yoked bullocks on the wagon. They travelled nearly thirteen hundred miles, and throughout their journey, the hand of God had been leading and protecting them. As they reflected back on their past experiences, “they were thankful and full of hope to face the future, ascribing everything to God who is the owner of his work, and giving him praises and glory” (Gondongwe 2011:46; see also Madhiba 2000:16).

Mawire (2015:44) postulates that on September 29, 1891, Watkins and Shimmin arrived at Fort Salisbury, now known as Harare. With their arrival, the work of expanding Methodism began. This expansion must be seen in the context of the Christian missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe as a whole. Missionaries for other denominations were already in operation in Zimbabwe when Methodist missionaries arrived. Agreeing that other missionaries from other denomination were fully functional in Zimbabwe, Gondongwe states that, the first mission society was established at “Inyati and Hope Fountain mission in 1859 and 1870 by the London Missionary Society respectively.” It was followed by the “Jesuits who arrived at Lobengula’s capital in Bulawayo in 1879.” As they arrived they established “Empandeni mission in 1895” and it marked the “first Jesuit mission to be established in the colony” (2011: 47).

Madhiba argued that the establishment of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Zimbabwe was based more on the politics of land than evangelism (2010). When analysing this idea, one is tempted to think that Madhiba could be correct in believing that a political agenda was dominant, especially looking at the relationship between the Pioneer Column that funded the whole mission enterprise and not the sending church, in this case the British Methodist Conference. On the other hand, Manyoba also argued that the Methodist missionaries began work in Mashonaland “where people accepted religion not because of what missionaries said about God, but because of the good work they did in the name of God” (1991:63). This work included the establishment of mission hospitals and mission schools, which was regarded as part of ministry dating back to John Wesley’s time, and a health and wealth motif in the teaching of salvation. In the same vein, Mujinga (2017) also considered the ministry of the church by missionaries to be threefold – evangelism, education and health see also Zvobgo (1991:71). Having seen how the missionaries transported and transplanted the gospel to Zimbabwe from Britain through South Africa, focus is now directed to the establishment and development of educational institutions in the MCZ.

2.3.1 Establishment and Development of Educational and Training Institutions in the MCZ

The previous section has discussed how the Wesleyan church was transported and transplanted through missionaries via South Africa to Zimbabwe. This section is premised on the establishment of educational institutions in the MCZ that was pioneered by Owen Watkins and Isaac Shimmin in 1891 from Transvaal in South Africa. Shimmin states that,

their main hope for building a strong Christian community rested on the children as a result they aimed at providing Christian education to the community (Zvobgo 1991:16). In 1902 Shimmin remarked that, the establishment of a school at Epworth was earmarked to train evangelists and teachers for indigenous people. This idea influenced the establishment of other mission schools where education became an evangelical tool for membership recruitment (Samudzimu 1991:83).

When European settlers arrived in Zimbabwe in 1890, it became easier for missionaries to spread the gospel to the native people. Through Mission schools Africans were able to access formal education; on the other hand white children got their education through government schools. Madhiba argues that when Africans insist for more education, a controlled system on education was introduced by the colonial government to limit missionaries to overeducate Africans (2000:21). The colonial government administrators became suspicious of missionaries in terms of the kind of education they gave to indigenous children. In their thinking whites wanted Africans to get basic education that was practical to enable them to work in agriculture and industry as labourers and not to compete with colonialists.

According to Zvobgo (1991) the missionaries used education as a strategy to convert young Africans as Butler confirms that when one wins children to Jesus, one would have conquered the world for Christ. This idea of targeting young people was based on the reason that young children were not yet contaminated by African epistemologies that may prevent them to adapt to Western culture easily. Thus, the Church made a declaration in 1930 that, although mission schools were difficult to establish they gave an opportunity for the presentation of Christian message that seems “impossible to raw Africans” (1991:86-87). The above statement by Zvobgo proves that for missionaries, establishment of schools gave them an opportunity for the impartation of the religious instruction that was spread to the old as well as young. The presence of schools in each kraal meant a greatest opportunity and a grip as well as a reputation of greater value for evangelism. In this case the school becomes the forerunner of the church as can always be witnessed that when there is no school in a village the church ultimately dies out.

Hapanyengwi is of the view that Africans, were going to school only because of the education they gained. Missionaries became aware that Africans were not truly repenting and converting to Christianity but using this to access education. As a result, “the processes were

a win-win state of affairs where, for the Africans, transformation through education took place (2013:22). The importance of education to Africans was witnessed by the inability of missionaries to establish a church in places where they failed to establish a school for example in Mberengwa MCZ failed to make inroads because of absence of an MCZ mission school. The education enterprise was a success story in Zimbabwe because of the role played by African evangelists who worked among local people. It was difficult for missionaries because they could not understand the culture and traditions of the indigenous people. The coming in of African evangelist strengthens the majority belief that “Africa was to be saved by Africans for mission work to be effective”. These native evangelists were to work under the supervision of the minister and they become effective missionaries especially in Rhodesia (White 1899: 29).

Morley-Wright who was a clergy saw indigenous teachers cum evangelists as “the ‘important agent’ in the education and evangelisation of the indigenous people” (Zvobgo 1991:27). The Mission emphasized the point that Europeans were not able to get to the back of the native mind hence the need for the gospel to be presented by Africans witnessing to Africans as an effective mission tool for evangelisation (Wesleyan Methodist Church 1923: 1). In recognition of this call for African evangelists, the Wesleyan Methodist Church brought in several teacher-evangelists including “Modumedi Moleli, Joseph Ramushu, Mutsualo, Tutani, Mutyuali, Fokasi, Shuku and James Anta” (Samudzimu 1991:84) from South Africa who were helped by Zimbabwean trained evangelists. From the vintage point of the MCZ, as acknowledged by Zvobgo that, besides preaching and teaching the foreign and local Africans established the strong foundations for education to Africans (Zvobgo 1991).

Among the local African evangelists, it was Simon Jonas Chihota, one of the first black local evangelists in Zimbabwe, who helped out the Rev John White in translating the New Testament Bible into the Shona New Testament and Rev Avon Walton in preparing the Methodist Shona Hymnbook. This marked the commencement of the translation of the Bible into local languages. This change of the Bible into the *lingua franca* helped Christians to worship God in their own languages and to remain rooted in their own culture.

The first African teachers cum evangelists were recruited from the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA). Denis (1994) argues that the architects of “missionary enterprise” are the native missionary workers cum catechists, lay preachers, deacons and clergy. Without

the above it was difficult for the white missionaries to have achieved their mission work. As a result “Clergy indigenization” becomes a process that is to be understood to have “a starting point, a continuation and possibly a conclusion” (1994: 9). It is critical to see the beginnings of the localization of ministry in the MCZ. The reasons for recruitment of indigenous clergy differ from denomination to denomination, but for the MCZ there were “both intrinsic and extrinsic factors at play” (Gondongwe 2011:79). One of the intrinsic factors, Gondongwe points out, was that even though the South African teachers from MCSA who later joined the first missionaries to Zimbabwe were fundamental to carrying out the intention of the missionaries, eventually their limitations became noticeable and this gave rise to the need for Zimbabwean indigenous clergy (:79). The second aspect is that evangelists from South Africa were not familiar with the religious and geographical environment of their new field of operation; as a result, there was a need for people with that indigenous knowledge. Another reason is that they did not speak the language of the majority of the Zimbabwean people, hence it made communication difficult. The white missionaries desperately needed translators. The fourth reason is that although they were Africans from MCSA, the Zimbabwean people regarded them as foreigners as a result; they always suspected them of being accomplices of the whites. Gondongwe further argued that evangelists cum teachers from South African were considered to have an agenda of pacifying local people so that it becomes easy for whites to expropriate land without encountering resistance from indigenous people hence they were equated to be “sell-outs” (: 80).

Another fundamental reason motivating the missionaries to recruit Zimbabwean indigenous clergy was the rapid growth and development of the church that demanded an increasing number of workers. Gondongwe postulates that the other pushing factor was the famous general missionary motto during that “period that says Africa must be served by Africans” (:80). This idea could have contributed to the recruitment of indigenous clergy in many denominations, including the MCZ. In addition, the failure of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (hereinafter WMMS) to send more missionaries and the resulting scarcity of clergy may have found a solution in the recruitment of local clergy. After the Synod of 1898, the recruitment of indigenous clergy commenced, starting with the recruitment of Zimbabweans as evangelists cum teachers.

Joshua Ramushu and Samuel Tutani, who were among the first evangelists (cum teachers), both from MCSA, were the first black candidates to be accepted for ministry, based on their

good record as companions of white missionaries. These earliest clergy, such as Ramushu and others, who came as evangelists from South Africa with the pioneer missionaries, never went to theological college because there essentially were none. Their major drawback to the local people was that they were not regarded as important to the activities of the white missionaries; but it was to their advantage because in no time they were promoted to be assistant clergy. Gondongwe (2017) admits that some died as evangelists cum teachers, including the likes of Wellington Belisi who was part of the first group of teachers who could not make it to becoming an ordained clergy. He continued to work as a teacher cum evangelist until the time of his death (Interview 29th March 2017).

This led to the phase of the recruitment of Zimbabwean evangelists that was to be done via the teaching profession. Gondongwe holds that “it was mandatory that a person who wanted to become a minister had to train as a teacher and evangelist before enrolling as a minister because the ordained African ministry in the Wesleyan Methodist Church was inextricably linked to the teaching profession” (2011:82). Methodist teachers and evangelists were trained at Nenguwo, which was later named Waddilove Institution. The District Committee of the Mashonaland and Rhodesia District held at Bulawayo on the 4th of January and adjourned on the 5th and 6th of January 1898, indicates that this institution was established at the behest of the Zimbabwean Methodist Synod of 1898 (District Committee is now Synod). It resolved thus:

We have as yet no training institution: the brethren however are of the opinion that such an institution is urgently needed if our native work is to be carried on satisfactorily and if the missionary committee have no objection we would request brother White to collect funds during his visit in England for the establishment of a training institution in Mashonaland (Rhodesia District Synod 1898:10).

This indicates that the Synod unanimously agreed that an institution to train evangelists and teachers was urgently needed. Funds were mobilised through the permission of “the Missionary Committee that permitted the Rev John White to collect funds during his furlough in England in order to establish a training institution in Mashonaland” (Gondongwe 2011:83). In 1899, the same Synod requested a donation from the Missionary Committee of £800 from the Twentieth Century Fund for the purpose of building Nenguwo training institution. The Nenguwo Training Institute opened its doors in January 1900 as reflected in the minutes of

the District Synod of the Rhodesian District held in Bulawayo on the 18th day of December 1900 which confirmed that they began the year with six students, three married and three unmarried (Wesleyan Rhodesia District Synod Minutes, 1900).

The focus of the institution was centred on training nurses, industrialists, teachers and evangelists. It became the hub of an African resurgence in the early 20th century. Every profession was made to serve theological interests (Gondongwe 2011). In 1910 the synod recruited candidates for training as evangelists and teachers. Candidates were nominated by their Superintendents from various circuits from which they live. “To be considered to train as a teacher and evangelist, one had to have attained at least Standard Three, a person with Standard Four was exempted from literary subjects”, confirmed the Quarterly Review of the Methodist Church (Buckley 1957:79).

This clearly shows that Standard Four was regarded as the minimum required entry point to tertiary level and in terms of education one was considered to be literate. This also helps the reader to understand the social standing of Zimbabwean society in early periods of missionary activity. Teachers and evangelists took three years to complete their studies. Their first year was spent preparing the candidates for a Standard Four examination. The remaining two were devoted to evangelist training. Courses covered for the evangelist training included, among others, Preaching, Bible study, the Gospel of John, Genesis, Ruth, Matthew and field work as stated in the Rules and Regulations for African Work (Wesleyan Rhodesia District Synod 1900:4). Candidates accepted as evangelists and teachers were to be trained free for the work of the church, but they had to do three years of service after leaving the institution. These teachers cum evangelists were instrumental in the emancipation of societies through their services in educational institutions. Some of them later answered their calling into itinerant ministry where they were accepted into ministerial training. This aspect of ministerial training is fully covered in chapter four.

2.4 The MCZ Educational Institutions and the Emancipation of Societies in the Pre and Post Autonomy Era

In Zimbabwe, the establishment of some of the following well known Wesleyan Methodist mission schools became the torch bearers of education in Zimbabwe. These include Waddilove (1892), Kwenda (1892), Thekwane (1897), Chemhanza (1912), Marshal Hartley (1894), Moleli (1962), Sandringham (1913), and Pakame (1920) (Gondongwe 2011:52). No

history of education would be complete without mentioning the part played by some of these Methodist institutions. It all started from Sunday school classes with recitation of Bible verses, progressing into reading and writing. These Sunday school classes and class meetings were the genesis of the establishment of formal schools. Indeed, it is the contribution of a major Christian denomination to the development and emancipation of the country. The Wesleyan church took a deliberate policy to uplift indigenous people through education. According to Samudzimu, it was the church that first built schools for blacks only and doing so the church brought upon itself the extreme dislike of “the European community whom some of them saw education as adding conceit to the black man’s ignorance” (1991: 79).

Samudzimu further argues that the Church managed to change the value of education from the point where “a Standard 4 teacher was quite a person” to the level where several Methodist schools were equipping students for “undergraduate studies, providing the country with doctors, engineers, accountants, theologians, economists and other specialists” (1991:104-105). The Church gave the indigenous people vast experience that proved valuable in creating awareness among the people to see themselves as one nation. It is also the Church that prepared the indigenous people for subsequent positions of responsibility by exposing them to sophisticated administration in schools and church affairs. In 1962, an important achievement took place at Waddilove. Zvobgo states that “the institution launched a three-month training course for 9 specialist teachers for blind pupils by the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. These students were integrated with sighted pupils and this marked the beginning of ‘Open education’ for the blind in Zimbabwe” (Zvobgo 1991:22).

By any standards and examples, the Methodist church taught its members to speak out on contemporary issues, such as legislation affecting the education of people. Church members were instrumental in bringing about schemes of great benefit to the community. Samudzimu argues that the brains behind the founding of the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) “were former Principals and teachers of mission schools” some among them include Fred Rea, Herbert Carter and Mr Manfred Hudson. Through Rev Rea the Council on Christian Education was started. One of its purposes was to monitor the proper teaching of Religious Education in schools and it also contributed immensely in the founding of the Department of Theology at the University as well as Diploma of Theology in Africa. As a result of all these and many other contributions Rev Rea was rewarded “an honorary Doctorate of Law by the UZ in 1978” (1991: 105).

It is worth noting that the struggle for independence was spearheaded by leaders who were trained at mission schools. Gondongwe (2011:294) observed that, most of the leading nationalists in Zimbabwe were icons with a Christian background and had passed through mission schools the likes of James Chikerema, Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Ndabaningi Sithole and Canaan Banana whose background within the church prepared him for the political role he assumed as first President of Zimbabwe.

There is no doubt that “universal human rights, equality, democracy, justice, the fundamental right of man to freedom and other abstract ideas that inspired those who led the fight for independence are values naturally from the framework of religion, Christianity being one of them” (:294). It is the mission schools’ teachings that put a great deal of pressure on political advances by giving moral influence to such issues as the demand for autonomy. This was witnessed at independence in 1980 where the entire Zimbabwean cabinet, including the Prime Minister Robert Gabriel Mugabe, were former students from mission schools. From that number, no less than three cabinet ministers, Nathan Shamuyarira, Sydney Sekeramai and Edson Zvobgo, passed through Methodist institutions. In addition to these were Rev Canaan Sodindo Banana, the first Black Zimbabwean President, and Enoch Dumbutshena, Chief Justice who was appointed in 1982. Joshua Nkomo the President of ZAPU, Josiah Tongogara, the head of ZANU guerrilla force, Stanlake Samukange, Dr Hebert Ushewokunze, and others in strategic places in commerce and industry had a Methodist mission background. There are others like Abel Muzorewa and Ndabaningi Sithole, to name just a few, who are also products of mission schools of other denominations.

Schools under the administration of the MCZ have remained among the best ‘O’ and ‘A’ Levels performers due to the consistent standards of Christian values and the philosophy of *unhu/ubuntu* upheld by the church. The Church Education Secretary (Rev Elliot Mashonganyika) states that “pass rates at the Church schools have been averaging around 98 percent for ‘A’ Level while ‘O’ Level has been 85 percent. Some of the schools which have consistently featured among the top 100 best performers in the nation include Waddilove, Sandringham, Pakame, Kwenda, Thekwane, Chemhanza and Moleli High Schools. Moleli High School is among the top 15 in “O” Level results” (see Felix Share and Diana Nherera Herald, 2015), while Sandringham is among the top 5 in “A” Level results in the whole country (see Staff Reporter, My Zimbabwe, 2015). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has

more than 40 primary and high schools dotted across the country. The church has a policy to concentrate on educational efforts toward the uplifting of indigenous Zimbabweans.

Using the academic niche as a way to evangelize has also worked as a fertile recruiting ground for ministerial candidates for itinerant ministry. Some of the revered clergy in the MCZ are products of mission schools. The tremendous outstanding work within mission schools can be summarized in the words Ndabaningi Sithole¹⁶ said while paying tribute to missionaries, it is through the Christian church that a self-consciousness that go beyond divisions of race and colour was created in Africa. It was a consciousness built upon the concept of love of God and humanity and was anchored on the principle of human justice. The church was able to send religious and industrial missionaries to Africa who expanded the view of Africans. Creation of opportunities for many Africans was seen and a spirit of brotherhood was encouraged instead of hatred. As a result the enlightened political leadership would be next to impossible but for the Christian church that spread literacy to many parts of Africa (Rose 1951).

Sithole acknowledged the role played by mission institutions for educating, and creating self-awareness and emancipation of the Africans, whom the missionaries had not even dreamt would use that same education to claim their rightful place and ownership of their land for self-governance. Many indigenous clergy and politicians were educated in these schools, including prominent personalities in government and industry. Thus, the Wesleyan Methodist Church has contributed immensely to the education of the indigenous people, as well as to capacity building, with many of its former pupils ending up in leadership positions in both the private and public sector.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the conditions prevailing in England, where the Wesleyan movement of Methodism arose. It also linked Wesleyan teachings transplanted by missionaries through education, to the transformation of Zimbabwean societies and the nation, as the Wesleyan ideas germinated in the minds of Africans. The chapter has also traced the history of Methodist education from John Wesley, and how it was transported from Britain through

¹⁶Rev Ndabaningi Sithole is the founder of Zimbabwe African National Union (hereinafter called ZANU), a militant organisation that opposed the government of Rhodesia. He wrote the book *African Nationalism*. He was a former student at Waddilove and taught at Tegwani training institution.

missionaries and transplanted in Africa. It shows how Africans as teachers cum evangelists transformed societies for the benefit of the MCZ and the nation. Through education, ministerial training became possible for indigenous clergy. The chapter has given the reader an appreciation of the background of the establishment of MCZ educational institutions. This helps to see how the clergy had gained their basic education as entry qualification to be enrolled into theological institutions and train as clergy. The next chapter will focus on discussing the theology of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), focusing on health and wealth as themes in Wesley's teachings.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 WESLEYAN THEOLOGY OF SALVATION (*ORDO SALUTIS*) AND ITS PORTRAYAL OF HEALTH AND WEALTH AS DOMINANT MOTIFS IN HIS TEACHINGS

3.1 Introduction

In chapter two, the focus was on a brief background of the development and growth of Methodism in England and Zimbabwe, tracing the history of Methodist education from John Wesley, and how it was transported from Britain through missionaries and transplanted in Africa. It further reflected on how Africans as teachers cum evangelists transformed societies for the benefit of the nation, and that through education, ministerial training became possible for indigenous ministers, as shall be discussed further in chapter four. This was done to give the reader an idea of the context in which this study is located. In this chapter, the focus is on the Wesleyan theology of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), with special emphasis on health and wealth as central key components in this doctrine. The chapter is going to highlight John Wesley's view of salvation as enshrined in the Standing Orders of the MCZ. An attempt to trace health and wealth as leading themes in Wesley's theology of salvation is made in this chapter, in order to then identify how this doctrine is taught to members of the clergy in the MCZ and how they appropriate and propagate these themes as good news to their parishioners.

In order to stay focused on the research question and theme of this thesis, and given that any in-depth study of Wesleyan theology is a paper on its own, this chapter will look at Wesley's order of salvation, focusing on prevenient grace, justifying grace and sanctifying grace. An African view or understanding of salvation is also given in order to identify whether certain traits or elements enshrined within the prosperity gospel are informed or resonate with the African perspective on salvation. This will then enable an informed theological analysis of the Wesleyan idea of salvation for the church to consider when training its clergy.

This chapter draws the reader to the heart of Wesley's teachings the doctrine of salvation. This also became the centre of doctrinal teachings in Methodism. Without understanding the doctrine of salvation the clergy and the members might lack a compass to lead them in a changing environment permeated by prosperity spirituality. The chapter is also important in emphasising that health and wealth are discussed as dominant themes enshrined in the

Wesleyan teaching of salvation. This will show the extent to which Wesley might be regarded as one of the forerunners of prosperity teaching. After looking at this doctrine, the focus can be directed to the institutions of learning to see how this doctrinal teaching is covered in the curriculum, for a better appropriation by the clergy. The questions grappled with in this chapter include: What constitutes the Wesleyan traditional teachings on the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*)? And, how do these teachings inform the way we live as Christians today within an environment shrouded in the prosperity gospel? Engaging in this study will be a “meaningful way of creating a dialogue between these historic writings and contemporary Methodist theology” (Wesley 2015:132).

3.2 The Context of Wesley’s Theology

A brief discussion on general historical conditions was given in chapter two, but for the purpose of emphasis in this chapter, a revisit of some conditions is necessary. Most scholars in the study of Wesleyan theology such as Davies (1965), Cannon (1984), Collins (1997), Bailie (2005) and others see it prudent to begin with an overview of the context in which John Wesley operated. In examining of any theological thought, context plays a considerable role, and even more so with Wesley. “Before discovering John Wesley’s originality one must first place him in his context”(Davies and Rupp 1965:83). Review allows the reader to appreciate the environment in which he did his theology. Review of Wesley’s context also allows us to draw comparisons with the existing environment where the present study was carried out, for an informed analysis and interpretation of the findings. It must be noted that this area is broad. A glimpse of his context guides this study to appreciate the contemporary situation of England in terms of the social, political, economic and religious environment, and to identify similarities with the Zimbabwean context today.

3.3 Factors in the Development of Wesley’s Theology

Rational, moral and political factors in England were the major influences that contributed to the development and shaping of Wesley’s theology.

Rationalism was one of the influencing factors in Wesley’s theology. During the 17th and 18th century, a group of religious thinkers started to base opinions and actions on reason and knowledge rather than on religious beliefs or emotional response. Their emphasis was that

faith has to serve reason. Deists fought hard to prove that natural religion is a phenomenon independent from dogmas and the faults of the priesthood. They did this through considering ideas that God is perfect, any religion that God gives to humanity is perfect, and as such revelation is not relevant to religion. They further argued that the Bible is a fallible book and full of errors. Thus reason is the final guide, philosopher and friend, the source of revelation, and the criterion of faith. From the above scenario, it shows that rationalism had penetrated the ranks of orthodoxy and Christianity was seen as a simple set of good ideas and opinions that had lost credibility. Reason became the litmus test on issues of faith.

The second influence was the moral factor, as indicated in chapter two, where corrupt tendencies typified eighteenth century England. The nation was characterized by immorality and impiety, even though there were some traces of religion in the land. Cannon (1984) reiterates that, those who ruled and the academics of the day had no time for religion they mocked at it. The majority of the people were in a poor, ignorant and brutal state. Those in the criminal classes became bold while small offenses were punishable severely. Leaders in England were in favour of slave trade. When analysing this situation, it clearly indicates that religion was on the decline, and the Church itself was spiritually far too weak to face up to and impact the moral deficiency of that time. Hence this factor influenced John Wesley to theologically correct the situation.

The third influencing factor was the political situation in England. There were great political changes that emanated in France, including the collapse of the political schemes of Louis XIV with the turmoil of French Revolution. It gave birth to German nationalism under the leadership of Frederick the Great. Political changes affecting England included the birth of the USA “in the War of Independence” (1984:24), while the era also witnessed the growth of the British Empire.

The fourth and a critical factor for this study is the theological factor, where the focus was limited to the Anglican theology toward the end of the 18th century. Cannon (1984:43) submits that despite the fact that at the beginning of the eighteenth century there was an attempt to bring together in a solitary system God’s grace and humanity’s responsibility, the main importance was centred on humanity and the requirements one must satisfy in order to be justified. Cannon further points out that the Anglican Church places big emphasis on the sacraments and measured them along with the good works required to the completion of the

conditions for justification and that baptism is the *sine qua non* that God takes to regenerate (1984). There was a misconception about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, where the Anglican Church took it to mean that, God approves, give strengths and holds a person in the Christian way while allowing one to do good works. They regarded Christ's death to be for all humanity however limiting personal salvation as a condition of one's free will and considered faith as some work done by humankind.

The fifth factor that influenced his theology was his training at home. Wesley was raised in a very sanctimonious home, but one that emphasized duty, and he survived according to the rules laid, especially by his mother. When John Wesley was growing up, religion was all about doing the will of God and not our own will. This clearly demonstrates that the forces that produced John Wesley's theology were not confined to the scholarly intricacy of diverse and differing forms of philosophical thought; to a certain extent, they were established in the moral and spiritual actions of his life, in his sincere effort to be excellent, and to do something in and for the Kingdom of God. Wesley's basic principle ideas before 1738 were that through moral goodness, obedience and fulfilment of commandments humanity will be saved. This shows that he possessed the religion of a servant¹⁷ and not a spiritually of adopted son (Cannon 1984).

A thorough analysis of John Wesley's letters before his encounter with Christ on the 24th of May 1738 clearly indicates that he was not aware of the nature of saving faith, as he admitted in one of his treaties when he wrote that he was ordained as a deacon in 1725 and as a Priest in the following year. After many years he obtained the truth but during all this time he was ignorant about the nature and condition of justification. He was ignorant about the nature of saving faith he thought it was just accepting all the declarations found in the Bible.

The above background has attempted to provide us with the context of wide-ranging religious and social factors in which John Wesley and the people called Methodists conversed, as highlighted in his prominent writings, letters, notes and journals. This lays a foundation for discourse, reflection and dialogue between Wesleyan teachings on *Ordo Salutis* and the prosperity gospel today.

¹⁷For a distinction between being a servant and a son see COLLINS, K. J. (1993). *A Faithful Witness: John Wesley's Homiletical Theology*. Wilmore, KY: Wesley Heritage Press.

3.4 Wesleyan Traditional Teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*)

As already indicated in the literature review, the concept of *Ordo Salutis* in Wesley's theology provides a framework for Wesley's thought. As reflected in the Deed of Church Order of the MCZ, the Standing Orders (2011) clearly states that "the Evangelical Doctrines to which the Preachers of the MCZ both Clergy and Laymen are pledged, are contained in Wesley's notes on the New Testament and the first four volumes of his 44 sermons" (2011:1). From this, it is understood that Wesley's theology is grounded in his sermons, particularly the Sermon on "Salvation by Faith"¹⁸ where he outlined the "Four Alls." These are the traditional summary of Wesley's teaching. In the sermon on "Scripture: our way to salvation", he outlines theologically sound ideas of his order of salvation (James 2014:13).

Collins (1997:153) studied Wesley's sermon, 'Scripture: our way to salvation'¹⁹ and pointed out, that, among John Wesley sermons, the sermon Scripture: our way to salvation is an important one because it looks at the soteriological content of Wesley sermons, letters, theological treaties, journals and the notes on the Old and New Testament. From the above statement, Collins goes on to discuss the emergence of Wesley's thinking on growth and maturation in the Christian life, and his framework of salvation inherent in the sermons.

This sermon provides fertile ground to explore the doctrine of the order of salvation in the context of it being the core area of study in the MCZ, especially on how Wesley articulated issues of health and wealth. It is worth noting that John Wesley did not write the 'four Alls' as they appear today; rather it is an early 20th century development through William Fitzgerald (1856-1931)²⁰ who summarized the core emphasis looking back on the first Methodists. This is noted by Gondongwe (2017) who said in an interview that "Methodist traditions are not automatically carried over but they are carried with a lot of reviewing and revising" – as reflected in Fitzgerald's summary made to capture the Wesleyan core teachings on salvation. Be that as it may, the values and ethos of Methodism are still captured in this summary.

For the purposes of this study, the original version of *Ordo Salutis* is briefly given to fully appreciate the context of John Wesley. A later 20th century development of the summarized version will be discussed in order to situate the study in the Zimbabwean context where clergy are trained using this version and to see its impact in the environment permeated by

¹⁸See also J. Wesley (1988). *Wesley's 52 Standard Sermons*. Salem, Ohio: Schmull Publishers.

¹⁹ See also *ibid.*

²⁰See W. Fitzgerald(1903). *The Roots of Methodism*. London: Epworth Press.

the prosperity gospel. For Collins (1977:153), the order of salvation is better explained by John Wesley as ‘the way to salvation’, and this is where Wesley made a remarkable contribution to Christian theology. Collins further argues that this concept is the “heart of John Wesley’s theology”. This was enshrined in hymnals and catechism as Wesleyan tradition and taught in theological seminaries. According to Campbell (2010:73), “it became a pattern by which Methodist people told their own stories of growth in grace and faith.” It must be spelt out at the outset that the order of salvation is not a prescription, nor does it intend to be in a numerical or chronological order. In other words, it is not intended to dictate or present its points as the only way through which God’s salvation works in the world. Instead the aim here is to clarify, explain and to situate some kind of systematic form in Wesley’s theology.

3.4.1 Preventive Grace

Bailie (2005:56) argues that “preventive or preventing grace for Wesley illustrates the complete work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of people between conception and conversion.” For Wesley, original sin makes it necessary for the Holy Spirit to initiate the relationship between God and humanity. This understanding of preventive grace is well explained in the sermon on salvation by faith Wesley preached at St. Mary’s Church, Oxford, before the University on 18th June 1738, just three weeks after Wesley’s heart was strangely warmed on 24th May 1738. From this sermon, Wesley first made the point that salvation is a present reality, not only the eternal destination of the believer. This means one can attain salvation; it is a possibility and a realised eschatology and not a future eschatology. In the summarized version, four distinct points are raised to demonstrate *Ordo Salutis*. The first point is that all people need to be saved. Some scholars like James (2014) highlights Wesley’s point that all people are sinners to underline that this calls for preventive grace from God.

Wesley analysed biblically the human condition and deduced that all men and women are sinners who have ‘fallen short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23). As indicated in the factors that determined the development of John Wesley’s theology, he was like Martin Luther during the time of the Reformation, “where his sense of his own sinfulness gave a sharp focus to his theology” (:13). Although Luther tried enthusiastically to search for holiness and a sound relationship with God, his efforts and religious discipline did not produce any help to

relieve him from the consciousness of sin, or to create any positive union with God. John Wesley's similar attempts during his missionary endeavour in Georgia served only to increase his feelings of alienation from God. As he wrote in his Journal towards the end of that period:

...I left my native country in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected), that I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God (Wesley 1738: 30).

Wesley discovered that all of humankind was in this condition and completely unable to save itself. For him, everyone needs to be saved from sin and its cost: as such, no human effort can suffice for salvation. It can be noted that Wesley not only looked at salvation from a spiritual point of view; for a wholesome attainment of salvation, he went further to consider the need to deal with those things that cause sin.

The second point on prevenient grace is that all people can be saved through the grace of God who avails Himself in hopeless situations and dark moments of one's life. Wesley believed that salvation is a gift of God, to which, he believed, individuals must respond by accepting it because God will not force that gift upon anyone. It is on this point that John Wesley differed from Reformers such as John Calvin, by seeing God's grace as, first of all, giving human's freedom, to allow the individual the space to accept or reject God's offer of salvation. This is what he referred as prevenient grace in the 1765 sermon "Way to Salvation" (Wesley 1765: 1). All can be saved but not all may choose to be saved. In agreement with the above, Bailie (2005) states that Wesley's theology is centred on the saving work of Christ and the individual appropriation of that work. Further, humanity cannot move towards God, except only through God's enabling grace. But he also insisted that humans are accountable for their own salvation, being free to accept God or reject Him.

For followers of John Calvin, they believed that God had already chosen who would be saved (predestination), and his grace would finish the work. Wesley, however, could not accept what he saw as a limit on the grace of God. All men and women without exception have the opportunity of experiencing God's free gift of salvation. This was underlined in an interview with Bishop Chinhara (2017) when he said, "the Wesleyan teaching on salvation is that every

person has a chance to be saved,” regardless of gender, race, colour or even religious background. Salvation is all encompassing, it does not select.

John Wesley responded to an Anglican clergyman, Thomas Church, who had referred to Wesley’s movement as schismatic and demanded that Wesley should resign from priesthood, by explaining the three stages of the way of salvation (Campbell 2010: 76). In his letter, Wesley (1746: 267-8)²¹ wrote that he had declared doctrines that distinguishes pagans and nominal Christians and those who do not worship God in spirit and truth. The three doctrines are repentance, faith and holiness where repentance is the porch of religion, faith is the door and holiness is religion itself. From Wesley’s point of view, the doctrine of original sin necessitates the need for repentance of those who have chosen the free gift of salvation, in acknowledgment of the fact that we as human beings cannot save ourselves from the continuing effects of original sin. We need divine grace. Campbell concurs by saying, “the doctrine of original sin is the reason for preaching repentance to those who are not yet justified; prevenient grace embraces repentance and awakening” (Cambell 2010:77).

3.4.2 Justifying Grace

As asserted above concerning prevenient grace, those that choose to be saved or have accepted God through repentance can have a further gift of grace. In the Wesleyan theology, the next step in the *Ordo Salutis* is justifying grace. Justifying grace is the work of the Holy Spirit during the time of conversion, in the lives of those who accept the call of prevenient grace by putting their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. This is also put in the summarized version as “all people can know that they are saved” (James 2014:10). When people have chosen to be saved or have accepted God in their life, they know that they have received a free gift of salvation from God. This is also referred to as the doctrine of assurance.

At this stage, those that have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour have an assurance that they have been justified or put in the right with God, forgiven and accepted by God. They are aware of a new journey of life as a child of God and have received a new power with which to live this life. In agreement with this assurance, Bailie (2005:62) confirms that, when one answers to God’s grace through repentance, Christ’s righteousness

²¹See Letter to Thomas Church, 17 June 1746. *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, John Telford Edition, II, pp. 267-8.

will be conveyed to sinful humanity. It is worth noting that for Wesley repentance or conviction of sin comes before faith.

But how do they know that they are saved? Wesley believed the ‘how’ was through the work of the Holy Spirit. He referred to the direct and the indirect witness of the Holy Spirit. This is supported by Romans (8:16) when Paul states: “(God’s) Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God’s children.” From within the believer, there is what Wesley called the ‘inward consciousness of the assurance of salvation that may be accompanied by feelings which are more than emotions or feelings.’ Wesley is making reference to the Aldersgate experience of the 24th May 1738 when his heart was strangely warmed. John Wesley (1738) recorded in his journal of 24th May 1738 that, in the night, he went unwillingly to a society along Aldersgate Street, where a preface to Luther was read in Romans. It was quarter to nine, when he heard a description of the change that God transforms in the heart, through faith in Christ. He felt his heart strangely warmed. He felt he did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given to him that he took away his sins, even his and saved him from the law of sin and death.

The ‘inward consciousness’ is the direct and inward impression of the Holy Spirit on the individual. The indirect witness of the Spirit is the development of Christ-like attitudes and actions in the everyday life of the individual, described by Paul in his letter to the Galatians (Galatians 5:22-23) as ‘the fruit of the Spirit’. Charles Wesley composed a hymn after the experience that endorses the above when he sang:

How can a sinner know
His sins on earth forgiven?
How can my gracious Saviour show
My name inscribed in heaven?
His Spirit to us He gave,
And dwells in us we know;
The witness in ourselves we have
And all its fruits we show
(Methodist Hymn Book 377, verses 1 & 7).

As stated concerning prevenient grace, that all can be saved if they accept God through repentance, which has been referred to as the porch, now those who have been saved can

know that they are saved or justified through the grace of God. They are justified by faith in Jesus Christ and this faith is the door to holiness, which is sanctification. Wesley's theology of grace met some objections²² and tensions but, without getting into a debate for the sake of remaining focussed on the objectives of this study, Bailie (2005:63) points to valuable insight by highlighting the ability of Wesley to balance both inward and outward holiness in his doctrine and his experience. This takes us to the next point of sanctifying grace.

3.4.3 Sanctifying Grace

The final point is 'all can be saved to the uttermost', which stresses the fact that one "can be saved completely, meaning that in salvation there is no partiality or some percentages but completeness in salvation"(Interview with M28, 2017).²³ For Wesley, sanctifying grace demonstrates how the Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers between conversion and death. Faith in Jesus Christ saves us from hell and sin. Wesley remained adamant to the end of his life that Christian perfection was the key emphasis of the Methodists. In his conviction that there was no limit to what the grace of God could do in us and with us, he used the concept to explain what he saw as normal Christianity.

Campbell (2010) contends that, there are two sides of Salvation which are justification and sanctification. In this regard justification symbolizes pardon or forgiveness of sins. Sanctification begins at the same time as justification in the new birth and it is the actual change in a person as compared to relative transformation that happens in justification. In light of the above, Wesley talks of "imputed righteousness" as that which gives one the right to heaven, and imparted righteousness which qualifies one for heaven (Bailie 2005:63). Here, Wesley goes to great lengths to describe his views on Christian perfection. In this case justification is the door by which to enter into holiness and attain perfection. Wesley borrowed the concept of sanctification by grace through faith from Luther. Bailie further concludes that, out of experience is where sanctification or perfection is realised from pure love as a person moves from the position where love happens to be out of self interest. When a person is not perfected in love then one is not ready for glory.

²²See M. James (2014). *12 Wesley Sermons in Modern English*. Harare: Connexional Bookshop.

²³Please note that M1 to M30 denotes pseudonyms or code names of clergy interviewed. The order of their real names as recorded in the interview is a preserve of the author, to protect the identity of the participants as shall be explained in the methodology in chapter six. However a list of participants is shown in Appendix 14.

This is what Wesley understood by what it means to be a real Christian in terms of a relationship with God and relationships in the world –it requires total commitment. Quality Christian living is available to all through the grace of God. It is energised by the Holy Spirit and continually encouraged by the means of grace, such as corporate worship, prayer, scripture, the sacraments, fasting and fellowship. Wesley thought that the only way to keep Methodists from backsliding was to keep them moving in what he called a continuous process. In that process of evangelical revival, a major motivation came through a motto or catchphrase: “Go on to perfection: otherwise you cannot keep what you have”(Baillie 2005:64). In these words, Wesley is mindful of negative forces and even false teachings that are contrary to salvation that could distract those that have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.

Prevenient grace, therefore, is a process. Justifying grace is immediate. Sanctifying grace is both a process and instantaneous. Though not exhaustive, this is a representation of the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis* from a Wesleyan perspective. Guided by the factors that influence his theology, Wesley was essentially a practical theologian who lived his theology. In a very practical way, his theology was geared primarily to his own needs and to the needs of those given into his care. This doctrine remains the vehicle that carries the church to greater heights in terms of sustainability and relevance, especially in the context of Zimbabwe where the environment is influenced by the prosperity gospel. James (2014:20) believes that it is important to preach the doctrine of salvation today because it is the opposite of the idea of salvation through good works, or through church ceremonies. Without this doctrine, the hearts of people cannot be warmed for repentance.

Having looked at the doctrine of salvation from a Wesleyan perspective, it is equally important to look at this doctrine from an African traditional view of understanding salvation, in the environment where the study is situated. This synopsis will help to locate some of the influencing factors inherent in the prosperity gospel that resonate with certain aspects of traditional African world view especially on health and wealth.

3.5 The African Understanding of Salvation

Before discussing this crucial aspect of understanding salvation from an African point of view, it is important to indicate that health and wealth themes features strongly in Wesley’s

doctrine of salvation as shall be shown in sections below. Be that as it may, when missionaries came to Africa, Zimbabwe in particular, they conveniently left out these crucial themes in their teaching on the doctrine of salvation, especially in the curriculum at colleges. It seems they did not want to appear as though they were in favour of African Traditional Religion. When the prosperity gospel came, it appealed to certain important aspects of the traditional world view, especially on health and wealth. Since there was a deliberate omission of health and wealth aspects by missionaries, the curriculum in theological institution (UTC) did not include these aspects either. As a result, when the gospel of prosperity emerged, it appeared as though these aspects were foreign in Methodism; to such an extent that when the prosperity gospel emphasised these aspects related to the traditional African world view and people responded positively, the church (MCZ) had no effective way of responding.

The African understanding of salvation, particularly to the Shona/Ndebele, should be explored with an understanding that Christians in Africa received the gospel while rooted in their cultural, social, political, religious and economic context of African life and thought, without which the gospel would not be relevant to them. Hence theology has to be contextual. It is a reality that people convert to Christianity from their own original experiences, contexts and needs, and their understanding of the Scriptures comes from their tradition and experiences (Mugabe 1993).

This study is specifically focusing on the understanding of salvation from the Zimbabwean perspective and the Shona and Ndebele culture in particular because it is critical to put this into context. Though MCZ covers all dialects in Zimbabwe, it is strong among the Shona and Ndebele people who have the same view regarding the concept of salvation. In the Shona/Ndebele cultures, the concept of salvation is not concerned about the afterlife. Shona/Ndebele religion is anthropocentric, meaning to say it regards humankind as the central or most important element of existence as opposed to God or animals, and it is life affirming. Mbiti (1974) argues that the concept of salvation in African religious circles takes note of physical and immediate dangers (be it of individuals or community) that are a threat to individual or community survival, good health, safety and its prosperity. Salvation is looked at in terms of what has happened and likely to come upon people as they go through their daily experiences.

The Shona/Ndebele use words to express or denote the above concept of salvation, such as *Kuponeswa/ukusindiswa* or *kudzikunurwa*, words commonly used to translate 'salvation'. The major concern of the African is about protection from the dangers of this world, good health and general prosperity here and now and not in the eschatology or after life. This view is in tandem with John Wesley's view of prevenient grace. The protection is from witches, sorcerers, avenging spirits and anything that may destroy life – hence for Africans, salvation means the well-being and fulfilment of individual destiny in the absence of everything that threatens to destroy human life or disturbs the conditions for prosperity and well-being.

There are four major aspects of salvation raised by Mbiti's view of the African understanding of salvation, namely: (i) Salvation is a condition of well-being and self-fulfilment; (ii) It has to do with protection from evil or forces of destruction; (iii) It deals with the safeguarding of space, and social order and concord; (iv) It involves restitution of broken life (1974:3). This is the reason why many African Christians have dual membership in both Christianity and African Traditional Religions (hereinafter called ATR), or even embrace and cling to prophets. It is because they see traditional religions and prophets as being able to meet real needs, in their bringing salvation into this world of ours. And they perceive Christianity as mainly concerned with the hereafter a salvation that is centred only on the salvation of souls from eternal damnation.

Mugabe (1993:33) argues that the idea of sin (*chivi/isono*) in Shona/Ndebele, looks at all harmful actions that are there to hurt individuals and the community. Even if sin involves evil thoughts, Africans do not consider evil in intangible terms; to a certain extent sin has to do with genuine life situations. He further argues that in the Shona/Ndebele context, there is no concept of a fall or of original sin. Children are born sinless and only get alienated as they grow up. Here they are in contradiction with the Wesleyan view which has the concept of prevenient grace from the original sin. For the Shona/Ndebele, sin is committed in this present life, and as a result, it is in this life where sin must be dealt with. There is no "place for punishment in the afterlife; hence there is no anxiety about judgement in the future life, from an African experience." Maimela (1987) confirms that in heaven or paradise, there is no reference to punishments to be circumvented or rewards to expect. Be that as it may, sin is dealt with in terms of appeasing; by paying compensation to the person or community that has been wronged here and now and not waiting for forgiveness by God in the eschatology (Mugabe 1993).

When analysing the arguments above, one can observe that the major weakness of the missionaries when they transported and transplanted the gospel into Zimbabwe was to import a concept of God to forgive sins committed between neighbours, and to focus salvation with soul winning rather than with the salvation of the whole person as a result Africans were not persuaded. Since missionaries and their African counterparts preached about a Jesus who only saved souls, other Africans started to question where the salvation of their entire lives was going to come from (Mugabe 1993:34). This weakness was also observed by a respondent during interviews with 3rd year students when she called for Christianity to be blended with ATR in order to have an African context and flavour that is compatible and relevant to congregants (Student D, 2017).²⁴

3.6 Health as a Dominant Motif in Wesley’s Teaching on Salvation

From the outset of the Evangelical Revival it was more than apparent that John Wesley “saw himself as having a particular mission to the poor people” (Stone 2001:8). Wesley dedicated almost seventy years towards helping the poor. His ethics sought to impact and transform the underprivileged and deprived parts of society (Marquardt 1992). Wesley’s idea of prosperity is seen in the theology of salvation as health and wealth where he regards love as healing and helping the poor. Wesley raised current issues about love as healing and the preferential option for the poor in his writings where he displayed a holistic mission stirred and filled with God’s love and the availability of salvation for all (Wynkoop 1972:25). As an advocate of prosperity by implication, John Wesley, through his provision and articulation of health and wealth issues, defined salvation as:

...deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health . . . the renewal of our souls after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth (Maddox 2007:7).

From the above definition one can deduce that Wesley wanted his followers and his generation to look for a holistic salvation where God’s forgiveness of sins is combined with

²⁴Student A–F are pseudonyms or code names used for the protection of the interviewees; the real names are in the custody of the researcher for ethical reasons, as shall be explained in detail in chapter six on methodology. Appendix 14 gives a list of all participants who took part in the study without any order.

