

**A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EMERGENCE OF NEWER
PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA
FROM 1975 TO 2008**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION AND
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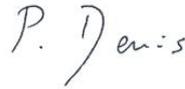
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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted to any other university. It is entirely my own work. I have given due acknowledgement of all sources.



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Date:

18 February 2015

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father Ishaya Mbaye-Adiyoel Gelnodji, my mother Marie Makeoundoh Ishaya Gelnodji and all my teachers in life.

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I wish to first thank God for granting me the opportunity to conduct this research and bring it to conclusion. The journey took many years and could not have been completed without the grace of God. I wish to state that the identity of some of the persons who provided the information recorded in this work has been disguised and it is my hope that no one will get hurt or be disadvantaged in any way as a result of my work.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AC	Apostolic Church
AFCS	Associate Fellowship of Christian Students
AG	Action Group (as related to a previously dominant party in Western Nigeria)
AG	Assemblies of God (as related to Assemblies of God Church)
AIC	African Initiated Churches
BME	Babban Majalisar Ekklesiya
CAC	Christ Apostolic Church
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CBM	Church of the Brethren Mission
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLASA	Centre for Law and Social Action
CMS	Church Missionary Society
COCIN	Church of Christ in Nigeria
CRCN	Christian Reformed Church in Nigeria
CRI	Class for Religious Instruction
CSM	Congregation of Sisters of Mercy
DLBC	Deeper Life Bible Church
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
EKAS	Ekklesiyar Kristi a Sudan
EYN	Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria
FCS	Fellowship of Christian Students
FMDM	Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood
GCC	General Church Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GO	General Overseer
GS	General Superintendent
HEKAN	Hadadiyar Ekklesiyar Kristi a Nigeria
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno-deficiency Virus Syndrome
LCCN	Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria
LCCS	Lutheran Church of Christ in the Sudan

LYF	Lutheran Youth Fellowship
MFMM	Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries
NCYG	Numan Christian Youth Group
NECAS	North East College of Arts and Science
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PFN	Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
RCCG	Redeemed Christian Church of God
RPM	Redeemed People's Mission
SAAPS	South African Association of Political Studies
SIJ	Sisters of the Infant Jesus
SUM	Sudan United Mission
SUM (D)	Sudan United Mission - Danish Branch
SUM (SA)	Sudan United Mission - South African Branch
TEE	Theological Education by Extension
TFM	Truth Foundation Ministries
UMCN	United Methodist Church of Nigeria
YMCA	Young Men Christian Association
ZME	Zumuntar Matan Ekklesiya

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ABSTRACT

Scholars and observers have described Pentecostalism as the fastest growing Christian movement in the world today. Since the beginning of the 20th century the movement has aimed to repeat the experience of the early church, with special emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, miracles, ecstatic prayers, singing, visions and prophecies. Divine healing and holiness were and are still aspects of its teachings. In the developing world, Africa has been identified as the continent with the fastest growth of the Christian church in general. Nigeria holds a leading position in this respect with a spectacular growth of the Pentecostal movement. The present research is concerned the rise of Pentecostalism in one out of the 36 states of Nigeria namely, Adamawa State. The research focused on discovering the factors that have stimulated the establishment and growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State. In conducting interviews and gathering of data, oral history methodology was employed followed by phenomenological and participatory observation approaches at worship services and conventions. Part of the research consisted of conducting in-depth structured and semi-structured interviews with leaders, ‘apostles’, ‘founders’, elders, clergy and other influential members of the churches which were used as case studies. Critical players of the mainline churches, as well as former ‘mainliners’ who have moved on to Pentecostal churches, have been interviewed, along with independent observers who are experts particularly social scientists. The research indicates that Pentecostalism gained influence in Adamawa State through the activities of members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) who were ardent readers of Pentecostal literature in their university days. During their service year, they usually get posted as teachers in schools. This gave them the opportunity to influence the students they taught. Also, new universities and schools established all over Nigeria in 1975 helped to prepare the ground for the spread of Pentecostal Christianity in the North of Nigeria where Adamawa State is situated. Thus, the first leaders of indigenous Pentecostal churches in Adamawa were products of the new universities and schools that had been influenced by ‘Pentecostalized’ teachers from the southern universities. The research also demonstrates that, in the mid-1970s, the first contacts with neo Pentecostalism took place through the Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) and its leadership. The second medium was to be found in the Associate Fellowship of Christian Students/Fellowship of Christian Students (AFCS /FCS) set up in schools, colleges and churches. The research highlights further that the various Pentecostal churches in Adamawa

are quite independent of each other but, at the same time, maintain close net-working to support each other. It was also discovered that the age groups most attracted to Pentecostalism are those of secondary school leavers and university graduates. The research further observes that liberalism in music and church architecture have contributed greatly to the status of Pentecostalism in Christianity. Pentecostal theology is centered on Christ and on Christ alone. Christ must constantly be experienced in the believer's life and the constant presence of Christ is required in all facets of life. Marriages are pre-arranged for members. This is done to check the behaviour of intending couples because there is great stress on chastity before marriage among Pentecostals. Faith healing is a draw-card for Pentecostals in Nigeria where illness is rife. Repentance, required of every sinner, must precede belief in Christ in order to activate faith. The study observed that most Pentecostals do not display the Cross which is generally seen as the most important Christian symbol, either in their churches or at their conventions. Pentecostal leaders in Adamawa State are still strongly attached to their former mainline churches. They pray for them and hope for a reformation among the mainline Christians and they also see the mainline churches as mission fields. Pentecostals have revised their stance regarding governments and politicians with whom they previously kept at bay and whom they considered as outcasts who defiled the treasure of being 'born again' for the sake of access to power. Today, business communities and Pentecostals maintain a symbiotic relationship. The close association of the Pentecostal churches with the business community also helps to sustain the flamboyant life style of the Pentecostal clergy while the drive to secure a wealthy membership has been a reason for many splits among Pentecostals and their proliferation. Among the most essential factors contributing to the proliferation of Pentecostalism in Nigeria are a lack of proper theological education and the role played by the so-called African worldview, the quest for modernization and the "Nigerian phenomenon", namely the "survival spirit" of people who are characterized by determination and an unlimited thirst for wealth accumulation.

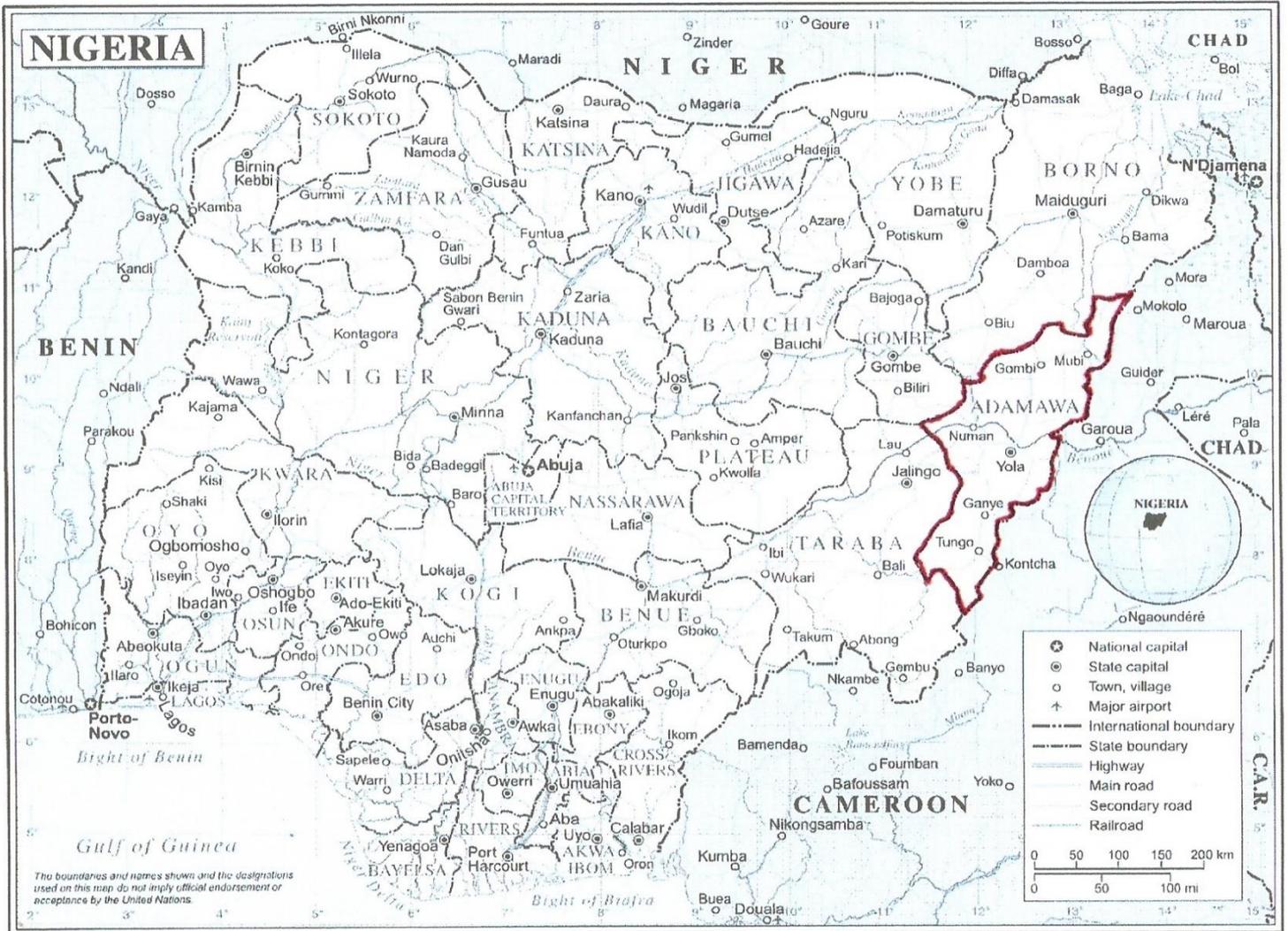
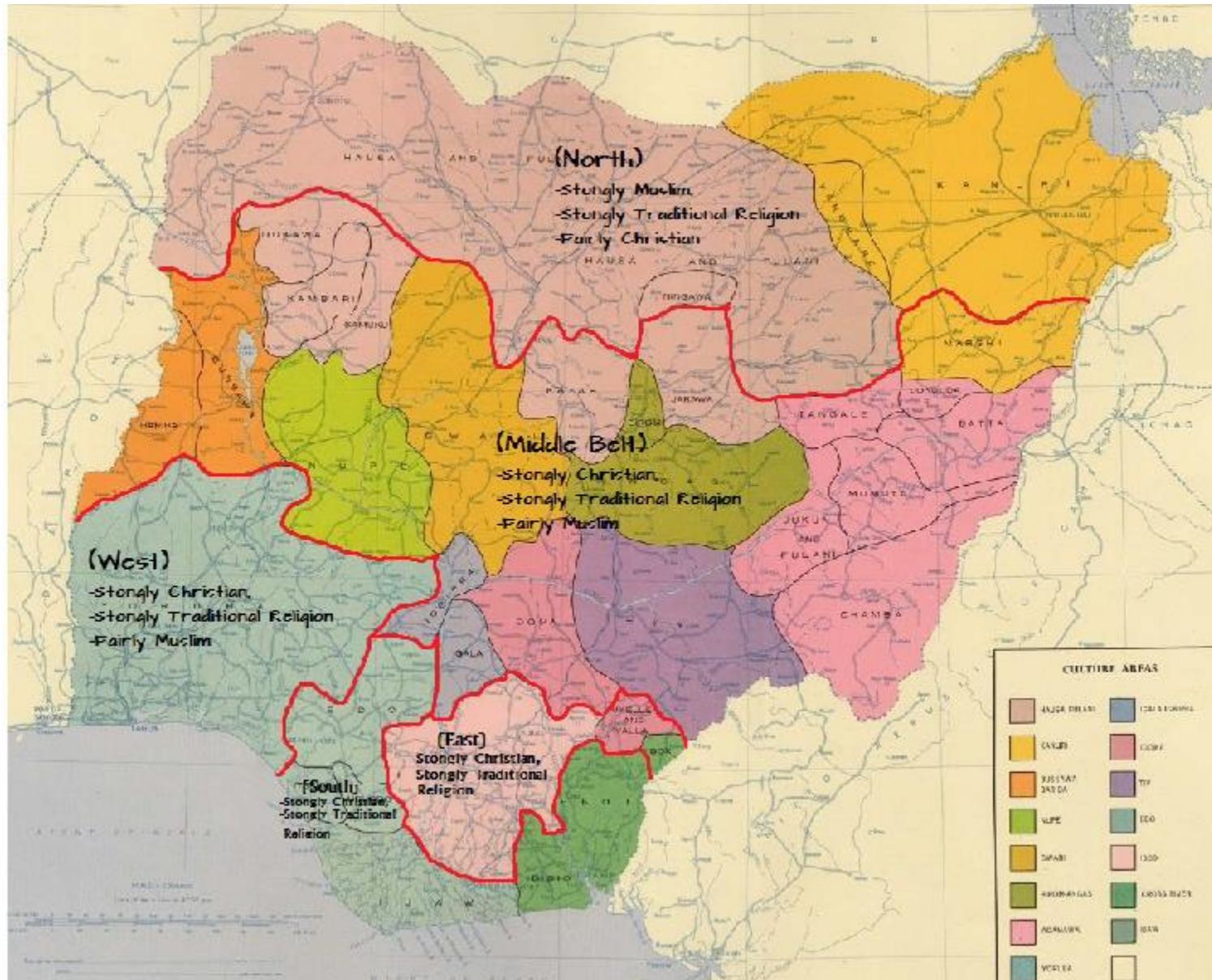