God's gracious healing of the damage that sin has produced. Wesley nicely blended pardon and action to strike a balance in the soteriological process.

John Wesley's interest in health issues resulted from the requirement that medicine become part of the training of Anglican clergy candidates around the seventeenth century. Maddox (2007:5) states that as part of their holistic ministry, priests offered medical care in small villages. This helps to explain why evangelization was intrinsically intertwined with the establishment of health centres. Seen as part of ministry and to be executed by the church, mission hospitals were created even in countries like Zimbabwe. Wesley indicates that between 1724 and 1732, he studied "medical treatises while at Oxford and when he went to Georgia in 1736 as a missionary Wesley read medical texts including one for medicinal herbs by John Tennent who listed herbs found in the continent"(Maddox 2007:6).

Things only changed when the Royal College of Physicians in London sought to control certification of medical practitioners and the clergy were targeted for exclusion (Porter 1995:375). Wesley refused to be deregistered from offering medical guidance and to leave it to those who were certified by the College because for him he was grounded in the holistic understanding of salvation. In his definition of salvation, Wesley did not limit it to the forgiveness of sins rather; he opted for a holistic approach, viewing salvation as God's forgiveness of sins that is combined with healing the damage caused by sin. This is equally seen in his advice to his friend Alexander Knox, who was sick. He said:

...it will be a double blessing if you give yourself up to the Great Physician, that He may heal soul and body together (Wesley Center Online 1778:16; see also Matlei 2002:16).

For John Wesley, the plan of God is to give both inward and outward health. And in this regard, Wesley understood that God provides full healing of body and soul through divine healing experience here and now. This idea was not the understanding of the Anglican Church and some Christians of his day who had the conviction that this was to happen at the resurrection time.

Wesley's strong view of a holistic approach to pastoral responsibilities is seen in his instructions to clergy and lay preachers about their ministry among Methodist people in his charge to them. He said that when they visited various societies, they should provide ongoing guidance and to recommend two important works – that of Thomas à Kempis on 'The

Imitation of Christ', which Wesley valued as a guide to spiritual health, and the 'Primitive Physic' which Wesley prepared as a guide to physical health (Maddox 2007:8). In this Wesley had a desire to enable his preachers to be able to dispense personal advice along with books. This, in my view, points to the fact that Wesley valued informed advice through education rather than reliance on irrational decisions that are not substantiated by the knowledge and authority of scholarship.

In Methodism, this was not limited to deacons only, but it was extended to local lay women and men who were involved in day today ministerial activities (equated today to class leaders who have the responsibility to exercise pastoral care in looking after the sick and the poor in the community). The office of the visitor of the sick were expected to visit sick members in their area three times a week to inquire into the state of their souls and their bodies and to offer or procure advice for them in both regards (Maddox, 2007:8). Wesley, in this context, ministered to both physical and spiritual, both the soul and the body, as he extended his hand to others. In his desire and commitment to care for the physical body, he was grounded in his belief of the encompassing nature of salvation whilst he advocated a holistic approach that encompasses all healing methods. His advice in 1788 to Samuel Bradburn, who was taking care of Charles Wesley whose health was deteriorating, gives more insight advising that, whether his brother was to die or not Dr Whitehead was to be taken to him, if he was not able to go out he has to do exercises or if he is to die he should be persuaded to use a wooden horse twice or three times a day and he advised him to be electrified (Bristol, 13 March 1788 letter to Samuel Bradburn) see also (Matlei 2001).

It is evident from this letter that John Wesley valued both professional and traditional medical treatment. Wesley insisted that Charles should consult a medical doctor. He did not reject medical care even if he himself had developed his natural and traditional remedies for the body. For Wesley, the best advice is sought from a good and honest physician. In this regard, Wesley endorsed or affirmed both divine and medical healing (Maddox 2007).

Another view on health is seen from the letter Wesley wrote to Robert Carr Brackenbury, 13 February 1784, when Wesley encouraged the use of medical care. He wrote:

...it is undoubtedly our duty to use the most probable means we can for either preserving or restoring our health. But, after all, God does continually assert His own right of saving both

souls and bodies. He blesses the medicines, and they take place; ...I commend you to him who is able to heal both your soul and body (Matlei 2002:7).

Wesley indicates to us the possibility of not only relying on faith healing but also to do our part in preserving and restoring our health through the use of medicines, which he categorically spelt out, are blessed by God. At the same time, Wesley is also teaching us to put trust in God through prayer as he considers God to be the medicine of all medicines.

Regarding emotional disturbances, or what Wesley called lunacy and madness or demonic afflictions, Wesley read the book by George Cheyne in 1742 which argued that true lunacy and madness are as a result of natural causes and they require natural cures (Maddox 2007:12). This made Wesley not to spiritualise all kinds of mental afflictions but rather to approach them cautiously. He even recommended institutional care for lunatics at St Luke's Hospital. Wesley also included natural cures for mental illness in 1747 in the *Primitive Physic*, signifying that in addition to prayers, people should be treated by either professional or traditional means. This is clearly articulated in his journal of 24 September 1742 where he attributed a case of raving madness simply to fever. He further recorded (in Journals of 5 June 1753, 2 July 1766) that "prayer for deliverance was not sufficient for curing lunacy or madness" (Works of John Wesley 19:299, 20:461-463, and 21:28-29, in Jackson 1872).

His wholesome approach to physical healing is also reflected in his journal of 12 May 1759 when he stated thus:

...why then do not all physicians consider how far bodily disorders are caused or influenced by the mind, and in those cases, which are utterly out of their sphere, call in the assistance of a minister; as ministers, when they find the mind disordered by the body, call in the assistance of a physician? But why are these cases out of their sphere? (Wesley 1703-1791:146).

A comprehensive way to approach all cases of illness is to exercise referral as one employs a balanced approach to health and healing. Wesley reminded his followers that "spiritual heaviness should not always be attributed to spiritual causes, it often reflects the impact of bodily disorders, acute diseases, calamities, poverty and the like" (Maddox 2007:17). Wesley understood healing in a multifaceted way and he practiced it in his ministry as an expression of his therapeutic focus on salvation. For humanity, this is the actualization of loving God and the neighbour because God's grace, increasingly delivers the human being from the

power of sin in this life. Therefore, love becomes the centre of Christianity (Hiatt 2008:35). For Wesley, this resonates well with “sanctifying grace which emphasises that full salvation is attained in this life here and now and in the pursuance of continual growth” (Maddox 1994:39-40).

3.7 Wealth as a Dominant Motif in Wesley’s Teaching on Salvation

As a result of the economic and political situations in England “many Methodists rose up the economic scale from poverty to modest affluence”(Hiatt 2008:48). Wesley’s sermon on the use of money, especially the two aspects on gaining and saving all you can, made a lot of sense in this period of political and economic turmoil in England. Wesley opposed the capitalistic ideology that was used to exploit people. He was against excess wealth, and at the same time, denounced excess sleep and all forms of self-aggrandisement as faithless stewardship of God’s creation. Wesley advocated for a work ethic (as emphasised in Genesis 3:19) and did not see money as evil in itself but how it is used. This work ethic principle is derived from Christian virtues that are found in the love of God and neighbour inclusive in the agenda of holy living includes “frugality, industry, honest sobriety and generosity” (Hiatt 2008:49) see also (Jennings 1990: 102).

Wesley’s third rule (Give all you can) is against accumulation of wealth beyond one’s need. The fact that Wesley was against wealth accumulation proved not easy, even to many prosperous Methodists who were left uncertain that their wealth can open the door to sin. The minutes of Conference of 1766 indicate that “many of the Methodists became rich and were lovers of the present world”(Outler 1964:238). As a result, those members who became rich merely ignored Wesley’s message. But it became one of the greatest worries for John Wesley as he doubted about the future of Methodism (Hiatt 2008:49). This situation is clearly shown towards the end of his ministry, especially on 16 April 1783 when he preached from 1Timothy 6:9 on the snares of riches. Again on 17 October 1787, he repeated preaching against the “Snare of riches in possession” from Psalm 73:12 in his sermon, “On God’s Vineyard”. In 1788, sermon 108 on riches was printed, and shortly before his death in 1791 he wrote, “the danger of increasing riches” sermon 131 (Jackson1872:516-17). Wesley addressed this theme of wealth throughout his ministry as he taught on salvation.

All of Wesley's sermons and writings against riches demonstrate his perspective on "surplus amassing as a result of discontentment," on what Hiatt (2008:50) called "Wesley's inventory of sins of praxis." Wesley placed it on par with the sins of adultery and murder, and considered the danger of riches as a snare or a trap of the devil that deters Christians' hope of salvation. Wesley also disputed the well-liked idea asserted by Puritans, that "honestly earned wealth was a sign of divine favour" (:50). The researcher also subscribes to the idea that the most radical point for a Wesleyan view of economics and relevance today is that "the stewardship of wealth and possessions is based on humanity acting as stewards on behalf of God who is the owner of everything." As entrusted by God humanity should therefore take care of God's possessions not for self-aggrandisement but for the good of others. (Jennings 1990:231; see also Hiatt 2008:50).

In the MCZ, the prosperity gospel can be traced back to the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, and his teaching on 'the use of money' (James 2014:140). The sermon on the use of money by Wesley reflected the way he actually lived. In his time, in the eighteenth century, inflation was not a problem. Wesley planned how he was going to spend his money on personal needs. He maintained the same amount on himself even when his personal income increased because of the sale of his books. Most of his income was used to relieve the poor and to spread the Methodist movement. When tax was imposed on household articles of gold and silver, Wesley said, he had "two silver teaspoons in London and two in Bristol". These were all the plate (meaning silver and gold cutlery or plates) that he had at that moment and he vowed not to buy any more while so many around him were in need of bread (Sugden 1921:310). He further claimed that, he sought the witness of God that his actions become more than what he teaches as he "gain, save, and give all he can" (: 311).

In the sermon 'The Use of Money', Wesley taught 'gain all you can, save all you can and give all you can'. Wesley's theology about money provides the foundation and explains the way in which the MCZ applies its teachings about money. Hence there were positive and negative responses towards the prosperity gospel by the leaders of the church, both laity and clergy, during interviews. White (1987) describes Wesley's teaching on money as giving simple, practical guidelines for Christians. His first rule was 'gain all you can', but he cautioned the believers that in the process of gaining all they can, they should do that without hurting their souls, minds and body, and even the souls, minds and body of their neighbours.

He advised people not to work in employment that will pollute the environment and endanger their lives. For Wesley, God calls us to gain all that we can by honest work and working hard and faithfully, to study in order to improve performance, and to use time wisely and well. He advised people not to delay in doing things that need to be done by putting all the strength into the work (James 2014:143).

Having gained all you can by honesty, wisdom and hard work, he also taught on saving all you can by not throwing away valuable possessions and wasting money on luxurious and idle entertainments (James 2014). He encouraged the believers to avoid an extravagant lifestyle by wasting money on very expensive food or drink. For Wesley, it is not only excessive eating or drinking that should be avoided but all those foods that cost a lot more than normal food. He urged people to be content with a plain, wholesome diet. He cautioned on wasting money on expensive clothing or unnecessary jewellery, expensive furniture, costly pictures, and elegant, rather than useful gardens, which can be very wasteful. He encouraged people not to copy their neighbours on these extravagances – instead, they need to follow Christ’s way. Wesley also hinted on admiration of Worldly people and said that people should not incur expenses that gratify their own pride or seek to be admired by other people. Humanity spends a substantial amount of money on food, clothing and furniture not to satisfy their needs or to look good but to add to their pride. “Prosperity attracts pride and admiration as such one should not waste money to draw public attention but to look for God’s praise” (Sugden 1921: 320).

For Wesley, indulgence increases desire; the more we indulge, the more we desire. On children, he advised that they should not be spoiled and exposed to luxury. When one dies, he or she should not leave too much money for it can be dangerous to the children. Wealth is like “arrows or fire” that can simply lead to “spiritual death” (James 2014: 145). One can argue that Wesley is saying this because he had no child of his own; perhaps if he had one, he would change his perception on inheritance.

It is not enough to earn all you can and save all you can without the third step: that is, give all you can. For Wesley, one would not have saved anything by only putting money into the bank. For him, burying that money is even better than throwing it into the sea, and banking it is not better than burying it; if you do not use it, you might just as well throw it away (Sugden 1921:323). He viewed humanity as stewards of God’s possessions, where God has entrusted

humanity with various valuables which are possessions that belong to God. Since humanity also belong to God, and all earthly possession also belong to God. Therefore, human beings are called to use these possessions in such a way that they are a holy sacrifice, acceptable through Christ Jesus (Romans 12:1).

Wesley provided a three-point guideline for using the goods that God has blessed humanity with. First, one has to buy all that one needs – be it food, clothing and all one needs – for healthy living. Second, one has to provide for wife, children, servants and anybody else who may be a dependant on him or her. Third, if there is anything left, one has to assist fellow Christians who are in need, and the rest should be given to God because you are not using it. These three important points show that for Wesley, one should not only give tithes to God but more than the tithe, as a sacrificial giving of all things that are extra in one's life. If one goes for six months without putting on a particular shirt or other type of clothing, then automatically that clothing should be given to those in need (James 2014).

In his sermon, John Wesley advocated for a principle of giving that was attainable and that would inculcate an element of sacrificial giving. This concept was then taught to believers as basic principles to follow and became part of Methodist practices passed on from generation to generation. This was also contextualised to suit different environments. In the MCZ, this concept was enshrined in the Standing Orders (2011:197) where in the Church a member is committed to worship, Holy Communion, prayer, Bible study and responsible giving. In the MCZ, the concept of tithing and sacrificial giving was demonstrated by the first native Christians. They dedicated themselves to the work of building the first Methodist Church structure at Epworth, as recorded in the Rhodesia Methodist Quarterly Review (1963:232):

...Minister we have heard what you say; we knew it would cost a lot of money to have an iron roof on the church, but we did not think it would be so much as £100.00. Still we must have an iron roof cost what it may; we can work for the money--- but let us have an iron roof. See down there in the village I have been building myself a large new hut, and it has a roof of thatch and shall the House of God only have a roof the same as mine? But let it have a roof of iron. See from the picture the church has an iron roof, it is free of debt which means that people have contributed over £200.00 for the building besides making the bricks and now this is a monument of God's grace through sacrifices.

Teaching on giving for the MCZ has a work ethic, is sacrificial and built on generosity without compulsion, and is for the benefit of the church of God for both members and leaders who together with the members are stewards of God's possessions. "Accountability, honesty, integrity, transparency, equality, inclusivity, flexibility and professionalism" are the core values guiding this church as seen in its mission statement (MCZ 2016:2).

3.8 An Analysis of Subsequent Representation of the Doctrine of Salvation

From the discussion on the doctrine of salvation, one can deduce that the MCZ has diverted from and paraphrased the original version of *Ordo Salutis*, moving from an emphasis on health and wealth motifs to concentrating now on the shorter version centred on 'the four Alls' (first propagated by Fitzgerald in 1903 and paraphrased by Margaret James, as already indicated in this chapter). This summarized version and paraphrased version greatly dilutes an already diluted approach to Wesley's *Ordo Salutis* by missionaries, who brought a watered down version, leaving out important issues of health and wealth addressed by John Wesley in his doctrine of salvation. This implies that clergy in ministerial formation receive a simplified and watered down version on *Ordo Salutis* because they use the paraphrased version of Wesley's sermons on salvation. Furthermore, UTC, being an ecumenical college, also further dilutes denominational biases. As a result, not much of Wesley's *Ordo Salutis* is taught, save for polity classes, which leave an hour a week for denominations to teach their doctrines to their clergy.

As also shown in the African (specifically Shona and Ndebele) view of what salvation is and is not, one can conclude that the major weakness of the missionaries when they transported and transplanted the gospel into Zimbabwe was to import a concept of God to forgive sins committed between neighbours, and to focus salvation with soul winning rather than with the salvation of the whole person. As a result Africans were not persuaded. This is an issue of appropriation because John Wesley never stepped foot in Africa, and in Zimbabwe specifically; as a result, his *Ordo Salutis* and his teachings, are diluted as they traverse from one country to the other and from one generation to another generation. Wesley was a man of his own generation more than 300 years ago. His traditions are carried over with a great deal of review, even though Zimbabwe had a direct link with the Methodist Church in Britain where John Wesley operated. Though important as the doctrine of salvation may appear to be, the process of transmission of this doctrine to the recipients in this case, clergy in training

entails many mutations, hence the end product will be diluted and may not adequately equip the clergy to respond to opportunities and challenges posed by the prosperity gospel.

Wesley's theology of salvation was concerned with a holistic approach for both the soul and the body, as evidenced in his economic and health ethics. The question is what this means in Zimbabwe, a country that is faced with bad politics that lead to economic collapse and poverty. According to Haywood (1964:315) the thing that had stirred Wesley to write to the editors of Lloyd's Evening Post was the sight of people on the verge of starvation who were demoralized and living as beggars. For Wesley the cause of depressed conditions was in the hands of the rich who demanded sumptuous living, rising in prices of goods out of reach of the poor, scarcity of food because of farm land was converted into pastures of horses that were to be traded to France and heavy taxes was imposed to the poor people. This scenario is a replica of what is happening in Zimbabwe today where there is hiking of prices, shortages of goods and taxes imposed on citizens offset government expenditure. This calls for the clergy to usher in a prophetic voice to the government to address all the economic hardship people are facing. Like Wesley who stand in the gap of the poor the clergy who are trained should equally appropriate teachings of Wesley in their context. This calls for contextualization of Wesleyan ethics and Biblical ethics to be transformative in the Zimbabwean context and MCZ in particular. All mission theology is contextual theology because it involves the communication of gospel truth by someone with a particular context to someone else in a different context (Bevans, 1994:10):

Contextualization is not something on the fringes of the theological enterprise. It is at the very centre of what it means to do theology in today's world. Contextualization, in other words, is a theological imperative.

This kind of contextualization operates therefore at the level of meaning, and it sets up an ongoing process of reflection and action which continues to refine our understanding of what the gospel will mean for that particular context (Nicholls 1979:20ff). Some advocates of this process allow the context to be the hermeneutical key that is the context itself gives us the categories in which the gospel is to be understood. Others acknowledge the need for the two way process of interpretation, but want to maintain the authority of the gospel to speak to the context in a prophetic way. Bediako 1992: xii) confirms this by saying:

It is possible to ask fresh questions of the Christian tradition of the past, questions which can in turn illuminate the task of constructing local theologies and the doing of theology in our religiously pluralistic modern world.

In as much as some critics the likes of H. Plumb criticise Wesley and his *Primitive Physic* as anti-enlightenment and regressive in thinking (1974:9). Wesley's ethics sought to improve the lives of the poor in various ways. Socially, economically, and medically, Wesley made a major impact on many of the poor, so much so, that the likes of Stone (2001) argue that it prevented a revolution in England, though this may seem far-fetched for some, this claim alone seems to attest to the overall impact with which Wesley's ethics had on the lives of the poor.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has managed to trace Wesleyan teachings with regard to the doctrine of salvation, where it has been observed that the order of salvation can be traced from prevenient grace, to justifying grace and sanctifying grace. These concepts were explained in several ways by John Wesley in his sermons and teachings. For example, he once considered them as repentance, faith and holiness, where repentance was taken as the porch and faith as the door to holiness. In the study, it has also been discovered that in a later development of the 20th century, these teachings on salvation were summarized through the works of William Fitzgerald who came up with 'the four Alls', explained above. The study goes further to explain the African understanding of salvation, particularly from the Shona/Ndebele perspective, in order to address why it is appealing to Africans. The chapter presents the way Wesley used the concepts of health and wealth as themes interacting within the doctrine of salvation.

This chapter concludes that Africans not only see salvation as an escape from the wrath of God and salvation of souls in the hereafter. Instead, they view salvation, from Christ's incarnation, life, death, resurrection and *Parousia*, to be a complete package that involves the individual and the society, soul and body, present and future. This is also in line with Methodist clergy who are serving. As one respondent in the interviews said, "It is a whole gospel to a whole community and it is a package of salvation of the soul guaranteed eternal life through the cross of Christ" (M18 2017). As such, Christians must work for their salvation.

It is also concluded that salvation in the African context means addressing issues that hold back Africans from reaching their full potential here and now (Mugabe 1993). These elements may include amongst others oppression, poverty, diseases, starvation, economic hardships, political violence, sexism and racism. From Wesley's preferential option for the poor, salvation means the humanizing of people who have been dehumanized by societal evil and by personal sin. Wesley emphasized that we cannot claim to love God in our hearts and at the same time turn a blind eye to human greed, hatred, sexism, police brutality, racism, adultery, bigotry, child abuse, and all kinds of perversions which are part of human existence. His thoughts are also in line with the African view of salvation which is against all kinds of human suffering. What Wesley said is not at the periphery of the gospel but at the core and centre of the gospel. "It is a progressive humanization of society based on 'being more' rather than having more, thus restoring meaning and wholeness to society and to the entire universe" (Mugabe 1993:40-41).

The chapter finally concludes by showing that though the doctrine of salvation was the major focus of the gospel by missionaries to Zimbabwe, they failed to appropriate it within the African understanding of salvation; hence the gospel of prosperity becomes more appealing to Africans since it identifies with their understanding of the concept of salvation. It further concludes that Wesley's ethical economic idea was grounded in a socialist rather than a capitalist view and is premised on biblical principles for practical ministry purposes. Wesley's tripartite dictum in the sermon "The Use of Money" clearly indicates his views and approach to economics which is against a utilitarian philosophy based on a materialistic worldview. Wesley offered holistic and consistent matters of health that is reintegrated with the importance of non-material facet to life, something that cannot be controlled by economics (Stone 2001). Wesley also managed to organize the Methodist believers to mediate for those who are marginalized because of adverse economic policies and deficiencies by spearheading efforts to abolish and condemn slavery, and his tremendous efforts to provide loans to help the poor to start their own business.

Wesley's commitment to holistic health and wealth in salvation is a heritage that Methodists should cherish and stand for in their own time taking cognisance that contexts differ. It is important to see how this heritage has been articulated in institutions of clerical training as to equip the clergy to embrace the opportunities and challenges posed by the prosperity gospel

particularly in Zimbabwe. Transformational contextualization has been emphasized in order to make sense of Wesley's teachings in the MCZ today. The next chapter will focus on assessing the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ ministers, starting with the establishment of theological training colleges, with emphasis on how Wesleyan teachings of *Ordo Salutis* are taught through polity classes.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE CONTEMPORARY MODEL OF MCZ MINISTERIAL FORMATION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three offered an outline of Wesley's theology of salvation with a special focus on prevenient grace, convincing grace, justifying grace and sanctifying grace. Chapter three also offers a brief overview of an African view or understanding of salvation in order to identify certain crucial aspects of the traditional African world view, especially on health and wealth that seem to have been invoked by the prosperity gospel. A separate section was dedicated to how health and wealth feature as dominant themes in Wesley's theology of salvation. Chapter three concludes by showing that though the doctrine of salvation was the cradle of the gospel brought by missionaries to Zimbabwe, they failed to integrate it with the African understanding of salvation. Hence the gospel of prosperity has become more appealing to Africans since it identifies with their understanding of the concept of salvation, despite the fact that Wesley was the forerunner of prosperity theology in Methodism. The previous chapter connects well with this chapter on models of ministerial formation in that it is through ministerial formation that the concept of salvation is taught to the clergy.

This chapter will focus on assessing the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ clergy. As already indicated in chapter one, the study interrogates issues that are intricately linked to theological formation of clergy leaders within the MCZ in the context of Zimbabwe. The ecclesial identity of the MCZ is shaped by Wesleyan theology. As a result, attention is given to one aspect, that of *Ordo Salutis* (order of salvation). It also reflects on how the current teaching of the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis* at the theological college prepares Methodist clergy to respond to the influences of the prosperity gospel. By interrogating the curriculum, the researcher identifies whether the themes of health and wealth that are present in Wesley's theology of salvation are still taught and relevant to equip the clergy to respond to challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel. In other words, how does the curriculum that embraces the teaching of *Ordo Salutis* in the seminary equip clergy in MCZ to offer life-affirming responses to the challenges and opportunities posed by the religio-cultural understanding and practice of the prosperity gospel?

In order to address the above, this chapter starts by investigating the historical development, nature and purpose of theological training of candidates for the ministry within the MCZ in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe. The study also examines the reasons for starting the training of indigenous clergy, the nature of the training vis-à-vis the needs of the Zimbabwean context.

An assessment of two key theological institutions, namely, Epworth Theological College (hereinafter called ETC) from 1899 to 1958, now called United Theological College (UTC) located in Hatfield, Harare, from 1959 to date, and Zimbabwe Theological Education by Extension (ZIMTEE) from 1999 to 2013, will be done in order to ascertain the merits and demerits of conducting theological training of clergy using these models. The residential theological training of clergy is the most prominent model of theological education brought by expatriates. This model will be compared with a new alternative model of theological education by extension that is rapidly growing.

The chapter raises questions regarding the relevance of theological training to the Church in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, whether the trained clergy are truly indigenous and relevant African Christian theologians or just western Christian theologians in a black skin? To what extent is the trained clergy able to respond to challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel? As Africans in general and Zimbabweans in particular are they claiming their rightful African identity: What role are the theological institutions playing in order to equip clergy to fulfil the desired goal? These and other questions will be attempted to be answered within the context of a serious shift, decline and de-Christianisation of the Western World on the one hand, and the ever-growing Christian Churches in the Third World, especially in Africa and Zimbabwe specifically.

This chapter is one of the key chapters in this study. It gives the model of ministerial formation used by the MCZ with its candidates to equip them for ministerial duties in their circuits²⁵. The chapter gives the reader insight into how clergy are formed in the MCZ. This intrinsically connects with the curriculum covered by the theological colleges, specifically in their polity classes where one aspect (*Ordo Salutis*) of the curriculum is under study. After which, it will inform the analysis of this study.

²⁵ According to the Standing Orders 101 (2011) of the MCZ, the expression Circuit means several Churches united for mutual encouragement and helps, formed into or recognized as a Circuit by Conference (2011:30).

4.2 Origins and Development of Theological Training Models in the MCZ

The historical facts and activities that shaped the growth and development of theological training is categorized into three episodes, namely: the period of total control by missionaries (1899–1935); the period of the growth of the indigenous clergy (1936–1976); and the period of indigenous autonomous leadership (1977–2017).

4.2.1 Period of Total Control of Missionaries and the In-service Theological Training Model

Before the establishment of the Nengubo/Waddilove training institution, African teachers and evangelists were recruited from the Transvaal and Cape Colony (Zvobgo 1991:17) particularly from the MCSA. Zvobgo further observes that, even though they were good men their efficiency was greatly held back by their limited training. Initially, early clergy were getting what we call in-service training. The earliest clergy, such as Ramushu and others, who came as evangelists from MCSA with the pioneer missionaries, never went to a theological college because there was none to talk about. As stated in the minutes of the Rhodesia District Synod held in Bulawayo in 1898, Josias Ramushu, having served for 5½ years as a native evangelist, was recommended to be received on probation as assistant African minister. He did not go to any theological college, when he was accepted for ministry he was stationed to work in the circuit under the supervision of the Rev Oswald Brigg who was a white missionary (Gondongwe 2011). Ramushu used the in-service training model up to the time he received his ordination in 1910, together with Samuel Tutani who joined the ministry in 1906 and was ordained in 1913. This was stressed by Gondongwe in an interview held at Wesley House when he said:

...Tutani, Moleli and Ramushu all those early ministers who got ordained received in-service training where they were working in the circuits under the strict supervision of missionaries and they were exposed to some theological discourses and at the end of the desired period they got ordained and became ministers, but obviously that system had its own weaknesses (Gondongwe 2017).

In this model of training, a candidate was accepted and continued to work in the circuit under the supervision of the Superintendent clergy who was a white missionary. The white missionaries continued to write progress reports, year after year, with regards to the progress

of the probationer. Ramushu was eventually ordained in 1910, making him the first African to be ordained in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Rhodesia. His ordination came after 10 years in the ministry. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was not alone in being slow to ordain indigenous clergy. After these pioneers who had been ordained without attending any theological institution, all others were enrolled at the institution that was established as a matter of urgency.

4.2.2 The Institutional Theological College Model

It is indicated by Zvobgo (1991:17) that Rev John White wrote to Marshall Hartley, the Secretary of Conference in Britain, that if their mission work was to be as successful as they desired, there was a need for better educated men. This became the factor that necessitated the establishment of the training institution. As indicated in chapter three, the first theological institution was established in Mashonaland at Nengubo in 1899 under John White who was the clergy in the area (Chinyeze and Gordon 1959:7). Rev John White, who came in 1894, is credited with starting this noble venture.²⁶ The name Nengubo was later changed to “Waddilove in 1916 in honour of benefactor Sir Joshua Waddilove” (:7).

4.2.2.1 Nengubo/Waddilove Institution

Nengubo training institution’s first intake was in 1900, starting with six male students which included James Kamira, Jonas Chihota and Petros Lewanikwa among others. Both trained as evangelists. The main objective of the training institution was to give students biblical and theological knowledge to fit them to be preachers and pastors, and education and training in teaching to fit them to be efficient school masters (Zvobgo 1991:17). Waddilove remained an institution of theological training until 1953 when the clergy began to train at Epworth Theological College.

Gondongwe states that, the courses for ministerial formation at Waddilove include among others, “Theology, New Testament, Church History, Christian Ethics, History of Methodism and Homiletics” (2011:92). The course was completed in two years. After successfully completing this course, the students graduated with a Certificate in Theology. These

²⁶The reader should take note that the name Nengubo was named after Chief Nengubo who gave permission to Evangelist Modumedi Moleli, one of the pioneer evangelists from South Africa, to preach the gospel to his people in 1892. Moleli was later killed in rebellion.

candidates had to spend five years as a Probationer in a Circuit, practicing after training at Waddilove.

The probationer was later received into full connexion, after passing required annual examinations in Methodism, Scripture and Theology. Examinations were set from prescribed text books by the Synod for post-collegiate studies. Ordination could be deferred on the recommendation of a Superintendent. Additionally, probationers were required to submit to their Superintendent a list of books that they would have read in the course of that particular year. If a probationer did not satisfactorily pass his or her examinations or if his or her character and work was questionable and not satisfactory, the Synod could recommend to the British Conference, either that his or her probation be extended, or that he or she retires from the training. Gondongwe (2011) indicates that, in principle the training considered to be completed when one was ordained but, even after ordination, the cleric was expected to continue reading, in order to broaden his or her scope. The researcher noted that the Waddilove Training Institute was established to train Africans to be good labourers and servants. It had several departments such as agriculture, industrial, literacy, medical, theology, and printing. But the theological department was the anchor of them all.

The training was characterised by not only racial discrimination but also gender disparities. Whites and Africans received their training separately. African women were further discriminated from receiving training with fellow African male students. The training of clergy remained a preserve of the males only, until 1977 when Margaret James, a white lady, joined the ministry. But she did not go to train in Epworth where indigenous clergy trained; rather she enrolled with University of South Africa (hereinafter called UNISA). Gondongwe (2011) relates that, in 1977 two candidates for the ministry were accepted namely, Levee Kadenge and Margaret James who became the first woman in the MCZ to be accepted for ministerial formation. Of interest is that Kadenge was sent to UTC but James was allowed to do her theological studies through the University of South Africa (UNISA). Being the first female clergy and being white, the church paid for her learning expenses in full at UNISA which was non-residential. James was allowed to work as a clergy whilst studying and when she completed, she graduated with a Bachelor of Theology, a qualification which many indigenous clergy took long to obtain.

For Gwenambira, theological training programmes soon attracted others because many of those exposed to literacy education were able to read and write. Learners were also fascinated

by the different skills given to the African people through the training (2006:37). This was an educational programme for Africans that exposed learners to teacher training, theology, literacy, agriculture, building, carpentry, and many others. As time went on, more teachers and evangelists were trained by this institution. Even though the church trained an immense number of evangelists and teachers, there was still a need to train indigenous clergy whose training was beyond what the evangelists were trained for and who could, subsequently, fulfil many more responsibilities (Gondongwe 2011:85). This is clearly indicated by John White (1920) in the report about mission work in Rhodesia when he says:

...a leading principle of our society is to do as much as possible of the teaching and the preaching by means of native evangelists, leaving the European ministers free to supervise and direct, hence the Waddilove Institution. There are some 80 students receiving industrial, literary and religious instruction to fit them to lift up their own people. From the most reliable of these men some have been selected as native ministers (1920: 4).

Those evangelists who wanted to join the African ministry were easily accepted on condition they received a 75% vote of confidence from the delegates of the circuit quarterly meeting from which they were candidates. The candidate should have displayed exceptional discipline during his or her training as a teacher and evangelist. A satisfactory report from one's Superintendent was a prerequisite for the process of candidature. During those days it was also a requirement from the ministerial training committee of MCZ that a candidate for the African ministry was to be a qualified teacher and a fully accredited preacher of the MCZ for at least two years.

The candidate must have been baptized and be a full member of the church. "As a general rule, no candidate above thirty years was to be accepted for the African ministry. Synod further ruled that every candidate was to be examined by the Synod in post Standard Six literary works"(Zvobgo 1991:116). Gondongwe notes that as a matter of principle, candidates should have read Wesley's sermons numbers 1-44 and must endorse the doctrines together with Wesley's ideas about slavery and the rules and regulations of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia. Candidates were also to be knowledgeable in five of Charles Wesley's songs and the general knowledge about the life and works of John Wesley (2011:85).

These requirements stated above show that theological candidates were to take seriously the doctrine enshrined within Wesleyan teachings through his sermons, one of which is the

doctrine of salvation as already explored in chapter three. Ross however warned that, as Africans, we should stay away from the temptation to try and duplicate eighteenth century Wesleyans. “We would be foolish to simply repeat Mr. Wesley’s words and patterns in our context as if neither three hundred years nor seven thousand kilometres separate us...” (2005:2). With a contrary view, Millard (2005:133) held that Wesley had a fair idea of what the African countryside was like. The source of his knowledge could have been people who had been there, especially when Wesley described slavery in the West Coast of Africa. Though the context may differ, Wesley’s teachings are applicable in the Zimbabwean context but with a lot of contextualization and revision in order to appropriate these well with indigenous congregants. The themes of health and wealth in salvation cut across boundaries, hence become universal.

Apart from Wesley’s sermon, a candidate was to be knowledgeable in the life and history of John Wesley. This shows that Wesley’s life history and teachings remained credible and applicable in the MCZ. His thoughts and actions became the basis of the church’s praxis and theological beliefs. Gondongwe demonstrates the extent to which the indigenous Methodist ministers had swallowed the Wesleyan history and tradition left, right and centre, by revealing how one MCZ African clergy was asked the number of children he desired to have, all things being equal. His response was that he would have as many children as God would allow because his example is Samuel Wesley who had many children and the most successful of them came last (2011:88). In an interview, Dube (2017) argues that:

...For us in the Methodist tradition the emphasis on Wesley does not begin at the stage of ministerial formation. It begins earlier on because they are trained as local preachers. We don’t accept candidates who come before they are trained as local preachers. There are some requirements there that they must have some basic understanding on Wesley and the second stage is the candidature stage where there are specific readings that are assigned; the students write exams as pre-collegiate where they are supposed to know sermons on Wesley, at least twelve sermons on John Wesley that will be the standard model at this stage.

A candidate was to preach a trial sermon that was to be heard by two clergy (one European, one African). The European clergy was the one to advise the candidate of the date, venue and time the sermon was to be preached. A report of the sermon was compiled and a possible mark was to be reported to the Examination Secretary. In addition, a written sermon in

vernacular, different from the one preached on, was to be forwarded by the candidate to the Examination Secretary two months before Synod.²⁷ An examination was written in September in Theology and Biblical Knowledge. A theology examination was a simple test on the candidate's knowledge of Christian experience; God's purpose for the world and the meaning of the church and the Sacraments. In Biblical Knowledge, it tested the candidate's knowledge about the great men and women of the Old Testament, the Psalms, the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Books for these examinations were prescribed from time to time.

The candidate had to appear before the Ministerial Session of Synod for an oral examination in Scripture, Theology and Rules and Regulations of the MCZ. An oral narration of one's conversion, religious experience and a call to join ministry was heard by clergy who would in turn ask questions for clarification. Zvobgo reiterates that, "one was required to state to the Synod one's attitude to *lobola* with regard to his daughters and wards and the extent of his financial liabilities, if any" (1991:116). One who was heavily in debt was not accepted. The period between acceptance as a candidate and reception into Full Connexion was to be seven years, of which two years were to be spent in the training course and five years on probation²⁸. The five years of probation as a rule were to commence after two years at a training institution, save in special circumstances where one could be appointed to serve part of his probation in a circuit before entering a training institution and the other part after leaving training.

Before ordination, a probationer was required to take annual examinations in Scripture and Theology from prescribed set books. In addition, every probationer was required to pass an examination in Methodist law and discipline before he was recommended for acceptance into Full Connexion. A list of books read during the year was a requirement. These books were to be submitted to the Examination Secretary without delay. A written report of the character and work of each African clergy on trial was to be forwarded by his Superintendent to the Examination Secretary a full month before Synod. If a probationer did not satisfactorily pass

²⁷The expression 'Synod' means a meeting of all the Ministers in a District, and of such Laypersons as are under the regulations of the Conference for the time being entitled to attend a Synod(MCZ (2011).*Deed of Church Orders and Standing Orders*. Harare: Research and Publications; Standing Orders 101 (2011:28)).

²⁸The expression 'Probationer' means a person who has been admitted by Conference upon probation for the ministry and is fulfilling ministerial duty by the appointment of the Conference but has not yet been admitted into Full Connexion (Standing Orders 101 (2011:29)).

his examinations, or if his character and work were not acceptable, the Synod could recommend to the British Conference either that his period of probation is lengthened or that he or she retires from the work. Now let us see the progression of the indigenous clergy.

4.2.3 The Period of the Growth of the Indigenous Clergy

Among the first indigenous clergy to train at Waddilove were: “M. Mfayi, K.M. Gazi, G. Malusalila and M.K. Zvimba. In 1920 the MCZ had recruited eight indigenous clergy” (Gondongwe 2011: 92). Waddilove remained the institution of theological training until 1953, when the indigenous clergy trained at Epworth theological college. In 1926, Matthew Jacha Rusike was accepted by Synod as a candidate for African ministry. He was from Kadoma and was a former student of Waddilove mission school (Zvobgo 1991:117). He was ordained in 1934 and became the first indigenous Methodist clergy to be appointed Superintendent. He was stationed in Makwiro Circuit in 1936. His splendid work justifies the experiment of placing African clergy in charge of circuits. Three more African clergy were ordained in 1936, namely: Revd Thompson D. Samukange, Simon J. Chihota and Esau T.J. Nemapare. In 1937, Revd Thompson Samukange was appointed Superintendent of Kwenda Circuit and he became the second African Methodist clergy to be elevated to that position (Zvobgo 1991:118; see also Gondongwe 2011:92).

The above scenario indicates that the white missionaries were reluctant to elevate indigenous clergy and they were not yet prepared to relinquish power. But these appointments marked the preparations of exposing indigenous clergy to positions of authority. Some of the indigenous clergy who exuded outstanding performances include, among others, Simon J. Chihota, Esau T.J. Nemapare and Andrew M. Ndhlela. This is seen in the important role played by these African clergy in the MCZ. Zvobgo (1991:118) writes that Simon Chihota was a former student of Waddilove. He trained as an evangelist-teacher and was stationed in the following circuits: Kwenda Circuit in 1917, Tegwani Circuit, and Broken Hill Circuit in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in 1921. In 1925 he joined Waddilove staff, Chipembi Circuit back in Zambia in 1931, Wankie Circuit in 1934 and Salisbury (now Harare) in 1936 (:118). He became the first African Tutor at Waddilove Theological Training College in 1940. This marked the genesis of Africans coming to train other African clergy in matters of faith in the MCZ.

Gondongwe (2011:94) argues that three tutors, namely, Revd Fredrick Hudson who did not have a degree, W.A Hoskins who had a Master's Degree in Arts, and Enoch Musa, an African tutor who held no academic degree whose responsibility was mainly training of evangelists, were in the theological department at Waddilove Training Institution. It can be deduced that the level of theological training African clergy received was low compared to their counterparts, as attested by Thorpe (1951) when he says:

... Candidates for the ministry have been almost without exception, trained teachers, and often with evangelist-training as well. Ministerial responsibilities in a backward country involve candidature at a relatively advanced age, and during the three different spells of training at the institution the necessary testing is accomplished. But we are on the threshold of a new age. There is the prospect now that our candidates, in increasing numbers, will be matriculates, or at least of junior certificate standard and a theological course of greater intellectual range will become possible (1951:116).

As Thorpe may have observed that the training seemed somewhat inadequate, it must be noted that from its own historical context, the education was not inferior to general standards of African education at the time. Thorpe's opinion could have been informed by his acquaintance with the level of theological education given to contemporary white missionaries. A remarkable progress in training is observed in 1950 where the church produced twenty-five African clergy, compared to the number of white missionaries (twenty-one) serving the church in the same year (Gondongwe 2011:95). It shows that the process of indigenization in theological colleges was moving at a fast pace.

In 1938, Nemapare was also appointed as one of the two African representatives on the Waddilove Theological Department Committee. In 1946 Nemapare was the only African Methodist clergy left in charge of 21 teachers with about 896 day school pupils, as stated by Zvobgo (1991:120). In 1947 Nemapare broke away from the Methodist Church to form his own church called the African Methodist Church (hereinafter called AMEC). The name of his church signifies that he was not happy with the dominance of white missionaries in the MCZ and opted for an independent church without the influence of the white minority. It also shows that he wanted an African flavour in the way of worship and the theological impetus in the MCZ, hence the motive to start his church with an African identity. The breakaway also reflects that indigenous clergy were ripe to be in leadership positions. It could be that he did not want to work under white missionaries like Matthew Zvimba who also formed his church

called Shirichena (White bird) because he did not want to work under white missionaries (Zvobgo 1991:82 see also Gondongwe 2011:94).

Another African clergy of significance is Andrew Ndhlela who was also a former student at Waddilove. He trained as a teacher-evangelist at this institution. In 1941 he was accepted for ministry. In 1942-3 he was an honorary Chaplain for the African Air Forces in Harare. In 1944 he was back at Waddilove Theological Training College for two years (Zvobgo 1991:120) pursuing a Certificate in Theology. He studied Theology, New Testament, Church History, Christian Ethics, History of Methodism and Homiletics. The curriculum outline gives an idea of the areas covered during ministerial formation, among which History of Methodism was taught as a course. In 1946 Ndhlela was a Circuit clergy in Harare African Circuit where he spent eight years. Later he transferred to Shurugwi in 1954. He worked there for ten years as Circuit Superintendent and Principal of Pakame Boarding Primary School (Zvobgo 1991:121; Gondongwe 2011:95).

The report on the Methodist Mission Society (1964:25) notes that, “in 1964 Andrew Ndhlela was appointed the first African Chairman of the District and General Superintendent of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia.” This is an office that was a reserve for Whites only. Ndhlela’s appointment as the first African chairman of the Rhodesia District expressed conviction that the time had come for Africans to exercise the highest responsibility and leadership. According to Zvobgo (1991:121), “Ndhlela led the Church for thirteen years from 1965 to 1977.” During these years the Church requested for autonomy from the Methodist Church in Britain. When autonomy was granted on 16 October 1977, Revd Andrew Ndhlela was elected the first President and he held this office for three years before retiring at the Conference of 1980 (Zvobgo 1991:121; see also Gondongwe 2011:95; Mawire 2015:48).

Some of the last group of African ministers who were trained at Waddilove before the college relocated to Epworth in Harare included, among others, J.C. Mashingaidze, H. Kachidza, E. M. Musa, E. M. Mapondera, S. Munyama, S. L. Zwana, O. Kawonza, W.J. Ramushu, O. Ramushu, N. Chiyoka, C. C.G. Mazobere, G. Myama, N. Zaba, J. Mamukwa, R. Chibasa, D.V. Sitshela, N. Z. Makwehe, M. Chidarikire, W. V. Gubudu, J. Siamtinta, S. Z. Sithole, J. D. Tabaziba and C.B. Manyoba (Zvobgo 1991:121).

4.2.4 Epworth Theological College/ United Theological College

It is at this stage important to note that from 1953 to 1963, there was a Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland that brought together three countries – Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (Malawi). This union was to a large extent in favour of Zimbabwe since a lot of infrastructure was put in place in this country. In relation to theological training, the first university was built in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Churches decided to benefit from it (Gwenambira 2006:36). The period was also characterised by a new black consciousness and nationalism. The demand for recognition and self-determination was not limited to national politics. Education in general and also theological education in particular helped prepare future African leadership.

In 1952 the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland opened its doors to its first students. The MCZ, without much ado, moved their theological training to Epworth mission farm so as to give their students easy access to the university. The college is situated about 11km east of Harare and 15 km away from the then newly established University of Zimbabwe. According to Gondongwe (2011:96), “when the college moved to Epworth in 1954 there were two full-time lecturers namely: Robert Forshaw who had a Master’s Degree and Shadreck Ushewokunze who was an indigenous clergy with a Certificate in Theology from Waddilove Training Institute.” As mentioned earlier, Enock Musa was deployed as a lecturer for evangelists before Ushewokunze. It is commendable to note that at this stage a black clergy was deployed to teach fellow Africans who were training to be ordained ministers and not evangelists, while “in the neighbouring South African Methodism, the first black lecturer was Simon Gqubule who was appointed in 1960 at Alice” (:96). This team at Epworth theological college had only one student by the name of Caspen Makuzwa.