Plate I: Map of Nigeria with Adamawa State highlighted in red. the old territory of Adamawa Kingdom extend across the frontiers from Nigeria to Cameroon and Chad.



The Cultural Map of Nigeria taken from Google maps of Nigeria accessed: www.googlemaps.com 21/05/2013. The red lines are demarcations of the possible homogeneity of world views as described in chapter two of this work. These demarcations are purely the author's assumptions intended to assist in interpreting arguments in this research.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Nigeria is a highly religious country. In his article “Advertising God” in the *Journal for Religion in Africa* Asonzeh Ukah argues that:

Nigerians are certainly religious, judged by the social indices of religiosity, but there are also a number of factors that converge in privileging religion in social and national discourses in Nigeria. Significant here is the recent history of the country, which was marked by unprecedented brutalization at the hands of military juntas and the corresponding economic ‘balkanization’ of the nation. The activities of military dictators and their cheerleaders reduced the country to a ‘crippled giant’ in the eyes of other nations.¹

It could be deduced from the above assertion by Ukah (2003) that Nigeria, although secure in its religiosity, is passing through an economically and politically difficult period in its history. The apparent failure of successive governments to address the fundamental challenges confronting the Nigerian state, often ending in disappointment and disillusionment on the part of the majority of the citizenry, has led a significant number of Nigerians to increasingly take recourse to spirituality.² This rapidly intensifying religiosity finds expression inter alia in the growth of Pentecostalism. Although the foundations for Pentecostalism in Nigeria were laid as far back as the early 20th century, the phenomenal growth and development of Pentecostal churches in the country is generally associated with the country’s social, economic and political dynamics from the late 1980s up to the present day.³

The rise of Pentecostalism thus coincides with a period of severe economic crisis and political upheavals in Nigeria, accompanied by social tensions resulting from the adoption of ‘structural adjustment’ policies, massive corruption and unemployment. The system, against this background and to a significant extent occasioned by successive governments (military and civil) has failed to live up to the expectations of the majority of Nigerians with regard to service delivery. At the same time, Nigeria was world-wide acclaimed as one of Africa’s leading oil exporting countries at a time that was characterized by high crude oil prices in the international market. This in turn led to the development of pockets of massive wealth among

¹ Ukah, A. F. K. 2003. “Advertising God” in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. XXXIII. 2, p. 204.

² Uzodike, Whetho and Ishaya. 2005. “Exhausted Nationalism, (Mis) Governance and Ascendant Pentecostalism in Nigeria: A Preliminary Exploration.” Paper presented at the South African Association of Political Studies (SAAPS) colloquium held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 5th September 2005.

³ Ojo, M.A.1988. “The Contextual Significance of Charismatic Movements in Independent Nigeria.” *Africa*, 58/2: pp.175 – 192.

a large generally poor population. Concomitantly, religious networks, especially charismatic movements, began to proffer solutions to problems that the state or traditional institutions could not satisfactorily address, thereby attracting both the lower and middle classes and in the last decade high profile businessmen and politicians who joined the charismatic fold.

Pentecostal churches through their messages of material prosperity, career success, healing, good health and freedom from oppression, provided a platform for people to deal with their misery, encouraging their aspirations toward self-actualization. The majority of Nigerians (including some political leaders) were disillusioned by the trend of events in the country. Those who had the opportunity to leave sought greener pastures abroad. Frustrated youths could be seen at the embassies or high commissions of developed countries eager to leave Nigeria for good. Many Nigerians needed hope to survive the excruciating realities of their lives and the Pentecostal churches seemed to provide the necessary succor. In a bid to find solutions for their predicaments, citizens had to make choices, including religious ones on how they could best deal with their circumstances. The quality of life was declining rapidly and not everyone had access to resources needed even for subsistence living. Access to land for example is today a problem in many parts of the country. There is a very high level of unemployment as government (the main employer) has curtailed employment since 1984. Only people qualified in specialized disciplines, such as medical doctors, pharmacists and, sometimes, secondary school teachers have employment.

University graduates are frustrated because they remain unemployed over many years. However, there are people in Nigeria who have more than they need and who display their wealth to be noted by the unemployed frustrated youth. Many Nigerians have very little to eat while a handful bask in luxury, driving the latest car models from Europe and Japan, travelling abroad for holidays and sending their children to study in European and American schools. When the children and siblings of the wealthy few graduate from universities or colleges, they are given choice jobs.

At independence on October 1, 1960, Nigeria's population was about $\frac{1}{4}$ of its present 160,000,000. The population explosion within its 40 to 50 years of independence has added to the socio-political and economic tension which affects the fabric of society deeply. Nigeria has thus become substantially a materialism-driven country where people focus on finding ways to meet their needs and where behaviour has come to be characterized by opportunism.

The present research has been motivated by the perceived need to study the current situation in Nigerian society, especially within the churches and with a focus on Adamawa State, Nigeria, where many young people are leaving the mainline churches to embrace

Pentecostalism. This study has attempted to put these developments into their proper perspective. The research topic is relevant as the Pentecostal phenomenon, which emerged in Nigeria in the 1970s, has become one of the most significant expressions of Christianity in the country. Pentecostal preachers are found continuously on inter-city buses in Nigeria, preaching to and praying for travellers. They are out on the streets of the big cities, moving from office to office in state capitals and in the federal capital. They are bold and lack all humility in their claims of bearing witness to the gospel. Their presence has by some been considered problematic. Their activities bother many Nigerians. The mainline churches in particular greet the emergence of Pentecostalism with mixed feelings, especially in view of their own massive loss of membership to the Charismatic movements.

As pointed out above, “by the mid-1990s, Pentecostal churches were the fastest growing and most vigorous form of Christianity in Nigeria attracting millions of new adherents each year with their appealing ‘faith’ and ‘prosperity’ doctrines”.⁴ However, the roots of Pentecostalism in Nigeria go back to well before the 1990s. While scholars differ with regards to the origin of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, it is generally agreed that the late 1920s and the early 1930s marked a watershed in the evolution of these churches. As early as the 1930s, “*Aladura* churches (the forerunners of modern-day Pentecostal churches) in Yoruba land began to collaborate with Pentecostal churches in America and Europe with a view to establishing legitimacy”.⁵ Peel writes that, “Pentecostalism first made its appearance in Nigeria in 1930-1931 when the leaders of the *Aladura* revival [...] made contact with the Apostolic Church, a British Pentecostal body”.⁶ A subsequent visit by members of the Assemblies of God in 1939 marked the earliest attempt at making Pentecostal inroads in the Nigerian religious landscape. The Foursquare Gospel Church was introduced into Nigeria in the 1930s.⁷ The roots, planted in those early days, strengthened until, in the 1970s when Nigerian universities (mainly in Ibadan and Ife) “became the hotbeds of Pentecostalism.”⁸

Students at these universities, given access to charismatic literature from the United States and Europe, soon established evangelistic circles which would form the nucleus of certain Pentecostal churches that emerged later. By 1974, graduates from these universities

⁴ Obiora, N. 2004. “Pentecostalism and Public Life,” <http://www.boellnigeria.org/pentecostal.html> Accessed 5th September 2005.

⁵ Gaiya, M.A.B., 2002. “The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria.” Occasional Paper. Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen. July.

⁶ Peel, J.D.Y. 2000. *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p.314.

⁷ Ojo, M.A. 2004. “Pentecostalism, Public Accountability and Governance in Nigeria.” Paper Presented for Discussion at the Workshop on “Pentecostal-Civil Society Dialogue on Public Accountability and Governance,” Held at the Agip Recital Hall, Muson Centre, Lagos, Nigeria. 18 October.

⁸ Gaiya, M.A.B. 2002. “The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria.” Occasional Paper. Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, p. 6, July.

had established more than ten charismatic organizations. The number of Pentecostal churches grew steadily over the years owing to a number of factors which this research has tried to determine. By 2000, the number of Pentecostal organizations operating in Nigeria was put at over five thousand.⁹ The Pentecostals have not only influenced the social life of people but also the theologies of mainline churches, thus impacting tremendously on the religious landscape of Adamawa State.

Pentecostalism is a worldwide Protestant movement that originated in the early 20th century in the United States of America. It takes its name from the feast of Pentecost that celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. Pentecostalism emphasizes a post conversion experience of spiritual purification and empowerment, the entry into which is signaled by utterances in unknown tongues (“*glossolalia*”, speaking in tongues). Although Pentecostalism generally aligns itself with Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, it is distinguished by having its roots in the American Holiness Movement that upholds the post conversion experience as an experience of entire or absolute sanctification.¹⁰ There are four types of Pentecostal groups in Africa, namely:-

- i. Mission churches established by missionaries from Pentecostal denominations in North America and Europe. These are the Assemblies of God Church and the Apostolic Church. They are classified as ‘Classical Pentecostals’;
- ii. Charismatic movements in the mainstream non-Pentecostal denominations;
- iii. Independent schismatic offshoots of the mission churches; and
- iv. Wholly indigenous movements.