Gwenambira (2006:38) claims that an idea for joint theological training between the Methodist Church in Rhodesia (Synod) and the American Methodist Episcopal Church (now United Methodist Church, hereafter called UMC) was mooted in 1917; however the idea faced a lot of resistance from the UMC. The two denominations have common roots in John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, but the missionaries radically differed in terms of moral issues, for example, the taking of snuff, tobacco and alcohol. The two Churches however continued to work hand in glove in other areas such as evangelism and invitations to their annual conferences. It is recorded in the UMC official journal (1945:81-82) that Rev. Mathew Jacha Rusike, representing the MCZ, attended the annual conference for UMC in

1945 and made a call for joint theological training in his address to the Conference delegates. As a result a committee was set by UMC to look into how that can be done and report to the next annual conference. “A decision to join the Methodist Church in Rhodesia was deferred until 1956” (Gwenambira 2006:38) when the two sister denominations designed a constitution on joint theological training.

In 1938, Thompson Samkange represented the MCZ at the International Missionary Council (hereinafter called IMC) in Tambaram, Madras where the idea of ecumenical ministerial formation was mooted (Ranger 1995:48; see also Gondongwe 2011:97). In March 1958, Rev. Fredrick Rea, who was then the Principal of Epworth Theological College, attended the plenary session of the International Missionary Conference in the university hall in Accra Ghana, when “the secretary announced the establishment of a fund of £1,300,000.00 for development and improvement of theological training for clergy of Asia, Africa and South America”(Rea 1963:370). This came on the eve of a union of MCZ and UMC in the joint training of clergy as indicated above. Each church was to provide two staff members and funds for a staff house and a classroom block where funds were available. This idea is contrary to that of Matikiti (2009:3) who suggested that the ecumenical idea was as a result of the instigation of Rhodesian Council of Churches. Since he is not an insider, his source is different from the records in the two denominations as cited.

In 1959, the UMC, which had its own theological training centre in Old Umtali, decided to work together with the MCZ by sending its students to train at Epworth Theological College. These students included, among others, Professor Kurewa, Dennison Nyamurowa, Ransom Choto and Ozias Kamusoko. They were considered because they were brighter students than the other average students who remained in Old Umtali (Gwenambira 2006:39). After the 1960 Conference of the Federations held at University of Rhodesia, where church leaders were provoked to think out of the box, other denominations started to consider seriously the issue of training at one college. Gondongwe (2011:100) remarked that besides the two Methodists who were already working together, progress was noted among the Presbyterians, the AMEC, the LMS, and the American Board Mission, who showed interest to join by sending students to the theological college. And some of these denominations were contributing towards the building programme. A council was formed to oversee the running of the college, and each sending church appointed representatives to the council.

In 1964, the enrolment had a white student for the first time in the history of theological training. It was in 1965 when the ELCZ became an active participating member of the growing interdenominational institution. Although the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (hereinafter called UCCSA) was already working with other denominations since the early 1960s, they only became active members of the institution in 1969 (Gondongwe 2011:101). The above scenario indicates the progress towards an ecumenical college; hence the name ETC was changed to UTC in 1976. This was done in order to capture the ecumenical drive.

UTC had the same courses and continued to offer a Certificate in Theology, as was offered at Waddilove. In 1964 the college introduced two streams, 'A' and 'B'. The first stream, 'A', was for students who prepared for the Central African Diploma in Theology, from those who were holders of a qualification equivalent to G.C.E. level. The second one was stream 'B' for a Certificate in Theology. In 1970 the curriculum was reviewed and new courses were added. The subjects taught included, among others, New Testament, Old Testament, Church History, Church Administration, Christian Ethics, Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Homiletics, Pastoral Care and Counselling, Polity, Systematic Theology, Ministry, Mission Theology and Music, African Theology, Black Theology, Christian Worship, Hellenistic Greek, World Religions, African Traditional Religion, Field Education and Christian Education (United Theological College Handbook 1970:4).

According to Gondongwe (2011:100), from 1954 to 1955, Robert Forshaw was the Principal of ETC. In 1956 Dr Fredrick B. Rea took over as Principal of the institution until 1964. The two were from the MCZ. Rev. K.E. Erickson from the UMC took over when Rea's term of office ended in 1966. In 1967, Rev Thomas Baird, another MCZ minister, was appointed Principal. A year later, Rev. K.E Erickson bounced back for the year 1968. In 1969, Rev. Dennis Salmon acted as Principal until 1970. It was in 1971 when Rev. Michael Appleyard, also an MCZ clergy, was appointed Principal of UTC and he led the institution until 1976. In the same year, Peter Russell from the MCZ acted as Principal until the arrival of Dr C.C. Mazobere who took over as Principal, and he became the first African Principal of the institution.

An analysis of the two periods from 1899 to 1976 reflects that the training of those who offered and were accepted for full time pastoral church service was different; they were sent

to separate theological colleges. The Africans were first accepted for training as evangelists, who after training did everything the clergy did except administering the sacraments, which was only done after given dispensation by Conference. Those with the necessary qualifications had the added task of being school teachers. Those who offered for the ordained ministry, who at times included some that had served as evangelists, were trained locally. The white candidates were always sent to England for training regardless of their academic qualifications. Mazobere (1991:156) comments that some senior missionaries went out of their way to make sure that no academically qualified Africans went abroad or even to colleges in South Africa, even when the church in that country offered full scholarships. The reason given by the missionaries was that Africans would be over qualified for their African congregations. This was however not correct because there were some Africans that were better educated and had a better command of the English language than the average worshipper in white-only congregations.

4.2.5 The Period of Indigenous Autonomous Leadership

The period 1977 was a remarkable one in the history of the MCZ. The MCZ celebrated the decade for women at the same time it attained her autonomy. This led to the advancing of women's rights and interests. Of much significance and influence was the image displayed by the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher. Women in the MCZ began to believe in themselves more and more and entered those domains once believed to be the preserve of men. The first woman to be trained in the MCZ was Rev. Margaret James. Even though she was given the privilege as a white lady to train with UNISA while stationed in a Circuit, it was breaking new ground. She was followed by Maybe Mugabe and Margaret Mawire in 1983 after many lonely years with only male colleagues in ministry. Although women were holding some positions like preachers, class leaders, stewards and in women's organisation at lower levels, they had not yet accepted to offer for ministry, even though this barrier was already dealt with by John Wesley who had included women in positions.

Another interesting development that started at UTC in 1977 was *ngoma nehosho* (drums and rattles) that was forbidden in almost all former missionary churches. It was Kurewa, a lecturer at UTC, with his quest to indigenize Christianity who argued that the gospel has to be in dialogue with African culture for Christianity to be meaningful to Africans. For him, the contextualization of the gospel was a momentous step towards autonomy. He also advocated

the use of African images during worship. His radicalism did produce a sense of awareness amongst his students and marked the genesis of contextualizing theology at the College. Kadenge (1991:113) argues that when autonomy was eventually achieved in October 1977, the Area Council was transformed into District Synods and the District Synod became the Conference of the MCZ.

Rev Andrew Ndhlela's appointment as President in 1977 came at the right time. The political situation in Rhodesia dictated that the reins of any progressive organization needed to be in the hands of a wise African leader. It was more difficult for the MCZ, which, from inception, had a double obligation to the whites and to the blacks alike. For Kadenge (1991:113), "Ndhlela proved to be the best choice for the time." Though he had difficulties when faced with revulsion from some in the white community who were not used to accepting leadership from Africans, he managed to keep the MCZ together during the most difficult time of its history. He became the roving ambassador of the church, visiting freedom fighters both inside and outside the country. He was one of the Chaplains to the Geneva talks. Ndhlela left the reins of leadership at the Conference of 1980 and handed them over to Rev Crispin Mazobere.

Before he took over the reins, Mazobere's ministerial history is chronicled by Gondongwe (2011:112) when he says, "When Mazobere applied to go to America, the answer from the church leadership was an emphatic no." Mazobere completed his teachers training at Waddilove and also acquired a Cambridge Ordinary Certificate at Goromonzi High School. It was in 1962 when he was sent by the church to work in Leicester North Circuit in England. When he returned to Rhodesia, he lectured at ETC until he left for the United States of America. The church had no clear policy on further studies, because the phenomenon had never been perceived as urgent at that time. Mazobere absconded to the United States when the church refused to give him permission to continue his studies. When he faced disciplinary action against his decision, he wrote a letter of apology from his base in the United States. The letter reads:

I profusely apologize for my defiance. You will remember that in my entire ministry, I had never been arraigned before a disciplinary committee for any charges. My coming here was necessitated by the fact that I was teaching at the theological college and the skills that I am going to acquire will be ploughed back if you give me another opportunity and pardon me. I

still believe the Lord has called me and I pray that the Standing Committee will have mercy on me (Gondongwe 2011:112).

It is true that the powerless always absorb insult without retaliating as a survival skill to earn pardon. This is seen in his letter of apology to the church. His apology was accepted and he was allowed to study. Upon completion of a Master of Sacred Theology he was supposed to return for duty but he chose to enrol for his PhD. The church at home decided to expel him on accusation that he was seeking employment in the States. Mazobere again used his diplomacy of flattering the dominant and wrote a letter to the President (Rev Ndhlela) stating his reasons for staying in the United States. In his communiqué, he stated that he had already secured scholarship from well-wishers; secondly, he could not return without a PhD since the African ministers were a mockery of the whites who accused them of being not educated; and lastly, he assured the President that he was not after his position, rather when he returns home he will be his advisor (Gondongwe 2011:113).

Mazobere was in the end allowed to complete his studies and returned in 1976. He was appointed to teach at the UTC, where he became the first black Principal. At the college, he lectured in Ethics and Sociology of Religion. Mazobere kept his promise to Ndhlela that he would not contest his position when he returned. He only took over as head of the Methodist Church when Ndhlela retired in 1980. Kadenge (1991:114) saw in Mazobere, a “stylistic Evangelist who travelled the length and breadth of the Connexion and conceived the idea of evangelism and also the initiator of education with production in Methodist schools in a short period of time he was in office.” He did not last long due to marriage challenges. He handed over to Rev Caspen Makuzva in the middle of 1981.

At UTC, Mazobere remained as Principal until he was designated President of the MCZ in 1979; hence Rev. L. Dube from the ELCZ was appointed Principal in 1980. Even though UTC had become an ecumenical institution in 1959, for the entire part of the period in question, Principals of UTC were from the MCZ. This implies that the culture of the institution was largely inclined to Methodism. This is reflected in the Methodism biases in the subjects such as evangelism and lay-ministry, which are Wesleyan terminologies. A rich curriculum in Polity class for Methodists that covered the theology of John Wesley is evidence of this factor. Between 1975 and 1978, the teaching staff was comprised of the following members: M. Chigwida MA, J. Kurewa PhD, H. Soderstrom PhD, J. Appleyard

MA, K.E. Erickson MA, C.C.G. Mazobere PhD, J. Kawadza MDiv P. Collinghood MA, F. Chirisa BA, P. Culvar PhD and S. Harlene PhD (Gondongwe 2011:104). The qualifications of indigenous lecturers who had studied abroad were commendable and very high by the standards of that era.

With indigenous leaders now at the helm of UTC, the evolution of various denominational training schools within the country and from outside the country was a sign of responding to the rapidly changing situations and needs. UTC developed a good relationship with the University of Zimbabwe that enabled it to train more pastors who would minister in an increasingly complex environment and society. Today, thirty-seven years after independence, the context has become more complex and more demanding of an educated, spiritually sensitive clergy. UTC and other colleges have to deal with the question of change to meet the new challenges, to capitalize on opportunities as well as to anticipate more challenges. So how did UTC managed to cope up with these challenges and opportunities bedevilling the country after independence to remain relevant to the demands of the society? This question can be answered by looking at the evaluation process of UTC programmes in 1998.

4.2.6 Evaluation of UTC in 1998

The College Council that sat in February of 1997 called for an evaluation of the College as an institution for ministerial formation. The terms of reference were to evaluate UTC as an institution in terms of its structures, course structures, programmes and staffing. A high-profile seven-member delegation was chosen with different expertise and capacities. This included a delegate from the Department of Religious Studies Classics and Philosophy of University of Zimbabwe taking part in the evaluation process. The researcher noted that the inclusion of the UZ was to authenticate the academic portfolio and credentials of the college in terms of meeting standards required by the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (hereinafter called ZIMCHE).

A number of recommendations were forwarded to the College Council, looking at the governing structure, constitution, staffing, student affairs, community life, library, administration and curriculum. The study focused only on the curriculum to see how it was designed in order to locate components of Wesleyan teachings. The following were some of the recommendations regarding the curriculum: The academic board revisited the courses in

Homiletics, Counselling, Christian Education and Worship and explored merging some courses that appeared to overlap. It recommended that the curriculum expose students to practicalities of the clergy's role. It further recommended that the curriculum introduces students to basic courses in various aspects of the Christian faith which they can share with parishioners, e.g. healing ministry, prayer, alpha (or similar) courses on Christian basic beliefs, person to person evangelism, sharing the Bible message in small groups, while Polity be left to participating or sending denominations to guide their students (Evaluation Report 1998:24).

It is important to analyse the recommendations given above, especially the idea of introducing students to basic courses in aspects of Christian faith, Christian basic beliefs, healing ministry and prayer. As can be noted from the responses of the students during interviews for the evaluation, nine respondents said that "lecturers were biased towards academic work at the expense of spiritual formation" (Evaluation Report 1998:15). The responses by the students could have been influenced by the hours allocated to subject areas such as worship that was given one hour per week per semester during first year only. Christian education was only taught in third year and was allocated three hours per week per semester. Polity, though it stretched for the whole period of three years, was given one hour per week per semester (:14). In contrast, Diploma in Religious Studies (hereinafter called DRS) courses were allocated three hours per week per semester for the period of three years.

Naidoo observes that, theology has embraced practical ministry skills and other disciplines that make emphasis on cognitive over spiritual aspects. For a number of years now faculty administrators are looking for ways to incorporate the theoretical and practical disciplines. Recently issues to do with how to embrace spiritual formation has been put forward into the debate (2010: 185)

She further outlined concerns that stimulated the need for spiritual formation in the seminary including the deficiency in spiritual formation offered at the beginning, when candidates enter seminary. This is the reason that students search for guidance to assist them to determine how the Holy Spirit is working in their situation. It is also a result of an awareness of spirituality and a rediscovery of the Christian contemplative tradition gained through constant engagement with other religious traditions. The inclusion of women in formerly all-

male student bodies and faculty added a new spirit²⁹ to the theological school together with social and political crises that informs and guides contemporary theological education in the African context. However the growing concern over a fragmented curriculum with no integrating centre raised the need for spiritual formation which could be provided by this centre of theological discourse (2010:186).

From the above statement, one could conclude that the challenge of spiritual formation cuts across many theological colleges in Africa. This challenge has been championed by the relationship between colleges and universities where the universities determine the courses to be covered for a DRS course. It could be that the evaluation committee observed the challenge, as also indicated by Naidoo, of other religious traditions and teachings, such as the prosperity gospel, and this created sharper awareness of spirituality, as well as pressures from social, political and economic crises that motivate a concern for the spiritual dimension. The evaluation report indicates that polity was to be dealt with by the sending denominations. This could have been necessitated by the divergence between doctrinal teachings emphasized by each participating Church; hence the College has to play it safe to avoid accusations of misdirecting students. This becomes the crux of the research – to establish the contents of the polity subject in the MCZ in order to understand if the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth, as themes in *Ordo Salutis*, are taught in polity classes.

4.3 Polity Studies at UTC

Regarding polity studies, as indicated above by the report of the evaluation committee, it is the prerogative of the sending denomination to facilitate the teaching programmes for each denomination. The entry point to this important area of study is to understand the meaning of the word polity first. The word refers to the “patterns of governance of different churches” (Long 2001:2). Polity provides institutional cohesion to many denominations, as reflected in their ability to remain intact despite doctrinal differences. In support of the above, Wright (1997:2) argued that polity is vital because it identifies the way in which we believe. It also shows how human beings should relate to one another for ecclesiastical purposes. It acts as a

²⁹ New spirit denotes the coming of women into theological education as a profound theological change that challenges patriarchal and hegemonic masculinities that inform contemporary theological education in the African context.

guide or model for human relationships of other kinds. Both writers acknowledge that even though there are real differences between democratic, hierarchical, oligarchic, and authoritarian patterns of social organization they are diffused within the understandings of the nature of human beings. Wright contends that if polity is conceptualized and expressed in theological language, it stands for both a doctrine of human nature, and a doctrine of the Church. Therefore polity is not an absolute idea of informal social engagements, but it goes directly to the heart of fundamental issues of theology (1997:2).

With polity being at the heart of crucial issues of theology, how then does the MCZ treat this important element at the institutions of training where clergy are moulded to execute their duties so that (as indicated in chapter one in the approach to this study) there must be no dichotomy between the theoretical and the practical? Each aspect of the curriculum should have a practical and a clinical dimension where the student is expected to engage in direct and guided involvement, where the Word intersects the World. Whatever the clergy in training acquired or grasped during the training period in theory they should be able to transmit that knowledge practically, in the field through an interactive approach between systematic and ministerial models. The mission statement of UTC as enshrined in the 2016-2020 handbook states that:

United Theological College is committed to the training of quality pastors and teachers of the Christian gospel as well as church laity in Zimbabwe, the Southern African Region, and the entire globe. As an ecumenical institution the United Theological College recognizes and values the different worship traditions and believes that individuals and communities can be transformed through the witness of an ecumenical Church of Christ. The College is committed to addressing the challenges of the time, which are characterized by chronic poverty, diseases, moral decadence, tribal and racial conflict in the context of faith expression (United Theological College Handbook 2016-2020:3).

A theological reflection and analysis of the mission statement indicates that the College is aware and equipped with all the tools to mould or to equip the students for the mission ahead. The College is aware that the community is characterized by poverty, disease, moral decadence and conflicts. Now with polity issues of governance and doctrinal matters—reserved for denominations to deal with, how is the MCZ wrestling with its polity affairs to fully equip its clergy to face these challenges? This is the question to be answered.

In interviews carried out among the leadership of the MCZ who are also former students and tutors of UTC, and are now serving as ordained clergy and practising in the ministry, with years of experience ranging between 20 years and 30 years, they all agreed that polity was not taken seriously during their days of learning and teaching at UTC. In the words of Gondongwe (2017) during an interview, he has this to say: “To be honest with you since my days as a student and as a lecturer, there was no profound teaching of Wesleyan theology as it were and polity was on the margins, it was done once a week for only one hour, and because of that it was never taken serious.” Dube (2017), in an interview, also agreed with other former students on the aspect of the seriousness of the polity curriculum when he stated that “the curriculum is very weak in the sense that just assigning students one hour a week while other courses do have three hours a week tells you that we are not serious about forming Wesleyan scholars; Wesleyan pastors we are not. In simple language I will say it is deficient.”

From the comments relayed by the authorities of the church, the former being the Mission Director and the latter the General Secretary of the MCZ, both former lecturers of UTC, one is left with more questions than answers. Maybe the reason for not taking this major component of ministerial formation seriously could be that the institution is ecumenical. Hence priorities are diverted to other academic issues, such as concentrating on the DRS that is certified by the University of Zimbabwe, as clearly indicated by credit hours allocated to DRS programmes. These are accredited three hours per subject per week while Polity has one hour per week. Zwana (2017), in the same interview, argues that “in training at the college as you know that it is an ecumenical institution and there is not so much of direct or intensive training that focuses on Wesley except Polity lectures. In the past the Polity lectures were not examinable; it was only recently that Polity was examinable.”

Zwana, as the Presiding Bishop of the MCZ, acknowledges that there is a lack of serious attention to polity. He substantiates the lack of seriousness by pointing out that the subject was not examinable in the past, hence students could not spend much time on non DRS subjects that are examined by UZ. The other reason could be that the tutors themselves, like many other clergy, were not well versed with some of those Wesleyan traditions, hence they had nothing to offer. The third reason could also be that the literature was simply not there to guide the students and the course.

In order to cover up the short coming indicated in the polity curriculum, Zwana (2017) was quick to say: “when it comes to order of salvation, you could then look at that from the perspective of the Christian theology course itself, but it does not have all the key elements that can only be discussed under other theological topics such as salvation, which is a key theological topic in theological training.” In agreement, during his interview, Gondongwe (2017) confessed that:

As a tutor at theological college, I remember that I would venture into in-depth analysis of Wesley theology in my Church History and Thought course rather than in Polity class. The thinking was that they will get to know about Wesleyan theology when they do their ordination examination. At theological college there was no real emphasis to this aspect; the emphasis was rather in my History class where I will talk about the Evangelicals and the entry of Wesley into the theological landscape. There I will dig a bit about his order of salvation and the history part but obviously emphasis was on the history part although I will dig the thought aspect which is the theology.

The remark from Gondongwe is surprising because the church in 2005 made a resolution in regards to this important aspect of training where Conference agreed that “each Polity tutor comes up with a course outline. It was agreed that lectures be drawn to cover the following: first years should cover Wesley teachings, Standing Orders and church structures, second years cover how to use various orders of services in the hymn book and circuit’s pastoral challenges, and third years cover church mission, MCZ financial systems, circuit administration that includes charring meetings, Synod related issues, responsibilities of ministers in charge” (MCZ 2014:11). Be that as it may, this resolution was never implemented though Bishop Ndhlumbi was tasked to prepare these manuals for different years as reflected in the said minutes.

Dube (2017), when interviewed, gave insights into stages (already mentioned earlier in this chapter) where Wesleyan theology could be taught and learnt even before one aspires to be a candidate for the ministry. He said:

For us in the Methodist tradition, the emphasis on Wesley’s theology does not begin at the stage of ministerial formation. It begins earlier on because they are trained as local preachers. We do not accept candidates who come before they are trained as local preachers. There are some requirements there that they must have some basic understanding on Wesley and the

second stage is the candidature stage where there are specific readings that are assigned; the students write exams as pre-collegiate where they are supposed to know sermons on Wesley, at least twelve sermons on John Wesley that will be the model at this stage.

There is that kind of introduction to Wesley at lower stages in the process of candidature but whether that is enough remains a big question. Besides having graduated from college without acquiring enough knowledge in Wesleyan tradition, the church had a hope of filling the gap during the probation period before ordination. As highlighted above, Wesleyan theology was a component of the ordination examination. Another justification that could be given is that unlike in other countries, these students are trained at a diploma level, so there is that kind of limitation in that this programme is diploma. If students were given a Bachelor or a Master's in Divinity, for everyone who wants to do ministry, then one would expect much more, but the limitation is the diploma level and the content has to be at the diploma level.

Having noted the developments in terms of polity curriculum from the former students, the study went further to look at the current scenario and not relies on history, though it informs current events. The current tutors were interviewed to see the areas they were covering in first year, second year and in third year. The responses from the tutors indicate that there is an improvement in terms of the Polity curriculum because they were all quick to mention that they do have a course outline in place (See Appendices 8, 9, 10). This is shown by Matarirano (2017), the Academic Dean and a Methodist tutor at UTC. When interviewed, he said:

Each class has its own lecturer. At the same time we were able to come up with a curriculum from last year. I take the first years and teach them on Methodism, covering history, theology and teachings of John Wesley, and we have Dr Kadenge who takes second years and he teaches them about standing orders. Then we have Bishop Sungai who comes for third years and teaches them the practical aspect because these are now ready to go to the field so he teaches them what is really occurring in the ministry there. So I think we have improved but I think we need to add on our time which I see as inadequate.

According to the Polity course outline for MCZ first years, which covers the Wesleyan teachings, it is aimed at equipping Methodists students with Wesleyan teachings (theology) and how to apply them in their pastoral responsibilities. Its objectives are to introduce students to the historical, political and social situation of Britain during the 18th century at the beginning of Methodism, to examine the background and life of the Wesley family, and to

analyse the theology and teachings of John Wesley (See Appendix 8). An analysis of the contents of the course outline does not indicate which aspects of Wesleyan teachings are to be covered; it just shows that it will touch on important marks of Methodism and on major teachings of John Wesley. These five marks, on the character of a Methodist namely, a Methodist loves God, a Methodist rejoices in God, a Methodist gives thanks, and a Methodist prays constantly, are derived from John Wesley's letter to Dr Dodd, addressed to the Editor of Lloyds Evening Post, a Christian Magazine, on the 5th of March 1767, (Wesley Journal 1767:185).

Besides an analytical view on the Polity curriculum and its shortcomings, Kadenge (2017) contended during his interview that, "Polity curriculum is very rich in that this is the only time when Methodists are taught Methodism. What it is all about, being it about discipline, scriptural holiness, evangelical faith following the evangelical doctrines which are biblically based." To make sure students take this course seriously, Munikwa (2017) suggests that "let it be an examinable subject to the extent that if someone does not pass the subject of Polity then they have failed" (interview). The subject is now examinable and with the curriculum now in place, they are beginning to appreciate the value the subject has, especially in the field. This is testified to by those in the ministry who are now facing challenges, among them, prosperity. All interviewed MCZ clergy agreed that an emphasis on teaching congregants the Wesleyan order of salvation will give congregants a balanced gospel that is holistic. It begins with the soul and touches the needs of humanity but in a more realistic way, as outlined in the Wesleyan teaching about money. His message, as indicated in the previous chapter, encourages human beings to work using their own hands. The effectiveness of the curriculum is seen in the way the students responded to questions regarding Wesleyan teachings; they did so with a great deal of clarity and full of knowledge, as shall be discussed in chapter seven. This model of training is a force to reckon with in the ministerial formation of MCZ clergy. And now the focus is to see the other type or model of training, Zimbabwe Theological Education by Extension (ZIMTEE).

4.4 Zimbabwe Theological Education by Extension (ZIMTEE) Model of Training

Scholars like Mugambi (2013:121) hold the view that in Africa, theological training is linked to ordination; therefore it is unusual for a person to enrol for theological training unless he/she intends to join the clerical ministry. However, today Mugambi's views are contested

because there are those who are training for academic purposes only with no intention to become clergy. If Mugambi's perception is to go by, this means that enrolment in theological institutions is determined by the number of clergy needed in specific denominations at a given time and area. It is a fact that the church in Africa is numerically growing. As such, the rate of numerical growth cannot sustain viable enrolment in Africa's theological institutions. The TEE model has been introduced as an alternative to residential ministerial formation. However, through interaction with both teachers and students in such programmes, there is general dissatisfaction with the conduct, content and quality of the training offered through TEE.

4.4.1 Background to the TEE Programme

Theological Education by Extension (hereinafter called TEE) was started in 1963 in Guatemala by the Presbyterian Seminary as a leadership development programme. It was the brainchild of three missionaries, namely, Ralph Winter, James Emery and Ross Kinsler, in response to the needs of the church in mission (Kinsler 2007:3; see also Werner 2010:70-83). The birth of TEE in the MCZ was responding to the conventional theological curriculum that was not meeting the needs of the young growing church because of two reasons. First, pastors were too few in rural areas and many seminary graduates did not remain in ministry. Second, the retention rate over a period of 25 years was 5%. In view of this situation, it was felt necessary to have another form of training as an urgent matter, to close the pastoral gap that was proving to be detrimental to the MCZ. For Asamoah-Gyadu (2014:146), this model was designed to safeguard denominational pneumatic identities from traditional seminary-based theological education, which, in his opinion, has a propensity to undermine the *joie de vivre* (vibrancy) of charismatic spirituality. The assumption here is that TEE preserves the identity of the denominations, and the trained clergy are not diluted or influenced by the academic disposition emphasized in conventional colleges.

At the beginning, the TEE programme involved home study materials, weekly classes with an instructor near the student's home and monthly meetings of all students together at a central location (Houston 2013:108). Over the years, TEE has become very popular in Zimbabwe as a response to the Conventional Bible Schools that are considered to be slow for the growing church. They are said to be expensive, and as such, increase donor dependency. In addition, these institutions are located in urban centres only, to the extent that some graduates have not

been keen to go and serve in rural areas after training. Above all, these colleges are regarded as removed from practical involvement in ministerial formation, with students having minimal chances of applying what they learnt in local churches.

Taylor and Dunsmuir states that “on 23 March 1976 TEE started in South Africa as a cooperative ecumenical project with more than 3000 students. It was mandated to provide affordable, ecumenical and contextual theological education to students in Southern Africa regardless of location, background or access to resources” (2013:958). Its mission was to train people everywhere for ministry. It did not only prepare theological students for ordination but also lay people, to help them to grow in their faith and enhance their participation in ministry in their home communities. The churches that formulated the TEE programme in South Africa are the Anglican Church of South Africa, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, which also uses the TEE training for its local preachers, the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, the Salvation Army in South Africa, United Congregational Church of South Africa, and the Roman Catholic Church (2013:959). The programme has seminars that are held weekly, monthly or several times a month to allow students time to discuss material learnt. The Diploma in Theology consists of 25 courses altogether, and one can proceed to study for a Bachelor of Theology degree after qualifying.

4.4.2 TEE Model in the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

The idea of the TEE programme in the MCZ started in 1999 to train Lay Pastors at certificate level who would have undergone the normal candidature process. Two candidates for ministry were put on this programme as an experiment in 2000, namely, Rev Munashe Matata and Rev Lekhai Molife. In 2001, the programme faced a number of challenges and it was dropped. In a letter written by Rev Matata to the Presiding Bishop, who was then Rev Cephass Mukandi, outlining challenges faced in using TEE as a model of training, he stated the following as constraints: “communication problems, social aspects, personal constraints, ministerial work constraints, environmental constraints and resolution to change mode of training”(Matata2000;his Letter to the Bishop³⁰ see Appendix 13). In stressing these constraints, Matata noted that by using a separate mode of training (TEE), it was going to

³⁰ Please note that the title Bishop was used to designate the head of the church at Connexional level before it was changed to Presiding Bishop in 2004. Rev Cephass Mukandi was the last to use the title Bishop from 2000 to 2004 and the first to use the title Presiding Bishop from 2004.

create division among clergy who will work in the same vineyard yet trained using different models. Matata (2000) argued that it will create a disturbing social stigma for life. He went further to highlight that he had the same experience of being looked down upon when he trained as a teacher by using the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC). He felt he needed time to adjust to the needs and demands of ministerial formation which he thought could only be addressed by being placed at a college where he could “adjust to true realities of the church ministry through socialising with other students and lecturers” (Matata 2000; Appendix 13).

For him, the TEE model was straining relationships even with the congregants since they would not understand the absence of the clergy from duty when he goes for tutorials, examinations or library. Working environments were also a major constraining factor raised: TEE students were sometimes placed in rural areas where there was no access to a library and away from other students; hence the learning experiences would be compromised. After all these constraints were raised, the programme was suspended by withdrawing students from this model. They were taken to UTC in 2001, as reflected in the response letter of the Bishop when he wrote, “I write to let you know that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has temporarily dropped TEE programme until further notice” (Bishop Mukandi 2000, letter)³¹. The two students who were studying using the TEE model were advised to remain in their circuits until they secured vacancies at UTC in 2001.

One of the entrance qualifications for TEE was maturity, i.e. 35 years. In 2003, the programme was resuscitated in collaboration with South Africa using the same criterion for recruitment of candidates. The MCZ elected Rev Margaret James to be the Coordinator of the programme. The reasons why the MCZ resuscitated the programme included among others, the shortage of accommodation at UTC, and financial crisis in raising the needed money to train clergy at UTC. TEE was seen as a cheaper option. The church also had embarked on a serious division of big circuits into smaller circuits where there was demand for more clergy in the created circuits, hence the move to deploy TEE students in some of those circuits.

Rev Margaret James was chosen to coordinate the programme probably because she also used the same programme with UNISA. Eventually, the programme was named ZIMTEE as an affiliate college of the Joint Board of South Africa. Four denominations initiated its establishment, namely, Anglican Church, MCZ, Reformed Church and Baptist Church. A

³¹See Appendix 11.

survey conducted shows that the Anglican Church had students who were registered with the University of Zimbabwe and some who were doing TEE. The Reformed Church had students who were given diplomas by the church, with the other group doing TEE. The Baptist Church also had students who were doing a diploma in Religious Studies with the University of Zimbabwe and some who were in the TEE programme. This was the scenario with MCZ, which had students registered with University of Zimbabwe through UTC and Zimbabwe Open University (hereinafter called ZOU) through ZIMTEE. Apart from the above churches who amalgamated to form ZIMTEE, there is the Salvation Army that has its own Officer Training College.

According to minutes of the Evaluation Committee Report (2012:3), the pros and cons for the establishment of TEE were tabulated as follows:

Positive factors

- (a) Following the growth of the church whereby we now have 12 districts and 121 circuits, and ten institutions, with an estimated membership of 150 000 against 206 clergy, work has grown. Of the 206 (28 are not full time in the circuit work, these include those in institutions, Connexional Office, Bishops and those in Diaspora), eventually the number will remain at 178 clergy in the full time circuit work and it leaves one clergy with an average membership of 842. Conference is on the record of saying that each clergy must have at least 300 members. If this is to be followed, this year, alone we need 294 full time clergy. Given the challenge of accommodation, and cost of residential training, TEE is the cheapest, relevant, and in thing for the church.
- (b) Related to the above, our members have multiple memberships. This has been necessitated by the world becoming a global village, the rising of many faith and the socio-economic challenges that our members face. In order to cover the gap, TEE is a very relevant form of training in the 21st century.
- (c) The TEE programme is a practical ‘hands-on’ approach which enables the students to put theory into practice immediately.
- (d) The TEE diploma in Theology has the capacity for further studies.
- (e) The candidature process is the same for Methodist clergy.
- (f) Students prove self-discipline as they are required to create a careful balance between academic and circuit work.
- (g) The programme costs the church less to train ministers and to maintain that membership of the church in the face of membership exodus.
- (h) TEE students are ‘productive’ during their training period as they are stationed in circuits.

- (i) Married students have better living conditions. This is an advantage to the church especially as we always encourage morality.
- (j) Considering the time they meet for studies, having one diploma certificate in four years is an advantage because it leaves them with less pressure (Evaluation Committee Report (2012:3)).

Negative factors

- (a) There is too much pressure on students as they fight to create a balance between theory and practice. They are supposed to be students then clergy, but the opposite always happens.
- (b) Some ZIMTEE modules are not up to the expected standard.
- (c) The time for tutorials is too short – one week per quarter.
- (d) The TEE programme is poorly resourced, e.g. the library is very ill equipped and there are no computers for the students to use – in the 21st century, E-learning is a prerequisite.
- (e) TEE students have been largely stationed in remote circuits which do not provide a good environment for study; as such, students are overloaded with circuit work as circuit clergy.
- (f) Slow learners struggle with the TEE programme.
- (g) The possibilities for further studies for ministers who have studied through the programme are yet to be seen. It remains to be seen if these students can be enrolled at any other institution of higher learning since even the UTC diploma in theology is not sufficient for such purposes, except complemented with a Diploma in Religious Studies (Evaluation Committee Report (2012:3)).

Using theological reflection as framework to analyse the above advantages and disadvantages in the report it shows that the MCZ did not plan strategically how the division of circuits into smaller units was going to tally with number of personnel to have pastoral oversight to these circuits. The introduction of the TEE programme was a short term stop gap measure to address the challenges of finance without looking at the future of the training model; hence it was received with mixed feelings. This is evidenced in the Evaluation Committee Report (2012) when it indicated that:

The TEE programme is not yet appreciated by some church members and clergy as such derogatory comments are said to the students sometimes in public. The affiliation of the programme to Zimbabwe Open University has, by and large, boosted the confidence for possibilities for further studies. However, lot more confidence would be boosted if more courses were added to the programme ensuring that the content of instruction fits the modern

world of theology. Courses like Computers, Theology of Development, African Traditional Religion(s) among others need to be considered (2012:4).

4.4.3 Polity Studies with Theological Education by Extension

This programme did not have Polity as part of the subjects taught to students, as clearly demonstrated from a comparative analysis of the minutes of Conference reports on the Ministerial Training Committee from 2004 to 2016. For example, in 2014, students in the TEE model were doing the following subjects, first, second, third and fourth years:

Church History 1, Christian Proclamation, New Testament 1, Old Testament 1, Healing and Counselling, Old Testament 2, Systematic Theology 1, Principles of Research, Church History 2, Theology Approach to HIV and AIDS, Systematic Theology 2, Introduction to Computers, Christian Ethics, Christianity in Africa and Project/ Dissertation (MCZ 2014:22-24).

On the other hand, those using the conventional model at UTC were doing the following subjects:

Academic Writing, Christian Education, Pastoral Care, Homiletics, Worship, Polity, Phenomenology, Old Testament, New Testament, Philosophy, Sociology, Christian History and Thought, Psychology, Theology, Old Testament Theology, New Testament Theology, Contextual Theologies, Church Administration, Pastoral Counselling, Religion Democracy and Governance, Christian Ethics, World Religions and Theology of Development (MCZ 2014:22-24).

From the above list of subjects, the interest of this study is on polity. It is only seen in the UTC conventional model and it is done by all classes, but as reflected in the UTC Polity course above, the depth at which it is done is the focus of the study. For students in the TEE programme, there was nothing covered of polity during their four years of study using this model.

4.5 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed models of training used by the MCZ, beginning from in-service training to conventional training at UTC, which had also a parallel programme of distance education with TEE. The focus of the study is to find out to what extent Wesleyan teachings

are taught in these models of training, with particular emphasis on health and wealth as themes dominant in the doctrine of salvation. It was noted in the chapter that UTC, since 2016, has introduced a course in polity that covers Wesleyan teachings and includes an element of *Ordo Salutis*. The TEE programme, however, has no element of polity in its curriculum. The church has other programmes that are used to mitigate the gaps left by conventional and TEE models.

As indicated in the interviews carried out, and supported by the Minutes of Conference (2013b:44), each year, the church has a “Wesley Week and a mission month,” as well as clergy retreats. All these are held to deal with theological challenges faced by the church, such as the prosperity gospel, and to emphasise Wesleyan theology, particularly during Wesley Week (MCZ 2013:44-45). The Wesley Week is also a platform where clergy teach congregants on the theology of Methodism. The church also holds a minister’s training seminar on Methodism at Africa University (AU), together with other denominations who share the same roots of Methodism (MCZ 2013:44).

A critical theological reflection and analysis of the chapter shows that the history of Methodism was a subject taught separately from church history at Waddilove until 1953 with course content covering the theology of John Wesley inclusive of *Ordo Salutis*. It has also been shown that graduates from college were to do a further five-year probationers period after training before ordination where they had to pass an examination in Methodism. It has been noted that it was after 1970 that the curriculum drastically changed to have an academic flavour at the expense of spiritual formation, when the college became ecumenical. This was done to meet the standards required by the UZ for its accreditation as an affiliate college. The curriculum eliminated History of Methodism and created Polity as a remedy for doctrinal teachings by sending churches. This point is supported by the 1998 evaluation where respondents indicated the bias of lecturers towards academic subjects at the expense of formation.

The chapter clearly demonstrates that only those with an appetite for Methodism would continue with seeking knowledge through further studies. It has been proven that those going for further studies acquired much knowledge in Methodism, and are able to meet the challenges and prospects of the prosperity gospel. This is seen with Kadenge, who, in 1977, was a candidate together with James. Kadenge went to UTC where he graduated with a Diploma in Theology and James went to UNISA where she graduated with a Bachelor of

Theology. James was able to acquire knowledge in Wesley's teachings on *Ordo Salutis*, hence she was able to paraphrase Wesley's sermons, while Kadenge at that time had not done Wesley theology at UTC, until he had to do further studies. Currently, those that are doing further studies and those that have completed are able to respond to the phenomenon of the prosperity gospel with the intention to maximise the opportunities and the challenges using Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as resources available to teach members.

It has also been noted that Wesleyan teachings on salvation as part of polity is the creedal part of the mission of the church that "exists to transform lives through biblical teaching, witnessing and nurturing believers into true worshipers of God" (MCZ 2016:2). This emphasis of Wesleyan heritage and teachings is seen to be the thrust of the church as indicated from addresses by the leaders of this church. In the Mission Director's report to Conference 2014, he observed that:

...the Zimbabwean theological landscape has shifted in a remarkable way. It is a given that the mainline Christianity has an unquestionable history in the service of the Zimbabwean people. However the dominance of the same in the new dispensation is highly interrogated. In the event that the situation continues to be unabated, it means the future of mainline Christianity is bleak. This calls for us to be resolute in the implementation of our strategies and to be open to change as we do our mission. More so it calls us to be very judicial as we preserve our heritage, particularly those aspects of our being that make us Wesleyans first and Methodists second (MCZ 2014:39).

Theologically reflecting the above statement shows that the church is facing some challenges that are threatening its identity, its existence, as well as prospects. Hence, there is the call to realign with caution in order not to dilute the identity of the church and to be derailed in terms of its teachings, especially by the challenges posed by the prosperity gospel. Generally, the chapter has shown that clergy agreed that there is not much done in terms of equipping clergy with Wesleyan traditions at colleges. It has also been noted that the church, by encouraging its clergy to do further studies, is equipping them to be informed and skilled in dealing with prosperity challenges and opportunities. The researcher, in this chapter, also concludes that education was a central arm of the evangelisation of Zimbabwe. It formed the firm foundation of the missionary enterprise in most parts of Zimbabwe. However, it is evident that it was to a large extent foreign and insensitive to the needs of the African people. It produced an elite and professional clergy who sometimes may fail to close the gap between

him/her and the congregants in terms of socialization. And it creates a superiority complex rather than a servant hood model of a clergy.

The Polity curriculum was not only non-indigenous but it also created patterns of ministry not fit for the Church in Africa. This was seen especially on the aspect of salvation of the soul – that is, for the afterlife, rather than here and now – hence the rise of “African Initiated Churches from most mission or historical churches such as Guta Ra Jehovah, Joanne Masowe, Zion Christian Church, and many others as shown by Matthew Zvimba who formed his church called Shirichena (white bird) because he did not want to work under white missionaries” (Zvobgo 1991:82). The research contends that for theological training to be relevant, it should be needs-based. This is indicated by the respondents who said that the college must have “constant evaluations through engagement with stakeholders like the church because the church is the market place for their product” (Zwana 2017).The study therefore questioned whose needs were being addressed by the theological education in the MCZ.

From the beginning of this chapter to this end it is clear that, although there has been teaching on salvation from the Wesleyan perspective, this did not deal in depth with issues around health and wealth. Graduates of UTC are not well grounded with skills of responding to these issues. Therefore the researcher proposes in this study a change of curriculum to the institutions of training of the clergy. Using theological reflection to analyse the curriculum one can deduce that the current curriculum of theology is only concerned with the study of religious experience and expression across all civilisations; ancient and modern within the context of philosophy. Much emphasis has been placed on careful reading of theology’s primary texts, preferably in the original language and the general belief systems. The curriculum is almost defunct as proved by the low intake at higher learning institution. Therefore a proposal to change the curriculum is suggested as a way forward. Details about new curriculum proposal shall be given in the concluding chapter eight. The next chapter presents the prosperity gospel’s concept of salvation and its challenges and opportunities for the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 PROSPERITY GOSPEL AND THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION: ITS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO THE RELIGIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with models of training used in the MCZ. The chapter found that there were two models predominantly used, namely, a conventional model through UTC, and the distance learning model through TEE. In-service training occurred at the initial stages of theological education, when there were no training institutions. It also traced the Polity curriculum to find out to what extent it embraced Wesleyan teachings, with a focus on the order of salvation, and concluded that though not much was covered at the beginning, a curriculum was introduced in 2016. There remains much more to be done by the church to strengthen this important aspect of the MCZ doctrine. The ability to face both opportunities and challenges posed by the prosperity gospel is possible only after some clergy undergo further studies, thereby adding to those who were exposed to Wesleyan teachings at an earlier stage.

This chapter looks at prosperity gospel's concept of salvation and the challenges and opportunities it poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. A general view of the rise of the prosperity gospel is given in this chapter. The focus is on the key components of salvation from where its foundational teachings emerge, and the transportability of this gospel from America to Africa, Zimbabwe in particular. Factors that are favourable for its transplantation into Zimbabwe, such as economic crisis, political instability and African traditional views among others, are discussed. Concluding remarks show that the prosperity gospel thrives well in the deplorable economic situation of Zimbabwe, and it rides on ATR as a related solution to the here and now crisis in the country.

This chapter is important in the study because it gives the reader an appreciation of the interconnectedness of the concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel and in ATR, as well as in John Wesley's theology. It also enables the reader to see the opportunities and challenges posed by the prosperity gospel to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe and to the MCZ in particular. This chapter necessitates an informed analysis, after interrogating all critical

components of the study. Before engaging in a historical discussion, this chapter starts by attempting to define the term prosperity gospel.

5.2 Definition of Prosperity Gospel

The use of terminology in any field of study, particularly the field of systematic theology, is critical because it gives the reader the context of scholarly arguments or discussion. Chitando (1998:5) confirms that “naming the phenomenon is crucial, for the labels we assign to ideas are indicative of our attitude.” This is true because in academia, the issue of definition is not conclusive. Concepts are defined according to the context of the writer. Due to the problems faced in defining certain terms, writers end up using working definitions. The concept of prosperity gospel has received different tags from different scholars. This clearly indicates that people understand the phenomenon from different perspectives. It could be argued that the teaching on the prosperity gospel constitutes a narrow interpretation of the Bible, one that is embraced by a particular group of Christians. The tag “gospel of prosperity has received different applications, indicating that it is not a straight forward or self-explanatory concept” (Chitando 1998:5).