Kalu (1998) identified the following types of Pentecostal movements that are peculiar to Africa:-

- i. Inter-denominational fellowships (e.g., Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International and Women’s Aglow);
- ii. Evangelistic Ministries (e.g. Deeper Life Bible Church);
- iii. Deliverance Ministries (specializing in exorcism);
- iv. Prosperity or Faith Ministries (tending toward ‘positive thinking’);
- v. Intercessors – part of Intercessors Africa;
- vi. Bible Distribution Agencies (e.g. Gideons Bible International, accepting only born-again members); and
- vii. Classical Pentecostals (e.g., Four Square Gospel Church and Assemblies of God Church).

⁹ Ojo, M.A. 2004. “Pentecostalism, Public Accountability and Governance in Nigeria.” 18 October.

¹⁰ Bassett, P. M. <http://mb-soft.com/believe/indexa.html> Accessed 23rd October 2004

Most of these pose as Holiness Movements and point accusing fingers at Prosperity preachers who they perceive as the cause of public distaste for the movement. However, the Prosperity preachers attract the biggest audiences. But, in the midst of lively liturgy, doctrinal stance, splinter traditions and rapid growth, the dupes are abounding.¹¹

Ojo (1988) has identified three streams of Pentecostalism, stretching over more than five decades in which the constituency developed in Nigeria. The first stream consists of the classical Pentecostal churches that were products of the activities of Western missionaries in Nigeria. The second current includes indigenous Pentecostal churches owing their origin to visionary experiences and activities of certain men and women between the 1940s and the 1960s. The third type consists of the newer charismatic churches that resulted from religious activities in university circles.¹²

Some of the most popular and wide spread Pentecostal churches in Nigeria that have become household names due to their TV network programmes are:

- i. The Synagogue of all Nations founded and led by the evangelist T.B. Joshua;
- ii. The Church of God Mission founded and led at first by the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa and presently by his widow;
- iii. The Living Faith, a.k.a. Winners' Chapel, founded and led by Pastor David Oyedepo;
- iv. The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), under the leadership of General Overseer Pastor Professor E.A. Adeboye;
- v. Latter Days Assembly, founded and led by Pastor Tunde Bakare;
- vi. The Deeper Life Bible Church founded and led by Prof. William F. Kumuyi; and
- vii. Christ Embassy founded and under the leadership of Pastor Chris Oyakhilome.

These Pentecostal churches have thousands of followers and their leaders command great respect among the citizenry as well as among political leadership in Nigeria. Of all the leaders of these churches, only T.B. Joshua of the Synagogue of all Nations could be said to be uneducated as his name does not come with chains of academic titles and qualifications. Among the other founders and leaders we find professional engineers and some university professors (Pastor E.A. Adeboye of the RCCG and Pastor W. F. Kumuyi are typical examples).

¹¹ Kalu, O.U. 1998. "The Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa 1970-1995" in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, Vol.1, No.2, p. 9. December.

¹² Ojo, M.A. 1988. "The Contextual Significance of Charismatic Movements in Independent Nigeria", p. 175-192.

The notion of “Newer Pentecostals or neo-Pentecostalism” has recently appeared in Pentecostal literature. It refers approximately to those segments of the Pentecostal constituency that relax the classical “holiness doctrines” while emphasizing the “prosperity gospel” and “faith”. The churches in this category also stress deliverance and healing,¹³ thereby appealing to the majority of Nigerians who are frustrated and disappointed by the failure of the state to deliver the goods (The term Newer Pentecostals or neo-Pentecostalism in this research are used, to represent one and the same group as described above unless otherwise stated).¹⁴

These churches, known for their large congregations, include the following:

- i. Mountain of Fire and Miracles (established in 1989);
- ii. Christ Embassy (1991);
- iii. Fountain of Life Church (1992);
- iv. House on the Rock (1994) and
- v. Daystar Christian Centre (1995).¹⁵

Another church, that was established already in 1952, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), has expanded aspects of neo-Pentecostalism and incorporated them into its *modus operandi*.¹⁶ Suffice it to say that these churches are overflowing with new converts to such an extent that worshippers are often cramped during worship.

Many former members of the mainline churches as well as adherents of the African Independent Churches, Islam and traditional religions and belief systems are the new adherents of the Pentecostal churches. Given its mass membership, running into several millions, and its ability to command immense goodwill and support among its adherents, the Pentecostal movement must be regarded as a major, perhaps even the leading, social movement in Nigeria today.”¹⁷

Factors that have put Pentecostal churches in Nigeria in a favorable position for growth may include:-

- i. Social forces perceived to be responsible for inequality;
- ii. Forces that are locally understood as being supernatural as well as political and economic in character;

¹³ Adeboye, O., 2005. “A Comparative Study of Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America.” <http://www.cishsydney2005.org/images/TS01AdeboyeText.doc>, Accessed 5th September 2005, p.3.

¹⁴ Allan Anderson used the term New Pentecostals several times in his work *An Introduction to Pentecostalism, 2010*, to differentiate between the new and older churches in Africa, in terms of their teachings and practices. See examples on pp.147 and 148 below.

¹⁵ Adeboye, 2005, p.3

¹⁶ Adeboye, 2005, p.3

¹⁷ Obiora, N. 2004. “Pentecostalism and Public Life.” <http://www.boellnigeria.org/pentecostal.html> Accessed 5th September 2005.

- iii. Popular discontent over poverty and inequality as well as people's aspirations to achieve wealth and prosperity' and
- iv. Accessible presentations of holistic spirituality by the charismatic movements.

Pentecostal churches have been thriving in a milieu of political upheavals, an economic downturn, social tension and uncertainty as more people, including young university graduates, seek answers to their problems through recourse to spirituality. People are also attracted by the claim of the Pentecostal churches that they "heal" all sorts of diseases, especially against the background of the decline in Nigeria's health system. Vital social roles that should be played by the state are instead performed by the Pentecostal churches.¹⁸

The Pentecostal churches that have been established in Adamawa State since the early 1970s number well over one hundred denominations. There are a number of splinter groups who form new congregations every year. No effort is made to stall the multiplication and duplication of churches following the Pentecostal ideology and practice. Every open space and every incomplete building made available is quickly converted into a place of worship. The proximity of one place of worship to another is not considered a problem. The most prominent and oldest Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State are:

- i. Maranatha (1974) later, Truth Foundation Ministries (1990s);
- ii. Redeemed People's Mission (RPM) (1976);
- iii. Deeper Life Bible Church (1982);
- iv. Upper Room Cathedral (1988);
- v. Living Faith 'Winner's Chapel' (1988);
- vi. Life Spring Ministries (1989);
- vii. Global Church (1990);
- viii. Four Square Church (1990s);
- ix. Fountain of Life Ministries (FLM) (1990s);
- x. Praise Chapel (1990s);
- xi. Christ Embassy (1990s);
- xii. Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries (1990s); and
- xiii. Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) (2000).¹⁹

¹⁸ Uzodike, U., Whetho, A., and Ishaya, E.R. 2005. 5th September 2005.

¹⁹ Sampling of Churches in Adamawa State from field work by Ishaya E. R., December 2004 – February 2005.

These Pentecostal churches have as from 1976 made important inroads in Adamawa religious life. Their leaders are generally quite articulate and mostly speak in English which has made them very popular with younger people. In Adamawa State in particular, these churches attract members from mainline, as well as from older Pentecostal churches.

The history of these churches; their choice of areas of operation (mainly institutions of higher learning, cities, towns and industrial regions) and the influence they exert on the youth as well as on the mainline churches (liturgies, language and theologies) are the focus of the present research. As Pentecostalism has also impacted on the social scope of Adamawa State, this research will attempt to articulate contributions made and roles played by both the Pentecostal and the mainline churches in the process whereby social life and Christianity in Adamawa State have been transformed. In Adamawa State the four forms of Pentecostalism, as outlined above by Anderson, are represented while the various peculiarities of Pentecostalism in Africa as described by Kalu (1998) are found throughout Nigeria as well.

2. PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

The researcher conducted preliminary research in Nigeria between December 2004 and February 2005. The research included participatory observation, interviews and the administration of questionnaires for members of both mainline and Pentecostal churches. One hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaires were handed out and one hundred and three questionnaires were completed and returned. A total of 85% of respondents was of the opinion that people were leaving the mainline churches and joining the Pentecostal movements because the mainline churches are:-

- i. lifeless,
- ii. Rigid and
- iii. indifferent to the spiritual needs.

Of the respondents 15% did not comment, perhaps because they did not understand this particular question or for other reasons which they did not state.

Pentecostal participants stated that the mainline churches lack (i) spiritual training, (ii) knowledge of the Bible, (iii) evidence of spiritual growth, (iv) evidence of Spirit-filled sermons, (v) evidence of the Holy Spirit at work, (vi) quest for knowledge of God, and (vii) are not vibrant in worship.²⁰ A careful analysis of the preliminary research revealed that most Pentecostals interviewed, and most of those who returned their questionnaires, were in agreement that, after they joined new Pentecostal churches and gave their lives to Christ, they

²⁰ Research Survey, Nigeria by Ishaya E. R., January 2005.

had become more successful in life and their businesses did better. They stated that they have been blessed spiritually, economically and socially. Their financial positions have improved; they were fulfilled and freed from the bondage of sin as their lives were ordered by the Word of God. One person said, “I am as a shining star, as a holy child of God, very successful, and are in control of affairs.” Another states; “I feel satisfied and contented with whatever I have, I am very successful.”²¹

What stood out clearly in the results of the preliminary research was that the Pentecostals have a good grasp of the Nigerian socio-economic circumstances. They have understood the workings of the Nigerian psyche when it comes to a tussle for power or the desire to hang on to power. They squarely address the ambition to make money and to achieve success in business. The Nigerian “survival spirit” in the face of socio-economic hardship is definitely a factor in the rapid and extensive transformation of Christianity in the country. Whoever addresses the socio-economic situation in whatever form is assured of a captive and ready audience.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to review and to analyze the development of the Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State between 1975 and 2008 and examine their successes and challenges. Preliminary research did show that after the year 2000 there was decline in the ability of Pentecostal churches to gain new members and to retain their more mature members. It was also observed that, before the 1990s, Pentecostalism had faced an up-hill battle to become accepted in Adamawa State. They worked assiduously for more than thirty years without much achievement. But the period beginning in the mid-1990s, marked a water-shed. Given that this period was characterized by a considerable growth of Pentecostal churches while the mainline churches kept losing members, the present research has attempted to pinpoint what it was that made the Pentecostal churches particularly attractive during the last decade of the 20th century. We have tried to find answers to such questions as precisely what it was that made new converts flock to Pentecostalism and whether any particular generational, social, ethnic or religious categories of people were involved.

²¹ Research Survey, Nigeria by Ishaya E. R., January 2005.

4. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The question of the Pentecostal churches' success needs to be understood in its historical context. One needs to determine which specific historical circumstances and events from the 1970s to the present day triggered the growth of Pentecostal churches. Between 1948 and 1963 Classical Pentecostalism had been introduced in Adamawa State and made little or no impact. Between 1964 and 1974 African indigenous churches and new Pentecostal churches, led by non-indigenous evangelists, were established to Adamawa State where they met with strong resistance from the mainline churches. From 1975 to 1985 the indigenous Christians of Adamawa State began to form their own Pentecostal churches. From 1995 to 2000 both indigenous and non-indigenous Pentecostal churches have flourished in Adamawa State. However, in the first decade of the 21st century they lost some of their excessive attraction but they remain strong. It is necessary to unpack the social and historical factors that contributed to the success recorded by the Pentecostals over the last three decades.