Coleman (2000:28) defines prosperity gospel or health and wealth gospel as “a Christian religious doctrine, which claims the Bible teaches that financial blessing is the will of God for Christians.” It is also argued that “the doctrine teaches that faith, positive speech, and donations to Christian ministries will always cause an increase in material wealth” (Masvotore 2016:28). Prosperity theology teaches that it is part of the path of Christian dominion over society, arguing that God’s promise to Israel of dominion applies to Christians today. The doctrine emphasizes the importance of personal empowerment, proposing that it is God’s will for his people to be happy. The atonement is interpreted to include removal of sickness and poverty, viewed as curses to be broken by faith.

In the eyes of a scholar in the Methodist tradition and a feminist voice who has written extensively on the prosperity gospel, Lisa R. Withrow (2007:5) defines success and economic prosperity as “a blessing from God if individuals and churches are appropriately faithful.” It is a notion that has been propagated as a personal approach for gain. She further argues that “prosperity gospel views the success which these churches see as the right of a Christian covering all areas. The slogan is God will meet you, in the standard phrase, ‘at the point of

your need” (:5). She views the practitioners of the prosperity gospel as unfaithful since they do this for self-aggrandisement. Her views are also in line with those of a minister interviewed by the researcher who views prosperity as a “capitalist gospel of those people who are here to take monies from the poor people for their own personal use” (M7 2017).³²

This can also be explained in terms of a social dilemma using pull and push factors, where the majority of people in Africa are generally poor. The economic, political and social situation, particularly in Zimbabwe, is at its lowest ebb. People are living below the poverty line and the political situation has created a big gulf between the rich and the poor. As a result, people are attracted by the gospel of prosperity that promises to solve their problems. Hence they are pulled into prosperity theology by circumstances beyond their control. As they get inside the prosperity enterprise, they will discover that they are continuing to be poor, and are stripped of the little they have. Hence they are pushed to the periphery or the margins of the prosperity enterprise without recognition, and getting poorer.

Prosperity is assumed to be achieved through visualisation and positive confession, which is often taught in mechanical and contractual terms. The ideology of prosperity is generated from an interpretation of the Bible as a contract between God and humanity, where, if humanity has faith in God, in turn God will bring his promises of security and prosperity. Admitting these promises to be factual is perceived as an act of faith, which God will reward (Coleman 2000:28). The doctrine is often based on non-traditional interpretations of the Bible. Prosperity ministries are usually directed by a sole pastor or leader, although some have developed multi-church networks that bear similarities to denominations. “They typically set aside extended periods of time to teach about giving and request donations from the congregation, encouraging positive speech and faith. Some prosperity churches also teach about financial responsibility, though some journalists and academics have criticized their advice as unsound” (Masvotore 2016:29).

Folarin (2006:80) argues that “the concept prosperity gospel is regarded as the gospel that promises only financial break-through or the preaching that does not address the concern of salvation from sin but only emphasizes that God will make everyone materially rich.” This is contrary to the view of an interviewee (M 18 2017) who said, “prosperity in my view is according to Psalm 24:1 the earth and its fullness belongs to God and humanity. Pastors and

³²Please note that M1 to M30 denotes a pseudonyms and the real names recorded interview are in the custody of the Author to protect the identity of the participants as shall be explained in the Methodology chapter six..

churches included are only stewards; they are only overseers of what God has given them and as far as I see it, I would believe that it is salvation first, a relationship with God first then the related blessings will come in.” This suggests that he is advocating prioritising the soul first, before the flesh.

For advocates of prosperity, material prosperity is brought by giving and tithing, and the greatest question would be giving what, where and why? In their view, every poor man and woman must graduate from adversity by also giving to the poorer. And in an obedient society, God expects poverty to cease to exist. For them, the gospel of prosperity defines poverty as a sin. In view of the idea of being poor Chitando (1998) explains that, when one is in poverty and lacks material possessions one is considered cursed and Christ is needed to redeem believers (Galatians 3:13). Those who are in poverty do not have right attitude. Riches are part of the divine plane for Christians to partake and enjoy.

Since the issue of definitions is never exhausted, this study will wrap up with an ecumenical definition given by the Lausanne Theology Working Group (2010:n.p.) who defined prosperity as: “The teaching that believers have a right to the blessings of health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions of faith and the ‘sowing of seeds’ through the faithful payments of tithes and offerings.” From this consultation, they unequivocally rejected as unscriptural the idea that spiritual matters can be measured materially. Using theological reflection to assess this definition, some theological themes are to be unveiled that informs this study.

Different views are given about this concept of the prosperity gospel, and it should be stated at the start that because prosperity gospel is not a creedal theological system, it is difficult to pin it down. Further, its different proponents construe and understand it differently. Be that as it may, an analysis of the definitions here are broad, with a focus on the issues of wealth, health and success. It is not new to many Zimbabweans that there are clergy and churches that make extreme financial requirements from their members with the promise that God will in turn give them a hundred-fold back or miraculously catapult them into wealth. According to an advocate of prosperity who was interviewed, “there is nothing wrong with claiming back that which was stolen by the devil, as God’s children we have a right over the wealth and health for us to enjoy life” (M30 2017). This shows that members are in it and looking for a reward from their God in obedience, bearing in mind the fact that there are pull and push factors that leave people without room to manoeuvre.

5.3 Emergence and Spread of the Prosperity Gospel

After focusing on working definitions, we move on to the development and emergence of this phenomenon, tracing its links to the Wesleyan holiness movement. The genealogy and emergence of the prosperity gospel is very broad and as such, a detailed history has been adequately covered in Masvotore (2016:31-33; see also Gifford 1990:373-388; Chitando 1998; Maxwell 2000; Asamoah-Gyadu 2014; Togarasei 2014; Schliesser 2014; and Bowler 2013). For the purposes of this study and to remain focused on the research question that asks about prosperity gospel's concept of salvation, and the challenges it poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe, the concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel is focused on, tracing its links to the Wesleyan holiness movement. The focus is on the key concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel, from where its foundational teachings emerged and the transportability of these teachings to Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. Factors favourable for its transplantation into Zimbabwe such as the economic crisis, political instability and African traditional views among others, are discussed.

The concept of salvation in the gospel of prosperity has its roots in the Pentecostal charismatic movement that also draws from the Wesleyan holiness movement of the 19th century, and later influenced by Augustinian or Calvinist movements called the Keswick or Higher Life movement (Ray 2007:1). The Wesleyan holiness movement developed its theology from Wesley's teachings on entire sanctification³³, part of his doctrine of salvation. He adopted this from both Anglican teaching on the doctrine of confirmation and Eastern Orthodox teaching on deification.

In as much as Wesley derived his teaching of justification by faith alone from the reformed ideas of the Moravians, other ideas in his teachings were derived from Eastern Orthodoxy. It is his teaching on entire sanctification that brought a schism between ordinary Christians and those who were viewed as 'carnal' or 'baby Christians' (2007:1). Regardless of the fact that Wesley himself did not at any point declare openly that he had attained entire sanctification, the later-developed teachings by the holiness movement of the 19th century went beyond Wesley and claimed that entire sanctification can be received instantly, the same as the conversion experience. But for Wesley, total sanctification is obtained gradually as a process, until one reaches the full attainment of it. The development of an instantaneous concept of

³³ By entire sanctification it means a doctrine of perfect holiness in which there is no sin. Wesleyans believe that after conversion but before death a believer's heart may be cleansed from all sin.

sanctification provided a theological basis for the Pentecostal revival of the 20th century, culminating in the rise of charismatic churches.

In the next section, I will briefly look at the background of Pentecostalism because the origins of the prosperity gospel are located within Pentecostalism, in the sense that it is a conduit of the prosperity gospel, or the prosperity gospel emerges out of an environment of Pentecostalism. It is generally agreed that the emergence and rise of the prosperity gospel in Africa has its roots in the “decisive historic point of reference of the post-war or cold war Pentecostal re-invention in America” (Heuser 2016:2). The period between the 1940s and 1950s witnessed the beginning of the Pentecostal movement across denominational lines. Heuser (:2) describes the period as a time when different theological threads, Pentecostals, Holiness Evangelicalism, American Methodism, African American Baptism or Dutch Reformed Calvinism, joined into becoming the American prosperity gospel. Blessings were received through positive confessions in the word of faith movement. Focus was on the religious rhetoric of the power of the mind through positive thinking or positive confessions reflected in the spoken word, hence the declaration of securing God’s blessing.

Young postulates that the famous American proponents of prosperity include, among others Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Robert Tilton and John Osteen. They were all influenced by the teachings of E.W. Kenyan, Norman Vincent Peale and Robert Schuller (1996:4). Another critical element that helped the prosperity gospel spread like a veld fire is the media and mass communication. The prosperity gospel was popularised in the new media of mass communication, such as radio programmes and TV broadcasts. Heuser (2016:3) confirms that new models of propagating the gospel became distinguishing features in assemblages of individual prosperity preachers from 1950s onwards. Independent ministries created coalitions and preached prosperity gospel messages through inviting international speakers and through exchanges programmes. The use of mass media became a breakthrough that culminated the setting up of joint conferences and enactment of mass-crusades. The institution of independent, single-handed ministries was propped up by the surfacing of manuals written by prosperity preachers. Further, the introduction of Bible schools and fellowships was also a new phenomenon. He further argues that, due to networking the flow of ideas and personnel interchange was enabled. This proves that mobility played a central role in the spreading of the prosperity gospel from 1960s.

Prosperity gospel as a transportable message was introduced to Africa largely through Reinhard Bonnke's Christ for All Nations crusade, which has been active in various centres throughout Africa. Young argues that these "crusades confirmed the operation strategy of prosperity philosophy and its American persuasion and this aspect of its teaching was adopted by a range of indigenous preachers (1996:4). Prosperity theology became a prominent feature among many neo-Pentecostal churches and large evangelistic rallies in Africa.

From its inception in America, prosperity gospel was not designed for America as it is not appealing to Americans today. This idea is supported from the words of one of the founders of this gospel, Kenneth Hagin, who confessed that, "prosperity is not an American gospel." For him it works in places like Africa, India, China, or wherever God's people exercise the truth of His Word; if it fails to make sense in the poorest place on earth, it is not true at all (Hagin 2000:200). Be that as it may, how then did this gospel touch down the soils of Zimbabwe and how was it received? Csordas postulates that the prosperity gospel operates effectively as a transnational religion by signifying characteristics of religious mobility, such as the transposability of religious messages, and the portability of religious practises (2009:5).

This suggests that religious movements are mobile and they are multinational. They move as people also move from one place to the other; either as migrants or refugees, they carry their religion with them. This is true with the transportation of the gospel of prosperity as it travelled from America to Zimbabwe. It came through inhabitants of America as well as Zimbabwean migrants who were in America either for studies or working in United States of America. Tracing how this became a reality, the study will not retell the history of Pentecostal Christianity in the country. Research that includes Gifford (1990:373-388), Togarasei (2016:1-13), Maxwell (1998:351-373), Togarasei (2005), and Verstraelen (1995) has done justice to the history of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe. This study therefore focuses on what Togarasei (2016:8) termed "American type Pentecostalism" in Zimbabwe, in order to connect with the prosperity niche that was propagated from America.

The birth of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe is traced from the Apostolic Faith Mission (hereafter called AFM) that originated from South Africa around 1908 (Maxwell 2006:38). It came to Zimbabwe in 1915 and was officially registered in 1943 under the leadership of

Enoch Gwanzura (Togarasei 2016:5). The AFM experienced a lot of disputes and schisms that gave birth to numerous groups of Pentecostal churches, among them including Mugodhi Apostolic Church under the leadership of Mugodhi, Pure Apostolic Faith Mission under the leadership of Madiba Moyo, African Apostolic Faith Mission under Isaac Chiumbu, and others. It also gave birth to Zimbabwe Assemblies of God/ Forward in Faith (hereafter ZAOGA/ FIF). ZAOGA was considered an elitist church from its foundation (Togarasei 2016:5), while Maxwell (2006:60) regards it as “young zealots who focus on being prosperous.” It is a fact that ZAOGA added a prosperity component in their mission besides *Glossolalia*. Although ZAOGA was split from AFM, it had strong links with the American type of Pentecostalism because its founder, Ezekiel Guti, was trained in the United States of America.

There are many American Pentecostal influences in Zimbabwe among movements that emphasise the gospel of prosperity. Such elements include individual-centred ministries, radio and television evangelism, print and electronic media crusades, advertisement and transnational religious networks (Togarasei 2016:8), as well as healing and deliverance. These traits were transported to Zimbabwe through the influence of Pentecostalism when the Campus Crusade came to the country in 1979. There was also Youth with a Mission which re-established itself in the country in 1981 after it stopped operating during the liberation war.

At the same time, the Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship International was also established in the country in 1981. Jimmy Swaggart Ministries began operating in Zimbabwe in 1985 and World Vision International began as an autonomous body in Zimbabwe in 1979. Christ for All Nations hosted revivals in Zimbabwe in 1980 and the Moonies/Unification Church started work in Zimbabwe in 1976 but made significant growth after independence in 1980. Of significance is the Rhema Bible Church that started working in Zimbabwe in 1982, as further established by Togarasei (:8).

Among the above movements, some suffered stillbirth as they did not attract the many crowds needed to survive, save for the Rhema Bible Church that survived and grew to become one of the giant churches in Zimbabwe. It has however gone through several mutations of name, from Rhema Bible Church to Hear the Word Ministries in 1996, and now it is called Celebration Ministries (from 2006). Celebration Ministries has American

characteristics because the founder of the church, Tom Deuschle, is an American graduate of Christ for the Nations International who came to Zimbabwe as a solo messenger in 1979 (:9).

In Zimbabwe today there is an assortment of Pentecostalism, to the extent that even mainline churches, MCZ included, are also accepting Pentecostal expressions of Christianity in their movements. Hence the need for this study to hear the response of the clergy to the influence of the prosperity gospel, a niche associated with Pentecostalism. The study however argues that these elements of Pentecostalism also emanate from John Wesley through his emphasis on health and wealth issues. This is to suggest that Pentecostalism travels and goes beyond boundaries and even shakes the status quo; it penetrates even what used to be the 'impermeable membrane', or systems, as it becomes a movement without borders. There is a high probability that any new church being started in Zimbabwe has Pentecostal features.

There are a number of fast growing charismatic Pentecostal movements, including Makandiwa's United Family International (hereinafter called UFI), Spirit Embassy for Uebert Angel, Christ Embassy for Pastor Chris, Heart-felt International Ministries for Vutabwashe and Prophetic Healing and Deliverance (PHD) ministries for Walter Magaya, among others. All these bear the characteristics of Pentecostalism including emphasis on the gospel of prosperity, stressing miracles during healing services, *Glossolalia* as a sign of being born-again, one centre of power and authority, and to a great extent, mystification of the founder of the ministry and widespread utilization of media technologies (Togarasei 2016:9). Having looked at the emergence or rise and transportation of the prosperity gospel, the focus now is on the concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel and emerging fundamental characteristics.

5.4 The Concept of Salvation in the Prosperity Gospel and Emerging Fundamental Characteristics

It is difficult to find what can be regarded as standard and uniform teachings of the prosperity gospel, partly because it does not present itself as a written theology but rather an oratorical and experiential philosophy in which the plea, to a great extent, is tied to the language employed and the persona of the proponent instead of the theological content (Young 1996:4). Further, the endeavour is difficult because there are extensive deviations involving the advocates of this teaching on some of its details. However, certain common elements are

found in the teaching, and it is to these common elements that this section gives attention, mainly focusing on health and wealth as part of the salvation act.

The prosperity gospel emphasises the teaching that God wants believers to be healthy physically, to be wealthy materially, and to be happy personally. In this case, God's will in the concept of salvation involve health and wealth, which is called into existence by faith. According to Richter and Olare (2016), if one remains unsaved he or she will lead a life of misery, sickness and poverty. Calamities are the result of sin, a curse, a lack of faith or generational sin in a family. There is an emphasis on salvation through Jesus Christ, and proof of the act of salvation is in receiving the blessings promised to Abraham in the Scriptures. In this case, salvation is seen through receiving blessings such as being healthy and having wealth. Salvation is here and now and not in the future eschatology, an idea that is in line with ATR as well as Wesley's holistic approach to salvation.

This concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel led Christians to two conclusions – that if one is wealthy and healthy, it is concluded that one is saved because he or she is enjoying the promises of Abraham. However, if these blessings are not seen in the life of the believer, it is concluded that the person does not have enough faith. He or she is in sin. One has to give more tithes or else one has not fully put trust in Jesus Christ, hence the need to be born again in order to receive the blessings of Abraham. From this concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel, some fundamental characteristics have developed, as discussed in the following section.

5.4.1 Leading a Prosperous Life

The focus of prosperity teaching is that all Christians have the right, and even the responsibility, to be prosperous in all areas of life. There is great emphasis on the areas of financial prosperity and physical health and well-being. The significance and outcome of this is that, for a Christian, to be in poverty or to be constantly ill is to be outside of God's will for his or her life, whether the cause is sin, lack of knowledge, societal challenges, political and economic factors or lack of sufficient faith. This is a teaching that rides in on poverty, to hopeless people, and has flourished in poor countries. It then redefined what illness is. Illness is caused by a curse, poverty is caused by a curse, and death is a result of causality. The prosperity teaching has a "political position of Capitalism that is promoted by constant

proclamation of phrases such as, “my God is rich,” “every blessed man must be rich,” “God blesses us with abundant riches,” “I worship the God of abundant wealth” (Mpofu 2013:51; see also Gifford 1998:2). In this scenario, the declarations contrast with service and promote capitalism.

From this teaching, one can deduce that God associates only with the wealthy and the healthy; these are the only ones considered to be saved and blessed. As such, they become true saints and victors. They automatically become the chosen ones, the new Israel and the true children of God. It is also seen that membership of prosperity churches is drawn not only from the elite class and those belonging in the working class who are not removed from the economic and political marginality but from those who have reasonable standard of living (Mpofu 2013:51). Wealth in this case becomes a sign of faith and being blessed by God. Prosperity gospel was a radical break from classical teachings of mainline churches on the work ethic. Heuser (2016) argues that, gospel of prosperity endeavours greatly to theologise material richness and to apparently keep the spiritual control over money and de-spiritualises poverty. Prosperity theology claims material wealth and breakthroughs of success in life by a double-binding argument: it spiritualises richness and wealth and it purifies money in seed faith and tithing policies.

This teaching raises a number of pastoral and theological challenges. One is that if it does not work and provide the prosperity it claims for the believer, the fault is always with that believer and never with the theology. The believer is accused of lack of faith and not being serious in the issues of spiritual welfare, and sometimes they may be challenged to fast and seed more money as an aspect of faithfulness to God.

5.4.2 Poverty and Sickness

Prosperity gospel found the ground already prepared by ATR as it provides a theology that explains poverty and sickness as a curse. As mentioned above, the new ministries, addressing poverty and illness, have given hope to the hopeless people; as such they have flourished in poor countries. Illness and poverty are caused by a curse. This is evidenced by the sentiments of one clergy interviewed, who is also a proponent of prosperity gospel. He insinuated that he specialises in healing and deliverance:

As a minister I have to pray for someone to bless him/her and by blessing, you are removing the curse. I am standing on the spiritual side therefore by blessing someone I am removing the curse because the person will be cursed by the devil. Myself I major on healing and deliverance because there are people in some families who are not Christians, they go maybe to consult divine healers and N'angas etc; others they have got also goblins (Zvikwambo) and they affect those who are working tirelessly, so by praying we are covering them with protection so that those things that are working against their prosperity in business are prevented (M 28, 2017).

A theological reflection and analysis of the above suggests that the clergy is deemed to hold the power to remove the curse. Nowhere in his statement has he attributed the power to God; instead he prays for someone, to bless him or her, rather than praying for someone to be blessed by God. In the same way, he prays to cover those in business with protection that prevents a spirit of anti-prosperity. The question is, by whose power is the protection granted? They attribute the power to be from their own making and initiation, forgetting that they have delegated power from God who is the provider of prosperity. Having looked at the fundamental teachings of the prosperity gospel, the focus now is to look at the challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe.

5.4.3 Giving and Receiving

This teaching of the health and wealth gospel is attached to the concept of seeding, where a theological creation of 'sowing and reaping' has surfaced, closely linking divine blessing with financial contributions to God and the church. It measures blessings by telling believers that the more they sow, the more they will reap. This is witnessed where "elaborated rituals of gift exchange with its postures on divine giving and tithing characterised the new style of Pentecostal worship" (Heuser 2016:2). As already alluded, it purifies love of money in seed faith and tithing policies. Money becomes the root of all blessings and progress against the traditional concept that says love of money is the root of all evil.

Prosperity is emphasised through the teaching of giving, and Scriptural references are given in support of every action undertaken. The use of 2 Corinthians 9:8 is prevalent in most ministries and churches for teachings on giving, with emphasis on the reciprocal aspect contained in the verse. Other Scriptural verses used are Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:6, Ecclesiastes 11:1 among others. The aspect on tithing is usually premised on Malachi 3:8-12

where the text addresses the Levites, telling them to bring tithes to the house of God in order for the store house to have food and for the Priests to have their share. The self-styled prophets design different approaches and gimmicks in order to milk the believers.

What is surprising is that instead of the tithes and offerings being banked in the coffers of the church, they are rather put in the prophet's account. Mpofu (2013:72) indicates that "the pastor becomes the richest person in the fold and the rest can only marvel at him/her." Some of the leaders in prosperity ministries are buying private jets, living in comfort, and riding in posh cars. They are now celebrities who often wear stylish fashion designs. They are no longer concerned about nor care for the poor people, like real shepherds should do - to give their life to the poor and offer a helping hand. In this regard then, prosperity teaching confirms a worldly view, as it stresses that prosperity gospel is not simply concerned with the spiritual realm. Young (1996) observes that teaching about prosperity is understood in terms of promises of material blessings that are not limited to provision but goes beyond abundance that reaches to luxury. John (10: 10) that states ... "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." is interpreted to mean promises to Christians that are not limited to provisions only, but to abundant provision. It is viewed as befitting that a child of the King should enjoy the luxury that such a position implies.

In the eyes of some Zimbabweans, these self-styled prophets are regarded as "professional con artistes busy stealing from people which means responsible authorities must intervene to protect citizens of this country" (Dube, 2017). In agreement with the above, Laity 3³⁴ shared the following in an interview:

Prosperity is a concept that arose from the economic challenges facing the generality of the population of Zimbabwe, particularly the poverty suffering among the young people who see the good things floating around but they are totally out of their reach. A few pseudo-theologians sought to take advantage of that deep desire for materialism which has engulfed our nation, to take benefit of poor people by abusing theology as it were, to say that if one is in Christ in *Toto* then one shall always be rich. They do so by carefully quoting half phrases of full sentences in the Bible to suit their own means. They do so by quoting verses in part, never in full, and abusing certain incidents in the Bible as said by Jesus Christ; and yet, in reality, the Bible in Job (5:7, 14:1) states categorically clear that human beings born of a woman are born to suffer. There is

³⁴Laity 1-6 are pseudonyms or code names used for the Lay leaders who were interviewed. Their proper names are preserved for their protection - see chapter six in the methodology for details. A list of all participants is attached in Appendix 14.

nowhere it says humanity is born to prosper materially. And when they talk about prosperity, it is a very broad concept; when one prospers it does not necessarily mean that it must be accompanied by financial or material accumulation. There is nothing in the Bible which directly or indirectly indicates that (Laity 3, 2017).

This clearly shows that some of the Lay leaders are not accepting the message of prosperity as it is preached by their clergy, as shall be fully discussed in chapter seven on the response of the lay leaders to the gospel of prosperity.

5.4.4 Faith and Positive Confession

Prosperity gospel is sometimes referred to as ‘faith gospel’ or word of faith movement due to the powerful oratory of positive confessions made by the adherents. Religious rhetoric is used to change the mind-set of the believer toward positive thinking or positive confession, which is then declared by the spoken word to usher in blessings. Often times the use of words such as ‘power of your tongue’ is used. For them, the power of religious speech creates reality, as derived from the creation stories (Genesis 1 and John 1), and this empowers the believer to take a positive course of life. Young argues that the condition for receiving this abundance of material blessing in prosperity is faith. God will not only act in answer to this faith but He is obligated to do so. Such reflections lead to narrow, rigid formulae as to how God works to fulfil his promises (1996).

Faith in this regard becomes the conduit for material blessing. Thus, humanity can have the power to effect change and bring prosperity by forcing God to act in favour of the believer, and the force is not from God but from the believer. “Innovative language of ‘naming and claiming’ divine blessings merged ideas of faith-healing” (Heuser 2016:2). Naming and claiming in faith is a common feature in the prosperity gospel movement. There are some cases in Zimbabwe where believers are made to make a claim of stands to build a house, or the location where one wants to stay. Then they are asked to buy anointed bricks; the more one buys, the more the number of assets one will acquire in faith. The anointed bricks may cost \$US 20.00 each. Because of desperation and wanting a place to stay, one sacrifices the little one has to buy the anointed bricks in anticipation of a place to stay. But, alas, some are still waiting for the fulfilment of the promises even though they had named and claimed in faith, as stated by Kadenge (2017) in an interview. Another example is a court case reported in the Chronicle newspaper, where prophet Uebert Angel is being sued over a Bentley after

Mr Ndabazinengi Shava gave the pricey Bentley Continental car, worth \$US 300 000.00, as a seeding asset, and the prophet vowed that his seed would multiply three-fold within eight months; but nothing materialised (Nemukuyu, 2014).

Advocates of prosperity teaching believe that force of faith must be continuously exerted, and if the pressure of faith relaxes, the return will stop flowing. Faith is the means of collecting the amount owed from the hundredfold return. “Any portion not collected goes into accounts receivable in the heavenly bank account for withdrawal when faith has increased” (Masvotore 2016:33). Kenneth Copeland confirms that, “When a man makes deposits with God, he has a right to call upon these deposits and make withdrawals”(1974:92). No wonder the motto of the prosperity movement is, “You can have what you say.” This is proved through Makandiwa’s sermon on “*simba remuromo*” (The Power of the Tongue DVD) of 2010. In this sermon, he encouraged his parishioners to say what they want by word of mouth.

When they claim their destiny, it will be granted as said by their words, for there is power in what one says (Makandiwa 2010). Young (1996:7) concludes that to uphold this positive confession, the believer is required to perform as though the benefit claimed has also been received, even though the evidence may be entirely to the contrary. To do otherwise is considered to display weakness of faith. This is not consistent with the Wesleyan approach to health and wealth issues, which advocated for a holistic approach and a strong work ethic. At the same time, it obviously poses the prospect of tragedy, particularly in cases of serious illness.

5.4.5 Scriptural References

The meaning for prosperity teaching is taken from a mixture of proof texts (this is the practice of using isolated, or out of context quotations from the bible to establish a proposition in eisegesis) that are interpreted with the supposition that they can stand alone as regulatory statements without the requirement to refer to context or original intention. A commonly used verse is 3 John verses 2 which says:

Beloved I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth (NIV).

Advocates of the prosperity gospel claim that the Bible testifies it is the will of God for all believers to prosper in every way; so for them the argument is conclusively proven (Young 1996:5). This verse is quoted repeatedly by prosperity adherents, as declaring God's will on the matter (Hagin1983:11-14). This is also seen in Prophet Makandiwa's DVD sermon of 2010 entitled "Finding your Destiny" (Makandiwa 2010a). In another sermon, "The Faith That Goes a Distance", Makandiwa expounded, quoting from 2 Chronicles 20:20: Zimbabweans should have faith in the servants of God whom he sends for prosperity. The prosperity of this world lies in the hands of God's servants. Bartemeous had faith in Jesus so that he would have his eye sight restored yet he remained poor. He developed faith in one area of his need but lacked faith to break foundational poverty (Makandiwa 2012)

Emphasis was put on earthly possessions instead of the context of military success or conquering in battles of war that demands dependence on God. Prosperity theology is rooted in interpretations of several passages in the Scriptures. The promise of wealth and the basis for the whole prosperity movement is seen in several scripture passages interpreted from a prosperity vantage point. The clarion call to prosperity is Joshua 1:8, which refers to God's promise to make Joshua's way prosperous and give him success. Further support is found in 2 Chronicles 20:20, "Put your trust in His prophets and succeed," and Nehemiah 2:20 that say "The God of heaven will give us success." Psalm 1:3 states that the righteous man will prosper in whatever he does, and Psalm 35:27 indicate that God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.

The provision of wealth centres on the application of the Abrahamic Covenant, personal blessings God bestowed on Abraham in the covenant God made with him. These are extrapolated as benefits for believers today. Hagin (1983:14) argues that Abraham's blessing was threefold: spiritual, physical, and also financial. Copeland (1978:4-6) delights in pointing out that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all became extremely rich because of their relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant. To remain relevant and authentic in the teaching of prosperity gospel, proponents maintain that materialism is the will of God here and now; they refer to the earthly Jesus whom they regard as one of the richest persons who ever lived. Evidence is drawn from the fact that Jesus paid taxes, fed the hungry multitudes and supported the ministry of the twelve disciples (1978:6). He even wears expensive dresses to the extent that when he died they fought for the inner garment (Hagin 1983). All this is done to authenticate and validate the prosperity gospel.

These are some of the common texts used by prosperity proponents, though the list is endless depending on the different dimensions or areas the preacher wants to emphasise. The texts are often taken out of context and do not take the original intent of the text into consideration. These texts are commonly used with an aspect of faith that is required as a lubricant to facilitate the outcome of the promises.

5.5 Opportunities and Challenges of the Prosperity Gospel to the Religio-cultural Context of Zimbabwe

Having looked at the concept of salvation and fundamental characteristics of the gospel of prosperity, the focus now is on the challenges and opportunities this gospel poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. The current environment of economic crisis with the advent of a multi-currency system, the unfavourable political turmoil, religious hybridity and the drought situation in Zimbabwe informs the religio-cultural context of this study. These environmental realities and challenges also inform the ministerial formation of MCZ clergy. The socio-economic context of Zimbabwe is highly complex. Scholars in Zimbabwe, like Makumbe (2009), Mude and Chigora (2013), have shown interest in what is happening in Zimbabwe, emphasising different aspects of this complex situation.

One component of the situation in Zimbabwe that has drawn scholars' debate is the socio-economic and political dimension. Mude and Chigora (2013) critique the Zimbabwean situation from a socio-political and economic perspective. They argue that, Zimbabwe has experienced a serious socio-economic and political crisis from 2000. Major causes to this crisis are ascribed to sanctions imposed by the West following the fast track land reform programme in June 2000. Agriculture collapsed and inflation rose to high levels, violence intensified during the run-up to elections 2000-2008, at the same time health and education systems crumpled (2013:27).

The above situation focuses on how and with what level of success good governance has been promoted by civil society, business and the state itself during this period. Furthermore, it examines how far the inclusive government has gone in promoting good governance in a bid to ward off the crisis. The scenario further looked into how the ideologies of inclusiveness, shared government, shared responsibility and shared prosperity enabled good

governance. How applicable is the concept of good governance in a state hit by crises affecting all spheres of life – political, economic and social?

The other component to be reflected upon is the crisis and degeneration of democratic Zimbabwean governance. From this angle, Makumbe (2009:14) has amply demonstrated that, compared to other African countries that were moving in the direction of meaningful democratisation during the last decade, Zimbabwe has been moving further away from democracy towards authoritarianism, if not dictatorship for the past 15 years of Mugabe's rule. Makumbe further argues that, invasion of farms in 2000 had a sombre cost for both economic and social development in Zimbabwe. Conversely Zimbabweans are looking forward for democracy to exist and refuse authoritarianism (2009:14).

The formation of an inclusive Government for Zimbabwe (2008-2013), though it brought in relief in a small way, failed to meaningfully revive the economic and social sectors of this country. To date the political landscape has shifted from a situation where governance of the country was not in the hands of the legislature and the judiciary, but rather it was dominated by cliques where the Mugabe family seemed to be controlling the situation, especially the first lady Grace Mugabe, who aspired to be the next president. Now governance under the current President Munangagwa, another clique in ZANU PF seems to be run by the junta as all sectors of government are controlled by men and women from the armed forces. Economically, inflation has hit the international record books once again. In 2008, Zimbabwe was second to Hungary, reaching the worst inflation record the world over (Hanke and Krus 2012). From the critique of these scholars (Makumbe, Mude and Chigodora), the study will gain insights into the challenges posed by the prosperity gospel that has come into this religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe, and how the Methodist clergy has coped with the ongoing socio-economic and political crisis in his or her daily duties. It also informs the study on how these contexts became fertile ground for the emergence and growth of prosperity theology.

5.5.1 Opportunities Posed by the Prosperity Gospel

First and foremost, in this fragile situation in Zimbabwe, the prosperity gospel has brought some positive and negative impacts to the nation at large and to the MCZ in particular. As alluded to in the literature review, the prosperity gospel, through encouraging

entrepreneurship, alleviates poverty in Africa (Togarasei 2011:336; see also Schliesser 2014:9).

This aspect of prosperity helps believers to discover wealth creation and financial intelligence. Both Togarasei and Schliesser applauded Pentecostalism and the prosperity gospel for creating employment for the public instead of advocating that people seek employment. Togarasei further argued that “it contributes a positive mind-set to believers” (2011:335). This is in agreement with Mpofu who also suggests that, prosperity equips a Christian to proclaim victory over sin and poverty as a sign of one’s confidence in God. These words of victory spoken by believers generate in them an imagined transformation, creative imagination that goes down in their minds for a positive move in their faith (2013: 52).

Mpofu suggests that a positive attitude enables the growth of the prosperity movement, largely because of “the failure of mainline churches to tap into African spirituality and failure to make the gospel message practical and relevant to the African child” (: 66). This is seen in Schliesser’s claims when she states that:

...when Christianity came to Africa and with it the particular brand of Pentecostalism and the Prosperity Gospel, the latter could tie in with many elements of traditional religions, such as the belief in spirits, in healings, in exorcisms (2014:8).

The dialectic link to key African concepts, along with other features such as the importance of charisma and ecstasy, plus the effective use of the new technology of media has helped the incredible rise of prosperity teaching in Zimbabwe. Prosperity messages attract the poor to love the church in search of miracle money and other material promises while the rich on the other hand are helped never to feel guilty about amassing more wealth (Mpofu 2013:67).

5.5.2 Negative Challenges of the Prosperity Gospel

Be that as it may, there are also challenges that are associated with the prosperity gospel theology, especially in the context of Zimbabwe. In a number of cases, prosperity ministries do advance a religious extremism where members of one family are urged to disassociate with those that are not going to the same church with them. They are sometimes accused of causing illnesses and some are regarded as sources of bad luck and owners of the goblins and

tokoloshes that cause bad spells to those who go to ministries churches. In this regard, family ties and relationship with one's kith and kin are destroyed because of this extremism. This kind of attitude is related to the ATR way of causality where death, sickness and poverty are caused by one's enemies, among who are members of the family.

From the teaching of the prosperity gospel, as indicated earlier, the social fibre of most families in Africa, and Zimbabwe in particular, are compromised by this Pentecostal ideology of prosperity. This is the reason why, at the beginning of Pentecostalism through AFM in Zimbabwe, around 1915, the government was reluctant to register the denomination officially, citing the discord it causes among the natives. Togarasei (2016: 4) states that, official status was denied to AFM by the authorities because of its Pentecostal features of *Glossolalia* and faith healing and the manner in which preachers of this church operated. The church was seen as a menace in the way it caused discontent and divisions among the natives.

This gospel has been packaged in such a way that it is very attractive to people but obviously doing more harm than good. For instance, the right now dictum: things must happen right now, go out right now, right now. Everything is traced to the presence of demons and it tends to appeal to African people. African people are afraid of the dead that once one invokes the spirit of the dead, they tend to follow. When they get to the point that they are really disappointed when ailments never go, this gospel creates peace for a person, like one who has been given anaesthetic drugs or sleeping tablets to suspend pain for a while.

In the desire to cast out demons and remove curses from believers that are attributed to the devil or Satan as the cause, there is no consideration of the existence of social vices, since, in their rhetoric, a believer is beyond all forms of sin and evil. In light of the meltdown of the economy and the political turmoil caused largely by the closing down of industries, unemployment, corruption and mismanagement of resources by the leaders in government, prosperity adherents have no aspirations to address the societal circumstances that manifest in and through social evil. Their interest is the instant "benefits of a materialistic and financial nature without fixing the socio-economic structures that gave birth to all the maladies of a corrupt and collapsed social systems"(Mpofu 2013:72).

Prosperity gospel has a materialistic drive over and above spiritual and moral issues. Mpofu (2013:69) argues that "from the message of Jesus Christ himself we are told to instead seek the Kingdom of God and these things shall be added unto you (Luke 12:31)." This is contrary

to the message of Christ for the advocates of prosperity, where there is more emphasis on wealth than God and loving one's neighbour. The promoters of the gospel of prosperity have a market niche that is readily available. Those young people who are desirous of accumulating material wealth, and are at the poverty level in this country promoted the circumstances that which the gospel of prosperity is flourishing.

The billion dollar question is: Do all believers get an abundance of material possessions, as promised during the time of prophecy in these new movements? For Dada (2004:95-105; see also Mpofu 2013:71), even though many people are attracted to the prosperity gospel, "their economic status has not changed rather it is their churches that have become rich, some to the extent of establishing universities." From the interviews conducted, there is unanimous agreement that many believers are duped and are left worse-off than before; as they continue to hope for promises to be fulfilled without anything materialising, they are left disappointed. It also presents another dilemma, where the clergy, prophet or pastor becomes a "cultic figure in the act of worship who is highly revered by congregants"(Mpofu 2013:86). The clergy, prophet or pastor moves with a convoy of security guards for protection. Even though he/she claims to have power to protect the congregants, he/she is protected by security guards. He/she becomes the chief executive officer or director where instructions are generated for all to adhere to without question, as he/she is deemed to be the ideal child of God who should be respected and adored by all. Hence, Christological titles like 'man of God, Holy one, apostle, Papa, Mighty man/woman of God and spiritual father' among others are created for the pastor.

From the titles mentioned above, one can deduce a theological challenge where members of the congregation are giving some names that are a preserve for God, such as Mighty man/woman of God. It is rather better to say a man/woman of a Mighty God. The implication in this case is that a human mortal being is now greater than God himself. This is the genesis of idol worship; to make matters worse, during testimonies there is no mention of the word 'God' but only the prophet or clergy. There is a tendency among believers of the prosperity gospel to rejoice in the miracles of the clergy or pastor rather than to know Jesus Christ who is the Lord of life and owner of these miracles. The clergy becomes a hero of the moment and the talk of society. The danger in this commemoration or celebration is to make the clergy or pastor an end in himself/herself, rather than pointing to Jesus who is the ultimate end while humanity is a means to an end.

Mpofu (2013:86) points that “there is less religious and moral growth visible as compared to economic and social success trends.” If this is the case, then there is a big challenge to the nature and meaning of traditional Christianity. In traditional Christianity, ethical values, discipline and morality were the guiding factors of believers and society as well. In the perspective of Christianity, change or evolution means transformation of the heart and mind of humanity and the society in which one lives. To date there are numerous court cases of immorality filed against those called ‘man of God’ (Staff Writer 2016) see also News Day 21 September 2017). In the MCZ, those who are regarded as inspired and full of the Holy Spirit have been caught in sexual scandals. As a result, it prompts people to believe that proponents of the prosperity gospel are more like dramatists than genuine clergy – ‘minister of religion’ in name only. Though a few might be genuine, the rest are dramatising. The drama goes on to include their wives as prophetesses, as if to indicate that once one is married to a prophet, there is an automatic transfer of power from the husband to the wife either through sexual transmission of power or through intimacy.

Magezi and Banda argue that there is a conflict of interest as to whether Christian ministry and theological education ought to follow an agenda for economic survival. The emphasis on wealth and prosperity in ministerial practices has led to the Commodification of Christian ministry where theological education and Christian ministry are used as conduits for economic profit (2017:1). In Zimbabwe, this emphasis on material prosperity and the amassing of personal wealth at the expense of congregants or their benefit has left significant and suspicious outsiders talking about “gospelpreneurship to complain about the changing of the Christian gospel into an article of trade that can become a form of lucrative free enterprise”(Chitando et al. 2013:9; see also Magezi and Banda 2017:1). Ministry is no longer regarded as a vocation where the clergy has a spiritual calling to renounce materialism and live frugally, and where there is an element of endurance in all times, whether one has material things or not. Instead, the calling is to render service to the people who are in need. Among them are the poor people in rural areas, where sometimes the clergy is the one to give to them rather than being given.

The shift has now witnessed “the materialistic and glamorous clergy who invest in stock markets and amass enough wealth to contend for listing among the world’s richest business people” (Magezi and Banda 2017:1). Christian ministry has now become a strategy of

survival. It is a serious challenge in that even those who preach end up abusing the congregants and promising people that they will become rich at the same time expecting some returns to come directly to the preacher. There is a sense in which it tampers with the institutional aspect of the church, becoming instead a personalized gospel which is about personalities more than the church. In the end, those who preach the gospel of prosperity and those who can promise miracles seem to be the ones who get more. Hence it becomes a gospel of acquisition even on the part of the preacher himself and not just the congregants.

For Gondongwe (2017), the prosperity gospel is also a gospel of servility to the powers that be, as he shared in an interview:

...they eat with Politicians, that is why the founders of ministries are seen at airports, the likes of Makandiwa and Magaya would give US \$30 000.00 as a present to the wedding and birthday of the President's daughter. There is no ministry like that; they have the poor in their ministries surely. It is a gospel that aligns to the powers that be. All what they think and know is to pray and pray for the powers.

Even though they associate with the political figures in the country, they are also a security threat to the nation because of their prophecies. These are aligned with the death of presidents and the ushering in of new governments, which is disturbing and may result in insecurity in the country.

Mpofu suggests that “their preaching is not for repentance from sin rather it is about destroying the works and tricks of the devil” (2013:71; see also Maxwell 2006:185). They burn magical substances publicly as a way of demonstrating power over the devil. Prosperity teaching has also created a religio-cultural entrepreneurship in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. For Ukah (2005:272) there is a “sacred secrecy around finance.” In Zimbabwe, as alluded earlier, “there are solo ministries that have created business empires under the leadership of ‘prophets of profit’”(Heuser 2016:5). They design market strategies to mobilise and organise funds for their self-aggrandisement. The leadership structure of the prosperity churches is the preserve of the founding leader and wife or husband, together with those who act as representatives. There is no ordinary or local member who will have access to financial knowledge in terms of management and expenses; all this is centralised and these empires are in the control of families. These are the characteristics of a kleptocracy (:5), meaning a society whose leaders make themselves rich and powerful stealing from the rest of the people.

5.6 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter provides a working definition for the prosperity gospel. Summed up, it is a wealth, health and success gospel where the children of God have a right over wealth and health for their enjoyment here and now, and do not have to defer it for an eschatological future. The chapter also traces the concept of salvation and the Wesleyan holiness movement, noting that this movement gave birth to the prosperity gospel. With Pentecostalism, the prosperity gospel spread from the United States of America (USA) and was transported via migrants, technocrats and foreign students in the States who carried this gospel to their various countries of origins. This includes the likes of Ezekiel Guti who had an opportunity to study in USA, and Tom Deuchle founder of Celebration Centre, a graduate from America who came as a solo evangelist to Zimbabwe in 1979. This chapter revealed that it was easy for Pentecostalism to thrive in Africa because it resonated with the beliefs of ATR. Further, the prosperity gospel thrived because of the difficult economic, political and social status of many African countries. The meltdown of the economy, political turmoil and social unrest led believers turn to religion for solutions.

In this chapter, the concept of salvation was explored and the fundamental characteristics of prosperity were discussed, such as aiming to lead a prosperous life. This is a pre-requisite for all Christians in all areas of their lives. Prosperity teaching regards poverty and sickness as a result of being outside the will of God regardless of the cause. Certain scriptural references are commonly used to justify any claim made. Proof-texts are used to manufacture support of these claims, without applying exegesis and regardless of contextual analysis that is required to affirm a position. This teaching is centred on faith and positive confessions, which propel one to realise the promises and blessing of God. It also touches on giving and receiving as a requirement – to buy God’s favour through tithing and seeding. Tithing and seeding become the conduit that brings blessings from God; hence one has to seed to the man of God. In these teachings, poverty and sickness are considered to be caused by a curse following the law of causality, hence the need for humanity to be delivered through the prayers and healing gimmicks of the man of God.

The chapter went on to outline the broad benefits and challenges of the prosperity gospel in the context of Zimbabwe. Advantages include the ability of this gospel to alleviate poverty; a strength that is in line with indigenization process of Zimbabwe, as indicated by Togarasei (2011:336). Further, it creates confidence through a faith that encourages positive thinking

and keeps humanity from losing hope, even in dark moments. On the disadvantages, the prosperity gospel ushers in a spirit of extremism that has caused division among families, especially those that do not attend the same prosperity ministries. They are accused of being witches, bringing curses to those who go to prosperity ministries, and are regarded as the source of goblins and *tokoloshes* that bring misfortune to the believers who to attend such ministry churches.

From this chapter, it was found that in the prosperity gospel, things are spiritualised to the extent that everything is deemed to be caused by a curse regardless of social, economic, political and even religious factors bedevilling the country, community and family. In the case of sickness, there is no time to look at the availability of health facilities and hygiene practices of the people affected, whether they seek treatment or not, whether it is a chronic disease or not – all is attributed to a curse. The gospel is materialistic in nature at the expense of the spiritual. The aim is to satisfy and maximise material benefits rather than spiritual benefits, to the extent that growth of a church is measured in monetary terms without looking at how many souls are saved.

The chapter argued that this is a gospel of servility to please the powers that be, particularly the political figures of the day. There is no wonder why donations are received from so-called Prophets at birthday parties of the President. Members of these sects are forced to attend national gatherings, like national shrines where there is a burial of a national hero, to demonstrate to other churches and the world that even churches are in support of the ruling party. The chapter has also shown that preaching in the prosperity gospel churches is not for repentance from sin; rather it is all about destroying the works of the devil. This is done mostly through demonstrations of power using symbolic relics like handkerchiefs, holy water from the sea, holy oil, wrist bands, anointed oranges or cucumbers etc. The next chapter focuses on selective society leaders' responses to the prosperity gospel.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SELECTIVE SOCIETY LEADERS' RESPONSES TO THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL

6.1 Introduction

In chapter five the focus was on prosperity gospel's concept of salvation and the challenges and opportunities it poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. A general view of the rise of the prosperity gospel is given in chapter five. The focus was on the key components of salvation from where its foundational teachings emerge, and the transportability of this gospel from America to Africa, Zimbabwe in particular. Factors that are favourable for its transplantation into Zimbabwe, such as economic crisis, political instability and African traditional views among others, are discussed. Concluding remarks in chapter five shows that prosperity gospel thrives well in the deplorable economic situation of Zimbabwe, and it rides on ATR as a related solution to the here and now crisis in the country.

The focus of this chapter is on the fieldwork results of this study, to evaluate how selected society leaders are responding to the prosperity gospel proclaimed by their clergy. Their responses will validate this study because it will show whether some clergy are advocates of a health and wealth gospel and how such teaching is received by the members. This will then be compared in the concluding chapter to the Wesleyan view of Salvation that is dominated by health and wealth motifs.

Responses to the prosperity gospel are derived from the laity, based on fieldwork interview responses from lay leaders as they are representative leaders at various tiers of the church. At Connexional level, there is the Connexional Lay President who gathers feedback information from the lay people and gives an address at Conference from the stand point of the laity in the church. At local levels, there are Circuit Stewards and society leaders who also speak on behalf of the MCZ community from the lay people's perspective. Although the focus of this study targeted the ministerial formation of clergy in the MCZ, it is prudent to also hear the voices of the laity as recipients of the gospel preached by their clergy. The voice of the laity will ensure "rigour and reliability"(Lacey and Luff 2001: 26) of this study, as their voice will authenticate the position of the lay people towards the prosperity gospel. A deliberate

selection of the lay leaders was done at random (a detailed explanation was given in chapter six; they come from two societies, namely Budiro and Parktown).

These two societies are unique in their own way. Budiro society is an upcoming high density suburb that has a working class population and a young generation. It is also surrounded by emerging prophets and ministries that preach the gospel of prosperity. Parktown is a medium density suburb with more working class members of the church, and it is situated near the Prophetic Healing and Deliverance Ministry (PHD) belonging to Walter Magaya. He has drawn the attention of the whole country in terms of prosperity and healing services. The environments of these two situations are such that MCZ clergy stationed in these two areas should be competent in order to manage the pressure exerted by the surrounding ministries.

Before analysing responses from the lay leaders to hear their views on the gospel of prosperity advanced from their clergy, it is crucial to hear what the clergy – in this case, the top leadership – say about what the laity feel about their clergy who preach a prosperity gospel. This is done in order to show that the MCZ has been battling with this phenomenon. Responses, as analysed from the interviews and addresses given by leaders, are in two categories, namely, affirmative positions with reservations and opposing positions, as indicated by Zwana (2017) in an interview:

...it is a mixed bag, some support it, and actually some push their ministers to be like those who preach the gospel of prosperity. There are others who really do not support it. So it's a mixed bag; some are for it and some are not for it. For some it is the general pressure from the members who feel that there is something they can get from that gospel.

The Presiding Bishop of the MCZ acknowledged that the church is a mixed bag when it comes to the issue of the prosperity gospel with some supporting it and pushing their clergy to preach the gospel while there are those who do not support it. The reason for this unclear position among the laity is given by Gondongwe (2017) when he states:

...this gospel has been packaged in such a way that it is very attractive to our people but obviously doing more harm than good. For instance, the right now dictum, and things must happen right now, go out right now, right now. Everything is traced to demons and it tends to appeal to our African people. African people are so much afraid of the dead that once if you invoke the spirit of the dead they tend to follow. They are so much afraid of the dead; they are also afraid of death and because of that our people reach a point when they are really

disappointed. If you try to bring order, if you try to be rationale about it, then you are labelled as very unspiritual.

The aspect of fear in the laity makes them to compromise their faith to the extent that they are attracted to the prosperity gospel that has immediate answers to their problems. As they are promised a quick solution, they admittedly run without counting the risk and the cost. If the clergy tries to either reason with them or reason against it then he or she is labelled unspiritual. Only when the promises fail to materialise will they realize that it was never spiritual from the onset. It could be that the MCZ has also failed to address the needs of the people, as Dube (2017) suggests in an interview:

...what is going on in our churches is that there are people who get attracted because it provides some quick meaning and quick solutions. So you find that we have now a problem of dual membership of people who come to our church and then they also go there because it promises them something. And I will also say our church, the way it has responded to the crisis out there, is that the church has failed to articulate a Wesleyan message that really provide answers to those questions and aspirations and yearning; therefore people end up running away because the church is not responsive enough to what is going on.

This testimony confirms that the laity has no clear position to guide them when it comes to prosperity, if the MCZ cannot articulate a Wesleyan message that provides answers to the crisis. It could be that clergy themselves do not know that John Wesley (as indicated in chapter two) was an advocate of prosperity through his provision and articulation of health and wealth issues. Wesley clarified that by salvation, he meant not only deliverance of people from hell, or going to heaven, but he also referred to a present “deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health and the renewal of our souls...” (Maddox 2007: 7). From the above, one can deduce that Wesley, without fail, expected his followers and generation to seek the profit of holistic and just salvation, where God’s forgiveness of sins is combined with God’s gracious healing of the damage that sin has produced.

Ncube³⁵(2014: 104), addressing a representative session of conference, remarked:

...we need to appreciate what is happening around us and be proactive. This however does not mean we lose our identity. Our foundation should never be shaken as we embrace change,

³⁵Mrs Sithembile Ncube was the former Connexional Lay President of the MCZ from 2010 to 2015. She was giving an address to the representative session of Conference 2014 held at Gweru Polytechnic College.

let us remain guided by our principles and values as a church. However as we embrace change we need to jealously guard and cherish our legacy.

It is evident that the leader was cautious as she gave her address. Her statement can be analysed from two angles. She is advocating for change – she is encouraging the church to acknowledge what is happening from other denominations and she encourages the church to adapt to change. In other words, the leader admits that time to change is now as the environment is permeated by prosperity; admittedly the church has to change its approach to the gospel. At the same time, as she advocates for change, she is cautioning the church not to lose its identity. She is calling the church to remain resolute to its principles and values. The question is which principles and values should not be shaken, because John Wesley is the forerunner of the prosperity gospel through his emphasis on health and wealth? Is she calling the church to go back to those principles as laid out by John Wesley? The challenge is that as people talk about Methodist principles and values, there is an assumption that everyone knows what one is talking about but to a certain extent even the one talking does not explicitly know these fundamentals of Methodism hence the need to empower both the laity and clergy through ministerial formation.

Mr Sanyauke³⁶(2016b: 52) admits that:

The challenges we have today are not unique to our great church but universal due to current political and economic situations worldwide. Let us maintain and increase qualitative and quantitative standards. God is with us all the time.

The leader here is too philosophical by not directly wanting to come out openly on what the church has to do, though he admits that the church is facing challenges which he attributed to political and economic situations bedevilling the whole world.

In the process of data analysis, table 1 below shows responses that were identified. This first category is the responses of the selected lay leaders to the prosperity gospel from their clergy, which is in line with answering the sub research question on how the selected leaders respond to prosperity gospel from their clergy. It also meets the same objective of evaluating how selected society leaders are responding to the prosperity gospel from their clergy. From the first category, two sub-themes were generated: (1) the affirming position by some lay leaders

³⁶ Mr Sanyauke is the current Connexional Lay President who gave his address to the Representative Session of Conference held at Kadoma Rainbow Hotel in 2016.

to the prosperity gospel from their clergy; (2) The opposing position by some lay leaders to the prosperity gospel from their clergy. This can be tabulated as follows:

Theme	Sub Themes
The response of the selective lay leaders to prosperity gospel from their clergy	(i) The affirming position by some lay leaders to the prosperity gospel from their clergy. (ii) The opposing position by some lay leaders to the prosperity gospel from their clergy

Table 1

6.2 Affirming Position by Some Lay Leaders to the Prosperity Gospel

Having noted the views from the top leaders of the church, it is ideal now to look at what the laity interviewees suggested about their clergy in relation to the gospel of prosperity. From the interviews carried among the lay leaders from Parktown and Budiro societies, three leaders affirmed that the prosperity gospel preached by clergy is not bad, rather it is biblical. But their reservations are found in the way it is done by some clergy. Laity1 (2017) confirms that:

...in my view, biblically, I think prosperity gospel has some element of truth in it here and there but to a very large extent in our environment it is being misused or abused rather. The abuse is taking people for granted to the extent that it is being used as a way of wooing or having bigger gatherings for one's intended ends.

During the same interviews, Laity 6 (2017) shares the same sentiments when she says,

My opinion on prosperity gospel is that this gospel is not bad at all because God did not create us to be poor but what happens when this gospel is preached is what sometimes is not good but I think the gospel itself is not bad but what we do makes the gospel to appear bad, it looks as if going to church has a motive to prosper and some clergy end up abusing members.

From the above, one deduces that these leaders affirming the preaching of prosperity but they are critical in how the preaching is done by some of the clergy in the MCZ. They indicated that the prosperity gospel is biblical and not bad, and when preached properly, it can grow the church. The feeling is that there is an element of abuse from the clergy who are advocates of this gospel, to the extent that they preach the gospel for self-aggrandisement. In the eyes of

the laity, the picture of church clergy has changed from the conventional anti-materialistic and heavenly persistent clergy who lives frugally, to the money-orientated and thrilling clergy who invest in money markets and accumulate sufficient riches to compete for listing among the world's richest business people (Magezi and Banda 2017: 2).

The lay leaders who are in support of the health and wealth gospel affirm that it is beneficial to the growth of the church in terms of numerical and financial growth. Laity 6 (2017) contends that:

...Prosperity gospel helps in the growth of the church financially because there is no way the church will function without money. Some use it as a tool to fundraise where if one gives to God, in turn that person will receive blessings, and since people want blessings from God, when the man of God says if you sow you shall reap and if you sow wind you shall reap whirlwind, so no one is prepared to reap whirlwind hence one will sacrifice whatever he or she has in order to get the blessings

A close analysis of the above statements from the lay leaders indicates that as much as there is financial growth through preaching prosperity, the clergy's message has to instil fear in the parishioners in order for them to give. The leaders clearly show that when the clergy says, if one sows wind he/she will reap whirlwind, the congregants will sacrifice the little they have to give to the church in anticipation of blessings. Furthermore, when interviewed, Laity 5 (2017) shows that he supports prosperity teaching from the clergy. He has assurance that members are benefiting when he said, "people are receiving more blessings from our clergy's sermons and even from the way our clergy work especially when they visit people in their homes and in hospitals; some people say they were blessed when they were visited by the clergy, their problems were gone and sickness healed." He confirms that clergy are providing healing to members through visitations in homes and in hospitals.

The intriguing question now is whether the blessings are realised from the one who gives out of fear? As shown above, as a result of fear of whirlwind, members sacrifice the little they have to give to the church. In as much as some leaders support the prosperity gospel, it is surprising that all the leaders agreed that with the 'name it and claim it' gospel advanced from their clergy, they observed that the promises expected by the congregants are never fulfilled. This is despite the congregants naming what they wish to get from God in faith, using holy oil and anointed handkerchiefs, and buying anointed bricks and anointed oil in

anticipation of blessings from God. This is clearly shown in their statements during the interview when one said,

To be blunt and short, I think that will not benefit the members. I don't know, maybe it is in the mind of those intended to be beneficiaries but from my own experience I haven't seen anywhere where it has benefited, except like say from a Methodist perspective, let us say, if our minister says guys we want to roof this church if you put an asbestos you will be proud you have played your part but not how it is being done (Laity 1, 2017).

In supporting the above, Laity 6 (2017) suggests:

...we as Methodists, we are not into name and claim, but if you look at those who do that, they will only have people for a short period of time and those people are not their members but they are people looking for benefits. As Methodists we first of all want a person to receive Christ first and repent and know who God is, then the rest shall follow. I have never come across anyone who has named and even touched a vehicle who later confessed that things materialised, so I think as clergy, prophets and ministers, they need to tell people the truth and if people receive the truth it will set them free, unlike telling people lies. At the end of the day when one realises it is not true it will damage those people. Our mission is to heal so if we lie to people..., even Jesus himself while on earth he did not come for material things so since we believe in Christ who did not come for material things so as a church we need to remain focused and preach the true word of God and leave out materialistic gospel because material things are short lived. If one could not find the promised things it will be a problem.

The responses from the laity who are advocates of the health and wealth gospel has elements where they are in total agreement with their clergy but they also critique some activities which they feel are not authentic and in line with Methodism. In this regard, clergy do not have a blank cheque to do whatever they want but they are still responsible and accountable to the church and to God, and to remain true to their calling. The views from Magezi and Banda show that there is a clash between the conventional view of ministry as an act of sacrifice and the prosperity entrepreneurial idea of ministry as a way of economic prosperity for the welfare of the clergy. On the other hand, the biblical teachings and examples drawn from the Bible confirm clergy as having a right to economic survival from their labour in ministry. The same Bible has teachings and examples that forbid turning ministry into a conduit for amassing wealth (2017: 2).

The clergy however has a responsibility to empower congregants to respond to poverty meaningfully, especially in the Zimbabwean context that has seen poverty from generation to generation. To accomplish this, theological education needs internal transformation to be able to equip clergy to integrate and play an economic function that has the power to transform Christians to engage poverty decisively.

6.3 Opposing Position by Some Lay Leaders to the Prosperity Gospel

There are opposing sentiments from some lay leaders against the notion of the prosperity gospel advanced by their clergy in regards to health and wealth themes, without striking a balance as advocated by John Wesley. Wesley, as indicated in chapter three, had a balanced notion of health and wealth. The leaders who are against the preaching of the prosperity gospel from their clergy hold the view that ministry is an act of sacrifice, devoid of material benefits, and rendered to the people who are in need of salvation, sometimes at the expense of the clergy. This act of sacrifice is seen among missionaries and the first generation of African clergy, as clearly stated in a letter from Rev Matthew Rusike³⁷ to Rev Andrew Ndhlela³⁸ on 13 May 1971 when he wrote:

...The money you have been giving me from 1960 works to £5/- per week and my wife £5/- per week. Can a married person leave on £10/- per month? Garden boys live on more than that plus rations. From 1960 to 1970 when I was receiving that amount I thought that the church was discouraging me to start the First African Children's Home... As I said in my last letter to you that I spent all my life working for the Methodist Church without a minor Synod held for me. And this is the way the church is saying thank you Rusike (Banana 1991: 191).

The above letter is the true testimony of a clergy who sacrificed all for the ministry with expectation of better reciprocal treatment by the church in terms of wages, but it never materialised. Even though the content of the letter shows deep complaint, the clergy, at the end of his ministry, gave to the church the Children's Home that he started using his resources. This shows a non-materialistic type of ministry rendered by those who adopted the Wesleyan ethic of preferential option for the poor. These are some of the first crop of clergy

³⁷ Rev Mathew Rusike was the first black clergy to be appointed Superintendent in 1936 in Makwiro Circuit. He established the first African children's home called Mathew Rusike Children's Home

³⁸ Rev Andrew Ndhlela was the first black clergy to be appointed District Chairman of the Transvaal District and the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church in Rhodesia, a position previously held by only whites from 1965 to 1977. He was elected the first President of the autonomous church from 1977 to 1980 when he retired.

to be trained at Waddilove, as indicated in chapter two and four, where there was teaching on the history and theology of Methodism. This was not found in the curriculum at UTC until 2016 when it was introduced.

In responding to the message of prosperity from their clergy, Laity 2 (2017) has this to say:

...I think we are in times where people are under stress, especially this country, because from the economic point of view, the country is not performing well. There are so many challenges and there are many people who probably if they had any means of survival, they would not be under so much stress. So my view is perhaps like anybody; when they go to a church they are interested in something. There are many challenges at home, no jobs, no prospect of getting it, and when they have something little, now there is these messages of prosperity. They come appealing and they felt they can get resolution to their circumstances. So I see this as a passing phase but the problem is that it can sway a large number of our people not in the correct direction but in the direction of chasing something which they will not get. They will be disappointed along the way and they will probably lose the little that they have and they don't develop the hope, faith and trust they should develop especially if one is a Christian.

There is no doubt that some of the lay leaders have listened to their clergy with suspicion and view their message as a survival tool that takes advantage of the people who are under stressful conditions posed by the economic situation in Zimbabwe. The lay leader was able to link the economic conditions with the propagation of the prosperity gospel where, in desperation, the people would want to find solutions in their circumstances through the prosperity gospel that is currently attractive and appealing. For him, it is a passing phase probably because he has hope of the stabilization of the economy in Zimbabwe in the near future. But he is bemoaning the damage that could be caused by the health and wealth gospel. He felt the gospel of prosperity is leading people in a wrong direction, chasing something they will not get from the false promises in the messages from the clergy. Hence the members will be disappointed in the long run and would have lost the little they have. As such, they will lose their faith and trust in God, in the church, as well as the clergy.

In the same vein, Laity 3 (2017) shared the same sentiments as the above by critically analysing the health and wealth gospel. He states:

My honest and earnest view of gospel of prosperity is: that is a concept that arose from the economic challenges facing the generality of the population of Zimbabwe, particularly the poverty suffering among the young people who see the good things floating around but they

are totally out of their reach. A few pseudo-theologians sought to take advantage of that deep desire for materialism which has engulfed our nation, to take advantage of poor people by abusing theology as it were; to say that if you are in Christ in *toto* then you shall always be rich. They do so by carefully quoting half phrases of full sentences in the Bible to suite their own means. They do so by quoting verses in part, never in full, and abusing certain incidents in the Bible as said by Jesus Christ. And yet in reality the Bible states categorically clear that a human being born of a woman is born to suffer. There is nowhere it says you are born to prosper materially. And when they talk about prosperity, it is a very broad concept; when you prosper it does not necessarily mean that it must be accompanied by financial or material accumulation. There is nothing in the Bible which directly or indirectly indicates that I have not found it (Laity 3, 2017).

It is interesting to note that the lay leaders are aware of the economic challenges bedevilling the population of Zimbabwe. They also observe that among clergy there are two groups – those that are faithful to their calling and those he regards as pseudo-theologians who take advantage of the craving for materialism that has swallowed up the nation of Zimbabwe and abuse theology. It seems the laity are aware of counterfeit preaching and the factual gospel because he went on to show how the clergy quote verses as half phrases of full sentences in the Bible to suit their own means. The lay leader has shown that he is well-versed with hermeneutical interpretation of the Bible, probably because he is a preacher himself or because of his academic prowess. This is an indicator to the clergy that they should not take things for granted and thinks that the message they preach is accepted without undergoing critical assessment from among the laity who are also qualified to separate true and false teachings.

Another lay leader who was interviewed indicates that,

...my view on prosperity is that it is misleading in a way, because what people are promised will not happen. Although it is taking long for people to realise that the way they are being taught or the way they are being lured into prosperity gospel is just misleading, there are examples of people who now come back to the church saying that, what we thought will happen is not happening (Laity 4, 2017).

The leader saw prosperity teaching as misleading, with a potential of robbing people of their resources through gimmicks that lure members. And the members never realise the promises made to them by clergy. Leaders see some clergy now taking “ministry as a blessed profession that must have immediate lucrative benefits” (Magezi and Banda 2017: 5), rather

than viewing it as negation of the world. There is an innovative interweaving that accommodates worldly things and propagates a materialistic gospel where wealth and health are evidence of blessings from God to those who are tithing and seeding to the pastor. Regrettably, those who leave the MCZ to either go to PHD ministries or other ministries in anticipation of accumulating wealth and who seek instant healing, come back disappointed because they would have not realised what they are promised by the prophet. This is why Laity 5 (2017) is in support of a work ethic principle in attaining prosperity. He says, “I think prosperity gospel is okay according to some of our clergy who teach that for someone to prosper one has to work hard, not that concept of instant receiving.” This is also in line with Wesley’s principle of gaining wealth, where he emphasizes engaging in work and the biblical principle in Genesis 3:19, “by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food.”

Regarding the argument on the benefits of the prosperity gospel and whether it helps the church to grow or not, some of the lay leaders indicate that it helps the church to grow financially and numerical as indicated above from those who support their clergy who are into prosperity. But those who are contrary feel that it is a temporary measure, like a sleeping tablet. Laity 2 (2017), in the interview, states that:

...I do not subscribe to the fact that prosperity gospel is beneficial, but if anything I challenge that; why, because this message especially around prosperity which is not backed by hard work, sweating, I do not think that it will last. This is the only challenge I have, because those that I read in the press here and there are discussions that I sometimes come across and you hear people saying this is benefiting them but I have my doubts and also what I see is something that does not have a good foundation and at some point it disappears into the air.

Laity 3 (2017), during the same interviews, also echoes the same objecting sentiments of the idea that prosperity is beneficial to the church when he states:

...the growth of the gospel of prosperity is destroying the core values of Christianity; it’s not beneficial in any way. It is destroying the very basic tenets which Christianity is born. Jesus Christ himself led by example, he was poor, born poor, he was born actually in a manger not by the teaching of specialist or medical aid from Medics, he did not have that. The mother being pregnant was driven on a donkey to a manger, that is why Mrs Charamba’s (gospel singer) song says “it all started in a manger”, that is a very powerful statement. So there is nothing beneficial; he died on the cross for sin and aside there was someone who chose to die in sin on the cross and luckily one chose to die to sin on the cross.

The objections raised by the two lay leaders are premised on their understanding of the Bible. One raises the issue of a work ethic, rather than receiving things from handouts where sometimes God is regarded as an automatic machine that provides people with money without sweating for it – by merely naming and claiming in faith, then it makes God to release all that human heart desires. Second, the lay leaders give us a pointer to emulate Jesus who himself came to live an earthly life though he was of the son of God. Rather, he chose to experience the hardships of life and he associated with the poor. Theologically, the leaders are raising important issues that clergy need to consider as they teach and preach to their congregations – never to spiritualize everything but to approach the Bible with rationale thought and to apply it to human situations rather than remaining in abstract ideas.

Furthermore, the lay leaders further scrutinize clergy who preach the prosperity gospel. One respondent states that:

It does not benefit anyone because it is a dishonest message from some of the ministers. Actually the proponents of this message are the guys who want to maximize the opportunities, they want to take advantage of naïve poor and suffering people. If you have your children who are not working and you come across this gospel where you are asked to buy these anointed bricks for them to be blessed, obviously you are going to buy, but the Lord is not saying that, instead God says, in good health or in calamities, in the mountains and in the valley I will always be with you (Psalm 46:1-3). When you walk on feet, whether you drive or not, I am still your God. Whether staying in Borrowdale or Glenorah, I am still your God, Where is it written that all children must have jobs? That is why people are different; some are black some whites, tall and short, some thin while others are fat, that's the will of God. The teaching to have all at equal footing is chicanery, daylight robbery (Laity 3, 2017).

The lay leaders who do not subscribe to the health and wealth gospel view regard this gospel as a dishonest gospel, probably because they have seen proponents of this gospel taking advantage of the poor people, instead of alleviating the plight of the poor. It could be that they have seen clergy benefiting more than the parishioners through the sale of anointed commodities such as bricks, water, ball pens, oranges, handkerchiefs and oil. The leaders are encouraging steadfastness, facing the challenges with soberness and without being brainwashed through what they called chicanery and daylight robbery from clergy who are regarding themselves as prophets (see Appendix 12).

The lay leaders who share a different view from those advocating prosperity teaching in its current form, where clergy emphasize on instant healing and instant wealth, subscribe to a

holistic approach to prosperity which is balanced and in tandem with Wesleyan teachings. This is clearly shown by the idea given by Laity 2 (2017):

...I want to say I have been privileged to be part of the services where I could see that this is a message of prosperity, and I can recall one occasion where the teaching of that sermon was everybody wants to prosper but if you are to prosper you need to work very hard. While I can recall maybe one other occasion like that. If for me you ask the question what is the Methodist teaching around this, I would say these two occasions were like speaking to each other; they were not saying you can shout 'I want to prosper' and you get it, no. And I think biblical examples, if I recall well, were given. So those two instances I am talking of not far from now, I think suggest to me that the teaching in the Methodist Church has a balance. Yes, it is scriptural and biblical that one can prosper but it does not happen unless you work for it. You need to plan, you need to have input and then prosperity will be at the end.

It is shown from the leader that he views prosperity as a means to an end and not an end in itself. In his remarks, he sees the MCZ as a balanced church that will not succumb to challenges posed by the prosperity gospel. According to the lay leaders, they view the future of the MCZ as a church that will thrive regardless of the threats posed by the current prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe. Their view could be informed by the fact that they are aware that Methodism, from its inception, had elements of prosperity, especially on issues of health and wealth for the marginalised people. All the leaders interviewed agree about the bright future of the MCZ. One member has to say, "I think the future is bright because it has forced even the preachers to sharpen their skills in response to the challenges coming from the prosperity gospel" (Laity 3, 2017). The ways the skills are sharpened are demonstrated by Laity 2 (2017) when he says:

...I think the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is now in an environment where there is some kind of competition for followers and I think it should also be its concern to say what kind of message they put across, not necessarily to keep people by promising what they will not get at some point, but by putting across I think teaching which empowers the individual to believe in themselves, work for themselves and to get themselves to some point of realisation and each member to think critically about messages preached to them. I think this is something which the church should be concerned with. How does the church, its minister, preachers put across a message which is not necessarily saying 'do these in order to prosper' but illustrates that one has to work hard in order to prosper.

The critical point raised is that of teaching as an empowerment tool for members to be fully equipped. This teaching tool has been the force to reckon with dating back to John Wesley when he introduced the class meetings. This also tallies with the focus of this study, to see how the clergy are taught in theological colleges on issues of health and wealth as taught by Wesley, in order for them to also teach their members so that they can withstand the challenges posed by prosperity gospel that is coming with different dynamics. An emphasis on teaching is highlighted by lay leaders strongly as a survival skill to curb the challenges of prosperity teaching. Laity 6 indicates another important component that has enabled the MCZ to withstand the pressure when she said, “the future is bright for MCZ because there is nothing that hinders the church to continue moving forward because the MCZ is moving with [the] times and has made provisions for its structures that will remain functional” (Laity 6, 2017).

Structures are necessary for an organisation to remain stable and functional. Structures provide the polity of an organization and in the case of MCZ, its structures are firm and strong because the church is not individualised. In other words, it belongs to both members and clergy, unlike ministries that are individually owned by a single person and where what he or she says becomes a decree to everyone without any scrutiny. For the MCZ, the church belongs to God and it has officers who are answerable to the Conference with room for different levels to act as checkpoints. It could be the reason that MCZ has managed to survive even more difficult situations and challenges posed from religious, political and economic spheres.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown responses from selected lay leaders of Budiro and Parktown societies regarding their perceptions of the message of the prosperity gospel preached by MCZ clergy. The chapter has clearly demonstrated that the leadership of the church, including the Presiding Bishop and other leaders, acknowledge that the prosperity gospel has brought divisions in the MCZ among both the laity and the clergy. It has also shown that there are two groups among the laity; those in favour of prosperity messages from their clergy and those who are opposing the gospel of prosperity as preached by their clergy.

Those who advocate for the preaching of the prosperity gospel see it as an opportunity for the growth of the church in terms of numerical figures and financial boost, while those who oppose it view the gospel of prosperity as destructive in that it promotes laziness among believers and is used for self-aggrandisement by ministers. It also destroys faith and trust in the event that promises are not fulfilled. The chapter gives the lay leaders perspective regarding the sustainability of the church– to develop a work ethic principle, to adhere to the concept of teaching its members biblical truth, and to remain functional and contextual in its structures for relevance. A concluding theological reflection and analysis of the above responses will be given in the summary chapter eight. The next chapter explores and gives an analysis and interpretation on ways in which the contemporary MCZ clergy have been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of prosperity gospel in view of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes enshrined in *Ordo Salutis*.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 THE WAYS IN WHICH MCZ CLERGY RESPOND TO CHALLENGES OF THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL IN VIEW OF WESLEYAN TEACHINGS OF HEALTH AND WEALTH AS THEMES ENSHRINED IN ORDO SALUTIS.

7.1 Introduction

The last chapter used fieldwork responses obtained from interviews conducted to analyse responses of lay leaders on their views regarding the prosperity gospel message from their clergy. It was observed in the previous chapter that lay leaders are divided in terms of their thinking about the gospel of prosperity. The chapter concluded that those who advocate for the preaching of the prosperity gospel see it as beneficial in the growth of the church in terms of numerical figures and financial boost, while those with the contrary opinion view the gospel as destructive in that it promotes laziness among believers and is used for self-aggrandisement by clergy. It also destroys faith and trust in the event that promises are not fulfilled.

This chapter is based on fieldwork results from clergy responses, discussing how MCZ clergy respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes as enshrined in the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis*. Three thematic areas are to be discussed regarding the responses of clergy. The first response is on how ministerial formation of MCZ clergy through polity studies, post-collegiate studies, seminars and conferences, and further studies as models to equip MCZ clergy in Wesleyan teachings, has equipped the clergy to be able to respond to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel in the context of Zimbabwe since 2000. Second, the chapter looks at the theme of responses of clergy to the prosperity gospel, specifically on areas of health that focus on healing and deliverance and areas of wealth accumulation with emphasis on material possession as a sign of being blessed and having attained salvation. The third theme is the response of clergy to the theology of MCZ and the future of MCZ in light of the penetration of the prosperity gospel.

This was in line with responding to research sub question: how are the contemporary MCZ clergy who have been formed to appropriate the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the order of salvation able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of

prosperity gospel? It also addresses sub-question on: how is the theology of prosperity both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe; and, what constitutes Wesleyan theology of *Ordo Salutis* and its interpretation through health and wealth as well as how is the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ clergy?

In this second category of responses of clergy to the challenges of the prosperity gospel, the following three themes were developed: (1) Responses of clergy to the ministerial model used for MCZ; (2) Responses of clergy to the prosperity gospel; (3) Responses of clergy to theology and the future of the MCZ in light of challenges posed by the prosperity gospel. Responses are from student clergy at college, clergy in leadership positions, and those assigned in circuits. This can be tabulated as follows:

Themes	Sub-themes
Responses of ministers to the ministerial model used to equip MCZ clergy with Wesleyan teachings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Polity class b) Other mitigating Ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Post collegiate studies (ii) Seminars and conferences (iii) Further studies
Responses of clergy to the prosperity gospel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2) Extreme responses to health and wealth (3) Reactive responses to health and wealth (4) Moderate responses to health and wealth.
Responses of clergy on the theology and future of the MCZ in light of challenges posed by the prosperity gospel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (5) Positive Impact in MCZ growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Statistical growth (ii) Financial growth (6) Negative, challenges in MCZ growth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Division among clergy (ii) Dual membership (iii) Abuse of authority (iv) Theological contradictions

Table 2

Using theological reflection framework to analyse the responses in table 2 above, it shows that clergy are divided into three categories in their responses. There are those who are advocates of prosperity and practitioners who admit that prosperity is the message to go by, The second category has clergy who are anti-prosperity gospel, to the extent that some have gone to the extreme of demonizing all activities done under the ambit of the prosperity gospel. The last group of clergy is a group that has a balanced opinion towards the prosperity gospel; they see something good in it and also some exaggerated phenomena that need to be corrected. From this chapter and the previous chapter six, the researcher develops a premise of a work ethic teaching, theology of enough and curriculum revamp for MCZ clergy to respond adequately to prosperity teaching.

7.2 The Responses of Clergy towards Ministerial Formation of MCZ Clergy in Wesleyan Teachings

Responses of clergy are given at three levels, namely, the leadership comprising of the Presiding Bishop, General Secretary, Mission Director, Bishops and Tutors in colleges. These leaders were quoted by their real names because they are in positions of authority. Responses from the leadership level were given in chapter three on the discussion on polity studies in models of ministerial formation. Their views are compared to the views of students and those clergy practising in their circuits. The second level is the third-year students who are to be stationed in circuits for the practical component of their studies in preparation for graduation. The third level is for clergy who are practising in various circuits, among whom there are advocates of the prosperity gospel. The second and third levels are quoted and identified by pseudonyms as explained in chapter one on methodology. The responses are based on the fieldwork interviews carried out by the researcher. Comparing these responses will validate this study and produce a reliable and credible conclusion.

7.2.1 Polity Studies

Phillips discovered that the word polity is misunderstood by scores of people because “some only carry an echo of meaning, a reaction, or some unclear historical association”(2015: 1). It is however critical to understand what the word really means in the context of this study. Polity in this study refers to the beliefs, doctrines and structures of MCZ, together with the denominational chain of authority and doctrinal accountability. In this case, polity structures

MCZ assumptions about how the world, God and its people work. “It is the way people choose to organise themselves around their collective purpose and it is the architecture that supports shared religious life” (: 2). In chapter three, it was explained that polity was only studied at UTC by separate denominations due to the fact that UTC is an ecumenical institution. Responses given by the leadership are already shown in chapter three. In this section, responses by third-year students at UTC and clergy in circuits are analysed and interpreted based on the raw data collected from the fieldwork.

Third-year students responses consist of six participants, given pseudonyms or code names (see chapter one for detailed explanation). There are three males and three females. All the participants completed their Diploma in Religious Studies and are completing their Diploma in Theology which is a four year course. They were asked the interview question:

What do you think about the Polity curriculum in relation to equipping students with Wesleyan tradition?

The students’ perspectives and feelings about polity studies as they are carried out at UTC vary, as demonstrated in the table below.

<p>Student A. <i>The Polity is very helpful because as I said before we are doing administration under Polity and as I said before we are taught how to handle the church; how to handle congregants in urban and rural circuits so Polity is contributing so much (interview 25 April 2017).</i></p>
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<p>Student B. <i>What I can say is we need to move with time, we need to move with technology one way or the other; church dogmas will not take us anywhere. For example the church is divided when it comes to issue of mass praying, demon exorcism of which those are the things that we should not run away. So if we cling to the orthodoxy, the dogmas of the church, the more we lose the young generation, they move with time. Even the attire, look at the attire, the traditionalist, the conservatives they believe that when someone is going to take the Holy Communion you need to cover your head, you need to dress decently, but it’s no longer applicable to our young generation, they are moving with time. So as the Methodist church, we must manoeuvre from the old Wesleyan tradition and move with technology. We are living in the world of dynamism (interview 5 April 2017).</i></p>
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<p>Student C. <i>I would say especially here at UTC it has not been, I think it was not well worked out in my opinion when we are talking about this Ordo Salutis. This is what we did when we</i></p>

came here first year and it was difficult to grapple with, and when we are coming here we are people who are not well versed with Methodism, and we were looking forward to know more about it, the deeper things that the laity don't know. But when we got here, it was something very different; and I would say that by the time we finished our first year, if you would ask someone about this Ordo Salutis then it was not able to come out even though we had done it. You know I think it needs to be revisited continuously and a lot needs to be done. This year we are doing things differently because when we came here we used to be in the same class with the second years, so what they had done first year they were repeating it second year and they were not benefiting much. The people who left last year, they have missed a whole year of what we are doing now so a lot needs to be done (interview 5 April 2017).

Student D. *So far so good only that there are some traditions that we witnessed, like at funerals when the body is in the church, there are some candles and you wonder, we never learnt it here. What is the theology behind the foot washing? It is done differently. In other circuits is done while in others it is not done; it is a mixed bag, it needs to be addressed (interview 25 April 2017).*

Student E. *I think the curriculum here in Polity, it really equips but you know academics and the reality, sometimes some of the things might not be applicable. Of course you have invested with it but of course when you come to the ground it will be something else in terms of applicability (interview 25 April 2017).*

Student F. *The Polity curricula I can say it is good though sometimes it has challenges. When we look at time allocation in our set up, we only have 50minutes every week so sometimes to really do deep things it becomes a challenge. But anyway those which we are learning so far, the items as I indicated, I think they are beneficial (interview 25 April 2017).*

Table 3

From the table of the raw data responses, one can deduce that Student A is positive and happy about the Polity curriculum. For him, according to the answer given, he is excited about other areas such as administration, and handling the church in urban and rural areas. It seems the student is articulating the current studies covered in third year and does not make reference to the studies covered in first year and second year. This prompts the researcher to agree with Student C when she indicates that when they learnt about *Ordo Salutis* during their first year, it was difficult to grapple with the concepts to the extent that if any of the students are asked about this *Ordo Salutis*, one is not able to recall even if they did it; hence she suggests a continuous revisit of the doctrine in successive years. She points out that the curriculum was

also covered in a haphazard manner, where first years and second years used to be in the same class and those who went for their fourth year in circuits could have missed a lot. This observation was also authenticated by the tutor in chapter four, who later revealed that things have normalised with the coming of another adjunct lecturer from the church.

A theological reflection analysis of the above scenario shows that there are groups of students who graduated from UTC who perhaps had no chance to have serious learning on the Polity subject. According to Student B, the Polity curriculum is not helpful at all. For him, the college has to move with new technology and discard the old traditions of church dogmatic. He felt that the church is not addressing fundamental issues such as mass prayer and demon exorcism which are currently prevailing. He is of the view that if the church remains in its orthodox way of doing things, then the young generation will leave the church for they are on the move with dynamism. The remarks by Student B clearly show the different perceptions towards Polity. It seems the student will leave college without a grasp even of one positive thing from the Polity curriculum, to the extent of thinking to move away from what he called the “old Wesleyan tradition” and move with technology. This supports Zwana’s (2017) observations that, “some as a response is simply abandoning the principles that they learnt during their training and simply join the bandwagon of the gospel of prosperity.” It seems this student will continue to address what he thinks is important regardless of what the church may think it has equipped its students to do.

Students D, E and F, although they appreciate the positive side of the Polity curriculum, they went further like Student B to look at some critical areas they think should have been addressed by the curriculum, such as the theological significance of foot washing, lighting candles in the church during funerals, healing and deliverance, and demon exorcism. An analysis of the students’ points shows that the curriculum is not responsive to challenges on the ground. Student E indicates that in as much as the Polity curriculum equips, it remains on the academic side, devoid of the reality on the ground; hence, some of the theories gained might not be applicable on the ground. It could be that time could be the limiting factor to delve into the finer details of the curriculum. The sentiments from students augment the worries from the leadership when they indicate that “there is need for the training to be responsive and there is need to include new programmes that respond to contextual issues. We need also to train our clergy to be able to reflect more than just receiving knowledge without emphasis on how to apply it” (Zwana 2017).

The same (above) question was also asked of clergy who went through training at UTC and ZIMTEE, and are stationed in different circuits in Harare West district and Masvingo district. Thirty clergy gave their responses and among this number, six were women clergy while twenty-four were male clergy. Among these clergy there are advocates of the prosperity gospel. A synopsis of some of the responses given by clergy is shown on the table below:

Minister 13. *As for now I don't know as for now, but during our days when we were there, there was no curriculum that was followed; it was like the teacher would come and teach on what he wanted and what he knows or she knows. The other one comes, he or she teaches something different, and so there was no proper curriculum that was prepared that we could follow. I don't know of these days. But it has to be there to prepare the ministers in training to defend the church, defend the faith. I believe if there is a curriculum that could be prepared I think that could help our ministers who are in training (M13, Interview 3rd April 2017).*

Minister 14. *I think that needs to be improved, especially to safe guard on the false teaching. Our Wesleyan tradition is rich and we have not exhausted it; there is lack of material especially on Wesleyan teaching, very little material that is available and we haven't exhausted and now we are adopting foreign things. The danger of the church just acquiring, for example we were observing the traditional covenant day service at the beginning of the year, we began taking ten days then thirty, now some are at forty. Some people are starving in fasting forty days. It is not Wesleyan, so those fundamentals I think they need to be deepened. Though yes it has been there after training you get a few books on Methodism that's it then from there it's up to you to research, so I think we need to have a major subject on Polity (M14, interview 10 April 2017).*

Minister 15. *I think that's a very good question. I think we as a church, our students must go deeper. When I was in college most of our lessons in Polity class were rather theological, some of which do not address the current situations we are facing. I think things such as entrepreneurship should be included, things such as politics should be included, social aspects should be included, things such as counselling, yes we did it but I think our ministry as ministers of religion has a lot to do with counselling rather than basing on the Bible, the theological aspect. With your theological knowledge you are exposed to a situation whereby members need practical things to be addressed, you will find short. It was when I was in the ministry when I personally pursued some of the studies to empower myself. So I think Polity must be the basis where a student from college should be equipped on most of the practical*

things we face in the ministry (M15, interview 3rd April 2017).

Minister 16. *I think the Polity curriculum has to go deeper in that if we look at most of the people or most of the churches, what they are doing, they copy it from John Wesley, but it may be known by other churches but not known by us as Methodists, so in that way I think the Polity class has to go deeper. It should be that when a student leaves college they need to know the life of John Wesley, his journals, his theology etc such that as they go out. Some of these subjects that we are talking about, I think they need to be taught such that our position must be known by a minister who leaves college. It is not easy for somebody who is already out there to try and grab our position but if he has been trained and you live with a position you would know that this is the position of the church and why we have such a position (M16, interview 19 April 2017).*

Minister 17. *I think the college should take it seriously because I remember during some previous years, it was something that was taken while away the time for students in the Methodist. But I would want to encourage whoever is taking that area to be a person who is well versed in that area so that when our students leave college they will know exactly what is expected of them from Wesleyan teachings. So it must be maybe a subject that would warrant marks that would make that student to have passed a very important subject. It should be a very important thing because that is where Methodism is, where students learn and when they leave college they must know it (M17, interview 25 April 2017).*

Table 4

A theological reflection analysis of the responses from clergy dovetails neatly with the responses from leaders and students where they all agreed that polity studies at college is not done to the degree it is expected, to capacitate learners to address the prevailing situations on the ground. An analysis of reasons why polity studies is not to be taken seriously include among others: (1) the unavailability of a curriculum from 2015, and before. More than half the respondents indicated that during their days in college there was no curriculum to follow, hence the subject was taught haphazardly, as shown in M13's response in Table 4 above. Leaders, including tutors at the college, are in agreement about this lack of curriculum, as indicated by Matarirano (2017) when he said "we were able to come out with a curriculum last year." This also shows that the resolution of conference held in 2014 was fulfilled in 2016 (see MCZ 2014: 11).

(2) Although the curriculum was developed in 2016, respondents felt it is not addressing contextual issues such as healing and deliverance, health and wealth (prosperity gospel), economic, political and social issues, as reflected by M15 in Table 2 above. A number of respondents, including the Presiding Bishop of the MCZ (Rev Dr Zwana), highlighted this lack in polity studies at college. There is a missing link between reality on the ground and the theory learnt in class, hence M9 (2017) says there are “hangouts which are left” and M11 also thinks there are “gaps of a certain chapter that is missing”.

(3) Polity studies are weak and not grounded in Wesleyan theology. As shown in Table 2, respondents M14 (2017) and M16 (2017) indicate that “Wesleyan tradition is rich but it is not exhausted, hence the Wesleyan fundamentals need to be deepened.” For M16, the “polity curriculum has to go deeper” at college because most of “the churches copy from John Wesley’s” theology and they know it better than the Methodists themselves. Most respondents feel the college is not grounded enough in Wesleyan theology as reflected in polity studies. For Gondongwe (2017), the curriculum was “just a mere narrative history of how the Methodist was born which is fit for laity but the polity study never got into proper discourses of the theology and its details.”

(4) The respondents also felt that lack of seriousness in polity studies is due to the unavailability of serious and knowledgeable teachers. M17 in Table 4 above indicates that in previous year, Polity was something that was used to while away the time for MCZ students. M13 also shows that the teachers could teach what he or she knows. This reason is also indicated by Gondongwe in an interview when he says:

...to be honest with you since my days as a student and as a lecturer, there was no profound teaching of Wesleyan theology as it were. The emphasis was just for students to have an appreciation of Wesleyan tradition but there was not really an in-depth analysis of particularly the order of salvation. Perhaps this was due to two things; firstly, it could be that the tutors themselves like many other ministers were not well versed with some of those traditions (Gondongwe 2017).

This could be the reason why the church had to second another polity tutor to fill in the gap. But the question of knowledge should be considered seriously for a sound Wesleyan theology that will address the prevailing situation and be applied in context.

(5) Lack of material to use as resources in teaching polity was also raised by respondents as a reason why polity studies fail to give considerable results. M14, as shown in Table 4 above,

states that there is very little material regarding Wesleyan teachings, hence people turn to foreign materials. Gondongwe also states that “the literature was simply not there to guide the course” (Gondongwe 2017). It is this crucial gap that the researcher also identified. In conducting this study, the researcher is filling a gap by adding new knowledge to MCZ polity studies.

(6) All respondents indicated time as a limiting factor to the progress and thorough study of polity by MCZ students at college. The subject is allocated only one hour per week, unlike other courses that are given three hours per week. Sungai (2017), a polity lecturer who is seconded by the church, has this to say:

There is not much in terms of Wesleyan teachings because our students are subjected to polity class and it is an hour lecture per week. So in my view, if we are actually to teach deep Wesleyan tradition, one hour really is not enough. In terms of Wesleyan teaching our ministers in training are not in my opinion well drilled.