Several sub-questions were envisaged. These are:

- i. What perception of the Pentecostal teaching do ordinary church members have?
- ii. How do people understand the Pentecostal churches' message on "success" and "prosperity"? How does this message fit in with their life experience?
- iii. Is it possible to identify any socio-economic circumstances, specific to Adamawa State during the period under review, which may explain the success of the Pentecostal churches (e.g. the curtailing of employment by government since 1984)?
- iv. Are there any funding strategies, local or international, which may explain the Pentecostals' success?
- v. Are there any aspects of Pentecostal religiosity, which may be especially appealing to African people and help to explain the Pentecostal churches' success in Adamawa State?

5. HYPOTHESIS

My hypothesis for this research is that large number of Christians have joined Pentecostal churches since 1970s because they believe that there their needs are met and because the Pentecostal churches promise rapid self-accomplishment, through the acquisition of spiritual powers.

6. METHODOLOGY

By means of archival research and through field work over a period of three years information has been gathered on the history of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nijeriya (EYN), otherwise known as the "Church of the Brethren in Nigeria", the Catholic Church in Nigeria, and the following selected Pentecostal churches and ministries: the Redeemed People's Mission, Deeper Life Bible Church, Living Faith, Grace Cathedral, the Upper Room Cathedral and Life Spring Ministries in Adamawa State, Nigeria. I chose to study the LCCN, EYN and the Catholic churches because they are the dominant churches in Adamawa State, and because their members are made up mainly of people indigenous to Adamawa State. The Pentecostal churches were also selected on grounds of their spread, the duration of their establishment and the degree to which they have been embraced in Adamawa. Some of these churches were founded and are led by indigenous people. Islam, which gave Adamawa State its name, will be discussed as the other religion with a large following in Adamawa, alongside Christianity and traditional religion.

Archival materials such as the minutes and reports of the General Church Councils, Diocesan and District Council meetings of the LCCN, the EYN, and the Catholic and Pentecostal churches were consulted as were the various records of the churches mentioned above, in order to capture their histories and developments and also to identify and unravel the actual themes considered important by each church. Of the material collected by churches for their own purposes, the researcher selected relevant data and used these in the construction of his thesis. Unfortunately, in both mainline and Pentecostal churches, there is not as much documentation available as one would have wished for. The thesis is thus based on statistical and other material from local church sources, published and unpublished articles by scholars, Christian encyclopedia(s), especially the works of Barrett, and other library resources, as well as on original enquiries made by the researcher during fieldwork, and information gleaned from private conversations with members of churches.

Over 150 questionnaires were distributed of which 103 questionnaires were filled in and returned by individuals, churches and their national offices. Extensive interviews were conducted in over 30 locations by the researcher and his assistants between 2005 and 2011. Interviews took place in every local government area in Adamawa State as well as in three states neighboring Adamawa. Relevant published and unpublished documents and dissertations were consulted. In addition, in-depth and focused interviews were held with bishops, other church leaders, theologians, lecturers and students of theology and social science. Areas covered during the unstructured interviews and via questionnaires include:

The background of people being interviewed;
Their former church affiliations, if any;
Their pre-conversion lives;
Their experiences in the Pentecostal churches, if any and how long they have been members of their congregations;
Successes, failures and challenges they have experienced in the Pentecostal or mainline churches;
Why they are leaving or not leaving their churches; and
Whether they think there are distinctive gifts of the spirit or gospel that are given to one particular Christian group, and not to another, on grounds of theology and disposition.

The interviewer posed questions such as the following to church leaders:

- i. Who is the founder of your church and when was the church established?
- ii. When did you become a leader or elder in your church?
- iii. When did you conceive the idea of starting your church?
- iv. What particular needs does your church intend to achieve?
- v. How much of the initial goals of your church are you still pursuing?
- vi. What changes do your ministry intend to effect in the community and how will you go about it?
- vii. Can you give evidence of positive changes or benefits in the lives of members of your church?
- viii. How do you plan for continuity and succession in the hierarchy and programmes of your church?
- ix. How and where do you get funding for the programmes of your church?
- x. Why did you establish this church?

The oral history methodology was employed in the gathering of data through in-depth structured and semi-structured interviews with the leaders, 'Apostles', 'Founders', elders, clergy and influential members of churches. The interviews were used as case studies. Critical players, as mentioned above, and members of mainline churches as well as those who have moved to Pentecostal churches were selected and interviewed, along with independent observers who are experts in their own fields as economists and social scientists. Some of these were not Christians but were consulted for their ability to scientifically analyze certain phenomena.

Most interviewees had stories to tell about the establishment of their churches or movements but there were obstacles to be overcome. One obstacle was the fact that the researcher is a mainline Christian and clergyman. He was viewed with suspicion by Pentecostals some of whom hesitated to grant him an interview. Where he was able to convince them, very few gave straight responses or told un-exaggerated stories. In some cases, when people had bitter experiences to relate, the researcher was represented by proxies with whom they felt more at ease.

On the other hand there were those who volunteered to tell their stories. It was observed that these interviewees generally felt they had been misunderstood or treated unfairly by the mainline churches they used to belong to. They considered the interview as an opportunity to clear their names from what they saw as misconceptions of the mainline churches. The researcher was also faced with the problem of verifying stories. Most stories had to be cross-checked to ascertain what came closest to the truth. The lack of sound documentation and maintenance of archival materials made it necessary to rely on oral information which was hampered by the fact that many of the initial key players are no longer alive. These key players most of them leaders of mainline congregations and Pentecostal movements during the period under review left behind very scanty records. It is, as Ojo lamented in his paper “Pentecostal Christianity and the Missionary Movement in Nigeria.”

Existing literatures on missions in Africa have largely focused on Western missionaries and mission agencies working in Africa. Contrastively, articles and books on indigenous African missions are limited in scope and content. Although these African initiatives have been noted by the early 1980s, the phenomenon has largely not been researched until the late 1990s. ...However, there exists a wide lacuna in scholarly literature on the history of indigenous protestant missions in Africa, and it is this gap that the present study seeks to fill.²²

The gap described by Ojo remains a major problem for scholars in Nigeria. Very little work has been done on church history, especially on the history of protestant churches, in Nigeria in general and in Adamawa State in particular. The history of Pentecostalism has suffered the same fate. Hence, few ready materials were available to the researcher whose only option was therefore to gather information through interviews and questionnaires. The history of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State exists mainly in oral form and the same is true for much of the history of mainline Christianity. Interviews are the most viable tool for researching the history of Pentecostalism in Adamawa. Despite the fact that all the

²² Ojo, Matthew A., 2011. “Pentecostal Christianity and the Missionary Movement in Nigeria”, A Paper Presented at the Theological Education in Africa (TEA) conference, held at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, Jos Plateau State, Nigeria, August 8:2012, pp. 3-4.

Pentecostal leaders in Adamawa are literate and many of them are university graduates, documentation remains a challenge for them as it is for the mainline churches.

However, Pentecostalism and the oral history research method relate well at this given moment in time, because stories and happenings can today be stored through electronic means for access by future generations. The Pentecostals, by making use of their electronic media outfits, are, unconsciously, constructing such a future 'archive'. The book by Philippe Denis, *Oral History in a Wounded Country*, was a major resource for the present research because it gives clear examples of how to collect oral history. The researcher also drew on participatory observation at Pentecostal worship services and conventions for the construction of a comprehensive body of information about what is going on in Pentecostalism.

7. Summary

This research is set to unpack the notion that Pentecostal churches are run as businesses and that Pentecostals develop among their members a positive approach to life and a determination to strive for self-accomplishment. Although this view of Pentecostalism is strongly held by the mainline churches in Nigeria, not many theology scholars have examined the Pentecostal movements from this angle. The research furthermore aims to articulate the history of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, in particular in Adamawa State, and to determine the reasons behind specific Pentecostal approaches to spreading the Christian message. The study attempts to measure, or to ascertain, the benefits which new and old devotees of Pentecostalism derive from their church membership. Another important aspect that needs to be addressed is the identification of the socio-economic context in which charismatic Christian theology is operating and in what sense this context encourages the rise of Pentecostalism. The research will thus make a case study of Adamawa State. Various scholarly works will be reviewed some of which offer promising results, especially the works of Kalu, Ukah, Meyer, and Jenkins which have a direct bearing on the situation in Adamawa State.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, WORLD VIEWS, TERMS AND TITLES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the various literatures that were studied for the purpose of the research. The different world views of the various cultural groups found within Nigeria were studied with a particular reference to peculiar world views of Adamawa people. The terms and titles most used by Pentecostals and what those mean to them are also discussed in the chapter.

Materials for the chapter are from published resources, internet, interviews and the empirical knowledge of the researcher.

2.1 Literature Review

The researcher consulted general works on Pentecostalism that address the development of the movement in a universal context, while a few works are available that trace its African and Nigerian background and beginnings. The books, discussed below, provide us with some historical facts on Pentecostalism in its universal, African and Nigerian contexts, relating mainly to recent years.

Joseph Thompson, *Out of Africa* (2004). This book is edited by Joseph Thompson. It discusses the Pentecostal phenomenon as a revival of the church in Nigeria. In his introduction, he presents the church in Nigeria as gaining a foothold in America, citing the RCCG which has established over 150 churches in the USA as an example. He maintains that many of these churches have more than 500 members as compared to 90% of American churches with 200 or fewer members.

Thompson believes that the tables are turned in two ways. Firstly, he says, there is a shift of focus. Whereas Africa used to be a “mission field” needing American missionaries, America is now becoming a mission field in need of African missionaries. In this shift, he sees the hand of God. The hand of God was at work in South Korea during its period of explosive Pentecostalist growth and began to shift to Nigeria during the 1990s. He considers Nigeria as a centre of gravity as far as the dramatic, visible manifestation of the presence of the kingdom of God is concerned.

Thompson perceives a second turn of events in the beneficial “change”, resulting from the growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria. An indication, he says, is the spiritual upsurge

and economic growth of the country which should be considered a divine visitation in response to the fervent prayers of a spiritually, physically and emotionally tortured nation.²³

The change observed by Thompson saw many Nigerian churches building hospitals, schools and banks that provide affordable, good healthcare, decent academic training and loans to help Christian entrepreneurs who otherwise would be unable to establish businesses. These, in turn, provide employment. In that way Christians can effectively steward God's move which they are privileged to be part of. Future generations will reap the benefits of their legacy.

Thompson believes that Pentecostal leaders are great church planters. He maintains that they have established between 150 and 200 churches each worldwide.

Ayo Oritsejafor, the current national president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), writes in the same book about "A Church that Builds the Nation" and he states that the African mind-set is given prominence in his ministry. The article dwells expressly on things that bother the African mind, namely beliefs in spirits. Oritsejafor opines that several problems and ailments are caused by spirits, for example seduction, jealousy, barrenness, AIDS, and witchcraft. In addition, there are "blood thirsty spirits" that suck or feed on human blood. This belief informs the Pentecostal fervor for prayers that demand the covering of the road, their cars, homes and bodies, with the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus is powerful, protective and, in case of accidents, it apparently makes the blood of the occupants of vehicles and homes repugnant to "blood thirsty spirits".

Oritsejafor agrees with Thompson that people purchasing new cars see these as a sign of God's blessings. Therefore, the members of his church are encouraged to become politically active in order to accelerate economic transformation. He insists that believers who fear God should be granted the opportunity to govern, as opposed to the run-of-the-mill politician whose trademark is embezzlement of public funds.

Oritsejafor, in his contribution to the book, stresses the concepts of salvation, deliverance, revival, healing and miracles. His submission on 'Ruling Spirits' is most revealing. He states that in the African worldview the spiritual world rules the physical. The spiritual world is divided into three realms containing:

- i. Marine spirits;
- ii. Witchcraft spirits; and
- iii. Bloodthirsty spirits.

²³Thompson, J., (ed.). 2004. *Out of Africa*, California: Regal Books, p.34

These spirits go under different names in the various communities and tribes, but they operate in the same way. They seek to draw people into covenants with multiple gods. The spirits invariably govern the lives and life styles of people, causing drunkenness, immorality, anger, divorce and so on. All social evil is blamed on the ruling spirits. The Pentecostals promise deliverance from such spirits. In other words, Africa has certain problems that Pentecostalism is well equipped to solve.

Joe Olaiya, another contributor to Thompson's *Out of Africa*, argues that the approach of traditional missionaries worked to a certain degree, partly because the gospel they brought came as part of a larger package of Western civilization, including education and medicine. However, the impact of this limited version of the gospel on African lives was shallower than the missionaries intended. An older generation may indeed have become "Christianized" and "Civilized", but the gospel could provide no viable alternative to the supernatural powers and benefits that the gods of the ancestors offered. So while Africans adopted Christianity and the benefits that came with it, at the same time they carefully preserved their links with the pagan gods, either openly or in secret. So that, in times of need, they would not be without help. Such 'spiritual harlotry,' as the Old Testament prophets would term it, was the practice of many who admired Christianity for its beauty and its blessings, but who looked in case of urgent need for supernatural assistance to their indigenous gods.²⁴

The advent of power evangelism as the main vehicle for soul winning and salvation in Africa came with the historic transition from the traditional gospel message to the Pentecostal gospel message. The Pentecostal message reached Nigeria in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, via the south-western city of Lagos. The said Tabernacle from America made an entrance and gained some converts, while in the eastern part of the country the Assemblies of God made headway. Out of loyalty to Britain, the Pentecostal converts of the southwest invited the United Kingdom-based Apostolic Church of Christ to come to Nigeria. By doing this they helped to establish the permanent power base for effective evangelism. Nigerians, having received the Holy Spirit, believe now that they have the necessary power to turn completely from idolatry, to protect themselves from the wrath of demon gods, and even to rescue others from the bondage of the spirits of darkness that have for so long held them in terror and torment.²⁵

David Martin *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*, (2002). In this work Martin opined that, Pentecostalism was the fastest growing movement in Christianity in the 20th century. David Martin conservatively estimates its adherents at ¼ billion people. Martin

²⁴ Thompson, (ed.). 2004, p.101

²⁵ Thompson, (ed.). 2004, pp.101-102.

observed that Pentecostalism is basically a “southern Christianity,” meaning that the highest growth in Pentecostalism is occurring in Africa, Asia and South America.

Martin provides us with a survey of world Pentecostalism taking into account the historical and sociological insights. Pentecostalism according to Martin is a vehicle for modernization in the form of voluntary pluralism and is a religion for people “on the move.” Also, Pentecostalism offers a place in which to find relativity, reliable spouse and in particular, peaceable husbands who will treat wives with consideration and not use them as baby machines. For example, marital disputes are adjudicated by pastors and assistants. Wedding ceremonies are reasonably modest and the choice of a partner is up to the individual. This choice more easily crosses ethnic lines than elsewhere.

Women on the whole find chances for mobility and achievement both in the Public and private sphere. And, even among the poorest born again people, women are increasingly encouraged to take pride in their own achievements. Furthermore, women find an affirmative atmosphere in such churches, helping single parenthood

Pentecostalism according to Martin has variations from continent to continent or region to region. For example in North America, Africa and Asia it is associated with modernization while in Europe Pentecostalism emerges exceptionally in an anti-modern form. Thus, it may not be a major force in Europe because it adapts to existing established churches and sometimes create them. In the Southern hemisphere however, Pentecostalism is a creative and ambiguous appropriation of the Christian tradition.

The book addressed the historical, sociological and theological aspects of Pentecostalism. Historically he argues that Pentecostalism is a replication of 18th century Methodism and is a fusion of ‘poor black’ and ‘poor white’ Christianity which has borrowed from American Methodism. Socially, Pentecostalism is a religion for developing nations, often emerging concurrently with the opening of local markets to global capitalism while on the theological position of Pentecostals; Martin stated that Pentecostals have moved a step further away from traditional Christian practice of baptism and stressing the new birth experience and encouraging individual spiritual growth.

The book is helpful for students of History of Christianity.

Philip Jenkins *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (2002). In this book Jenkins writes: “over the past century [...] the centre of gravity in the Christian world has shifted inexorably southward to Africa, Asia and Latin America.” Already today, the target Christian communities on the planet are to be found in Africa and Latin America. If we want to visualize a “typical” contemporary Christian, we should think of a woman living

in a village in Nigeria or in a Brazilian *favela*. As the Kenyan scholar John Mbiti in conformity with Jenkins (2002) has observed, “The centres of the church’s universality [are] no longer in Geneva, Rome, Athens, Paris, London, and New York, but in Kinshasa, Buenos Aires, Addis Ababa and Manila.” Whatever Europeans or North-Americans may believe, Christianity is doing very well indeed in the global south, not just surviving but expanding.²⁶

This trend will continue apace in coming years. Even if Christians just maintain their present share of the population in countries like Nigeria and Kenya, Mexico and Ethiopia, Brazil and the Philippines, soon there is going to be several hundred million more Christians in these nations alone.²⁷

Jenkins observes that the church is projected to grow. By 2025 there would be 2.6 billion Christians in the world. Latin America and Africa will be competing for the title of the most Christian continent while Europe would have slipped into third place.²⁸

It is expected that by 2025, half the number of Christians in the world will be found in Africa and Latin America. “By 2050, only about one-fifth of the world’s 3 billion Christians will be non-Hispanic Whites. Soon, the phrase ‘a White Christian’ may sound like a curious oxymoron, as mildly surprising as “a Swedish Buddhist”. Such people exist, but a slight eccentricity is implied. Jenkins believes that the “era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning.”²⁹

He notes that the membership of Pentecostal and independent churches already runs into the hundreds of millions, and congregations are located in precisely the regions of fastest population growth. Within a few decades, such denominations will represent a far larger segment of global Christianity, and even form the majority. Jenkins posits that, “since there were only a handful of Pentecostals in 1900, and several hundred million today, is it not reasonable to identify this as perhaps the most successful social movement of the past century?”

By 2050 the number of Pentecostals will surpass the one billion mark. There will be as many Pentecostals as Hindus and twice as many as there are Buddhists but there will still be more Catholics than Pentecostals.³⁰ Jenkins can even imagine Southern Christians taking the initiative to re-evangelize the North in a process that would change many familiar aspects

²⁶ Philip Jenkins. 2002. *The Next Christendom, The Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.2.

²⁷ Jenkins, 2002, p.2

²⁸ Jenkins, 2002, p.3

²⁹ Jenkins, 2002, p.3

³⁰ Jenkins, 2002, p.8

of beliefs and religious practice and that would see the export of cultural traits presently found only in Africa or Latin America.³¹

Jenkins traces the origins of the African Initiated Churches (AIC) in the Congo and Liberia and notes that in most African churches a dream has served as the conduit for a transforming spiritual message, with profound political implications. Examples he gives are:

i. *Dona Beatrice Kimpa Vita*

Vita was a prophetess from Congo whose message stemmed from a dream in which she was told that Jesus was born a Black Congolese, as were the apostles and popular saints like Saint Francis of Assisi. Her main message was that African Christians needed to find their own way to God, even if that meant using traditional practices condemned by the white priests. She identified with St. Anthony, “the restorer of the kingdom of Kongo... the second God, whose spirit possessed her”. Dona Beatrice Kimpa Vita was burned as a heretic and witch in 1706. Her successors tried to translate Christianity into terms intelligible to the “two-thirds world.”³²

ii. *William Wade Harris*

Wade was a Liberian prophet who claimed to have been instructed by the angel Gabriel in a vision with strong, physical manifestations. He received “a triune anointing by God and was tapped three times on the head and the spirit descended upon his head, feeling and sounding like a jet of water.” This made of him a prophet, a watchman of the apocalyptic dawn and he was Elijah. The angel ordered him to give up his valued European clothing, thus rejecting the power of white colonialists and of the Americanized black elite that monopolized power in his home land. In 1913 he dressed in a white robe and turban and began his successful preaching journeys across West Africa. He carried a bamboo cross, a Bible, and a guard rattles symbolizing the African nature of his mission. His message reflected largely an orthodox Christianity, teaching obedience to the Ten-Commandments and demanding strict observance of the Sabbath.

Wade did not, like his audience, believe in ancient cult figures and fetishes. He combated these beliefs by burning the objects. Unlike the white missionaries, he knew the powers of witchcraft. He called upon his followers to spurn occult practices but he did not condemn polygamy.³³

³¹ Jenkins, 2002, p.14

³² Jenkins, 2002, p.48

³³ Jenkins, 2002, pp.48-49

iii. *Simon Kimbangu*

Simon Kimbangu was called to be a prophet healer in the wake of the 1918 world influenza epidemic. He began his preaching and healing ministry in 1921.³⁴

Wade and Kimbangu were not isolated figures and their stress on the spiritual gave the new churches strength. The same ‘influenza epidemic,’ dreaded all over Africa, led to the foundation of faith healing churches known as “Aladura” (the “Owners of Prayer”) in Yoruba land in Nigeria; The Cherubim and Seraphim, Christ Apostolic Church and the Aladura Movements were offshoots of the Aladura Movement in the 1920s.³⁵

Jenkins points out that there is a stark religious imbalance between North and South. The Northern world - Europe and North America - has 35% of Catholics and 68% of priests the world over. Latin America on the other hand has 42% Catholic Christians and only 20% of priests worldwide. This imbalance, Jenkins reckons, could lead to dreadful consequences for parish life. He finds it scarcely surprising that the Vatican is alarmed by the inroads, made by evangelical movements among the ill-shepherded Catholic faithful, and that the Catholic Church looks upon protestant conversions in terms of vulnerable believers being preyed on by sectarian wolves.³⁶ The alarm is sounded also among mainline Protestants who consider the absorption of their members into Pentecostalism as ‘in-boat fishing’. The fact remains that, “Since Martin Luther, the church continued to experience problems of break-ups and internal disagreements.”³⁷

Philip Jenkins in his other work, *The New Faces of Christianity, Believing the Bible in the Global South* (2006), deals with a range of conservative themes in the religious thought of African and Asian Christians. These are:

- i. respect for scripture in matters of morality;
- ii. Willingness to accept the Bible as an inspired text and a tendency to literalism;
- iii. Special interest in supernatural elementary scripture, e.g. miracles, visions and healings; and
- iv. Beliefs in the continuing power of prophecy, and a veneration of the O.T. that is considered as authoritative as the N.T.³⁸

³⁴ Jenkins, 2002, pp.49-50

³⁵ Jenkins, 2002, p.50.

³⁶ Jenkins, 2002, p.213.

³⁷ Denis, Philippe. in a History of Christianity Seminar Discussion, Nov. 2006.