This was also supported by Matarirano (2017) and others who said “the challenge is because polity is taught only one hour per week and we think it’s not adequate for students to really understand the depth of the course.” Zwana (2017) echoed the same sentiments by stating that, “polity lectures are done once a week so there is not enough time to exhaust Methodist polity that has a lot of elements.” For Dube, “the MCZ is not serious about forming Wesleyan scholars because it assigns students just one hour per week while other courses do three hours a week” (Dube 2017). It is only those who develop their own appetite to know more about Wesleyan theology who find their own ways to fulfil and satisfy that appetite, not because the institution is providing the information.

(7) Almost all respondents raised ecumenism as a big limiting factor to exhaustive study of polity at the theological college. M26 (2017), during an interview, emphatically responded by saying:

...the problem we have at the moment in regards to that question is of ecumenism. Ecumenism is right but if we do not stick to our tradition to our doctrinal systems we will end up having no identity and this is what I am seeing in our church people who are priests, clergy or ministers. They do things differently depending on where one has been associated with and even the influence of the spiritual agents has encroached into our systems of the church. You would find out that people would want to demonstrate power and the demonstration of power exercise is based on these spiritual agents because it is about themselves fulfilling that desire

that they can do it. They want to prove to the people that they can do it. But the Wesleyan tradition is that we want to give God to the people, we want Jesus to be seen working amongst the people. We should hide behind the cross, let the people see the cross rather than the clergy or prophet or preacher; there is Christ who should be at the centre.

The participant observes a stumbling block in ecumenism which he has attributed to the loss of identity in some MCZ clergy who end up being photocopiers of other traditions. For him, traditions like demonstrations of power by clergy are foreign and are as a result of association with other denominations during training. An analysis of this account shows that the respondent is advocating for what he calls a Wesleyan tradition, giving God to people through showing people that Jesus is working among them, hiding behind the cross and allowing Christ to be at the centre of all activities; unlike parading a self-image at the expense of God. The interviewee is advocating for glory to be given back to God in all encounters of miracles or divine healing. The above is also supported by Gondongwe when he states that UTC as an ecumenical college dilutes denominational biases (Gondongwe 2017). Kadenge (2017) also argues that MCZ clergy are trained at UTC ecumenically with other students from other denominations, so they do not have something which is separate for Methodists except for Polity where they meet once a week just to teach them the rubrics of Methodism (interview).

7.2.2 Programmes to Mitigate the Gap and Enhance Wesleyan Teachings in the MCZ

Having noted the limitations in polity studies at college in terms of grounding theological students in Wesleyan teachings, some respondents felt that there are other avenues that could be exploited by the church to enhance Wesleyan teachings and empower the clergy. This could be achieved through post-collegiate studies where clergy undergo further training as a probationer before ordination. Zwana (2017) states that “there is two years of post-collegiate further training as probationers where clergy do a set book in Methodism after college.” The researcher as an insider had the privilege to be an examiner of probationers in this area and confirms that there is a set book done by probationers in regards to Wesleyan teachings. But this has its shortcomings as well, in that each examiner identifies a set book of his or her choice that is approved by the Ministerial Training Committee. There is no direct engagement between the examiner and the students; they receive assignments and an examination at the end of the year without having time to discuss and engage in a tutorial class. The identified set book limits students to resource themselves with other information outside the prescribed

set book since they are required to answer questions according to the given information from the set book.

The respondents also indicate that during Synods and Conference, clergy go into a separate session, called the Ministerial Session, where there is an opportunity to raise challenges faced by the clergy in the vineyard and how they could be solved. This, according to respondents, give clergy ample time to identify challenges like the gospel of prosperity, and they find ways to solve the challenges – the Methodist ways guided by Methodist principles and ethos. According to Sungai, “this could be in the form of what they termed Ndhlela lecture³⁹ or November week where clergy would go for a retreat to converge and reflect on current issues” (Sungai 2017). Gondongwe saw an opportunity for further studies as a platform where clergy could be further equipped in Wesleyan teachings by those who venture into historical and theological studies in Methodism. In his words, he says:

...One effective way is you [referring to the researcher], where the Church creates scholarship for our ministers to further their education. I have not seen one Master’s or PhD holder who comes and get wild with the wind like what others do. Just give them international exposure, send them to school. Anyway we have been doing that in numbers and this is another way to deal with this challenge. Number two, even besides seminars, what we have also tried to do as a church is to remind them in every conference. Does every minister continue to walk faithfully to our church doctrine? That is an invitation of a theological engagement so that at that level we engage. Whilst it has been very difficult really to isolate people and say these are the culprits come here and do this. We also need them because Methodism itself was never a church but it was a movement and because it was a movement it continued to move positions so we like the pressure that they exert on us so that we strengthen ourselves. These people who are doing that are part of us and they are very necessary, we love them because they lived the spirit of Methodism (Gondongwe 2017).

An analysis and interpretation of the above indicates that the church has other programmes outside theological colleges to enhance Wesleyan teachings and to address current issues. This includes their deliberations in the ministerial session of Conference and Synods, during retreats and in further studies. Further studies have proven to be the only effective way to mitigate (or lessen) the gap in knowledge of Methodism, especially Wesleyan theology, between clergy with little training in polity and those who have such knowledge either

³⁹Ndhlela lecture is a lecture named after the first black President of the MCZ on attainment of autonomy in 1977. It is usually a lecture to address current issues bedevilling the church and the country at large.

through their own efforts or further study. A comparison on the ground shows that those who have received further education are well equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities posed by prosperity gospel, unlike those who come from college where they have received little or no Wesleyan teachings at all, as indicated elsewhere in this chapter.

Though these mitigating measures are obtainable, they are also not without challenges. These include costs, time, and the fact that the challenges might not be related to Wesleyan theology; hence a vacuum still is left unattended. The suitable environment conducive for learning is at theological college. Having looked at the responses of clergy to ministerial models of training where Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth are taught in polity studies to equip clergy to respond to religio-cultural challenges posed by prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe and MCZ in particular, it has been discovered that the training is inadequate to address these challenges.

Reasons outlined include among others: operating for a long time without a curriculum – though the curriculum is now in place it does not address contextual and current issues, it is weak and not grounded in deep Wesleyan theology; time allocated to polity of an hour per week – it is not enough; unavailability of knowledgeable teachers in Wesleyan tradition; lack of material resources; lack of seriousness because the subject was not examinable; and ecumenism as a limiting factor that leaves the subject of polity to sending denomination. The focus in the next section is centred on the clergy's responses to the prosperity gospel in matters of health and wealth, when their training in college on matters of Wesleyan teaching on *Ordo Salutis* is deficient.

7.3 The Responses of Clergy to the Prosperity Gospel

In any given context, even though there are challenges bedevilling the MCZ in terms of equipping clergy with Wesleyan teachings through polity studies from college, there are exceptional cases where some will acquire Wesleyan teachings through the little taught, or through self-appetite for further education even without adequate Wesleyan teaching. In an interview Gondongwe (2017) states that:

...in as much as they may not be really grounded in Wesleyan theology, but just being grounded in theology should be enough for you to separate heresy and proper teaching of the Church. If they are really properly trained, particularly in systematic dogmatic, then they must

be really be able to withstand that; but this is always the case when you have a class of fifty students, they do not all cross the line well. You always have one or two who are enticed by other traditions in the quest to be popular and to get popularity from people and even to get money and resources. Some ministers, they do that, they become Pentecostal in approach just for material things yet they know that these are wrong things.

A theological reflection analysis of the above statement insinuates that Gondongwe is trying to compensate for the failures of the MCZ to offer sound and firm Wesleyan teaching by suggesting that even those grounded in systematic dogmatic in general are able to withstand the religio-cultural challenges posed by prosperity gospel through their ability to separate heresy from orthodoxy. Probably Gondongwe is giving these remarks from the position of being a former lecturer and tutor at UTC. He is aware of the training students are exposed to and also being a former student of UTC, he was able to acquire enough skills during his time to be able to withstand the challenges. This section looks at responses to the research question from three categories of clergy, namely, leadership, students and clergy who were interviewed during fieldwork. The researcher has analysed and grouped the responses into three categories: extreme responses, reacting responses, and moderate responses on prosperity, particularly issues of health and wealth.

7.3.1 Extreme Responses on Health and Wealth

In Zwana's response above, he indicated that some clergy are simply abandoning the principles they learnt during their training and are joining the bandwagon of the gospel of prosperity. This implies that they do so as copycats or caricatures that sometimes have no time to reflect or think theologically on the activities involved in healing and wealth accumulation; as a result, they end up doing these activities to the extreme and are led by populist acclamation. During interviews, M1 (2017) stated:

...prosperity gospel is good because the Bible says all the wealth that is in the world belongs to God, and us as partakers or inheritors of that wealth, we deserve to have things, we deserve to enjoy life, we deserve to have food on our tables, our children deserve to go to school without problems, going to universities, we deserve everything that is good. We deserve even to have the best of clothing, housing, cars and everything from God, so people need to be taught that we deserve to enjoy life because life is good.

The idea reflected above is lamented by M2 (2017) in an interview when she said "we cannot run away from the gospel of prosperity, we also want to live a luxury life. If you do not grab

the chance you will be left out as clergy and lagging behind while others are advancing.” The above statements resonate with the observation of one of the lay leaders, quoted in chapter seven, when he describes a few clergy as ‘pseudo-theologians’ who take advantage of poor people, in their deep desire to acquire material things, a desire that has engulfed the nation. For him, he saw these clergy employing techniques that abuse proper theology through “quoting half phrases of full sentences in the Bible to suit their own means” (Laity 3, 2017). The extreme responses come in the form of abusing the biblical texts for self-aggrandisement.

Some clergy, as also alluded to in chapter five, invent new titles, such as prophet, apostle and others, as a way of recognising their ability to provide solutions to issues of health and wealth. Some even fail to give a theological justification as to why they do certain things, as indicated in the interview with Dube (2017):

...I will say there is a sense in which some of our clergy are kind of attracted to prosperity gospel. And their emphasis on seeding and tithing, sometimes when you try to push them further to say justify the basis, they don't; it is like they copy and paste. They copied this from these prosperity guys and paste without giving it a theological Wesleyan or biblical foundation; that is the weakness that I am seeing. I am not saying they must not emphasize tithing or seeding etc. but he must have a theological basis why are we doing this. When somebody asks why we are doing it, we can't respond that because such and such church down the street is doing it or brother so and so in his ministry is doing it, so I think that is one of the weaknesses.

An extreme phenomenon of self-enrichment has been observed among clergy in the MCZ where some even go to the extent of taking members to mountains. Here they built holy altars for members to pay their tithes which will find their way to the clergy's pockets and not the church coffers. This was earlier noted by M24 in chapter five:

...it seems we have some people coming up, we cannot run away from that, you see we have some young ministers coming up, they are taking people to the mountains but when they get there they would ask their people to give their tithe there. They build altars there and say this is the place you should give your offerings. We have this issue of the young ministers, on themselves benefiting, individuals going out with individuals where they build altars and encourage people to give for their benefit. They seem to be abusing the systems if this is true of what is happening, because that is not us as Methodists (M24 2017).

The self-enrichment desire that M24 seems to have observed was also challenged by the Presiding Bishop in the ministerial session of Conference 2016 when he said, “the only challenge is that in some cases invitations are selective and based on ability to give fat envelopes (cash), friendships or confined to those who can return the favour. Some colleagues are very gifted and ever busy traversing the length and breadth of the country, however a few have been too busy elsewhere to the detriment of their own circuits. Some have the audacity to sneak into colleagues’ circuits, lead prayer meetings or do pastoral visits without the courtesy to advise them” (MCZ 2016: 43). This kind of response by some of the MCZ clergy went to the extremes and is contrary to the Wesleyan teachings of health and wealth. This act by some clergy of religion, to be spiritual agents for the process of acquiring material blessings for congregants, has been equated to the traditional way where traditional healers (*N’angas*) were consulted by people to acquire wealth, and they could give those people tokoloshes or goblins (*zvikwambo*). This is now a replica of events, where some clergy calling themselves prophets could give people anointing oil, wrist bands with their names, holy water, or anointed pens. Some are instructed to eat snakes, grass and even to drink sewage water, all in the name of receiving blessings from the man of God, which in most cases never comes to fruition.

A theological reflection analysis of healing in MCZ seems to be confined to individual clergy instead of healing from God. This is evidenced in the response from M1, who states:

...there are some issues that might need to be addressed once again like these issues of prophet, healing and deliverance because even in our church, we have got people who are now calling themselves prophets and even when we are holding our crusades, our congregants have names of clergy whom they think they can deliver people, who are gifted, and some of us they feel we are not gifted in those areas (M1 2017).

This extreme response to healing and deliverance was also observed by the researcher during an Easter Crusade indicated earlier in chapter one on methodology. Participants M6, M13, M18, M22 and M23 were facilitators in the programme that had a lesson on sacrificial giving and a session on healing and deliverance among others. During the healing and deliverance session conducted by M22, an altar call was made and clergy were invited to go and pray for the people. The researcher observed that the queues for M22 and M23 were long while the queues for M13 and another student minister present had few people. The researcher further observed that some members who were prayed for by M13 and a student clergy went and joined the queues for M22 and M23.

A theological reflection analysis of the above situation shows that the issue of healing in the MCZ is a bone of contention where some clergy are regarded as superior and full of Holy Spirit while others are not. The issue of healing is programmed in such a way that there are certain times when God is invited to come and heal, and during other sessions it seems as if there is no healing taking place. A closer look at some programmes for MCZ events suggests there are special clergy to be allocated the healing services –the services are not given to those seemingly labelled to be without Holy Spirit; hence the comment by the Presiding Bishop to say they are traversing length and breadth of the country at the expense of their circuits. A further analysis from observations, as already shown in chapter one seems to suggest that most of the people possessed were women; of interest were two young ladies. These two had vicious demons and when confronted by the clergy to speak, they could be heard saying a lot of things that connect to their families. The demon could not be delivered by the clergy who was performing healing and deliverance; instead M22 had to excuse himself to go to another Easter gathering where he was going to give the same lesson. The demon-possessed girls were left lying on the ground with some lay people in the evangelism team praying for them.

One wonders why the clergy had to leave the patients lying down with the demons not exorcised. On enquiry, the researcher discovered that the two ladies were perennially possessed on every gathering, so it could be that the clergy performing healing and deliverance already knew these patients. Those clergy who were regarded as less spirit-filled, like M13 together with the researcher as an insider, had to exorcise the demons through prayer and offer counselling afterward. This then demystifies the concept of the selected few who are able to heal; instead, healing is the preserve of God alone and humanity will always remain vessels used by God to accomplish his will. An analysis of the above responses indicates reasons why these are seen as extreme responses to health and wealth issues.

The first reason is that the responses are very materialistic, consumerist and tend to put a price tag on the gospel. Clergy seem to be preaching or doing services for a fee. They also encourage people to think that if they give more, then God will bless them more; as such they could buy favours from God through having anointed relics. Second, it is also a challenge to the work ethic in that it tends to give the impression that one can get wealth very easily. With a prayer, one becomes wealthy and healthy, which kills the spirit of wanting to work, or the motivation to seek medication and doing things the proper way. The responses show that it is a theology of instant gratification, which is a challenge because it removes the obligation of

humanity to work for a living. People then just wait in hope that money will fall from heaven, and their trust will be in anointed items. The third reason shows also that even those who preach end up abusing the congregants and promising people that they will become rich and be healed. At the same time, they are expecting something in return to come directly to the clergy. There is also the suggestion that extreme prosperity clergy tamper with institutional aspects of the church, as seen in those who go into mountains and build altars for offerings for personal gain. At the end of the day, the clergy who preach and promise miracles are the ones who get more; hence it becomes a gospel of acquisition for the clergy.

7.3.2 Reactive Responses on Health and Wealth

The economic situation prevailing in Zimbabwe prompted the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (hereinafter called ZCC) to offer a press release in reaction, cautioning church ministers. It said: “we have seen some in the church who have taken advantage of the anxiety of the unsuspecting citizens to extort from them hard-earned money through different forms of religious manipulation. We reject as evil, all economic manipulation that masquerades itself as divine solutions to the current economic situation” (Zimbabwe Council of Churches 2017: 3; see also Jakes 2017: 3). It is from the backdrop of the above statement that reactive responses by some MCZ clergy are premised. Some regard the ZCC to be a toothless dog that barks but does not bite. As an ecumenical body, it has watched over the situation of the crisis in Zimbabwe for years without effecting any change. The body of churches is reacting to some ministries that are enterprises of the prosperity gospel and have given hope to citizens in a hopeless situation. For the ZCC to condemn as evil those they regard as masquerading and pretending to provide divine solutions might not be fair to the citizens who have faith, hope and confidence in those clergy, even though their situations have not yet changed and they are still hoping.

Likewise, some MCZ clergy, in their responses to health and wealth issues, were reactive and some have given labels to the whole act of healing and getting instant riches. For Zwana (2017), “prosperity theology focuses on a capitalistic kind of theology that dwells much on wealth and health theological themes. It deals with the relationship between faith and health, faith and wealth, and faith and good things that can happen to a person, implying that if one is not wealthy or healthy, his or her faith is not adequate.” A reflection of the above indicates that the head of MCZ views prosperity with a negative eye, hence labelling it a capitalistic gospel. The implication of this label is that the gospel has created two classes of people – the

rich and the poor – where the minority are rich and the majority are poor. Zwana did not look at it from another angle where prosperity gospel advocates for the emancipation of all believers from poverty to prosperity; for this reason it can be regarded as empowering the poor. Consequently, his response is in reaction without taking time to look at both sides of the coin.

Gondongwe (2017) refers to the prosperity gospel as misguided when he says, “the gospel has been endeared to our people no matter how misguided it is.” Dube (2017) also labels the prosperity gospel as a “cheap gospel that promises people prosperity as a way out because the economy is not providing the solution.” At the same time, Kadenge (2017) regards it as a ‘narrow view’ where one looks for blessings and miracles that make one rich instantly even without working for it. These labels are given in reaction to the gospel of prosperity, regarding it as a damaging gospel that seeks to mislead people. To refer to as cheap gospel means there is another gospel that is considered to be a superior and correct gospel. The question is who defines a ‘cheap, misguided and narrow view’? Whose interest does the definition satisfy? One can construe that these are labels given in reaction to the gospel that has perhaps unsettled the status quo.

Not only leaders reacted to the theology of prosperity –clergy also responded in a reactive manner where M2 (2017) claimed that “there are other powers that empower prosperity to flourish in Zimbabwe.” For M4 (2017) “prosperity is more of a painkiller because it gives people hope that things will be okay today and tomorrow.” In the same way that the ZCC views prosperity leaders to be manipulating people, M12 (2017) states:

...well prosperity gospel to me is a kind of a means by individuals who have decided to make their own money through manipulation, using religion to manipulate people and enrich themselves, because my understanding is at the end of it all it is not the members who prosper but the individual. So instead of making people prosper it is impoverishing the people.

Another respondent who gave a reactive view is M15 (2017) who considered the gospel of prosperity churches or ministries to be called “sects and not churches for they keep an eye to wealth and money.” From these labels given to health and wealth gospel, one can conclude that these are judgemental terms used to look at prosperity from a negative point of view. For instance, considering prosperity to be used by other powers means the power is not derived from God but from another source, which is not mentioned by the interviewee. Perhaps the respondent is thinking along the same lines as Shoko (2015) who considered the powers of

the prophet to be the same as those of the N'angas (traditional healer). In any case, all divine healers including traditional healers claim to have their source of power from God. It is scientifically difficult to prove the source of power save to depend on faith. To label prosperity as a painkiller is also judgemental because to some, painkillers may work efficiently to stop the pain once and for all. Lastly, the view that churches or ministries are sects is to suggest that they are a division of a large company. It could be true in the sense that ministry can be a large company that comprises different sectors in the form of different churches and denominations, but to view it as business-oriented might be a reactive judgement.

The fact that some clergy, including some leaders, give a reactive response towards the health and wealth teaching is an indication that they may not be aware of the Wesleyan teachings about health and wealth; or if they know, the probability of them not contextualizing it in terms of the prosperity gospel is high. Sometimes when people have what they regard as their polity or doctrine, they do not look beyond their own polity to see areas of convergence and areas of divergence in what their church believes and what other churches believe. Therefore, theological reflection helps in mitigating this gap, as the study shows. Reaction sometimes comes from fear of the unknown and a sense of danger of being overtaken by events; there is fear that if appropriation of new ideas is permissible in the church, it will destabilise the status quo. This then calls for theological reflection to see areas of cooperation and areas where people agree to disagree but remain comrades in arms. It is in the areas of cooperation that the gospel and Christianity are strengthened rather than in areas of divergence.

7.3.3 Moderate Responses to Health and Wealth

A moderate view is influenced by two factors as shown in the responses from the participants: (1) it can be as a result of indecision and fear of being different from what the church holds as its fundamental beliefs, and; (2) being enlightened about the teachings and able to critically analyse the pros and cons, and having a rationale for taking an equivocal neutral standpoint. In this case, the respondents show that they are aware of the Wesleyan teachings regarding health and wealth, as illustrated in their ability to quote Wesley on use of money and healing remedies. From an enlightened point of view, Matarirano (2017), as a New Testament scholar states:

...people concentrate on the present eschatology where they said the Kingdom of God has already come, concentrating on the here and now without looking at the future eschatology because it is all about attaining good health and wealth as marks of receiving salvation yet we still have the Kingdom of God which is yet to come. There is need to balance the two in order to remain faithful to God.

The above statement indicates that Christians should not only be worried about the present and should not only focus in their faith to obtain good health and wealth as marks of gaining salvation here on earth. Rather they should also be worried about the future in regards to remission of sin and qualifying to enter the Kingdom of God in the future eschatology. These remarks show a balance and an informed idea about the prosperity gospel. Probably Matarirano had developed an appetite for further research about Wesleyan teachings since he is the current tutor at UTC and teaching Wesleyan traditions in Polity classes. It could be that he had an opportunity for further studies since he is pursuing his PhD.

Matarirano's view is in line with Wesley, who addressed his clergy by saying,

Overseers of God's church that he bought with his own blood, what type of men they should be in terms of gifts and grace that are from nature. First of all a clergy should have good understanding, a clear apprehension, a sound judgement, and a capacity of reasoning which are all necessary in the work of ministry. If not how could one be able to understand the different conditions of those under his care or to guide them through difficulties and dangers, to the place of safety where they should be. Knowing the number of enemies one has to encounter can a fool handle all those who do not know God or the spirits of darkness? No he might not be aware of the devices of Satan or the cunning of his children. Secondly, is it not ideal for a guide of souls to have thought and be ready to answer a fool according to his folly since on daily basis you come across those who do not use reason as their weapon hence you cannot deal with them without reasoning? Thirdly, besides understanding and thought one should have good memory to the extent that one should be ready to make whatever happens in reading or conversation your own but on the other hand retentive in case we be ever learning and never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Absolutely not each scribe trained unto the kingdom of heaven, every teacher integral for his work, is like a householder who bring out of his treasures things new and old (Jackson T (ed), 1872: 481-482).

Matarirano demonstrates a sound judgement of prosperity gospel and an employment of reasoning in order to see that the teachings of health and wealth have to focus on both the realised eschatology and the future eschatology, in order to be satisfied materially and spiritually directed towards eternity. Without reason as one of the sources of theology, ministers and Christians can move in darkness. Reasoning is what John Wesley advocates in his address to the clergy.

The idea of reasoning is also supported by M6 when he critically analyses the health and wealth gospel:

...being rich does not mean that you will enter heaven, but you cannot substitute entering heaven with gospel of prosperity, that is number one. Number two, you need to work and work very hard in order to earn anything or a decent living, or in order for you to prosper you need to work. It doesn't just come because the man of god has prophesised, it doesn't come because you have bought anointing oil, you have bought whatever holy water, or he has given you handkerchiefs and you touch whatever a house or a car using a handkerchief, so for me prosperity comes by working hard and you need to work very hard (M6 2017).

M22 share his views on prosperity,

My personal view is that when it is not handled properly, it turns to be heresy especially when you go to some other churches and ministries where they begin. It's fearsome for people to start just from saying God will give anything, this use of handkerchiefs, use of holy water, the use of anointed bricks, anointed fruits, I believe that is not the right way to go. But of course I am saying I am not against the gospel of prosperity, the only thing is that the gospel of prosperity is now majored on and somewhere somehow these prophets and church who use these other things I mentioned about, they are using them using hook and crook where they are majoring for their own prosperity and not the congregants (M22 2017).

The two respondents agree that prosperity is biblical and that there is nothing wrong in people, particularly Christians, getting rich. But the bone of contention is on how to get healed and get rich. For them, they advocate a work ethic approach to riches, where people have to work and to work very hard to earn a living. They both dismissed the use of anointing oil, anointing water and handkerchiefs as vehicles and means of getting healing and wealth as nothing but hook and crook means of personal enrichment by the prosperity clergy. The final nail putting to rest the belief of easy prosperity is driven by M30 who refers to John Wesley as one who taught about money:

...when John Wesley taught about money he knew as a church leader that money is there, everyone needs money and if everyone needs money what is the problem in having money? I am happy because John Wesley actually said save all you can and have all you can so when he says have all you can; he actually meant we should work to have that money. Maybe the problem now comes with these so-called current crops of apostles, pastors, fathers, and papas, and names them, because these ones are now saying you have these things miraculously; where now I differ with them, but for me if a person has money, if a person has a car and has a house, for me that is not a problem. We believe in a God who provides for his children and a God who blesses his children in health and wealth. The problem only comes when we say we should not work, it should just happen miraculously; for me, I am against it, and for me, that is not prosperity gospel but something else which we are still to name (M30 2017).

From a theological reflection analysis of the points raised above one can deduce that the respondent shows that he knew about the teachings of John Wesley regarding the use of money, although his emphasis in gaining all we can did not elucidate on the moral ethics emphasized by Wesley. According to Jackson (1872) Wesley, when Europe changed from an agro-based economy to an industrial-based economy, the use of money was prevalent. To an extent, Methodism through Wesley contributed to the rise of the middle class through the serving ethic. Wesley emphasised hands-on social work and Methodism became grounded in the teaching that prayer, church services and other spiritual quests had to balance with reaching out to the downtrodden. Care for the sick and feeding the malnourished all requires time and money. This pragmatic love became the characteristic of Methodism, a holistic approach that clergy should demonstrate to their flock.

In as much as Wesley advocated a health and wealth gospel, for him frugal living was more important than increased earnings. This means that both clergy and Christians should live parsimoniously or sparingly. As other respondents infer, Wesley was not opposed to his followers earning a lot of money, but he taught them it was good within certain limitations. For him, economical living and responsible spending was a duty and not a choice. In his words addressing the clergy concerning their vocation, Wesley says, what is the intention of one when taking the office of ministry? What is the reason for being in charge of a parish as a minister or Curate is it to give glory to God and to save souls? Are there no mixed intentions, did I think of worldly gain or secular view to prefer income, comfortable living? Anyone who has other motives in executing the office of a minister than to glorify God and save souls is misdirected and his eyes are not single (Jackson T (ed) 1872: 494-495).

Wesley's charge to the clergy is a clear demonstration that he is not against remuneration of clergy through payment of their salaries but, for him, the intention of the call should be to serve than to receive. An analysis of the above shows that some clergy want always to reap from their members through dubious and carnal means; even what they consider to be service to people is all about money, as if to say salvation is attained only through giving. Their message is designed to create a heaven of those who are rich, and the poor are cursed by God. This is contrary to God's preferential option for the poor, where "God sides with the oppressed against their oppressors and calls believers today to do the same in working for a more humane society on this earth" (Blomberg 1999: 22). Blomberg further states that, a preferential treatment to the poor is required in any society in order to create equal opportunities for all that then allows laws against partiality to be executed justly.

The implication therefore is that the motive to seek self-glorification and self-aggrandisement in material things should be avoided, especially with those entering the vocation of ministry, as enunciated by Wesley. For Rapley, where there is widely shared belief, religion often follows; even without realising it, you have a religion that is economics (2017: 5). In grappling with the question 'money or God: which is more important?', Rapley concluded that "human beings have created a religion called economics that has its beliefs in richness is better than being poor but it leads people astray" (: 1).

This is true because many people want to get more money with the expectation of being happy. At the end of the day, it is sometimes true but it is also not true. When it is true, it is only so under a host of conditions. People live under the aspiration to be rich, to the extent of making themselves miserable and even sick to acquire more money. They do this through means that are outside the science of economics but draw on religious beliefs that require blind faith. People choose among the facts and then tailor them to their interests to craft a belief system that justifies their place in the world. Human beings have always done this. Social historians distinguish between the official religion of clerical establishments and this popular religion of common beliefs. All through history theologians have dedicated their lives to studying arcane points of doctrine only to have the folk in the pews flatten out nuances to adopt simple beliefs and practices that may contradict the scholarship. But if

economics is our religion would that make economists our theologians or priests? (Rapley 2017: 6).

Prosperity is no longer a gospel, rather it is spirituality; hence it also qualifies to be regarded as a religion. It offers a comprehensive doctrine with moral codes that promise followers salvation in this world. This ideology is compelling to the extent that the faithful remake whole societies to conform to its demands, with a roadmap to the Promised Land and riches there far beyond what any God could offer. Moral teachings are coined in a language often intelligible. It has its mystics and magicians who conjure money out of thin air using spells such as seeding. It has its prophets and reformists, and its strength is derived from the same force that animated the old religion it displaced. It is also interesting to note that the same scriptures are used to justify the action intended.

There is always conflict between faith and facts, where facts always win in the end. Despite the fact that there is imitation and arm twisting of scriptures, the truth is that if contemporary research is anything to go by, clergy should logically remain humane and selfless. Maximising their gain is not always the principal motive for action nor is it clear that the endless accumulation of wealth always makes people happy. When clergy make decisions, especially those to do with matters of principle, they should seem not to engage in the sort of calculus that orthodox economic models take as given (Rapley 2017: 404). If one is cultured to believe that greed is good, then one will be likely to live accordingly.

According to Rapley (2017: 416)

...economic issues must become a serious public matter and the subject of debate if new directions are to be undertaken. Meaningful reforms cannot be put over by advisory and administrative elite that is itself the architect of existing situations.

This means that MCZ should design a way to deal with health and wealth issues, as was done by John Wesley, beginning with clergy in training; unlike the present situation where the polity curriculum is not taken seriously by all. From this point, the researcher will offer an overview of the summary to the responses, in terms of MCZ theology and its future in light of the challenges posed by the health and wealth gospel. Magezi and Banda (2017: 6) demonstrate that, churches are now like private enterprise where the idea of doing ministry is now a means of economic prosperity where the pastor acts as a conduit of blessings to the Christian believers.

Proponents of the prosperity gospel entice believers who aspire to have health and wealth, to plant a seed (as stated in other chapters) for their harvest by giving their money to the anointed man of God, who is believed to have the keys to unlock the heavenly riches. The money is not directed or offered to the poor or the offering and tithing to the church, but to the man of God. This scenario brings a false hope and belief that wealth lies in giving to the man of God rather than to the church.

The moderate views on prosperity also help to curb the idea that ministry is a means of economic survival, a view that has promoted greed. From an objective and factual perspective, prosperity teaching offers a way of Christian empowerment through its engaging in income generating projects as a church and encouraging a work ethic as John Wesley promoted. From this moderate view, clergy approaches to economic life in MCZ have been assessed. It has been proven through this study that those who advocate a moderate view are not many as compared to those who are either on the extreme side or have a reactive response. Analysis shows that most of these respondents with a moderate view had gone for further studies to quench their appetite for knowledge.

This leads the researcher to conclude that those clergy who have received further education are well equipped to face the challenges of the prosperity gospel as compared to those who only passed through UTC and TEE colleges. This also authenticates the inadequacies of Wesleyan teachings at college, and supports Dube's (2017) idea that only those with an appetite for Wesleyan teachings find it elsewhere. M30 (2017) acknowledged that he only came to know about Wesley's teaching on healing when he went to a seminar held in Mutare in 2015. It could be that those giving a moderate view had found their own ways to learn about Wesleyan teachings through further studies.

7.4 A Summary of Responses to the MCZ Theology and its Future in Light of the Challenges and Opportunities Posed by the Prosperity Gospel

Magezi and Banda assert that a clergy reproduces his or her theology through ministry. One's theological understanding is inseparable from one's practice. Theory (theological understanding) influences praxis (ministry practice) (2017: 9). This section reflects on the interaction between theology and praxis in the MCZ. The responses show that the MCZ

polity curriculum shows deficiency because it does not address economic and health issues. As a result, polity teaching in MCZ theological education only prepares ministers for evangelistic purposes. It does not offer an iota of teaching on the Wesleyan holistic life that includes economic participation and engagement. The polity curriculum for MCZ lacks “economic and entrepreneurship literacy” (: 8). Even if “traditional theological education has managed to produce critical thinkers” (Gondongwe 2011: 17-19), their political ideas have not translated into a visible and viable ethics of economic life. For the MCZ clergy, there is evidence of “a gap between spirituality and economic life” (Magezi and Banda 2017: 8).

Theological education and religious studies offered in universities are equally to blame as they remain theoretical without concentrating on entrepreneurship. As much as theology and religion have managed to make an unforgettable mark in the “decolonisation of the African fight for gender equality and HIV and AIDS, they have only focussed on abstract and historical issues with little or no relevance to contemporary socio-economic and political situations particularly in Zimbabwe” (: 8). This could be because theological training is detached from community involvement. Theological education therefore should foster a Christian ministry that is God fearing, that does not abuse God’s people, but enables clergy to be productive economic participants.

As seen from the analysis of respondents’ views, there is a need for MCZ theological education in polity to address the issue of Commodification of the church. There is a tendency for some clergy to hold onto society members as his or her personal property, and sometimes refuse to disengage with them even when transferred to another circuit. They still possess these members as cash cows and property. Polity in MCZ theological education should instil a teaching that de-commodifies church members, and instil within MCZ clergy the realisation that, in as much as they derive economic survival from the ministry, they must be accountable to the church they are called to serve. This then underlines the idea that the church is not a personal commodity; it belongs to Christ and the clergy is just a steward with God’s people. Hence MCZ clergy should not manipulate Christ’s people for selfish means. UTC polity should instil a sound Wesleyan theology a theology of enough. A good balanced polity curriculum has a theology that is accompanied by economic literacy, in tandem with the Wesleyan model. This means that the polity curriculum must open clergy to the socio-economic and political dynamics of Zimbabwe. Such polity teaching in theological education

will equip MCZ clergy to enhance the human agency of their communities. Polity must be “contextualized into realities in order to transform them” (Magezi and Banda 2017: 9).

Different responses were given by lay leaders and clergy regarding the prosperity gospel that has encroached into the MCZ through some of the clergy trained at UTC and ZIMTEE. They either copied from new upcoming ministries or learnt prosperity teachings from Wesleyan teachings. There are positive aspects brought to the MCZ by this gospel as well as negative challenges as witnessed by respondents in their interviews.

7.4.1 Opportunity Aspects of Health and Wealth Gospel: Statistical Growth

Analysis of the interviews with both lay leaders and clergy shows to a certain extent that the prosperity gospel has brought in opportunities for numerical growth. M10 (2017) espoused when he said; “if we preach prosperity gospel we have a number of people who will attend the Methodist church so our numerical status will grow as a church.” Similarly, Student A (2017) said, “I think if the gospel of prosperity is preached every time, the church may attract many people, even those who are not interested in going to church because of the need to prosper; it will attract them as a pull factor.” Even the lay leaders think along the same line of membership growth. One of them, Laity 5 (2017) says:

...in our circuit I think nowadays it is benefiting so much, looking at the way how the word of God is being preached and the growth of the circuit. Numerically we are growing and we have members who are testifying that they are benefiting from the teachings by our clergy. Some even give testimonies that they have now secured jobs so it is benefiting so much.

In pursuing teaching on the use of money, the MCZ has experienced an infiltration of other dynamics of prosperity that are not Wesleyan, because of the growth of Pentecostalism in Zimbabwe. Hence there is a mixture of realities, from positive to negative, among the clergy and the MCZ members in general regarding their view of the prosperity gospel. On the affirmative side, the prosperity gospel has brought significant numerical growth in terms of membership of the church, particularly those congregations with clergy who advocate this new phenomenon. Though it cannot be conclusively proven that the increase in number is attributed to the propagation of the prosperity gospel by these clergy, the fact is that the MCZ experienced the numerical growth of 2.7% in 2014 (MCZ 2015: 49), with a total membership of 117,713 all inclusive; and in 2015, an increase of 3.6% (MCZ 2016: 39), with a total membership of 121,972 all inclusive. Although the numerical figures are given, there is

concern with the degree of accuracy in these figures and percentages. MCZ (2015: 50; see also MCZ 2013b: 68) raised the same concern on accuracy of statistics and felt the figures could be higher if data collection is improved and a more accurate database is established.

It is believed that prosperity gospel is a crowd puller. People go to witness miracles performed by the clergy. One wants to be close to the man of God, and in these times of economic hardships, one would envy being the first to receive a blessing and anointment. In the MCZ, when the church introduced healing and deliverance services in the order of service, those that were going out to seek healing and deliverance from Pentecostal churches began to gain confidence in the MCZ. Membership became stable and was on the rise. As messages from some of the MCZ clergy began to incorporate prosperity teachings, members began to hope for a better future, hence stayed in the church anticipating a brighter tomorrow. Like the motto or themes by some preachers or clergy advocating prosperity would read in the vernacular, *gamuchira munana wako* (Receive your miracle).

However, in as much as there is a statistical increase in numbers and in church gatherings, one should also note that not all those who come to church services are members of that church. A close analysis by the researcher reveals that there are different categories of members who are welcome to worship and fellowship in a church service. As confirmed by the Standing Orders of the MCZ (2011: 191), there are “full members⁴⁰, On Trials,⁴¹ adherents⁴² and some who are just observers” – those that are drawn in because of different reasons. Some are gate-crashers or onlookers while others are just visitors for the day. So by virtue of seeing a crowd of people at a church service, it does not mean that all are members of that church. This is also true of the crusades and ministries – not all belong to those churches. The same applies to political parties – not all who gather at a political rally to listen to a politician are cardholders of that party. In view of the above, membership recorded by merely looking at church attendance does not reflect a true picture.

7.4.2 Financial Growth

⁴⁰Full members according to Standing Orders 900 item 4 refers to anyone who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and accepts the obligation to be saved, baptized and confirmed as a full member.

⁴¹ On Trials are members who desire to be prepared for reception into full membership of the MCZ.

⁴² Adherents are made up of members from other denominations who enjoy the fellowship of our church, be it OT or full members of those churches without any commitment to Methodist discipline. It also includes members whose marriages fall out, those who come but do not wish to be members, and disciplined members.

It can also be argued that prosperity has changed the economic status of the MCZ in terms of giving. But this is debatable because although the church is surviving through thick and thin in terms of its revenue bases, Conference (2016b: 35) mooted the idea of “maximizing income through income generating projects from farms as well as centralizing capital expenditure and implementing cost cutting measures.” This reflects the unsustainable financial position of the church. It could be that those who argue for a financial boost see prosperity as a vehicle to get the church to financial stability, as attested by M23 (2017):

...if prosperity gospel is taught without bias it will help people to get rich and also in turn will support the church. I think people need to be taught to work very hard, then they prosper and even the church will prosper. So I think it needs to be taught correctly; we cannot prosper just because we bought anointing oil or we have been prayed for by the minister or the prophet but we need to teach people to work like what John Wesley taught when he said earn as much as you can, save as much as you can and give as much as you can.

What is advocated is correct teaching for sustainability, not the current scenario where prosperity speakers are invited for a fundraising activity and a substantial amount is raised for a specific project but that will not keep the church going. Members are also suspicious about the frequency of these fundraising activities, which have become spiritual drain among members, and invitations of guest speakers who employ technical gimmicks to hoodwink a person. This is not the culture of Methodism. This was also observed by the Presiding Bishop in his address to Conference in 2015, when he stated: “some clergy have a tendency to invite preachers from other churches, some of whom do not respect the practices and traditions of the church” (MCZ 2015: 3). His observation was a result of continuous and numerous invitations by some of the clergy to some of the preachers who do not share same traditions and practices as the MCZ.

This frequency of fundraising activities raises more questions than answers. Rapley presents an important question for further discussion when he asks: “do we worship money the way we worship God?” (Rapley 2017: 1). From time immemorial, our ancestors prayed for wealth, health and happiness, and sometimes we devote our lives to getting money, often doing work we do not like. Instead of embracing hardship, to reach heaven through salvation of our souls, churches are now filled to capacity in the pursuit of riches – but does that make people religious? The problem today is that even if God exists, He or She is intangible. One cannot prove God’s existence besides having faith in His or Her existence, unlike money that

can be seen as real. One touches it and pulls it out of his or her pocket. But people have not posed this question to themselves, asking ‘is money real?’

“Money exists in our imagination. If you do not believe in it that bank note is worthless but if you do you can change the world” (Rapley 2017: 2). People help to create money by the act of will and faith in it. Humanity started creating and imagining money in earliest civilisation when they had the IOU (I Owe You); these circulated as village economics and later regional economics. In Zimbabwe, people were trading using barter trade, exchanging goods and services without the involvement of money. The IOU or ‘I owe you’ were written down or simply were kept as word of mouth and began to circulate. Later on the IOU were simplified by entrepreneurs who introduced a process of keeping accounts by disbursing a medium of exchange in the form of sea shells, pieces of silver, gold or bronze, or elephant tusks, as long as these were not forged. They had to choose their unit of exchange and measure the value of each type of labour in that unit. There was no money involved. Rapley states that, “the middlemen often sat on the bench in the market where they could keep everyone’s accounts they were later known as benchers which later developed into bankers”(2017: 3).

As these benchers proposed, units of exchange attracted wide acceptance; buyers and sellers started to list their prices and keep their own accounts, and its “free flowing character gave birth to the term used as money which is currency like the current in a river or breeze” (2017: 3). Governments then took advantage of that and began to issue their own currency to tender taxes in it so that they could collect revenue, handle and control trade. But they were overtaken by traders who then issued paper or cloth certificates which they backed with money instead of being weighed down with heavy coins or knives. This enabled currency to move as liquid cash, as known in economic terms today, but the value is just an imagination.

Rapley (2017: 3) further states that, “Governments today watch the traders and regulate banks through central banks. The vast majority of the money we use is little more than figures on ledgers or digits in cyberspace and no government can claim with certainty how much money is circulating in its economy.” The case in point is Zimbabwe that has no legal tender of its own. Zimbabwe had a legal tender of Zimbabwean dollars from 1980 to 1995, with its highest denomination being a hundred dollars (Zw\$100.00). In 2001 they introduced a five hundred dollar note and in 2003 they had a one thousand dollar note being legal tender. From the 15th of September 2003 to 31st December 2008, Zimbabwe introduced bearer cheques and agro bearers. What is interesting to note is that the denominations printed kept on rising due

to inflation – from a five thousand bearer’s cheque in 2003, to a five hundred million bearer’s cheque in 2008? Alongside bearer cheques were agro bearers, with a highest denomination of one hundred billion. Although slashing of zeros was introduced by the Reserve Bank Governor, the Zimbabwean dollar denomination escalated to one hundred trillion in 2008; hence the introduction of multi-currency and the use of the United States dollar that brought sanity during the unity government between MDC and ZANU PF.

The 31st of December 2008 marked the end of many millionaire and trillionaires account holders in Zimbabwe, who were only to wake up on the 1st of January 2009 without any money in the bank. This authenticates words of Rapley when he states:

Imagine one day you went to a cash machine and found your money was gone. You rushed to your bank branch, where a teller said that overnight people had stopped believing in money, and it all vanished. Seem incredible? It happened, and it could happen again (Rapley 2017: cover).

It is true: in Zimbabwe one day, overnight it all ended. Although people survived the crash of 2003 to 2008, most of the people have watched their living standards decline. As long as people believe that money has real power, it enables us to create stuff out of nothing. In as much as the prosperity gospel is considered the engine to material possession and accumulation of wealth, it is majoring in the minor, leaving what is credible. This reminds us that John Wesley taught a holistic approach of the soul and the body and the need to strike a balance.

7.4.3 Negative Challenges to Health and Wealth Gospel: Division among Clergy

There are also negative challenges posed by the phenomenon of prosperity in the MCZ. First and foremost, the prosperity gospel has brought misunderstanding and division among the clergy and even members of the MC. This was noted in the Minutes of Conference (MCZ 2015: 4; see also MCZ 2004: 2, 79) on the relationship among clergy. The Presiding Bishop “encouraged clergy to maintain sound relations among themselves” after it emerged that there was discord in how clergy were operating. The response by clergy gives a clue of what was prevailing that called for such encouragement to work together by the Presiding Bishop. Clergy argued that “members have special preferences whereby long queues accumulate on specific clergy while others are left without anyone” (MCZ 2015: 4). The ministerial session was encouraged to be proud of their brand of Methodism. In the same Conference, the Mission Director also informed Conference that “cases of clergy and lay leaders who use oil,

handkerchiefs and other symbolic commodities are on the decline and reminded the clergy and the laity that they must exercise their ministry within the confines of Methodist belief and practice” (2015: 29).

In the ministerial session of Conference (2014: 11), in his review, the Presiding Bishop also encouraged clergy to create sound relationships with their colleagues and the laity as they serve. The major area that has brought this bone of contention is the issue of healing and deliverance. He urged clergy to handle this with caution because some members were complaining about the extremes related to this phenomenon. The extremes that were challenged include, among others, making people vomit, going into ecstatic moods and running around in places of worship. It is clear, as noted from the minutes (2014: 12), that healing and deliverance was dividing the church. There was a call for the church to go back to the original healing and deliverance practised by Methodists and that there was no need to use healing and deliverance to attack each other. The seriousness of the issue referred to Masvingo Central Circuit where a disaster was looming; hence a task force was set for fact-finding on the conflicts between the Bishop and the Superintendent.