³⁸ Jenkins, Philip. 2006., *The New Faces of Christianity, Believing the Bible in the Global South*. Oxford University Press, p.4.

Jenkins points out that, in the African and Asian contexts, several factors contribute to a more literal interpretation of scripture. For one thing, the Bible has found a congenial home among communities who identify with its social and economic realities that are reflected in their own political environments. For the growing churches of the global South, the Bible speaks to everyday, real-world issues of poverty and debt, famine, brutality and persecution. The omnipresence of poverty promotes awareness of the transience of life, the dependence of individuals and nations on God and a distrust of the secular order.³⁹ These considerations are affirmed by the assertions, the belief and the interpretation of scripture by the Pentecostals as can be observed in Nigeria. This underscores Jenkins' submission that Christian communities in global-South nations share certain approaches to the Bible and to biblical authority, and it is sufficient indication of real differences with the outlook common in Europe and North America.

Ogbu U. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (1998). Here, Kalu presents us with some historical, cultural, instrumentalist and religious explanations for the Pentecostal phenomenon. His work demonstrates a high standard of scholarship and is purely academic. He sees the new study of African religion and Church history as a religious tool for the recovery of the lost voice, identity, and power of the African. He sees the rapid growth of African Pentecostalism as an important dimension of Africans' allure to pneumatic ingredients of the gospel that resonate with the power theme in indigenous religions: the power that sustains the cosmos and the socio-economic and political structures, and gives meaning to life's journey from birth to death, to reincarnation and a return to the human world. The thrust of the work is on the premise that Africans have lost their own story and have absorbed another people's story.⁴⁰ Pentecostalism is seen as African and is Africa's contribution to Christianity. Kalu observes that, "...the astonishing growth in Africa must be understood within the larger perspective that all religious forms are growing."⁴¹

Kalu goes on to trace the history of the very first Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and their contacts with the western world. The Apostolic Church and Faith Tabernacle in Nigeria received their first missionary in 1932.⁴² The Faith Tabernacle and Apostolic church easily and almost naturally became fully Pentecostalist by the late 1930s because, firstly, they linked the indigenous movements to external Pentecostal sources and, secondly, the way they developed brought them into close alignment with the contemporary Pentecostal movement in West Africa.

³⁹ Jenkins, 2006, p.5.

⁴⁰ Kalu, O.U. 2006. *African Pentecostalism, an Introduction.*, Oxford University Press, p.4

⁴¹ Kalu, 2006, p.5.

⁴² Kalu, 2006, p.42.

In south-eastern Nigeria five young men, belonging to the True Faith Tabernacle, spoke in tongues. This led to their expulsion and, in 1934, to their founding of the Church of Jesus Christ. Thereafter they invited the Assemblies of God who responded quickly by sending a Rev. W. L. Shirer and his wife to take over their Church in 1939.

Kalu traces the development of Pentecostal churches in Africa from 1901 to 1960. He attributes the growth of Nigerian Pentecostalism to African-American contributions, or to American involvement with the movement in Nigeria.

In an article titled, “The Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa, 1970 – 1995” (1998), Kalu presents a narrative discourse on the history of the Pentecostal movement in Africa, preserving its chronological order and leading, through a profile of the socio-economic backdrop, to an anatomy of the reconstruction paradigm in Pentecostal theology and practice in Africa.⁴³ The work gives attention to Nigeria and brings perspective into the history of Nigerian Pentecostalism.

In yet another very important work by Kalu, “Pentecostalism and Mission in Africa” (2007), a great chunk is dedicated to Nigeria. He did a case study on the history of Pentecostalism, highlighting its missionary activity in Nigeria. Kalu gives us the term used to identify Pentecostals in Nigeria, as well as the source of the term. He says,

The revival that swept through Nigeria in the 1970s created a phenomenon that is known as the “born again” movement. In the Nigerian context, this terminology covers both Pentecostal and charismatic movements. It has acquired various hues and become complex but its origin was a wave of charismatic movements among the youth of various denominations which occurred in different parts of the country and eddied into churches, challenging the parent groups who allegedly suffered from “power failure.”⁴⁴

Kalu identifies the goals of the movement as both re-evangelizations of the mainline churches and the winning of new souls for the kingdom. Evangelism and passion for the kingdom remained central to whatever the Pentecostals did. He presents a run-down of the historical development of the movement which spanned 61 years from 1914 to 1975. During those years revivals occurred in Nigeria which led to the founding of the born-again movement in the country. He argues that the movement before the 1970s was unique, and that the phenomenon did not benefit from the proverbial “resources of externality.” After political independence and during the long process of decolonising the African churches, it had little to do with the nationalist ideology that suffused the politics of independence. The youth simply derailed the decolonisation process of the churches by reshaping the religious

⁴³ Kalu, O.U. 1998. “The Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa, 1970 – 1995”, p.4.

⁴⁴ Kalu, O. U., 2007. “Pentecostalism and Mission in Africa, 1970-2000” in *Mission Studies* 24, 2007, p.11.

landscape along charismatic lines, and away from the indigenisation strategies of the mission churches. The phenomenon had six components namely:

- i. Hour of Deliverance,
- ii. Benson Idahosa Ministry,
- iii. Radicalisation of Scripture Union 1967-1975,
- iv. Hour of Our Freedom Ministry,
- v. Christian Union, and
- vi. NYSC “Corpers as Preachers”.

Kalu mentions an important aspect that most scholars on Pentecostalism have failed to note, namely the civil war factor. The Nigerian-Biafran civil war is important because it changed the religious landscape of Nigeria. Social suffering and a scarcity of money led to a cultural renaissance, enlarging the space for the ancient cultures of communities, especially for traditional social control models and for native doctors. Occult groups flourished because dire times needed quick solutions. The *Aladura*, who had not been very successful in certain parts of the country because of the strength of the mission churches, now proliferated as prayer houses were established in the hinterland at the heels of fleeing refugees.

British support for the Nigerian government disillusioned and angered many who thought that “Christian” England would readily recognize that eastern Nigerians constituted the bulwark of Christianity in the country. Patriotic propaganda harped on this perfidy, suggesting that western-type Christianity might not provide a reliable path. Many turned to the syncretistic prayer houses for support in dealing with their spiritual and physical needs in war time. So, ironically, the middle ground of Christianity gave way as the culture shifted to, either the prayer houses or to the young radicalised Scripture Union boys and girls.⁴⁵ Kalu gave a run-down of seven reasons why the charismatic fervour took roots and spread in Nigeria. Five of the reasons have direct bearing on Adamawa state. They are:

- i. Idahosa’s prosperity motifs which sounded like music in the ears of those who had just come out of the war and because of his huge Miracle Centre, his television ministry, his All Nations for Christ Bible School, and his effective musical group called “Redemption Voices.”
- ii. By the mid-1970s, efforts of the charismatic movement were concentrated on the students of the Universities of Ibadan and Ife where members of the Christian Union started to speak in tongues and organized national conventions to arouse other universities,

⁴⁵ Kalu, 2007, p.13.

- iii. These young people graduated at the time when the Federal Government of Nigeria made the National Youth Service Corps compulsory for university graduates. As they dispersed throughout the nation, they formed charismatic groups.
- iv. In northern Nigeria, in the Muslim strongholds of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Kaduna Polytechnic, branches were established. In 1973, when evangelical fervour had reached a high point, a central body, Christian Youth Corpers, was constituted to create a measure of organisational order.
- v. The southern youths who had not gone through university, but got their charismatic inspiration in secondary schools, surged through Muslim northern Nigeria, founding ministries, just at the time when many Nigerians were returning from the south to the north after the civil war.

Kalu discusses the impact of the charismatics on both the religious and the social landscape. He notes the response from the mainline churches in their various degrees of opposition to the charismatic interests of their young members. The Roman Catholic Church, the Anglicans and the Presbyterians had their various degrees of hostility towards the charismatics Kalu observed. He also highlighted how the youth subverted the doctrine, liturgy, and patriarchal ideology of the mission churches, and how females embraced charismatic fellowship as a safe African home-grown spirituality which was beyond mere adaptation and notable for its vigour.

He discusses inter alia the initial achievements of the Pentecostals and their funding strategies. The vogue was, in line with the ideal of the Ethiopian movement of the 1890s, that Africans must evangelize Africa. Kalu observed that contemporary African Christianity was actually grappling in a creative manner with the “trauma” of their growth. The Pentecostals daily face the challenge of being compared to a lake that is wide but shallow and their patterns of ministerial formation were initially, and still are, confused. If they have solved some old problems, they have created many new ones. Kalu concludes that wariness in respect to the Pentecostal leadership is called for. He adds a critique of Pentecostals in general.

Kalu argues in “A Discursive of African Pentecostalism” (2009), that there is an identifiable African Pentecostalism which enables Africans to respond to the gospel from the position of their indigenous worldview and embracing charismatic spiritualism. In other words, Pentecostalism was not exported to Africa from Azusa Street.

The character of African Pentecostalism is, according to Kalu, diverse and amoebic, creating a movement that is complex and full of ironies. He contrasted Pentecostal theology against mainline theology and concluded that many Pentecostal groups emphasize healing, deliverance, and various strands of prosperity gospel.

Kalu observes that Africans in different regions tend to call specific Pentecostal movements by different names because of historical experiences. For instance, in Ghana, independent new Pentecostal churches refer to themselves as charismatic churches, befuddling the use of this label in academic literature for those who are still within the mainline churches. This is because the Ghanaian neo-Pentecostal churches arose from charismatic movements. In Nigeria however, “Pentecostals” are “born-again” Christians, whether outside or inside the mainline churches. In Uganda, Congo Brazzaville and the Democratic Republic of Congo, various names are given to the movements, depending on local historical experience. Kalu makes an important point as regards networking by the various movements. Many scholars consider the charismatic movement as monolithic, but it is, on the contrary, broadly and diversely based, and sometimes eclectic. Insiders network among themselves, in response to a ministerial emphasis on apostolate, on deliverance, evangelism, Bible distribution, healing, teaching, children evangelism, prosperity, intercession, and fellowships. Those sharing the same apostolate tend to cooperate or network closely.

In his Multi-sites Discourse, Kalu discusses that several, often unconnected “flares of revivals” occurred within a limited period all over the globe. Such revival flares were experienced in Wosan (1903); Wales (1904); Mukti, India (1905); Azusa (1906); Pyongyang/Seoul (1907) and Calcutta, India (1910). These events indicate, Kalu maintains, that Azusa Street was just another such occurrence. Kalu submits a seven strand typology of Charismatic Movements in Africa:

- i. A diviner or religious leader from the traditional religion who suddenly accepts the power of Christianity and urges the community to yield to it;
- ii. A strand of prophets, who would emerge from the ranks of a Christian praying band, sometimes the tendency was to pose like an Old Testament prophet sporting a luxurious beard, a staff, and a flowing gown. The prophet would call for a holiness ethic and manifest the gift of healing like William Wade Harris, whose ministry started in 1910;

- iii. A wave of African Indigenous Churches arose all over Africa at different times before the First World War and especially during the influenza epidemic of 1918. Some were messianic and others revivalistic.
- iv. Sometimes a puritan and charismatic expression of Christianity would occur within the boundaries of mainline denominations.
- vi. External input. A range of external agents featured white Holiness and Classical Pentecostal groups that did mission in various parts of Africa. People received Holy Spirit baptism before inviting outsiders.
- vi. African charismatic agency, Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) agents in Southern Africa, The role of migrant workers must not be ignored.
- vii. The period since 1970. The face of Pentecostalism in Africa was catalysed by charismatic movements led by young people from mainline churches from the late 1960s in some parts of the continent, but more especially in the 1970s.⁴⁶

The essay addressed what Kalu called the ‘cultural discourse approach’ and argues that as the gospel spreads into various regions of the world and encounters different peoples, mental and material cultures are shared. People appropriate the message, along with new ideas and material cultures, through the prism of their worldview and cultures and in the process, new forms of religious expressions emerge in the multi-layered encounters.

He explained further that the historian will do best to use the concept of “Three Publics” in explaining contemporary African appropriation of charismatic spirituality, because the modern public space in Africa consists of interpretation of the rural and village public, the urban and emergent public, and the Western public. Kalu maintained that cultural flows percolate among the three, and Pentecostals engage the popular cultures in all three spaces.

Kalu argues that Pentecostalism challenges the mainline from inside, less from any deep theological revision by affirming the Bible’s reality as a guide for daily living. This could be described as a “setting to work” of the message of missionaries, but at the same time a recovering of those pneumatic elements which had been discarded by liberal theology in its dance with the Enlightenment worldview. He noted that ordinary Pentecostals in Africa may be less concerned with modernity and globalization and more about a renewed relationship with God, intimacy with the transcendental, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, and protection by the power in the blood of Jesus as the person struggles to eke out a viable life in a hostile

⁴⁶ Kalu, 2009, pp. 76-79.

environment. It could be that many African Pentecostals enjoy a certain “moral innocence of the global economy.” This is true when it comes to Adamawa Pentecostalism.

Kalu illustrated the impact of Pentecostalism from certain aspects of the domestic domain, how it provides an inner power to survive the anxieties, unease, destabilization, and crises of modern Africa, replacing the loss of efficacy of other religious options; it aids the satisfaction of new needs and developing an existential theology that engenders upward mobility in life activities because prosperity is predicated on the quality of inner life.

In line with the stance above the Pentecostal must also avoid being “unequally yoked with unbelievers” by seeking love and courtship only within the boundaries of the born again. Thus marriage would establish a new family for Christ. It has been argued that this strengthens the institution of the family amidst rapid social changes, but it can become an encapsulation strategy that offers security and opportunities to young girls and keep young males focused and out of trouble.

Kalu made an important observation in this essay. He says that Pentecostals do not actually break away from their roots rather they reconfigure cleansing their roots and bringing it under the moral economy of the gospel to enhance the potential for moving into the future. It is alleged that the failure of many men of God stems from neglecting their roots.

In the case of political alliances Kalu posits that Pentecostals use intercession as a form of political praxis, but the data differ from region to region and from country to country. Their political theology moves from rebuilding the bruised self-perception of the individual to second, empowering the individual with new hope and confidence to third, assisting him or her in garnering the rich promises of the gospel, and fourth, enabling him or her to reclaim, redeem, and liberate the land.

For Kalu Pentecostal movements in Africa emerged historically from the revivals that indicate indigenous appropriation and a “setting to work” of the translated gospel and missionary message. Its shape changed in every decade from the 1970s to the present. He ascribed the complexity of the movement and explanation of its massive growth and transformative impact to religious ones, rather than by promoting modernity and globalism or any other single analytical discourses.

Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (1998). Gifford discusses the growth of Pentecostalism as a result of the socio-economic and socio-political situation faced by the Church in Africa. The exclusive application of Gifford’s ideas to the African situation, or to the circumstances in Nigeria and particularly Adamawa State, is problematic because there is also a religious dimension to the phenomenon in Nigeria. This religious dimension

has been well articulated by Lamin Sanneh in his work *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*. Gifford's work does not cover Nigeria as such, but it is in many ways relevant to the socio-economic and socio-political situation in Nigeria. His observations point out some factors that led to the rise of Pentecostalism in Africa "...since the 1970s the modernising project has visibly run out of steam, and often been positively repudiated by the people who were supposed to be its beneficiaries. At the same time the Pentecostal churches have taken root. When a Pentecostal Christianity is preached that stresses the reality of demons or witchcraft it has quite naturally evoked a powerful response from people with an 'enchanted' world view. Pentecostal Christianity is answering needs left entirely un-addressed by mainline Christianity. For this reason, countless thousands are leaving the mainline to join new Pentecostal churches".⁴⁷

Not only have the Pentecostals taken root, but Pentecostalism presents its converts with a new chance for attaining modernity. It encourages Christians to struggle to free themselves from the past and to hope for eternal life while they live a comfortable life here on earth. It should be noted here, that many Christians who move over to Pentecostalism do not do so for theological reasons but rather for the sake of modernity and for the visible developmental projects being carried out by Pentecostal churches. It is such developments, including schools, colleges, universities and hospitals, as well as the business-like spirit of Pentecostals that led to the rise of Pentecostalism in Nigeria.

Birgit Meyer, "Make a Complete Break with the Past: Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse" (1998). Meyer writes that, "the necessity to break away from local traditions ... [and the] 'notion of rupture' ...form a key to a better understanding of Ghanaian Pentecostalism."⁴⁸ Meyer maintains that Pentecostalism seeks a break with the past, thereby enabling the converts to become free from old traditions, to be transformed into free individuals, accepting the material and existential dreams of modernity. Pentecostalism in Ghana thus preaches individualism and liberation from the family, both the living relatives and the ancestors. "Indeed, in practice the 'complete break with the past' boils down to a break with one's family, and progress translates well into individualist patterns of production, distribution and consumption."⁴⁹ This applies very well to the situation in Nigeria, where the traditional worldview is rejected and preached against by Pentecostal preachers. Family ties may be challenged and are sometimes denounced when decisions have to be made. All this, was done in the name of being free to do as one wants, because one has

⁴⁷ Gifford, P. 1998. *African Christianity: its Public Role*. London: Hurst & Company, p.329.

⁴⁸ Meyer, B. 1998. "Make a Complete Break With the Past." *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XXVIII, 3 p.317. .

⁴⁹ Meyer, 1998, p.329.

found a new family in Christ. This demands a new loyalty and it encourages personal accomplishment.

Meyer raises issues that are relevant to the characteristic form of Pentecostalism found in Adamawa State. The researcher agrees with her findings.

In her other work, “Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Pentecostalist Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana” (1998), Meyer demonstrated how it was believed that the consumption of Western goods could destroy Christians of the Ewe region in Ghana. This work addressed existential needs of the Ewe people and the offer by a Pentecostal preacher to remedy or neutralize such dangers, namely through prayer. Church members were called upon to say a brief, silent prayer over every purchased commodity before entering their homes. They ought to ask God to ‘sanctify’ the thing bought, thereby neutralizing any diabolic spirit present in it. Only in this way could they prevent destructive powers in the objects from harming their owners.⁵⁰

This situation is especially prevalent among members of classical Pentecostal churches such as the Church of Pentecost and the Assemblies of God, as well as among members of prayer groups within mission churches and new Pentecostalist churches such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church ‘of Ghana’. What is most interesting is that mission societies also played a crucial role in the promotion of this belief. An example is the NMG, a German Pietism mission society which was active among the Ewe from 1847 onwards, for whom the spread of the Gospel and world trade clearly belonged together. To both the missionary and the Ewe converts, the possession of Western goods was a self-evident feature of Christian life and their lack was regarded as the sign of ‘savagery’. Yet, it seems that their ideas about consumption differed considerably.⁵¹

The missionaries’ association of pleasures such as entertainment, beautiful clothes, and good food and drinks, with the ‘broad path’ that would end in a hell fire, whereas abstinence from pleasures and indulgence in charity formed the ‘narrow path’, leading to salvation in the heavenly Jerusalem is also common in Nigeria and Adamawa state.⁵² As in Ewe Ghana, Nigerian pietistic groups and Classical Pentecostals hold the same views.

The denunciation of ‘fetishistic’ objects, the worshipping of rivers, stones and other objects, were not allowed and a strict boundary was drawn between people and things. A

⁵⁰ Meyer, B.1998. “Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana,” in *Development and Change* Vol.29, Institute of Social Change, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, pp.752.

⁵¹ Meyer, 1998, pp. 754-755.

⁵² Meyer, 1998, p.755.

good Christian was to subject objects to his or her will and strives after immaterial, higher values.⁵³

In contrast to the mission churches, the so called Spiritual churches promised their members not only salvation but also material well-being in this world and hence became increasingly appealing to members of the mission churches in Ghana after Independence in 1958 as well as in Nigeria from the 1960s.

Socially speaking, Meyer writes, the Pentecostalist churches are most attractive to those people who are powerless in the male-oriented and gerontocratic power structure that still prevails in Ewe society and that strives to advance economically, mainly through business and trade. Meyer observes that the immediate reason why someone joins a Pentecostalist church is the experience of affliction and healing, although such occurrences cannot account for continued church membership. The churches were filled by people who found there a perspective that enabled them to look at and address the changing world with both its negative and positive effects of modernity.⁵⁴

Meyer contributes greatly to our understanding of differences between the mission, the spiritualist and the Pentecostalist churches, especially as regards attitudes to materialism. She states that the Ghanaian Pentecostalist churches present themselves in marked contrast to the established mission churches which are criticized for failing to help their members to retain health and wealth, and to the spiritual churches which are accused of making clandestine use of traditional spirits, in other words Satan's demons. The Pentecostalist churches claim to rely solely on the Word, which is thought to be able to both invoke and represent the Holy Spirit, and they vehemently oppose reliance on objects such as amulets, candles and incense in healing practices.⁵⁵

Meyer's thesis is that goods have a 'dark side' and that side has been neglected in the literature on African Pentecostalism. She notes that many women in the Pentecostalist churches, who engage in trading, share a widespread fear of "strange things" going on in market places that cannot see the light of day. If one happens to actually see those things, one may be faced with very severe consequences 'in the physical'. This belief is linked to the idea that, next to the visible market, there is an invisible witch market going on where meat is sold. This meat is taken "spiritually" from human beings who are eventually "eaten up" by the witches this imply that they will fall sick and die. One has to take great care not to fall victim to these witches who are, above all, motivated by their envy of successful traders and

⁵³ I Meyer, 1998, p.757.

⁵⁴ Meyer, 1998, p.759.

⁵⁵ Meyer, 1998, pp.760,761.

who seek to prevent businesswomen from ever prospering. Pentecostals regard the Holy Spirit as the sole entity, able to protect the women and to provide, at least some of them, with the much-desired “spirit of discernment”, that is the ability to peep into an otherwise invisible realm.⁵⁶

Her paper focuses on the rumours pertaining to dangers that may lurk in commodities for sale in the market. Today, there is an increasing number of narratives of which the commodities themselves are the subject and not only trade, but consumption itself is presented as posing supernatural dangers...⁵⁷ For example, Pentecostal preachers may state in plain language that the possession of fashionable jewellery signifies not only a distraction from God, but may imply a state of actual possession by satanic powers.

In other words, nothing productive could be done with these commodities, eventually they become worn and their owners will end up poor. Hence, the advice is to abstain from the purchase of certain fashionable things and to purify other commodities, ranging from food to electronic articles, through prayer, that is, by predicating God’s spirit upon the objects. Pentecostal preachers are concerned that people have only a limited or partial knowledge of the whole process of production, marketing and consumption of a commodity. In their view there is a problem, not so much in the lack of understanding the process, but rather in the inability to fully control it.