There are pertinent factors that can be noted from the above deliberations at these Conferences. It could be that those clergy who attracted long queues are considered the spiritual gurus and the superstars that are able to bring healing to the people. These are clergy who are regarded as holier than others, and are seen to be having power, such that when they pray for people they always fall down and some demons manifest; hence it attracts the attention of congregants. Those who do not have people in the queue, it is because when they pray there is no manifestation of demons and people do not fall down. These clergy are considered unspiritual and without power to demonstrate that they are anointed. The situation causes an unprecedented scenario where there is comparison and demonstration of power, to the extent that some clergy challenge those with no one in their queue as “the Gehazi among the Elisha”(M16, 2017) – meaning those who just accompany those who are gifted to cast out demons. This cracking down on relationships not only concerns the clergy, it is also found among the laity. There are those who would want to identify themselves with the man of God who has demonstrations of power, and shun those who are less gifted to the extent of undermining authority of the clergy. Some even go to attend services of the one with assumed power and absent themselves from the other services of the weaker brother. The case of Gutu

circuit⁴³ which has officialised the service of healing and deliverance at three ‘o’clock in the afternoon every Sunday (Agenda of Conference 2016:R25).

The above situation had reached a stage where clergy were giving themselves names depending on the level of spirituality, as indicated in the Conference Agenda (2013: M3). The Mission Committee⁴⁴ “after realizing that some clergy are giving themselves titles, some of which are bogus such as apostle, evangelist and prophet, the mission committee recommends that the church should address this issue in order to deal with confusion that now characterizes the church”. Bishops were tasked to deal with this issue once and for all. Although these titles are biblical and relevant, they are not used in the MCZ to refer to ordained clergy. Though this issue was tabled at Conference, some clergy continue to use the titles publicly as shown in the poster in Appendix 12.

The division among clergy has escalated to the point where signs of what Rev Matata (2000) foresaw happening are now beginning to show. As indicated in chapter 4 in his letter to the Bishop, Rev Matata was afraid that by using a separate mode of training (TEE), it was going to create a division among clergy who work in the same vineyard yet are trained using different models (Revd Matata 2000: 3)⁴⁵. There is an element of grouping according to the college that you trained with; those who are engaging mainly in healing and deliverance and are said to abuse it are primarily associated with the TEE programme, and a handful from UTC. Those from TEE are regarded as preachers who masquerade as clergy, while those who went to UTC and are in the extremes about prosperity are referred to as misguided. For Gondongwe (2017), “the whole thing of unguided Pentecostalism that we are trying to fight with even today is coming because we have laity amongst the clergy who masquerade as trained clergy.”

Interviews carried out also show that clergy themselves are aware of this gulf among them, as indicated by M16 (2017): “you may find that we are all clergy, some are praying for people while some are watching because they know that even if I pray for people they still go back and join the other queue because they are saying they are the guys. That on its own shows that the church is cracking, there is a division.” M27 (2017) affirms this when he says, “the

⁴³Gutu Circuit is one of the circuits in Masvingo District, which is one of the case studies in this thesis.

⁴⁴Mission Committee is the driving committee for the mission of the church. It has sub-committees that implement the mission of the church. These include: faith and order, local preacher’s board, stewardship and training, evangelism and discipleship, research and publications, statistical, education, lay ministries, youth conference and board of tertiary institutions.

⁴⁵See Appendix 13 for the complete details of the letter.

church is losing identity; we do not know who is who in the church between the clergy and the members and this is why I am saying the church is losing identity and we are also even losing our unity. Some say prosperity is good while some say it is bad and the church is divided.” This clearly shows that from 2004 to date, the issue of relationship among clergy is a cause for concern in the MCZ; and it is because of matters of spirituality, where some are becoming superstars and taking others as inferior.

7.4.4 Dual Membership

The second challenge that prosperity gospel has brought to the MCZ is dual membership of the laity and to a certain extent some clergy who frequently attend services in ministries where they copy some of the prosperity teachings from other churches. MCZ Minutes of Conference (2016: 31) states categorically that “dual membership has escalated in the church due to the mushrooming of Pentecostal churches,” and it was recommended by Harare East district that there be improved services in terms of teaching, preaching, spirituality and embedding deliverance services in an attempt to curb the challenge. This resolution was however noted as an encouragement. The reaction of Conference to this challenge was a casual way of indirectly saying Pentecostalism is not a threat any longer or there was the realisation that dual membership did not start now, it has been there before.

Dual membership among Africans dates back from the time when missionaries came to evangelise Africans while the latter had their own religion. Missionaries had a misconception of Africa as a dark continent, saying Africans had no religion and hence the need for them to bring light. Though missionaries referred African way of worship as pagan, Africans converted to Christianity in light of their African religion. They just transferred into Christianity with their inborn African religion. When Africans are faced with challenges like illness and any other misfortune, they revert back to ATR for solutions, and when everything seems alright, they worship as Christians. In the same vein, when Pentecostalism came, it came in on ATR; hence it was easy for African Christians to appropriate it and adapt it because it seems to them as a form of worship that is practical, with solutions to their problems. Like ATR, it has immediate solutions here and now. It is unlike Christianity in mainline churches like MCZ that wait for things to happen in the future eschatology.

In the case of MCZ members, they attend church services in the morning until lunch time to keep their names registered in the church register, and in the afternoon they go to ministries

and interdenominational churches for healing and deliverance services. This is why in Gutu circuit, as stated above, a healing and deliverance service was launched in order to curb the situation, in line with the resolution suggested by Harare East District to Conference. Dual membership is also necessitated by the fact that ministries led by a one man band do not call themselves churches; rather they are a specialization of a particular ministry, be it prophecy or healing and deliverance. Hence they do not offer other services needed by members. Some even encourage their followers not to leave their original churches. This is supported by Laity 2 (2017) in an interview conducted when he observed:

...I think the other thing I have noticed is that some of the people who go to Prophetic Healing and Deliverance (hereinafter called PHD), some of them have found their way back. I am not so sure, I have not interacted to know exactly why they are back, but the other thing that I picked was that the head (Magaya) of the PHD ministry says when you come here you have not joined a church you have joined a movement, but this movement is for healing and deliverance, so don't run away from your church something like that. This I have picked but I did not dig deep into it to say is this true; first, I have never gone there to PHD ministries but in the area where I stay in Horton Park I have been talking to some people there who have put this across to me so we will be likely to see another impact that we need to monitor, that of fluctuation of membership, and then some aspect of some people having dual membership. I think that is a danger if one decides to be A then they should be A, if they decide to be B then they should be B. So one way to address this is to make sure that teaching is strong so that people will ask themselves three times 'do I really need to go there or not'?

This case suggests these ministries do not have time to do pastoral visitation, sick visitation, burial of the deceased, or even offer counselling to their members. These services are only found in the mainline churches, as indicated by M15 (2017) who states:

Members of these churches also do not benefit, instead they are cash cows which finance the leaders because as a Methodist clergy, some of my services are going to some of the members of these churches because if one dies they don't go for burial because of the vastness of the area they cover, the huge numbers of congregants coming, they are not able even, some of the large members are not even known as individuals in these churches. They always come here, 'reverend our member died can you please help', even in some social problems that they face in the community. These pastors of these churches are nowhere to be found; most services are given by clergy from mainline churches who are nearby who does not believe in this gospel of prosperity.

So for the security and survival of the members, they end up having dual membership. The only way to curb this in the MCZ is to have a holistic approach and emphasize more on teaching and pastoral responsibilities. It also noted above that some members are finding their way back into the church, a sign reflecting that some did not find what they were searching for or they waited for the fulfilment of the promises that never materialised.

7.4.5 Abuse of Authority

The third challenge the prosperity gospel has presented to the MCZ is the abuse of authority by some clergy. Some have gone to the extent of using symbolic objects as demonstration of power as they anoint believers who have come for healing services. As earlier reported by the Mission Director of the MCZ in the Minutes of Conference (2015: 29), the church had to “thank God because cases of clergy and lay leaders who use oil, handkerchiefs and other symbolic commodities are on the decline. He reminded the clergy and the laity that they must exercise their ministry within the confines of Methodist belief and practice.” The remarks indicate that there were clergy and perhaps lay leaders who were not observing the beliefs and practices of Methodism by using relics such as handkerchiefs and oil to perform miracles or healing and deliverance services.

This is categorically abuse of office in the eyes of the MCZ, and it calls for disciplinary measures, especially to a clergy who do not abide by Methodist doctrine as enshrined in the Standing Orders. This is frequently checked during ministerial sessions of Conference of each year where a question is asked, “Does each clergy among us continue faithfully to discharge the obligation laid upon him or her by the ministry which we have received from the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God?” (MCZ 2016: 8; see 2015: 3 and 2014: 11). Each Bishop will affirm or raise concerns if there are those who are not doing so, following Methodist practices.

The abuse of authority under the influence of the prosperity gospel has also reached a stage where some clergy, with the pretext of healing and deliverance, would take congregants to mountains for prayers and fasting for a week or some days. While they are in the mountains or places like Mazowe or Chishawasha, they ask members to give their tithes to bless the man of God and for them to receive their miracles. M19 (2017) confirms:

...it seems we have some young clergy coming up, they are taking people to the mountains but when they get there they would ask these people to give their tithe there. They build altars

there and say this is the place you should give your offerings. We have this issue of the young clergy on themselves benefiting from individuals by going out with individuals where they build altars and encourage people to give for their benefit. They seem to be abusing the systems, if this is true of what is happening, because that is not us as Methodists.

The interviewee observes an element of abuse of the system and also feels that the practice has diverted from the norms of Methodism, especially the Wesleyan economic and work ethic. One can conclude that this practice by young clergy is done for self-aggrandisement because whatever is collected there does not find its way back into the church coffers. Theologically, one can argue that the altars built in the mountains are sacrilege or profane because the motive behind all these endeavours is to use ecclesial services and places deemed to be holy for their own gain. It is a gimmick that truly remains secular. As such, the next section looks at theological pitfalls of the prosperity gospel in the MCZ.

7.4.6 Theological Contradictions

The above phenomenon raises more questions than answers in that the ability to heal is now confined to certain people and is no longer a provision from God who is the healer. Healing is now identified with personalities. The implication of having a healing service on a Sunday at a specific time creates theological problems of confining God to a certain place on a specific day and time. God who is omnipresent and omnipotent, who is not confined to any place and is not restricted by boundaries of this world, is now reduced to a commodity to fit into people's plans and actions, yet people are the ones to fit into God's plan. To have a special service after people attended a normal service is like saying in this normal service God is not present to heal the sick and to bless his people. Even the clergy himself or herself is not theologically informed about the contradiction he or she is presented with. Suppose he or she is conducting a service in a distant area; he or she has to come back before three to conduct this important service, meaning to say he or she does a disservice to the congregants outside the area where the clergy resides, or it forces those people to follow him for the service at three o'clock.

The MCZ, in its Easter programme, revivals, crusades or even big gatherings like celebrations, the programme is designed in such a way that healing and deliverance is scheduled for a specific day and time, and normally it is not conducted by any ordinary clergy who is assumed not to have power. Often times it is given to those who are known to

be in ecstasy and who, when they pray, demons will manifest. The theological quagmire that the church puts itself in is that healing and deliverance is not part of the process of the crusade or revival. Even a Sunday service becomes an event on its own that needs a special speaker, a special time with special anointing. Indirectly the church is saying all other facets of the programme do not bring healing to the people, be it worship, word preached, songs, testimonies, lessons delivered, prayers of confession, supplication, thanksgiving and even the offerings. They do not bring healing through the grace of God in His own time place and power.

What raises theological concerns, particularly regarding some Methodist clergy who emphasise this gospel, is to put material things as primary pointers of devoted Christianity. In MCZ congregations, some clergy are currently preaching what the researcher may call a reduced Christ who can be manipulated and controlled, a deity who can dance to a people's tune at the tap of a remote control. This can be equated to animistic or pantheistic religion where the gods exist to give people what they want and demand, because they perform some rituals that are supposed to appease them and convince them to act in their favour. On the contrary, the Christ of the Bible is not a puppet as implored by these prosperity advocates.

Not only the issue of Christology has been reduced, but the issue of soteriology has also been materialised and not spiritualised by some clergy in the MCZ; and the leadership has remained quiet as if nothing is happening. Salvation is now free; from having nothing to having more simply by pointing your finger to the type of car one wants. Hell is now prescribed as poverty and heaven is wealth. Salvation is achieved by giving to the church, as uttered by some clergy during crusades. When one analyses this theology of prosperity, one can discover that in attaining salvation, there is no need for the cross of Christ, no need for grace or repentance or conversion, no nothing except walking into the church and claiming your wealth. What is regarded as sin now is to be poor since it hinders one to claim blessings. Prosperity gospel has turned people into religious consumers without any ethical commitments in today's church; the fewer the requirements on the people, the larger the constituency. On the other hand stricter demands discourage people to join.

Another theological contradiction posed by the prosperity gospel is that it removes responsibility from our people because it starts to say that one can get things for free. A person can just pray, pray and pray and not work, and one can still reap the results. So it is a poison to the young people as it teaches them irresponsibility. It is also a challenge to the

work ethic in that it tends to give the impression that one can get wealth so easily. With a prayer, a person becomes wealthy and that kills the spirit of wanting to work and do things the proper way. It is a 'theology of instant' or 'fast food theology' which really challenges because it removes the obligation of humanity to really work for a living. People then just wait in hope that money will just fall from heaven. The researcher identified this gospel of prosperity as fast food or instant theology because today people are fond of instant products or fast food products such as Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), McDonalds, Chicken Inn, Pizza Inn, Nandos, Chicken Slice, Steers, among others, where one buys instant coffee and fried chips and chicken that is prepared while waiting. It is observed that KFC originated from America through Colonel Harland Sanders in 1952, where the gospel of prosperity also originates. Fast foods were prepared for travellers along the roadsides.

People want fast foods which are quick to prepare, unlike the traditional foods that take long to prepare but remain nutritious and healthy. There are health challenges associated with eating these fast food items. Arya and Mishra (2013: 26) comment that:

...eating junk food has become a trend. The children hate homemade healthy food. Junk food is injurious to health. Eating burger and pizza increases cholesterol in the human body. The fat in human body increases. The increased fat is dangerous for the heart. Drinking soft drinks adds dangerous toxins in the human body. It affects the bone, skin and kidney.

Evans (2011: 3) affirms that "fast food is nearly always unhealthy. Food from takeaway outlets is often high in salt, fat and sugar making it difficult to make a healthy choice." Trans fats are created during food processing and are commonly found in fried pies, pizza, pastries, and cookies among others, and no amount of Trans fat is good. Eating foods that contain it increases risk of diabetes and heart disease. The prosperity gospel is like the fast food that is quick to make but has long-lasting consequences. The market strategy for these fast foods is in packaging and billboards with appetising pictures, which is the same as the prosperity gospel. It is packaged in colourful advertising with words that promise great things but sometimes end being pie in the sky. Prosperity theology is such an appetising gospel to hear at face value, but in the long run will disappoint many believers who have been waiting for their promises to be fulfilled from time immemorial.

7.5 A Critique of Wesley's teachings on Health and Wealth

A critique of Wesley's teachings in relation to how he converses with issues of health and wealth as expressed through the prosperity culture of his time is worth undertaking because even though John Wesley is the founder of Methodism he is not infallible with his teachings, like any other founder of the church reformers the likes of Martin Luther and others. Wesley was a product of his own time who sought to interpret and present a contextual understanding of Jesus teachings for his context of the United Kingdom and not Zimbabwean context and the other 'colonized lands.' It is a fact that Wesley's situation was different from Zimbabwe as a result the reading of his teachings are to be done with a lot of appropriation without which it is not relevant to duplicate Wesley's theology without contextualizing it with the Zimbabwean context. This remains the role of theological education through colleges that equip the clergy to remain relevant to Christian communities.

When Wesley wrote about salvation in the 18th century he had no idea of other people outside his context rather salvation was in relation to his context in Britain and not in the context of the colonial imperial government of the other people. This critique is a reflection that Wesley had no estimate of other people who were non British for example Zimbabweans. In this regard Zimbabweans are Zimbabweans in their own nature and context therefore, how then are his teachings applied to people in the Zimbabwean context? It cannot be that he taught what salvation is to Zimbabweans without conversing with their experiences of salvation. It seems to suggest that Wesley's model is short sighted in so far as to embrace all cultural dynamics. As a result the church in the 21st century cannot follow Wesley blindly rather it has to contextualize his teachings and appropriate them to suit their own context. This is done in order to see how what Wesley said and taught find life in the Zimbabwean culture and therefore, what are the things Wesley said that remain in his own time meaning teachings that are not of essence to how Zimbabweans live. It means some of the teachings that Wesley taught in the 18th century in Britain are not transportable since they belong to an error of cultural lenses that cannot travel into another culture.

Oden (2014) reminds that, major cultural and historical differences account for many problems readers' faces when reading Wesley's teachings. One should take note that Wesley was ruled by a king in his country which is contrary to Zimbabwe that is ruled by an elected President who operates under a constitution and govern the State using the Judiciary and the Legislature through Parliament. The conditions Wesley operated in when he taught about health and wealth are totally different from those prevailing in Zimbabwe. As such, his

teachings on health and wealth cannot be offered as the final criterion for the remedy to the challenges and opportunities posed by of the prosperity gospel.

Be that as it may, Wesley's teaching of health and wealth is not a panacea to the churches in the world but he provides a model of the concern for holistic health and wealth that only guide the present ecclesial heirs. According to Maddox (2007) though Wesley provides this model it should stand in a dynamic continuity. He further states that "we can affirm Wesley's insight about the importance of regimen, (a prescribed course of treatment, diet or exercise for the promotion of restoring health) making this a focus of our lives and ministries, while recognizing the inadequacies of the specific model of the cold regimen" (2007:27). It should also be noted that Wesley's concern to provide physic to the poor can be appreciated but that has to be done in consideration of alternatives that are beyond Wesley in modern world in order to provide an up to date health and wealth to the marginalized in different contexts.

It is however, worth noting that none of these and other plausible criticisms of Wesley is sufficient to dismiss his teachings rather they invite further investigation of the clash of world view between modern consciousness and the classic historic root of evangelical faith (Oden 2014:312). While approaches may differ from those of Wesley in health and wealth teachings the goal must remain the same to fully realize the health of the soul and body and wealth in a holistic and ethical manner.

7.6 Conclusion

From the responses of clergy concerning ministerial formation and Wesleyan teachings taught in polity classes, it was concluded that polity is not taken seriously at UTC, and at ZIMTEE, it was not even taught at all. It was discovered that at UTC there was no curriculum for polity to follow for a number of years, only to be introduced in 2016. Its contents are found wanting because they do not major in Wesleyan theology but just scratch the surface in historical terms. The chapter indicates other ways of augmenting Wesleyan teachings for MCZ clergy during and after their ministerial formation, such as post-collegiate studies as well as seminars, theological symposiums and in ministerial sessions of Synods and Conference. It was also concluded that none of the above programmes adequately cover health and wealth issues from either the Wesleyan perspective or the prosperity theological

approach; hence MCZ clergy are found wanting in terms of meeting the challenges posed by the prosperity gospel.

The chapter demonstrated that ministers responded in different ways regarding their views on the prosperity gospel. Some clergy advocates of the prosperity gospel gave what the researcher saw as extreme responses that even show elements of going beyond the boundaries of the practise of Methodism. The extremism includes performances such as name it and claim it in faith, use of anointed handkerchiefs, anointed oil, anointed bricks and drinking of sewage water all in the name of giving wealth and health to their followers. Sometimes their claims are never fulfilled. Another response is the reactive response by some ministers who are against the prosperity gospel, as demonstrated in the chapter. Lastly, the chapter concluded that there are moderate responses from some clergy where they gave a balanced view of prosperity. There is acknowledgement of the fact that prosperity teaching is helpful when done correctly but destructive and dangerous when handled with a motive of self-aggrandisement.

Due to the inadequacies seen in the prosperity gospel in this chapter, the study went further to look at challenges the prosperity gospel raise for the MCZ. It looked at the context in which MCZ understands prosperity teachings, through Wesley's view of healing and the use of money. These are the teachings that shape the theological understanding of the MCZ. As shown in chapter two, Wesley said humanity (Christians included) must gain all they can as long as they do not hurt their soul, mind and body, nor hurt the soul, mind and body of their neighbours. Humanity, after gaining all they can, they should save all they can; in this aspect, the teaching demonstrated that one should not spend money on extravagant food, clothing and furniture. Items must not be acquired for pride but for the glory of God. After gaining and saving all you can, it is not enough; one has to give all you can.

From this aspect, the chapter has shown that one has to buy all the food, clothing and furniture one requires then after that one has to buy those things that the wife or husband requires, what children need and what servants also needs. One should go further to buy what those in your custody need, also looking at the neighbours and any fellow human being who is in need. When these needs are satisfied, if there is any balance left, then that money should be given to the church as sacrificial giving above tithing. Wesley advocated for a responsible giving, which is sacrificial giving as also adopted in the Standing Orders (2011: 197). These

principles promote a work ethic; that is the meaning, concludes this chapter that MCZ clergy need to appropriate in the understanding of prosperity.

This chapter also indicates positive challenges to MCZ, such as a growth in statistics where there was demonstrated numerical and percentage growth in the MCZ over the two years of 2014 and 2015. However, the percentages were critiqued and it was deduced that not all who come to church are members of the church. Some are adherents while others are just observers, hence the figures may mislead. Financial growth is also attributed as a positive gain when the prosperity gospel is taught in a holistic manner. Negative challenges indicated were division among clergy, dual membership, abuse of authority and a number of theological contradictions caused by propagation of the prosperity gospel. A theology of fast food or instant food is advanced to suit this kind of prosperity theology. A critique to Wesley's teaching on health and wealth was offered to strike a balance in scholarly approach. The next chapter presents a summary and conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WAYFORWARD AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This study employs a framework of theological reflections to interrogate how MCZ clergy experience ministerial formation in response to Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes as embraced in the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), within a religious environment influenced by the prosperity gospel since 2000. The study investigated the responses of MCZ clergy to the challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel and postulated ways that a Wesleyan health and wealth themes could be used as an inspiration to empower and equip the clergy to adequately respond to the prosperity gospel from a theological perspective. This concluding chapter is a summary of the entire study and proposes a way forward for MCZ. It demonstrates the extent to which the goals of the study have been achieved, and is presented in the following six sections. First, a general overview of the study's design is given. Second, a review of the objectives of the study and the degree to which they have been achieved is offered and a way forward proposed. Third, an assessment of the quality of the present study is included. Fourth, the contribution of the present study to new knowledge is evaluated regarding its validity, rigour and reliability. Fifth, areas of further research are suggested in order to cover the gaps identified in this study. Last, the conclusions are summarised and the final statement is presented.

8.2 General Overview of the Study Design and Review of the Objectives of the Study

Academic, contextual and pastoral questions confronting the researcher inspired the idea of this study. An academic research gap observed during my Master's degree on the topic: Prosperity Gospel: To Save or Enslave? The Case of UFI in Zimbabwe (Masvotore 2012) makes it an area that requires an in-depth study focusing on MCZ. It is necessary to pay attention to MCZ ministerial formation, particularly how well MCZ clergy are equipped through the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as motifs in the doctrine of salvation, to be able to meet the opportunities and challenges posed by the prosperity gospel that has been embraced in Zimbabwe since 2000. The second academic impetus in this study constitutes

the need to engage in research on the way MCZ clergy are engaging with the challenges posed by the influences of the prosperity gospel, a religio-cultural phenomenon that is shaping expressions of Christianity within the society. To date, a few books and articles have been written on the influence of the prosperity gospel on the MCZ ministry and the formation of its clergy within the local context. However, the work of these scholars confirms that attention was not given to the ecclesial context of the MCZ in relation to the topic of this study. This study gives attention to, and fills the identified research gap.

Another motivation as indicated in the study is the contextual and pastoral issues the researcher was confronted with as a Methodist clergy. According to the minutes of the MCZ Conference (2015), where the researcher was present as a delegate, the church noted with concern the challenges posed by the prosperity gospel. The Conference recommended that the clergy should be proud of their brand Methodism and should exercise their ministry within the confines of Methodist beliefs and practices. It further recommended that clergy should desist from using borrowed phenomenon, like the use of oil, handkerchiefs, and other symbolic objects denoting anointing in the name of prosperity (2015: 4, 29). This attitude towards religio-cultural practices that are different from those bequeathed to the church by its Euro-centric missionary heritage constitute part of the motivation that triggered this study, to try to discover the root cause of the recommendation from Conference.

The research problem of this study therefore emerged out of theological reflections that seem to call into question the religio-cultural ways on how MCZ clergy are formed, and their appropriation of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as themes in the doctrine of salvation, and whether it adequately equips them to address the challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel within the Zimbabwean society since 2000. This then calls for the need to investigate to see how the ministerial formation strategy within MCZ has been able to equip the clergy for effective engagement with the challenges posed by the phenomenon within Zimbabwe.

This study interrogates issues linked with the theological formation of clergy within MCZ in particular, and within the Zimbabwean context. The Polity identity of the MCZ is formed by Wesleyan theology. This study focuses on health and wealth as themes enshrined in the doctrine of *Ordo Salutis*. Answering the research question was achieved through the use of a systematic theological reflection framework to interrogate the doctrinal teachings of the MCZ and its theological institutions in conversation with issues of ministerial formation. This

dialogue between the ministerial formation and doctrinal teachings enhances the authenticity and trustworthiness, and provides a niche for this study. The contextual analysis also helped in integrating concepts, methods and techniques to construct a relevant theology of prosperity which in this case the study proposes a theology of enough, which shall be discussed in detail below.

The teachings of John Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism, on health and wealth have been neglected in ministerial formation as a resource that could empower its clergy to respond to challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel. The thesis argued that through effective appropriation of Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth, clergy could effectively respond to the religio-cultural challenges that the prosperity gospel poses in Zimbabwe. This is proven and seen particularly with those clergy who have gone for further studies and have assimilated Wesleyan teachings. They are able to offer a balanced message emphasizing a work ethic regarding health and wealth issues as alluded to by Gondongwe (2017) and Zwana (2017) and demonstrated in the findings in chapter seven. In order to discover how the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth can inspire the clergy to respond to religio-cultural challenges of prosperity, it was invaluable to examine the responses of clergy and lay leaders, to hear their views on the prosperity gospel, ministerial formation, the theology and future of MCZ, and the extent to which Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as enshrined in the doctrine of salvation have been used by MCZ as a resource to respond to the current prosperity theology. The research question that was answered is: *How do MCZ clergy appropriate Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth themes in the doctrine of Salvation and to what extent does it equip them to respond to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000?*

In an attempt to respond to the above key question, the following five sub-questions were generated. First, what constitutes the Wesleyan theology of the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs? Second, how is the contemporary model of ministry formation used for MCZ clergy? Third, how is prosperity gospel's concept of salvation both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe? Fourth, how are the selective society leaders responding to the prosperity gospel propagated by their clergy? Fifth, how are the contemporary MCZ clergy who have been formed to appropriate the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), able to respond the challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel?

In order to respond to the question, the following five objectives for the study were identified. The first objective discusses the Wesleyan theology on the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs. The second objective critically assessed the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ clergy in relation to their polity studies. The third objective examined the prosperity gospel's concept of salvation and the challenges and opportunities it poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe. On the fourth objective, an evaluation was carried out on how selective society leaders are responding to the prosperity gospel propagated by their clergy. The last objective explores how the contemporary MCZ clergy have been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of the Wesleyan theology of *Ordo Salutis* that interacts with health and wealth themes.

To this end, a mixture of empirical and non-empirical qualitative research methods was utilised. This includes the use of diverse sources of academic literature, and field research. In the field research, three districts out of seven were selected, namely, Masvingo, Harare West and Harare East where UTC is located and the researcher conducted interviews and observations. The study involved church leaders, third-year students at UTC, lay leaders and clergy in various circuits of Masvingo and Harare West districts who were interviewed individually. Observation was also conducted among some of the interviewed clergy at an Easter Crusade programme with results discussed in chapter seven. The choice of participants followed a sampling plan of a purposive sampling. This was done by selecting participants from clergy in circuits, students in college particularly third-year students, lay leaders and clergy leadership. Among them are found tutors, bishops and Connexional staff. Based on the fieldwork results, a meticulous theological reflection led to a demonstration of how the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth can inform the response of the MCZ clergy to the religio-cultural challenges posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe generally and in MCZ in particular.

8.3 Alignment of Objectives, Research Questions and their Achievement

Each chapter in this study was developed according to particular objectives and sub research questions pursued in order to answer the key research question. Chapter two gave the historical setting of Methodism in England, outlining the conditions that gave birth to Wesley's teachings on health and wealth as one of the pioneers of prosperity spirituality. It

also reflected on the transportability of Methodism to Zimbabwe through the establishment of institutions of learning as a vehicle for evangelism. The chapter helped the reader to know the context in which this study was conducted. Chapter three dealt with achieving the first objective, discussing the Wesleyan theology on the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs. This chapter took much from the second chapter, exploring the literature that explains the doctrine of salvation from a Wesleyan point of view. It showed that in this doctrine, the health and wealth themes were dominant, especially on health and the use of money as part of Wesley's holistic emphasis of salvation. Wesley demonstrates through the use of home remedies on health, that he advocated for both spiritual and physical healing. For him, both prayer and medication are useful for physical healing. On the use of money, one should be mindful of gaining all he or she can through ways that do not hurt his or her soul, hurt others and the environment. One should also save in order also to give. Spending is to be guided by thinking of others rather than self-aggrandisement. Giving to God was guided by the tithe and anything that one has as excess should be given to the church and to the poor.

Chapter three further demonstrates that though the doctrine of salvation was the cradle of the gospel brought by missionaries to Zimbabwe, they failed to integrate it with the African understanding of salvation; hence the gospel of prosperity is more appealing to Africans as it identifies with their understanding of the concept of salvation. It further concludes that Wesley's ethical economic idea was grounded in a socialist rather than capitalist view and is premised in biblical principles for practical ministry purposes. Wesley's tripartite dictum in the sermon "The Use of Money" clearly indicates his views and approach to economics, which is against a utilitarian philosophy based on a materialistic worldview. It is holistic and consistent with matters of health. He offers a health view that is "reintegrated with the importance of non-material dimension to life, something economics cannot control" (Stone 2001: 52). Wesley also organized the Methodist believers to intervene for those who suffered from adverse economic policies and deficiencies; he made efforts to abolish and condemn slavery, and sought to provide loans to help those struggling to start their own business.

Wesley's devotion to holistic health and wealth teachings in salvation is a heritage that Christians may celebrate and embody in their own time. Though contexts differ in many ways from that of John Wesley, the embodiment of this heritage should be a dynamic continuity with the goal being the same. This is the reason why the quest to analyse this

heritage and its articulation in institutions of clerical training in relation to curbing and embracing the new form of prosperity, as seen particularly in Zimbabwe, through emphasis on a work ethic principle. The study has sought to answer the sub research question: What constitutes the Wesleyan theology of the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) and its interpretation through health and wealth motifs? It is through the development of this chapter that the gap in the literature on the response of MCZ clergy to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel in the context of Zimbabwe was exposed.

Likewise, chapter four critically assessed the contemporary model of ministerial formation used for MCZ clergy in relation to their polity studies. This objective was to theologically reflect on the Wesleyan teaching on health and wealth done at theological institutions through polity studies as a potential resource to equip MCZ clergy to succinctly respond to religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel today. Although Wesleyan teachings on salvation as part of polity is regarded as the creedal part of the mission of the church that “exists to transform lives through biblical teaching, witnessing and nurturing believers into true worshipers of God” (Minutes of Conference 2016: 2), it is critical to the existence of the church and empowering its clergy in centres of theological training. The emphasis on Wesleyan heritage and teachings is seen to be the thrust of the church, as seen from addresses by the leaders of this church. The chapter observed that MCZ, throughout all its models of training clergy, dating back to in-service training, institutional training through UTC, and distance education through ZIMTEE, has not taken polity seriously.

It was also concluded that although a polity curriculum was introduced in 2016, the contents do not comprehensively equip MCZ clergy because more historical than deep theological Wesleyan teachings, particularly on health and wealth issues, are taught at UTC. Hence clergy are found wanting, and this is the reason why there are conflicting views regarding prosperity in the MCZ in matters of handling the phenomenon. It was also noted that those seconded to be tutors at colleges could be handicapped in terms of what to offer to students, or by lack of material resources to be used. The apparent gap –the insufficiency of research done to theologically equip MCZ clergy in Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as portrayed in the doctrine of salvation– is validated as an identifiable gap. The chapter has sought to answer the sub-research question: How is the contemporary model of ministry formation used for MCZ clergy?

8.3.1 Change of curriculum a proposal and way forward

As proposed in chapter four for a change of curriculum in institutions of training for MCZ clergy the researcher has used theological reflection as a framework to analyse the current curriculum and has discovered that curriculum of theology is only concerned with the study of religious experience and expression across all civilisations; ancient and modern within the context of philosophy. Much emphasis has been placed on careful reading of theology's primary texts, preferably in the original language and the general belief systems. The curriculum is almost defunct as proved by the low intake at higher learning institution.

In the previous chapter four there was a call for a transformative contextualization of Wesleyan teachings to suit the Zimbabwean context as such there is need for a transformative education. Technology and science have changed our view of the world radically, leading some to say that we have entered a new stage of human existence as Africans. In the age in which we live in, religion has become influential in all facets of life. One has to acknowledge and discover that religion is at the centre of global issues and cultural conflict. Most conflicts around the world are increasingly becoming a religious nature. This implies that development can as well be affected by religion.

As the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology refocuses Zimbabwe's education to shift from pedagogy to androgogy, development theology must also be ushered in. The field of theology and development is a relatively untested discipline within theological studies in Africa. Theological institutions heavily rely on the Western template meant to produce philosophers only. Key to this discussion is the contested nature of 'development' and the need for theological perspectives to engage this contestation through a social analysis of the global structures of economic injustice.

The sudden influx of the philosophy of miracle money and other unorthodox means of prosperity gospel exposes a deficiency in the corridors of theology education. This means that theology now requires an engagement with the social sciences. The current curriculum of theology was shaped by context, politics, situation and environment. Africa must now produce theologians who are relevant to the context. Relevant enough to transform the communities they lead. The clergy must be able, after prayer and preaching to design strategies which address economic justice.

Theological institutions must be able to initiate development which touches the individual as well as the social order. They must be able to guide the church in designing it into economic institutions. These institutions will determine how each person earns a living, enters into contracts, exchanges goods and services. The institutions will help its members to have a mindset of economic sustenance. The ultimate theology curriculum must address economic injustice not rhetorically. It must practically free each person to engage creatively in the unlimited work beyond economics.

Curriculum of theology in theological institutions must answer the following questions in the quest to fit for relevance.

Is the theology graduate fit for the context?

This is where the debate around contextualisation of theological education becomes relevant. Besides deliverance, our context is that of Africa with its particular needs and realities that include industrialisation, rapid urbanisation, employment creation and so forth. Do our curricula address these matters as we train theologians for the people in Africa, or they will end up teaching religious studies?

Is the theology graduate fit for purpose?

In this definition, the actual competences of the graduates (the ‘product’ of the seminary or university) on the job are evaluated against the educational objectives of the college/university. Thus, if the college exists to produce theologians for the society, one needs to find out if society is satisfied with the training the students have received. It would be a sobering exercise for every college to bring together small groups of graduates and ask them three questions: namely:

Which courses that you attended have been valuable to you in your ministry and society? Which course was a waste of time because you have never used the material since leaving college? What do you wish you had been taught that would have helped you change society? The point behind these questions is simply that some of our courses are irrelevant and negate the ‘fitness for purpose’ hence compromising quality.

Is the quality of the curriculum transformative?

Students have to learn a large body of knowledge which the Christian tradition has generated. That is a good idea, but this raises the question of “So what?” What difference will the theology graduate student make in the life of the nation? Knowledge plus skills equals competency, that is, the ability to be effective. There is another important aspect to the subject of transformation. It has to do with social transformation. When theologians fail, it is seldom because they did not learn enough hermeneutics or Greek. They fail most often in the areas of management and development.

It is evident from the three descriptions of quality curriculum listed above that the notion of “quality” has many dimensions which overlap and interact with each other. A major shift is occurring in higher education away from measuring the inputs only, that is, the teaching content, towards outcome-based education based on systems of quality assurance. As a proposal to MCZ curriculum at theological institutions must not remain the same till Jesus returns but they must change their curriculum.

The fifth chapter addressed the objective of examining the prosperity gospel's concept of salvation and the challenges and opportunities it poses to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe, answering the associated research question: How is prosperity gospel's concept of salvation both a challenge and an opportunity to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe? The chapter gave a synopsis of working definitions for prosperity gospel and summed it up as a wealth, health and success gospel where children of God have a right over wealth and health for their enjoyment here and now, and not have to wait for the future eschatology. The chapter showed that the concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel has linkages with the Wesleyan holiness movement, and the emergence and spread of this gospel started from United States of America (USA). Chapter five observed that the origins of the prosperity gospel are located within Pentecostalism; it worked as a conduit or created an environment that was conducive for the spread of the prosperity gospel. The transportation of this gospel was through migrants, technocrats and students who had the opportunity to study and work in USA, and who later transported this gospel to their various countries, Zimbabwe included. It was also discovered in this chapter that it was easy for Pentecostalism to thrive in Africa because it came riding in on ATR, and took advantage of the meltdown of the economy, political turmoil and unrest in the society when believers turned to religion for solutions.

Chapter five also delineates the concept of salvation in the prosperity gospel and its fundamental characteristics, such as aiming to lead a prosperous life as a pre-requisite for all Christians in all areas of their lives. Prosperity teaching regards poverty and sickness as a result of being outside the will of God regardless of the cause. There are scriptural references that are commonly used to justify any claim made. Proof-texts are used to manufacture support of their claims without even applying exegesis and regardless of contextual analysis that is required to affirm a position. This teaching is also centred on faith and positive confessions as propelling factors for one to realise the promises and blessing of God. The chapter touches on the issue of giving and receiving as a requirement to buy God's favour through tithing and seeding. Tithing and seeding become the conduit that brings blessings from God, hence one has to seed to the man of God. It is in this teaching where poverty and sickness are considered to be caused by a curse following the law of causality, hence the need for humanity to be delivered through the prayers and gimmicks of the man of God.

Chapter five went on to outline the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in the context of Zimbabwe. Advantages noted include the ability of this gospel to alleviate poverty, a priority in line with indigenization process carried out in

Zimbabwe as claimed by Togarasei (2011: 336). Further, this gospel creates confidence through a faith that instils positive thinking and keeps humanity from losing hope, even in dark moments. Numerical and financial growth was also noted, though they are qualified. On the disadvantages, the chapter saw prosperity teaching generally as ushering in a spirit of extremism that has caused division among families, especially toward those that do not attend the same prosperity ministries. They are accused of being witches, bringing curses to those who go to prosperity ministries, and are regarded as the source of goblins and *tokoloshes* that bring misfortune to the believers who go to ministry churches.

From chapter five it was found that in the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe, everything is spiritualised to the extent that everything is deemed to be caused by a curse regardless of the social, economic, political and even religious factors bedevilling the country, community and family. If there is sickness, there is no time to look at the availability of health facilities and hygiene practices of the people affected. Whether they seek treatment or not, whether it is a chronic disease or not, all is attributed to a curse. The gospel is materialistic in nature at the expense of that which is spiritual. The aim is to satisfy and maximise material benefits rather than spiritual benefits, to the extent that growth of a church is measured in monetary terms without looking at how many souls are saved.

In chapter five, it was shown that this is a gospel of servility to please the powers that be, particularly the political figures of the day. There is no wonder why donations are received from so-called prophets at birthday parties of the President. Members of these sects are forced to attend national gatherings, like at national shrines where there is a burial of a national hero, to demonstrate to other churches and the world that even churches are in support of the ruling party. It has also been learnt in the chapter that preaching in the prosperity gospel churches is not for repentance from sin; rather it is all about destroying works of the devil. This is done mostly through demonstrations of power using symbolic relics like handkerchiefs, holy water from the sea, holy oil, wrist bands, anointed oranges or cucumbers etc. From chapter five, the researcher moved on to find out how the MCZ clergy are able to cope and respond to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel particularly in the MCZ.

Chapter six wrestled with answering the fourth sub research question on how selective society leaders respond to the prosperity gospel advanced by their clergy. It addressed the accompanying objective, to evaluate how selective society leaders are responding to

prosperity gospel ministry practiced by some of their clergy. In chapter six, the responses of the selected society leaders of Budiriro and Parktown societies authenticated the insights from the Presiding Bishop that prosperity gospel has caused friction among both the laity and the clergy. From the selected leaders, it was evident that there are two groups: those in favour of the prosperity gospel preached by their clergy, and those who oppose the prosperity gospel from their clergy.

Those advocating for the preaching of the prosperity gospel by their clergy see a benefit in the growth of the church in terms of statistics and a financial growth. Those who are opposed to prosperity gospel view it as destructive in that it promotes laziness among believers and they conclude it is used for self-aggrandisement by the clergy. It was also observed by the lay leaders that it destroys faith and trust in the event that promises are not fulfilled. The chapter concluded with the lay leaders' perspective on the sustainability of the church: it should develop a work ethic principle, adhere to the concept of teaching its members biblical truth, and remain functional and contextual in its structures for relevance. This also answers the research question: How are the selective society leaders responding to the prosperity gospel from their clergy?

A critical analysis of chapter six clearly demonstrates that although the leadership of the church is aware of the crisis posed by prosperity gospel, it actually does not seem to know what needs to be done to change the situation. From the responses, it seems all are just overwhelmed by this situation. However, one can deduct that the MCZ are just not prepared theologically to deal with this challenge at the local church level or ministerial formation level. It is clear that the MCZ teaching on wealth and well-being is very limited in most cases there is no training at all on this matter. People are just overwhelmed by this new form of gospel.

While chapter seven addresses the last objective that explores how contemporary MCZ clergy have been able to respond to challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel in view of Wesleyan theology of *Ordo Salutis* tinted with health and wealth themes, it also answers the research question, how are the contemporary MCZ clergy who have been formed to appropriate the Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth motifs in the order of salvation (*Ordo Salutis*), able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the prosperity gospel? This is the leading question in the whole project. From the three groups of clergy, namely, top leadership, third-year students and clergy in different circuits, the study has summarized their

responses into three thematic areas. The first thematic area regards ministerial formation models of MCZ clergy training as ways to equip them with Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as enshrined in the doctrine of salvation in order to respond to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000.

It was inferred in the discussion that Wesleyan teachings at colleges were taught through polity studies. In this study, polity is contextualized to refer to beliefs, doctrines and structures that hold the MCZ together within the denominational chain of authority and doctrinal accountability that exists. Reasons outlined by respondents for not engaging seriously in Wesleyan teachings include, among others, unavailability of a curriculum in polity studies for a long time – it was only introduced in 2016. Although the curriculum is now available, its content does not adequately and theologically address socio-economic and political issues.

There is a lack of knowledgeable teachers who are grounded in Wesleyan theology, a lack of material resources to fully teach the Wesleyan theology, and time allocated to the subject is limited. It was found that polity is only taught at UTC. As an ecumenical institution, UTC only dedicates one hour to polity studies. That is done by sending churches in their own ways and UTC as an institution is not accountable. All respondents agreed that polity studies were not adequately executed at UTC and were not even visible at ZIMTEE. Deep Wesleyan theology particularly was and is not reflected in its curriculum to date. This implies that MCZ clergy are not fully equipped to respond to the religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe using the Wesleyan model of health and wealth.

It was observed and concluded that when missionaries came to Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, they conveniently left out crucial themes of health and wealth in their teaching on the doctrine of salvation, especially in the curriculum at colleges. It seems they did not want to appear as though they were affirming and in favour of African Traditional Religion. When the prosperity gospel came, it invoked certain crucial aspects of the traditional worldview, especially on health and wealth. Since there was a deliberate omission of health and wealth aspects by missionaries, the curriculum in theological institution (UTC) did not include these aspects as well. As a result, when the gospel of prosperity emerged, it appeared as though these aspects were foreign to Methodism. Therefore, when the prosperity gospel invoked and emphasised these aspects related to the traditional African worldview and people responded positively, the church (MCZ) had no effective way of responding.

The study explored ways MCZ is equipping its clergy with Wesleyan teachings, such as post-collegiate studies, seminars and further studies through universities. Those who have an appetite for further education, which the church supports, were found to be informed in these aspects of health and wealth that were left out by missionaries; hence some are equipped to respond to challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel, as proven in chapter eight. As much as these are equipped, it was also found that this has not helped much because the teaching has remained highly theoretical without concentrating on entrepreneurship, contemporary socio-economic issues, and the political situations bedeviling Zimbabwe. Theological education is devoid of economic literacy, unlike the case with John Wesley who addressed the socio-economic and political dynamics of his day.

The second thematic area pertains to MCZ clergy's responses to the prosperity gospel, specifically in areas relating to health and wealth as taught in polity studies at theological colleges. Responses fell into three categories addressing this matter. The first are responses the researcher analysed and termed extreme responses because they contain elements that are far from reality and sometimes contradict the natural laws. This includes ideas such as 'name it and claim it in faith', and the use of anointed oil, anointed handkerchiefs, anointed pens, etc. It includes construction of altars in the mountains for offerings to the clergy, and attributing sickness and poverty to curses regardless of the conditions and circumstances that may have caused it.

The researcher, through a theological reflection analysis discovered that this group of clergy to have responded in an extreme way because of the following reasons. First, it was observed and concluded that the responses are very materialistic, consumerist and they tend to put a price tag on the gospel where clergy end up like they are preaching or doing services for a fee. They also encourage people to think that if they give more, God will then bless them more as such they could buy favours from God through having anointed relics. Second, it is a challenge to the work ethic in that it gives the impression that one can get wealth so easily. With a prayer one becomes wealthy and healthy, which kills the spirit of wanting to work, seeking medication and doing things the proper way. The response shows that it is a theology of instant gratification, which is a challenge because it removes the obligation of humanity to work for a living. People then just wait in hope that money will fall from heaven, and their trust will be in anointed items. The third reason shows that those who preach even end up

abusing the congregants, promising people that they will become rich and be healed, while at the same time expecting something in return to come directly to the clergy. There is a sense in which extreme prosperity clergy tamper with institutional aspects of the church, as seen in those who go into mountains and build altars for offerings, for their personal gain. At the end of the day, the clergy who preach and promise miracles are the ones who get more; hence it becomes a gospel of acquisition for the clergy.

Another group of clergy, it was found, offer a reactive response towards the prosperity gospel – they give different labels to those who practise the gospel of prosperity. It was noted in the study that labels such as ‘capitalist gospel’, ‘narrow view’, ‘cheap gospel’, ‘they are not churches but sects’, were given by clergy in their responses. Giving concluding analysis to the labels given by respondents show a reaction to the gospel of prosperity, where these clergy regard it as a damaging gospel that seeks to mislead people in the churches. To refer it as a ‘cheap gospel’, ‘capitalist’ or ‘narrow view’ gospel means there is another gospel that is considered to be a superior and hundred percent correct type of a gospel. The question is who defines ‘cheap, misguided and narrow view’? Whose interest does the definition satisfy? One can deduce that these are reaction labels given to the gospel because it has perhaps unsettled the status quo. The researcher believes that the gospel of Christ is divine but it has human elements whenever it is delivered to humanity through human vessels.

The third response is what the researcher analysed to be moderate responses from clergy. Here, an informed consideration has judged prosperity, looking at it from a holistic approach where pros and cons are tabled. It was concluded in this chapter that focus should be on both realised and future eschatology when approaching the prosperity gospel. The moderate views on prosperity also help to curb the idea that ministry is a means of economic survival that has promoted greed and gospel power. From an objective and factual perspective, the prosperity gospel can be viewed as a way of empowering Christians through engagement into income generating projects as a church work ethic that John Wesley promoted. Clergy with a moderate view on prosperity teaching advocate a work ethic for Zimbabwe and MCZ.

The third and final thematic area addressed in chapter eight is the response of clergy on the theology of MCZ and its future in light of the penetration of prosperity gospel in the church. Discussion in this chapter deduced that a leader’s expression of ministry reflects his or her theology. One’s theological understanding and education are inseparable from one’s practise, and it is true that theory and praxis are interconnected. This chapter, referring to the

overwhelming evidence from responses of clergy, clearly concludes polity curriculum is deficient in its ability to fully equip MCZ clergy to respond to religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel. As a result, there has been a Commodification of church members by some clergy; hence a theological call for an ecclesiological de-Commodification of the church. The church should never be a commodity of an individual but rather remain an assembly of believers.

This section of the chapter found that there are theological opportunities the prosperity gospel offers to MCZ, as in statistical growth. There is a demonstrated increase in numerical and percentage growth over the years 2014 and 2015. However, a critical analysis of the percentages has shown that not all who come to church are members of the church; some are adherents while others are just observers, hence figures may mislead. As a crowd-puller, the prosperity gospel bases its strength on promises made to believers, but as soon as these promises are not fulfilled, the believers are disappointed and later move out. Financial growth has also been attributed as a positive gain when the prosperity gospel is taught in a holistic manner. The only challenge to this is that wealth accumulation is not equal; the scale seems to be tipped more toward the clergy than to the believers.

Prosperity teaching has also brought empowerment to the vulnerable groups in the society through statements that bring hope in a hopeless situation. Some challenges discovered in the course of the analysis include division among clergy, dual membership, abuse of authority, and a number of theological contradictions caused by propagation of the prosperity gospel. A theology of fast food or instant food is advanced to suit this kind of prosperity theology. In all these challenging environments, MCZ clergy are expected to guide the flock, even while they are not spared these hardships that the nation is facing. Hence there is a call for clergy to be alert and to read the signs and trends correctly, in order to be an effective clergy to the sophisticated 21st century Christians (MCZ 2016: 42-43).

A theological reflection of the above summary of findings from fieldwork on how the clergy responded to the pressure mitigated by prosperity gospel indicates that there are three main responses by clergy. The first, are those who have decided to join the prosperity gospel approach, thus abandoning the teachings of Methodism on health and wealth for reasons of expediency and practicality. The problem with this group is that it has gone to the extreme, by ignoring the disadvantages of prosperity gospel and misusing scripture to justify it. This group believes that if you cannot beat them, then join them. The second group are those who

have rejected prosperity gospel out rightly and demonize it, without presenting the viable alternative to it, other than just reverting to the traditional approach, which is also not adequate in a modern society faced with poverty and scarcity of resources. The third group is a nuanced approach, which seeks to appreciate the value that is added, by prosperity gospel whilst being aware of its limitations. The root causes to these diverse responses is the lack of a proper teaching in health and wealth at the theological college where it has been indicated that it is not taken seriously. The church is therefore challenged to address this situation through a change of curriculum as demonstrated in the proposal above.

Be that as it may the researcher is aware that it is a fact that poverty levels have risen to extremity in Zimbabwe. The question therefore is how does the church adapt the gospel to these circumstances without buying into prosperity, which compromises the message of the gospel? Is Wesley's approach to the wealth and health adequate for modern society or there is need for more approaches. To answer these questions one has to acknowledge that in Zimbabwe the poverty level is getting worse each day. Even though the curriculum is revamped and Wesley's teachings contextualized to be transformative there is need to also develop and teach a theology of enough to the MCZ clergy both at college, pre and post collegiate as well as in seminars.

8.3.2 Theology of enough as a proposal and way forward for the MCZ

In Africa and Zimbabwe in particular for the Church to transform society, it must uphold and promote high ethical values. In particular, it must challenge greed and corruption in society (Haywood 1964:315, Dodge 1986:554-55, Marquardt 2000). The Church should seriously proclaim and teach the theology of enough. It has been from wanting more and more that humanity has caused more harm than good to humans and the environment. The theology of enough is biblically based (although, admittedly, passages that promote excessive consumption are present). By definition theology of enough means sufficiency, not less than required quantity, not what is more than needed, excessive, and profligate (Claiborne 2006:23). This is exactly what is said by the following biblical texts among many others (Exodus 16:4, 16; Proverbs 30:8).

Mahatma Gandhi states that "there is enough for everyone's needs, but there is not enough for anyone's greed" (Gandhi, 2008). In addition to rooting simplicity in love, it also seems crucial that economic practices are theologically grounded (Claiborne 2006: 123). Theology

of enough has two central claims. First, in contrast to the health and wealth gospel often espoused in mega-churches, poverty or wealth is not something ordained by God but rather created by man. Claiborne further cites the biblical responsibility Christians have to poor neighbours, for letting land lie fallow, for allowing gleaning, for the redistribution of property, and for the releasing of slaves. Claiborne (2006: 112) argues that when there is too much distance between rich and poor, Christian community becomes impossible. Typical acts of charity are not enough; they can act as “an insulator” rather than a point of connection. Jesus wants concrete acts for connection to bring people into relationship.

The second claim of a theology of enough is that to become part of God’s Kingdom, Christians must let go of worldly ties both material and familial and instead rely on God for life. True fasting, is not just depriving ourselves of privilege but also sharing sacrificially to bring an end to the cycles of inequality, an end to creation’s groaning and the groaning of hungry bellies (Claiborne 2006: 122). Privilege must be sacrificed. Simplicity is only meaningful if it is grounded in love, authentic relationships and interdependence. It is against this backdrop that the 21st Century Church in Zimbabwe must have a paradigm shift within the systematic theology, by introducing seriously the theology of enough, to both Christians and non-Christians for this mother-earth to be inhabitable. In turn, this will inspire sustainable development.

In Zimbabwe belief in religions has grown stronger than confidence in government. Religion has become the safe haven for many troubled minds, largely on the assumption that prayers and miracles will deliver people from their earthly troubles and usher them into the next life. On account of that narrative, religious institutions are thriving more than, and in some cases usurping, the power and role of the governments. While African governments have a lot to do to clear their images on why their countries have lagged behind in development, it cannot be disputed that the fraction of money that goes into the pockets of religious leaders would help address some of the problems the masses are facing today if that money had gone into government’s coffers. If only that money could be used to buy medicines, build schools, and clinics, roads and energy, the masses would be in a better place (Gomo, 2015).

To this end, and in view of the above factors, it is strategic for the ZCC to promote the theology of enough in order to create social stability with an economic efficiency that is centred on masses rather than on the oligarchy. Therefore, enoughism contends that “the

earth provides enough resources for every man, woman, and child to live comfortably. However, there are people in power who choose to hoard it all. When people have more than what they need, they must build longer tables, rather than a higher fence” (Chaplin, 2016). Ultimately, greedy people who plunder natural resources and reserve wealth for themselves and their coterie of friends for self-satiation should be prosecuted. They are not working for a just society and equitable distribution of wealth. The theology of enough is a concept to reckon with in this time of unprecedented inequality between the filthy rich and the ‘filthy poor’ masses in Zimbabwe and beyond. Churches, MCZ in particular must be promoting the theology of enough for sustainable development to be achieved.

8.4 Assessing the Quality of the Study

In order to assess the quality of this study, concepts of credibility, dependability, and transferability have been used, as recommended by researchers such as Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006), Rossman and Rallies (2012), and Hill and Clara (2012).

8.4.1 Credibility

The issue of validity has much bearing on “the degree to which the research conclusion is sound” (Van der Riet and Durrheim 2006: 90). In other words, how plausible and credible are the research findings as they try to explain and interpret the phenomenon under study? This means that they should give meaning and be acceptable to both the researcher and to the reader. “The term validity has been widely used in quantitative research while credibility has been used mainly in qualitative research,” state Van der Riet and Durrheim (: 90). For them, “a research is credible when it produces convincing and believable findings” (: 90). A research study can achieve and maintain credibility through the use of the triangulation method. Triangulation in this study is “a way of using different methodologies and strategies to ascertain or take care of discrepancies in the findings” (Rossman and Rallies 2012: 65). It helps to bridge in the gaps left by one method, as the other one complements it. Rossman and Rallis further elaborate that besides triangulation there is a provision of the use of a variety of sources of data, different methods like spending time with respondents in their environment as well as having a critical person serving as an intellectual guide to superintend the manner in which the research is conducted and... through peers helps validates credibility (2012: 65).

Be that as it may, this study utilized a qualitative approach. To enhance credibility, Rossman and Rallies' model was employed during data gathering. The researcher used triangulation by including three different groups of people as respondents in the interviews. These included six selected lay leaders, six third-year students, eight church leaders at the helm of MCZ, and thirty clergy in different circuits covering rural, semi-urban and urban areas in order to get an all-inclusive response that validates credibility. The method of data gathering was also triangulated by using interviews, observations and archival materials and books. Interviews were conducted in three communities, namely, Masvingo district, Harare West and UTC, to draw a variety of experiences from interviewees. Further triangulation has to do with gender representation where both males and females were interviewed, as indicated in chapter one.

Academic veracity and credibility were strengthened through comments from the Supervisor, Dr Sakuba, and critical analysis from Professor Hewitt who is the Co-Supervisor. They monitored and critiqued every step of this study, from setting up of the proposal until submission of the final thesis. Their rich experiences and comments shaped this study. Another way credibility of this study has been enhanced is through presentations of the research project during Systematic Theology Seminars organised by the department, and presentation of part of this study at an International Research Training Group (IRTG) summer school hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Seth Mokitimi Theological Seminary in February and March 2017. The feedback and comments given strengthened the credibility of this study.

8.4.2 Dependability

Learning from scholars like Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006: 93), "ways of assessing dependability depend entirely on the researcher's ability to describe in full the methods one uses to collect data and to analyse it." Durrheim (2006: 51) also affirms that "the researcher has to ascertain how certain conclusions and opinions were developed." This was done through analysis of the data, where observations were a result of the study and were categorised into themes. A general picture or idea of the phenomenon investigated was then built up from the participants. This is supported also by Hill and Clara (2012: 11) where they state that:

...for dependability or reliability there is a need for the researcher to constantly return to the data to check for trustworthiness of emerging understanding of the data. Re-reading the words,

listening to a recording of the interview and thinking about the context of the case, help to distinguish whether the interpretation of the data arises from the data or from one's own biases and expectation hence improve dependability.

This research study was conducted using a qualitative model that ensures dependability. Informed by the above scholars, the researcher used valid methods of collecting data, transcribed it, and in the process analysed the data by rigorously re-reading and listening to the recordings of the interview. The researcher derived the interpretations from the data collected, as demonstrated in chapter one under methodology, chapters six and seven. This has made this study dependable.

8.4.3 Transferability

According to Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006: 91-92), transferability means that the “findings from one setting can constitute a framework for other studies occurring in similar settings hence it becomes a useful tool to understand the findings in other settings”. It means transferability is the extent to which there are similarities between the research conducted at one site and other sites as judged by the researcher. To ensure transferability, the researcher has to “construct a comprehensive description of the milieu of the study” (: 93). In cementing this idea, Rossman and Rallies (2012: 64) suggest that “researchers should provide a full account of theoretical and methodological orientation, context and research process and results of lessons learnt to enable other researchers to resolve if the study findings can be used in their own similar research settings.”

Based on the arguments for transferability above, the researcher provided the context and approach of this study as detailed in chapters 1 and 2. A meticulous account and conditions of methods of data collection and analysis of the data as well as lesson learnt from the data analysis and interpretation of the findings were tabled in chapters 1, 6, 7, and a summary of conclusions in chapter 8. These interpretations and conclusions were based on a theological reflection framework of the Wesleyan teachings of health and wealth, to equip clergy to be able to respond to religio-cultural challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe. All this rigorous effort was done to satisfy the need for transferability.

8.5 Contribution to New Knowledge

The contribution of this study to new knowledge is demonstrated in the following ways. First, in the motivation to this study in chapter 1.4.1, it was stated that, to date, a few books and articles have been written on the influence of prosperity gospel on the MCZ ministry and the formation of its clergy within the local context. However, the work of these scholars confirms that attention has not been given to the ecclesial context of the MCZ in relation to the topic of this study. Chapters 1.4.1, 7 and 8.2 also demonstrate that there is limited academic literature for MCZ on the socio-economic and political aspect of its ministry, particularly to equip clergy in Zimbabwe to respond to the prosperity gospel. Within the limits of the literature review, there was no documented information about the MCZ addressing this ministry of prosperity in the church. Further, there was no literature on the response of the MCZ to the new phenomenon of the prosperity gospel; as such, this study has contributed to scholarship in filling this gap.

The second component of this study's contribution resides in the reflection on the Wesleyan motifs of health and wealth as enshrined in the doctrine of salvation, in the context of addressing prosperity gospel challenges and opportunities in the MCZ and other churches. Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 have shown gaps created by the MCZ by not equipping clergy in Wesleyan theological concepts. Hence divisions, abuse of authority and theological contradictions abound. By demonstrating that if clergy are equipped with knowledge on theological Wesleyan themes of health and wealth, they will contribute to responding to the religio-cultural, economic and political challenges and opportunities of prosperity gospel, this study has raised consciousness or awareness for future researchers in regards to this new and valuable area of focus.

The third contribution to new knowledge comes in the use by the researcher of dialoguing or interactive approaches of systematic and ministerial models. This has provided a niche to this study and helped to integrate concepts, methods and techniques to construct a relevant theology of prosperity. A theology of enough has been proposed as a theology to counter prosperity gospel. The theoretical and practical approaches guided by theological reflection framework as demonstrated in this study provides new knowledge to would be researchers not to condemn or spiritualize but to be cautious when dealing with a phenomena.

Last but not least a developmental and entrepreneurial theological curriculum has been proposed as knew knowledge to theological institutions to empower the clergy.

In light of the above knowledge contributed by the study, it must be acknowledged that the study has left a number of gaps that have not been examined and which should be taken into account by further research.

8.6 Identifying the Gaps and Suggestions for Further Research

There is no study that can comprehensively address all issues; hence there are knowledge gaps that are left for further research. In this study, the first gap concerns a comparative study of Methodist theological institutions in view of Wesleyan perspective of *Ordo Salutis*. A second gap for further research is why prosperity gospel thrives in urban areas and not in rural areas. The third gap is on how prosperity gospel is viewed in light of the indigenization process in Zimbabwe. The fourth aspect is what does an MCZ feminist approach to the prosperity gospel look like? The fifth gap concerns the responses of young people towards prosperity gospel. A sixth gap is the question as to why Zimbabwe is crumbling despite the many prosperity gospel proponents found in the country and their promises to believers. A last gap that needs attention is how to take care of those church members who have been disappointed by promises that never materialized.

8.7 Summary of Conclusion and Final Statement

Drawing from all conclusions, the design of the study was examined and the success of the study's objectives were acknowledged. The quality of this study was measured and its contributions stressed in order to categorize any new knowledge and gaps to be filled by future research. Based on conclusions from different chapters, it is concluded in this study that the majority of MCZ clergy (except those who have developed an appetite for further education are able to respond) are not well prepared at college in Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth. Hence they did not adequately respond to the religio-cultural, economic and political challenges and opportunities posed by the prosperity gospel in Zimbabwe since 2000. The Wesleyan teachings on health and wealth as enshrined in the doctrine of salvation remain an inspirational potential resource to improve the MCZ clergy's response to these challenges. The study therefore proposes for a change in curriculum to be transformative and refocuses on technology, scientific and developmental theology. Africa must now produce

theologians who are relevant to the context. Relevant enough to transform the communities they lead. They must be able, after prayer and preaching, to design strategies which address economic justice. A theology of enough is also proposed for churches to teach their clergy in order to curb the challenges posed by prosperity gospel.

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10.1 Appendix1 Ethical Clearance Letter



22 March 2017

Rev Peter Masvotore 215082050
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Rev Masvotore

Protocol reference number: HSS/0007/017D
Project title: A Theological Reflection on ministerial formation of Clergy members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) in response to Traditional Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within a religious environment influenced by Prosperity Gospel since 2000.

In response to your application dated 03 January 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **Expedited Approval APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

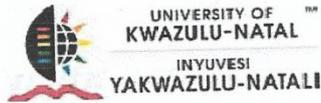
Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
/px

cc Supervisor: Dr Xolani Sakuba and Prof Roderick Hewick
cc Academic Leader Research: Prof Roderick Hewick
cc School Administrators: Mrs Catherine Murugan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

10.2 Appendix 2 Letter to the MCZ



School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Postal Address: Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0) 33 260 5560 Facsimile: +27633170046 Email: masvotorep@gmail.com Website: <http://stu.ukzn.ac.za>

13 June 2016

The General Secretary
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
Wesley House
17 Selous Avenue
Harare
Zimbabwe

Dear Sir

REFERENCE: PERMISSION TO GET ACCESS TO THE ARCHIVES AND TO INTERVIEW MINISTERS, LAY LEADERS, 3rd YEAR MCZ STUDENT MINISTERS AND TUTORS.

My name is Revd Peter Masvotore, first year PhD student at the University of Kwazulu Natal Pietermaritzburg campus. I am conducting a research on the topic: **"ATHEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON MINISTERIAL FORMATION OF CLERGY MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE (MCZ) IN RESPONSE TO TRADITIONAL WESLEYAN TEACHINGS ON THE ORDER OF SALVATION (ORDO SALUTIS) WITHIN A RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCED BY PROSPERITY GOSPEL SINCE 2000."** This study employs a theological frame work of Theological Reflections to interrogate how clergy personnel of MCZ experience ministerial formation in response to Traditional Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within a religious environment influenced by Prosperity Gospel since 2000. Therefore this letter serves to humbly request for permission to study documents in your archives such as the Standing orders, minutes of Conferences, Synods, Standing Committee, Personal files of ministers and other documents that are of help to my thesis.

Secondly, I am also seeking for your indulgence to allow me to conduct interviews to MCZ 3rd year students and their Tutors, Some ministers in Harare West and Masvingo District and lay leaders in Budiriro and Parktown Circuits in a bid to understand how ministers are formed during their ministerial formation. All the findings shall be used specifically for academic purposes. A copy of the findings shall be given to the Church when the research is completed.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration

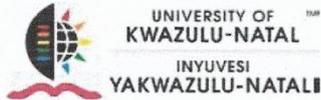
Yours Sincerely

Peter Masvotore
PhD Candidate 215082050

10.3 Appendix 3 Gatekeeper's Letter from the MCZ



10.4 Appendix 4 Letter to UTC



School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Postal Address: Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0) 33 260 5560 Facsimile: +27633170046 Email: masvotorep@gmail.com Website: <http://stu.ukzn.ac.za>

19 September 2016

The Principal
United Theological College (UTC)
P.O.Box H97
Hatfield
Harare
Zimbabwe

Dear Sir

REFERENCE: PERMISSION TO GET ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM AND COURSE OUTLINES IN YOUR ARCHIVES AND TO INTERVIEW 3rd YEAR MCZ STUDENT MINISTERS AND TUTORS.

My name is Revd Peter Masvotore, first year PhD student at the University of Kwazulu Natal Pietermaritzburg campus. I am conducting a research on the topic: "A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON MINISTERIAL FORMATION OF CLERGY MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE (MCZ) IN RESPONSE TO TRADITIONAL WESLEYAN TEACHINGS ON THE ORDER OF SALVATION (*ORDO SALUTIS*) WITHIN A RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCED BY PROSPERITY GOSPEL SINCE 2000." This study employs a theological frame work of Theological Reflections to interrogate how clergy personnel of MCZ experience ministerial formation in response to Traditional Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within a religious environment influenced by Prosperity Gospel since 2000. Therefore this letter serves to humbly request for permission to study documents in your archives such as the curriculum, course outlines and other documents that are of help to my thesis.

Secondly I am also seeking for your indulgence to allow me to conduct interviews to MCZ 3rd year students and their Tutors as well as the College Executive in a bid to understand how ministers are formed during their ministerial formation. All the findings shall be used specifically for academic purposes. A copy of the findings shall be given to the College when the research is completed.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration

Yours Sincerely

Peter Masvotore
PhD Candidate 215082050

10.5 Appendix 5 Gatekeeper's Letter from UTC

UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Cellphone: 0777808539
Telephone: 04 573629
P.O. Box H 97, Hatfield
Harare
Cell: 0773610799(After hours)
Email: principal@utczim.co.zw
Website: www.utczim.com.zw



132 Valley View Lane, Park Meadowlands
P.O Box H97, Hatfield
Harare, Zimbabwe

22 September 2016

Revd P. Masvotore
University of Kwazulu Natal
Pietermaritzburg Campus
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Private Bag X01
Scottsville 3209
South Africa

Dear Revd P. Masvotore

RE: Permission to use UTC archives and conduct interviews to 3rd year MCZ students and tutors

Thank you for your letter dated 19 September 2016 on the above subject matter.

Permission is hereby granted to use college archives in search of useful documents for your studies and to conduct interviews to the targeted group of students and their tutors. Please be advised that all earthical clearance procedures should be done before interviews are conducted.

I wish you the best as you add to knowledge on the topic: Theological Reflections on Ministerial Formation of Clergy members of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) in Response to Traditional Wesleyan Teachings on the Order of Salvation (Ordo Salutis) within an Environment Influenced by Prosperity Gospel Since 2000.

Best Regards
Rev Dr S. Mpofu
Principal

10.6 Appendix 6 Interview Question Samples

Introduction

A survey solicits information from people. For this study interviews will be used to collect data (Both personal and telephone interviews shall be used). This method is very useful as it closes various gaps left by archival sources. Personal interviews will take the form of interactive conversational narratives, where I shall ask open-ended questions and posed some follow-up questions and telephone interviews shall be employed where distance might be a limiting factor. The choice of participants shall follow a sampling plan which in this case shall be a purposive sampling. This is done by selecting the participants from ministers in circuits, Students in College and in this case shall be third year students, Lay leaders and Clergy Leadership among them is found Tutors, Bishops and Connexional staff. A simple random sample is a sample selected in such a way that every possible sample of the same size is equally likely to be chosen.

A total of fifty (50) participants are going to be interviewed, where Thirty five (35) are full time ministers (this is 20% of the total number (177) of full time MCZ⁴⁶ clergy) while nine (9) are clergy in training and six (6) are lay leaders. Among these participants, ten (10) are women whereas forty (40) are male. Furthermore, interviews are in this study used to compliment the rich findings from the archives and books. The weakness of interviews as a source of information is that memory lapses and when memory lapses people tend to fill in the gaps with lies hence it has to be treated with caution. The other danger is that human beings are mortal and once they die the library has been destroyed (Gondongwe 2012). For the purpose of this research, the results of the interviews shall be critically analysed in a bid to come up with a balanced testimony. In addition, information from the interviews will be compared with the outcome from other sources and archives so as to present a reliable and factual academic account.

Interview Questions for Clergy in Circuits.

Questions

1. What are the Wesleyan teachings about?
2. What areas did you cover at college in the Polity class?
3. What can you say about the Wesleyan teaching about Salvation?
4. What did you learn about Salvation at college?
5. How does what you were taught about order of salvation help you to make sense of prosperity gospel?
6. What is your personal view about prosperity gospel?
7. How is prosperity gospel beneficial in the growth of the church?

⁴⁶According to The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Agenda of the 39th Conference held from 24–28 August 2016 at Kadoma Hotel hosted by Harare West District page R52. The 2016 statistics indicate that the total number of full time clergy is 177. 20% Of 177 gives 35.4 and to the nearest whole number is 35. The total number of clergy in training in both colleges is 47. 20% of 47 are 9.4 and to the nearest whole number is 9.

8. What is your understanding of the word blessings in view of members of the church?
9. How does one get material blessings from God?
10. How can prosperity be measured and experienced in the church today?
11. In your own opinion how is the theology of the MCZ shaped by prosperity gospel?
12. Who are the people intended for receiving prosperity?
13. What can you say about material possessions are they biblical, support your answer.
14. Can you mention as many as you can types of prosperity people receive from God.
15. What is your view regarding the role of spiritual agents in the process of acquiring material blessings?
16. In your own view what is the future of the MCZ like in the advent of prosperity gospel?
17. From the name it and claim it in faith gospel how are the members benefiting from this message?
18. What are some of the tangible examples in form of testimonies if any of the changes brought by the advent of prosperity gospel in the MCZ?
19. What do you think about the Polity curriculum in relation to equipping students with Wesleyan traditions?
20. Can you comment on the current training of clergy in relation to meeting the socio-economic, political and spiritual needs of the members in the church today?
21. Do you have any other comments?

Interview Questions for Top Leadership of the Church including Principal and Tutors.

1. What is the contemporary model of ministry formation used for MCZ clergy?
2. What constitutes the Wesleyan traditional teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) taught to your students in training colleges?
3. What is the theology of Prosperity Gospel in your own view?
4. What challenges does it pose to the religio-cultural context of Zimbabwe particularly to the MCZ?
5. How are society leaders responding to prosperity gospel from some of their clergy?
6. What are the ways in which the contemporary MCZ clergy who has been formed to appropriate the Traditional Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) able to respond the challenges of the prosperity gospel?
 7. What do you think about the Polity curriculum in relation to equipping students with Wesleyan traditions?
 8. Can you comment on the current training of clergy in relation to meeting the socio-economic, political and spiritual needs of the members in the church today?
 9. Which areas did you find your clergy ill prepared basing your comments on:
 - Preaching
 - Teaching
 - Worship
 - Church polity
 - Pastoral Work
 - Counselling

Church administration

Meeting challenges such as prosperity gospel

10. What do you feel the theological college could/should be doing to deal with inadequacies you have identified
11. What programme does your church have to help new graduates and other clergy to meet the challenges of prosperity gospel?
12. Compared with other graduates of other theological colleges and other ministries, what do you see as the:
Strength of U.T.C and T.E.E graduates
Weaknesses of U.T.C and T.E.E graduates
13. Do you have any other comments?

Interview Questions for Lay Leaders

1. What is your personal view about prosperity gospel?
2. How is prosperity gospel beneficial in the growth of the church?
3. What is your understanding of the word blessings in view of members of the church?
4. How does one get material blessings from God?
5. How can prosperity be measured and experienced in the church today?
6. In your own opinion how is the theology of the MCZ shaped by prosperity gospel?
7. Who are the people intended for receiving prosperity?
8. What can you say about material possessions are they biblical, support your answer.
9. Can you mention as many as you can types of prosperity people receive from God.
10. What is your view regarding the role of spiritual agents in the process of acquiring material blessings?
11. In your own view what is the future of the MCZ like in the advent of prosperity gospel?
12. From the name it and claim it in faith gospel how are the members benefiting from this message?
13. What are some of the tangible examples in form of testimonies if any of the changes brought by the advent of prosperity gospel in the MCZ?
14. Can you comment on the current training of clergy in relation to meeting the socio-economic, political and spiritual needs of the members in the church today?
15. Do you have any other comments?

Interview Questions for 3rd Year Students

1. Can you name the subjects that you studied at the theological college in your first, second and third year.
2. Which subjects did you find most helpful in your ministry in the course of training?
3. Where did you exercise your ministry during your holiday placement?
4. What demands have been made on you in the ministry for which you felt inadequately prepared in your placement?
5. Which areas did you find yourself ill prepared as you go on term time and holiday placement basing your comments on:

Preaching

Teaching

Church polity

Prosperity gospel

6. What do you feel the theological college should do to deal with inadequacies you have identified?
7. How did the College prepare you for the ministry in terms of understanding your church's:
Polity
History
Doctrine
Worship
Administration
8. What subject areas did you cover in your Polity classes?
9. What can you say about the Wesleyan teaching about Salvation as you were taught in your Polity classes?
10. How does what you were taught about order of salvation help you to make sense of prosperity gospel?
11. What is your personal view about prosperity gospel?
12. How is prosperity gospel beneficial in the growth of the church?
13. What is your understanding of the word blessings in view of members of the church?
14. How does one get material blessings from God?
15. How can prosperity be measured and experienced in the church today?
16. In your own opinion how is the theology of the MCZ shaped by prosperity gospel?
17. Who are the people intended for receiving prosperity?
18. What can you say about material possessions are they biblical, support your answer.
19. Can you mention as many as you can types of prosperity people receive from God.
20. What is your view regarding the role of spiritual agents in the process of acquiring material blessings?
21. In your own view what is the future of the MCZ like in the advent of prosperity gospel?
22. From the name it and claim it in faith gospel how are the members benefiting from this message?
23. What are some of the tangible examples in form of testimonies if any of the changes brought by the advent of prosperity gospel in the MCZ?
24. What do you think about the Polity curriculum in relation to equipping students with Wesleyan traditions?
25. Can you comment on the current training of clergy in relation to meeting the socio-economic, political and spiritual needs of the members in the church today?
26. Compared with students of other theological colleges what do you see as the:
Strength of UTC
Weakness of UTC
27. Do you have any other comments?

10.7 Appendix 7 Informed Consent Letter



Social Sciences, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg Campus,

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Peter Masvotore Student (215082050) I am a Systematic Theology PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, South Africa.

I am interested in **Ministerial formation of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ) clergy in response to Wesleyan teachings on the order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within the Religious Environment Influenced by Prosperity Gospel**. This study employs a theological frame work of Theological Reflections to interrogate how clergy personnel of MCZ experience ministerial formation in response to Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within a religious environment influenced by Prosperity Gospel since 2000. This study is motivated by the concern on how clergy in the MCZ are formed in view of Wesleyan teaching on Salvation to be able to rise to the urgent challenges posed by the gospel of prosperity. The study is also focused on individual interviews in three (3) districts in the MCZ namely Masvingo, Harare East and Harare West members of the clergy as well as lay leaders from Parktown and Budiriro societies. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing how clergy personnel of MCZ experience ministerial formation in response to Traditional Wesleyan teachings on the Order of Salvation (*Ordo Salutis*) within a religious environment influenced by Prosperity Gospel since 2000.

- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

I can be contacted at: Email: masvotorep@gmail.com Cell: +27 633170046, +263 774958353

My Supervisor is Dr. Xolani Sakuba,
 Systematic Theology, School of Religion Philosophy and Classics, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus
 (Tel) + 27 33 260 5850 (Cell) +27 71 301 8360, Email: Sakuba@ukzn.ac.za

My Co-supervisor is Prof Roderick Hewitt who is located at the School of Religion Philosophy and Classics, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details - Hewitt@ukzn.ac.za Phone number: +27 33 260 6273

You may also contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel: +27 31 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

10.8 Appendix 8 Polity Course Outline for 1st Years

UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

MCZ FIRST YEAR POLITY COURSE OUTLINE 2016-2018

1. Course Description

The course is an investigation of the origins and development of Methodism in Britain. It will be a study of the birth, life and teachings of Methodism particularly in Britain.

2. Aim

The aim of this study is to equip Methodist students with Methodist teachings and how to apply them in their pastoral responsibilities.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. To introduce Students to the historical, political and social situation of Britain during the 18th Century in the beginning of Methodism
- 3.2. To examine the background and life of the family of the Wesleyan.
- 3.3. To analyze the theology and teachings of John Wesley

4. Content

4.1. The Wesleyan family

- Susannah
- Samuel
- John
- Charles

4.2. The political, economy and social factors which led to the formation of Methodism

- Industrial Revolution
- Teachings
- The state of the Anglican Church

4.3. The life of the Wesleyan Family

4.4. The important Marks of Methodism

4.5. The major Teachings of John Wesley

5. Selected Bibliography

Baker, F. (1970) John Wesley & the Church of England, London: Trinity Press

Outler, A.C. & Heitzenrater, R.P. (1987) John Wesley's Sermons, Nashville: Abingdon Press

O'den, T.C. (2008) Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition, Nashville: Abingdon Press

Davies, R. E. (1963) Methodism, Victoria: Penguin Books

Telford, J. (1931) The letters of the John Wesley, London: Epworth Press

10.9 Appendix 9 Course Outline for 2nd Years

MCZ - POLITY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

COURSE OUTLINE 2016-2017

MCZ POLITY; SECOND YEARS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ). The central goal is to familiarise the MCZ students of polity to know the documents that established the Church. It is fundamental to ministerial students to appreciate and learn about that which makes the Church an entity separated from the missionary church that was established in 1981. In 1977 the MCZ was founded then known as Methodist Church in Rhodesia prior to independence in 1980. A Deed of Foundation was signed by the then leader of the Church A. M. Ndhlela. The documents contain information on the procedures, rules and regulations of how the Church is run. The structures of the Church are outlined.

OBJECTIVES

1. To acquaint students with basic information on the founding documents
2. To try to make students appreciate the structures of the Church
3. To help them to be grounded in the Church doctrines
4. To make them know the rules and regulations of the Church

SECTION A

- A) Membership
- B) Baptism
- C) The Lord' Supper
- D) Responsibilities of members
- E) The pastoral care of members
- F) Admission to Full membership
- G) Pastoral care of Children and Young people
- H) Evidence of Membership
- I) What Churches are Associated?
- J) Ministers in Full Connexion

K) Ministers of Associated Churches

SECTION B

- A) The Conference as the governing Body
- B) The session of the Conference
- C) Of what the Conference consists
- D) Members of Conference
- E) Eligibility for membership of the Conference
- F) Procedure of Conference
- G) Functions of the Conference
- H) The Presiding Bishop, Connexional Lay President and Secretary

Reading Materials

- 1 Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders, Research and Publications, 2011
- 2 A Century of Methodism, Research and Publications
- 3 Being A Christian, Research and Publications,

10.10 Appendix 10 Polity Course Outline for 3rd Years

Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

UTC Polity Course Outline

Class- 3rd Year 2017

Visiting Tutor; Rev T Sungai (Bishop for Harare West District)

Preamble

The United Theological College is both an academic and theologically oriented institution that trains and mould Christian ministerial students from member churches for practical ministry in Zimbabwe and beyond its borders. It has a curriculum that is tailor-made to suit the demand for a model minister of religion in the 21st century Christian church.

The college allows its students once a week to undertake a 50 minute tutorial for the Polity subject. This slot is meant for students to familiarize with issues peculiar to their individual denominations.

Focus

For the Methodist In Zimbabwe students, the 3rd year Polity class shall be an opportunity to explore some of the practical areas of concern as students are shaped up for practical ministry in the circuits at the end of their 3rd year in college.

Objectives

- To deepen the student's understanding in various issues around Methodist Church in Zimbabwe itinerant ministry
- To expose students to certain practical issues that are inherent in real circuit situations
- To prepare students for practical ministry after 3 years of theoretical training

Expectations

- It is strongly urged that students be present at all tutorials. An Assignment each semester shall be set which will constitute 25% of the total mark. An examination shall be written at the end of the year which will constitute 75% of the total mark.

Course Content

- Expectations on a new minister in the Circuit
- Preparation for Rural and Urban ministry
- Superintendence and working under Care
- Serving Probation and Preparation for Ordination

- Preparation of the Preaching plan
- The use and interpretation of the Standing Orders
- Chairing meetings
- Records and Record Keeping
- Grooming and Etiquette
- Tips on real life issues

Assignment

1. (i) The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe ministers have a responsibility of planning for events and programs in the circuit .Discuss the importance of a Circuit Preaching plan.

(ii) Using the information from the current Circuit you are stationed; produce the Preaching Plan for the 3rd quarter of the year 2017.

Due date 9 May 2017

2 Using the Deed of the Church and Standing Orders of the MCZ outline the procedure of discipline of church members in a circuit.

Due date 12 September 2017

Bibliography

1 Russie, A. (Ed). The Essential Works of John Wesley: Selected Books, Sermons and Other Writings;

Uhrichsville,Ohio: Barbour Publishing Inc., 2011.

2 Deed of Church Order and Standing Orders: Harare; MCZ Research and Publication Production, 2007.

3 The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Handbook: Harare MCZ Research and Publication Production 2017.

4 Wells, S R, How to behave: A Pocket Manual of Etiquette, and Guide to Correct Personal Habits:New York; Fowler and Wells,1957

5 Hartley, C B, The gentlemen’s Book of Etiquette, and Manual for Politeness: A Complete Guide for Gentlemen’s conduct in all relationship Towards Society: Boston: Lee and Shepherd, 1973.

10.11 Appendix 11 TEE Letter

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE



The Bishop: Revd Cephas Z Mukandi
Connexional Office
Methodist House
7 Central Avenue
P.O. Box CY71, Causeway
HARARE, ZIMBABWE
Telephone: (04) 724069, 721154 & 250523
Fax: 263 4 723709
E-mail: MethodistZimbabwe@MANGO.ZW

Ref: LM/CZM

19 December 2000

Revd M Matata
1486 Nyachuru
Cherutombo
MARONDERA

Dear Revd Matata

RE: TEE PROGRAMME

Greetings. I write to let you know that the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe has temporarily dropped the TEE programme until further consideration.

As for now, you will continue to serve in your circuit until the Church works out availability of vacancies at the United Theological College.

Good wishes for Christmas and New Year.

God bless.

Yours in Christ

Cephas Z Mukandi
BISHOP

/ts

10.12 Appendix 12 Advertising Banners

IN ZIMBABWE

Hosts
Mrs Mapfumo & Prophet Mapfumo

**GUTU CIRCUIT
OPEN AIR CRUSADE**

Supporting acts to be provided by:

Speakers
Evangelist Musengi
Prophet Mapfumo
Evangelist T Muparinga

Vadzidzi Vekutanga Gospel Choir

Gutu praise and worship team

Venue: Hwiri Primary Grounds
EVERYONE IS INVITED
Date: 3-9 October 2016
Time: 5pm-8pm
Time: Doors should be opened (Acts 12 vs 10)

11.13 Appendix 13 TEE Complaint Letter

NO. 1486
NJACHURU
CHERUTOMBO
MARONDERA

File (1)

30-10-00

Distribution

1. The Superintendent - Marondera Circuit. 2. The District Chairman 3. The Secretary of Conference 4. The Bishop (M.C.Z).

REF: REQUEST TO CHANGE FROM TRAINING UNDER T.E.E.C TO U.T.I.C. OR ANY OTHER LOCAL PROGRAMMES

I hereby most humbly request for permission to change from training under the T.E.E.C to U.T.I.C. I have increasingly found it difficult to cope with the demands of T.E.E.C Programmes and ministerial work, due to several reasons which I have shared with my superintendent Revd. Tadzaishe.

1. COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

There is serious lack of effective communication between the students and the college. This year, college lecturers had programmed to come to Zimbabwe on 11-08-00 to 13-08-00 but failed. No explanation was given. The important exercise of orientation we were supposed to have appears to have been shelved indefinitely. I note with special concern that the T.E.E.C in their 2001 DIPLOMA PROGRAMME YEARBOOK pages 19-22, have programmed important

tutorial meetings for most of their centres in Southern Africa except Zimbabwe. This leaves us out of touch with the college. A lot many aspects remain unclear in us. Our local tutors, though they have the knowledge of the subjects, they are not oriented by the college on how to assist us implement the programme. Both students and tutors see to be sailing in a lot of uncertainties.

Due to lack of effective communication, the college at times fails to understand genuine problems from students in terms of failure to meet deadlines. This negatively affects students.

SOCIAL ASPECTS

I feel that going through a separate course from what the majority of students are doing, separates us from our college. Since they are the minister we will work together with in future, this separation will create a disturbing social stigma for life. I actually experienced the same problem of being looked down upon when trained as a teacher with the ZINTEC Programme. Fortunately enough, ZINTEC students were so many that we were submerged by the conventional students.

PERSONAL CONSTRAINTS

As I trained and worked as a teacher and professional administrator for a total of 12 years, I feel I need time to adjust to the needs and demands of the new ministry. I find the experience I gathered quite useful, relevant and applicable to church ministry. However, in a few areas where adjustment is necessary, the effects can be demagogic. Thus I feel, if I am placed at a college for 3 years, I would be able to have ample time to adjust to the true realities of church ministry through socialising with other students and lecturers.

Ministerial Work Constrains

So many a time, the demands for work and the TSEC programmes get on collision course. Demanding church programmes at times are on the run when assignments are due or when I am supposed to be revising for examinations. At times even after requesting for permission to be absent, due to pressing college deadlines, not all will understand and appreciate my absence and relations begin to deteriorate.

Environmental Constrains

Next year, I am supposed to be doing my studies and work in a typically rural

environment. Imagining to work on a Diploma course in an area out of touch of resource persons and libraries, it is difficult. It would mean undertaking a journey wherever I meet anything difficult.

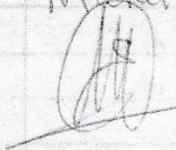
Also because T.E.C. students are scattered all over, we find ourselves working alone. Without sharing learning experiences, we end up at times putting into examinations a work practice with misconceptions.

PERSONAL RESOLUTION

Due to the five factors I have outlined in this letter, and many other pertinent issues which I did not have space to outline, I feel the best option for me would be to go to college (U.T.C.). This is a special request and I am sorry for inconvenience ~~caused~~ caused.

Yours in Christ

Matala M. (Student Minister)



10.13 Appendix 14 List of Participants

NAMES	STATUS
Rev Letween Makuvaza	Female
Rev Josephine Kwava	Female
Rev Tendai Chikwature	Male
Rev Tamuka G. Chikwaira	Male
Rev Aaron Makiwa	Male
Rev Amon Chidongwe	Male
Rev Badi Lombard	Male
Rev Beauty Makuzva	Female
Rev Daniel Muzenda	Male
Rev Douglas Mukoki	Male
Rev Givemore Chare	Male
Rev Godknows Makuvaza	Male
Rev Griffin Magwera	Male
Rev John Mugozi	Male
Rev Laneton Shariwa	Male
Rev Lindsay Rukarwa Nleya	Male
Rev Margaret Mawire	Female
Rev Matthew Ncube	Male
Rev Munetsi Manungo	Male
Rev Noel Nhariswa	Male
Rev Obert Shatai	Male
Rev Peace Simango	Male
Rev Petros Marangwanda	Male
Rev Roderick Shoko	Male
Rev Rumbidzai Zvorwadza nee Chigwende	Female
Rev Saul Tadzaushe	Male
Rev Sunungurai Munyoro	Male
Rev Tendai Mapfumo	Male
Rev Tichaona Chigaaazira Chigaba	Male
Rev Victor Chidzambwa	Male
Bishop Blessmore Chinhara	Male
Rev Dr. Jimmy Dube	Male
Presiding Bishop Rev Dr Solomon Zwana	Male
Bishop Tawanda Sungai	Male
Rev Dr Kennedy Gondongwe	Male
Rev Manenji Munikwa	Male
Rev Dr Levee Kadenge	Male
Rev Clement Matarirano	Male
Mr Bernard Pasipamire	Male
Mr Moses Tapfumaneyi Mukabeta	Male
Mr Reuben Muchada	Male
Mr Samuel Chitenderano Rwambiwa	Male
Mr Temba Matengu	Male
Mrs Lindiwe Kasirori	Female

Rev Sithembile Madiridze	Female
Rev Effias Munkuli	Male
Rev Marjorie Rumbidzai Makomo	Female
Rev Rambisai Sibanda nee Mapfumo	Female
Rev Richard Chikwese	Male
Rev Tapiwa Muleya	Male

10.15 Appendix 15 Turnitin Report

6/22/2018

Turnitin

[Document Viewer](#)

Turnitin Originality Report

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 Word Count: 96127
 Submitted: 1

MINISTERIAL FORMATION OF THE
 METHODIST CHURCH... By Peter
 Masvotore (ma, Ba Hons)

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