The game plan is simple. By stressing that commodities may be dangerous because of their uncontrollable past, Pentecostalism suggests that the appropriation of Western goods through consumption is problematic and may draw consumers into the danger zone of inverted possession; rather than possessing the commodity the owner risks being possessed by the commodity.

Meyer observes that this modern fetishism is ironically similar to the indigenous religious objects burned by missionaries in the past, but has shifted from the shrine to the market. There is clearly an expression of tension between the striving for proprietorship and the notion that a person is to a large extent ‘operated’ through spiritual powers. The main project of Western missionary societies and their local converts was the criticism of local gods as fetishes and of local religion for not allowing people to have an identity. Today, the presentation of commodities as fetishes is a critique of capitalist consumption. Hence, the very means by which the local converts were to achieve Christian identity (and thus proprietorship of the self) are suspected of making them lose that identity.

⁵⁶ Meyer, 1998, pp. 763,764.

⁵⁷ Meyer, 1998, p.765.

Pentecostalism actively fetishizes commodities by referring to their unknown and hidden origin. Here, an awareness of the commodity's origin does not drive away the fetish, but rather makes it. By exposing the hitherto hidden past life of the commodity, Pentecostalist preachers claim to inform people about its true nature. From this point of view, commodities as found in the marketplace are truly fetishes while most people are unaware of this and regard them as harmless goods.

For Pentecostalists commodities have become fetishes because the Devil appropriated them before they appeared in the market or shop. Through the supposedly innocent act of buying, the consumer becomes linked to Satan, entering into a relationship with the diabolic, losing his will and identity. His spirit and body are reduced to signs which refer to, and even 'glorify', the power of the Devil. Consumption thus threatens to turn people into powerless signs, metonyms of the satanic. In order to prevent this, one has to be aware of the danger posed by commodities and prevent them from conquering one's spirit.

The true fetish, then, is the lust for pleasure and luxury which subverts a person's individual will and locks him or her into the circularity of the market as the source and target of desire. Pentecostalists warn young people especially, that their own (sexual) desire may eventually turn against them and make them forget and forego what really matters in life: instead of preparing themselves for marriage and childbirth, they live in a dream world in which they are subordinated to spirits and bereft of a personality of their own.

The Pentecostalist discourse on consumption does not stop at exposing the dangers of commodities. It also, significantly, claims to have the power to provide a safe alley towards consumption. By turning church members into vessels of the Holy Spirit, capable of fighting Satan and his demons through prayers, Pentecostalism empowers believers to transform commodities into mere objects. It provides them with a ritual, able (quoting Comaroff and Comaroff, 1991)" to plumb the magicalities of modernity." Therefore, by invoking God's power over every commodity bought, the Pentecostalists perform "exit rites" for the commodity, through which it is purified from its polluting past in the global market. In short, it is de-fetishized.

Meyer concludes that the Pentecostalist dialogue on consumption clearly addresses not only the dangers of consumption, but also offers an effective space, a dreamland located at the bottom of the ocean, to dream about its forbidden pleasures which defy any rational, practical stance. It takes seriously people's wildest dreams in which they lose themselves in their desires and it offers them the possibility to claim ownership over things.

Pentecostalism helps people, albeit temporarily, to surface from this dream; not because it regards *Mami Water* imagery as just fancy, but exactly because it confirms the spiritual reality of this imagery and it maintains that *Mami Water* spirits may affect, not only those who have embarked on a spiritual marriage with these beings, but anybody. By pointing out that the Devil may not only appropriate the abodes of local deities but also commodities as fetishes, the taken-for-granted association of Western goods with Christian civilization is opened up (and this, of course, reflects the actual state of things).

The message is that people need Pentecostalism in order to disenchant commodities and neither the state nor the former mission churches are able to achieve this. Only through Pentecostalism can people be connected with the 'world' without running the risk of being overrun.

Meyer contends that this version of Christianity is so successful in Ghana because it takes as its point of departure the desire to have access to the world and existing fears about the nature of the global market and one's connection with it. Acknowledging that the market is an abode of invisible satanic forces, Pentecostal adherents can claim help from their religion in order to profit from, rather than fall victim to globalization.

Matthews A. Ojo, *The Church in the African State: The Charismatic and Pentecostal Experience in Nigeria* (1998). Ojo's work describes a desire for self-actualization and for indigenization of leadership in the mission churches were, as Ojo observes, major reasons for the secessions that took place in the Baptist, Anglican and Methodist Churches in Lagos. As a result of those secessions eight new churches were established between 1889 and 1941. The seceded churches added a Pentecostal flavour to their traditional or mission church liturgies and came up with what they termed an African or indigenous liturgy. This appealed to the Nigerian psyche and they rapidly made converts among members of the mainline churches.

Matthews A. Ojo, *The Dynamics of Indigenous Charismatic Missionary Enterprises in West Africa* (2000). Ojo's work dwelt on the origins, development, evangelism and teachings of the Pentecostals in Nigeria. It is a serious study that helps students of history of Christianity to understand the development of both the Classical- and Neo-Pentecostal movements and churches in Nigeria. The work does not deal directly with sociological issues. Rather, they are historical studies, giving in-depth information on the beginning of, and reasons for, the emergence of Pentecostalism in Nigeria.

Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact* (1990). Sanneh describes the impact of Christianity as involving “a plurality of approaches”.⁵⁸ In other words, Christianity can be expressed in multiple ways namely missionary Christianity in African indigenous Christianity and Pentecostalism is one expression. The work covers Christianity in the West-African sub-region. It contains one chapter on Pentecostalism, under the title ‘The Rise of African Independent Churches’. Much of the work of both Sanneh and Ojo addresses in detail the development of Pentecostalism in the coastal areas of Nigeria and West Africa. This limitation may have been informed by the fact that the coastal areas (especially in South-West Nigeria) were the first to come into contact with modern day Christianity while the north, especially of Nigeria which had been considered un-Christianized.

Asonzeh F. K. Ukah, “Advertising God Nigerian Christian Video-Films and the Power of Consumer Culture” (2009). Ukah states that indigenously produced video-films in Nigeria constitute a cultural and social revolution and that, in the past three years, on the average a thousand feature films have been produced each year. According to Ukah mass production of video films is encouraged by vitality of the market, including lively competition. Ukah uses the concepts ‘religious marketplace’ and ‘religious economy’ which should be understood as part of a theory that emphasizes the plurality of religious practices and options in an unregulated environment, forcing religious organisations to operate according to the logic of a market determined by competition, rivalry, profit and self-interest.⁵⁹

Pentecostalism as described in Ukah’s paper is a broad, fluid and protean category under which many seemingly incompatible denominations coexist. The core of this group, however, is generally (but not exclusively) characterized by the doctrinal emphasis on the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, made manifest in such activities as speaking in tongues, divine healing, prophecy, post-conversion experience and revelation knowledge, frequent prayer vigils and fasting, evangelical zeal and the use of modern mass media in ritual and religious activities. Other typical features are a charismatic leadership structure and a laity-driven administration as well as what is variously called prosperity teaching or theology of abundance.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Sanneh, L. 1992. *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, p. xv.

⁵⁹ Ukah, A. F. K., 2009. “Advertising God: Nigerian Christian Video-Films and the Power of Consumer Culture,” in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol 32. Fasc 2, “Religion and the Media,” Brill, Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581655>, <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp> pp.203,207. Accessed 9th March 2013.

⁶⁰ Ukah, 2009, p.209.

Commenting on the confused dating of the arrival of Pentecostalism in both its classical and modern strands in Nigeria, Ukah observes that Pentecostalism is to many scholars interesting not only for its origin, but as much for its rate of growth and its mutations as well as for the question of how it has come to capture the imagination of its followers, saturate the media with its presence, and claim an important place for itself in the social, religious, political and economic dynamics of urban Nigeria.

Ukah argues along Kalu's line of thought, that the Nigerian Civil War of the 1960s created a sense of disillusionment with the secular order and a craving for spirituality. The oil boom after the war encouraged the expansion of higher education and increased both international travel and urban influx. The new city dwellers constituted the primary catchment area for the emerging religious groups. But its appeal began to spread like wildfire only when words were matched with images, first in the form of videotapes of television broadcasts by pre-eminent American televangelists such as Jimmy Swaggart, Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell and Robert Schuller, and later through the preaching tours of travelling Pentecostal personalities. Tapes were imported in large quantities and used extensively by young, university-educated leaders of the post-war campus Christianity in Nigeria who often mimicked what they saw on these tapes.

Ukah posits that the young pastors who emerged in the late 1990s as religious leaders of the proliferating Christian groups were, in the main, self-trained or video-trained by watching and listening to audio-visual recordings of American televangelists whom they regarded as role models. Many pioneer members of these nascent churches and parachurches report that they had their first video experience in the context of a church or parachurch meeting. Hence, the VCR and the television became instruments of proselytization and propaganda, apart from their functions as tools for religious education and entertainment.

The Pentecostal pastors and leaders encouraged their members to watch the tapes that were vaunted as 'points of contact' with the divine and as purveyors of miracles and fortunes. The tapes also functioned as an extension of church ministrations of preaching, worship and songs. More importantly, they formed a sort of surrogate authority on matters concerning religious, social and ethical values. In addition, their use served as a form of public sacrament, a morale-booster and an embracing of the technological innovativeness of the West, in short: advancement from one stage of social life to a more progressive one.

The video-films, Ukah argues, did re-enforce and confirm the existence of an active occult world as much as they enhanced the role that the pastor can play in identifying, deconstructing and reinventing indigenous beliefs and providing remedy.⁶¹

Generally, Ukah observes [and rightly so], more women than men belong to religious groups and frequent religious, especially Pentecostal activities. Some Pentecostal leaders suggest that this is because women experience more traumas and a greater spiritual thirst than men. Hence, focusing on witchcraft, barrenness, and infidelity reflects not just a general concern for family values but it involves especially the centre of family life, namely the woman who is deepest affected when the family disintegrates.⁶²

The majority of Pentecostals, many of them ordinary citizens without university training share with the students a love for Christian video-films that represent ‘a source of truth and value’. For some, they provide examples of applying abstract doctrines to concrete situations. Such applications may refer to the diagnosis of a spiritual or witchcraft attack symptoms of which can be repeated failure in examinations or lack of progress in a specific area of life. Part of the appeal of Christian films lies in the way they relate the African worldview to the contemporary lives of individuals, reinventing African cultural ideas through images and giving them concreteness and poignancy. Thus, they perpetuate the obsession with the African worldview that is common among most Nigerian Christians.

Ukah also rightly mentions that the strengths of images, and the vividness with which an external ‘Other’ is portrayed, partly accounts for their appeal. By attributing poverty, illness, lack of progress and all other unwanted occurrences to the agency of evil spirits, Satan, malign forces of witchcraft and sorcery located in the primal local culture, a perspective is created that privileges Pentecostal actors as ‘undoing’ this cultural world.⁶³

Furthermore, the current emphasis among many Nigerian Pentecostals on a theology of abundance which teaches that it is the will of God for all his children to be successful, healthy and wealthy, is a strong impetus to proselytise by demonstrating that indeed ideas are matched by reality. All this teaching is given colour and vividness in many of the videos from Pentecostal churches and the argument is strengthened that Pentecostalism not only preaches the good life, it also provides for it. By teaching the theology that regards it as a divine right to possess and consume every good thing conceivable, the ‘born again’ is encouraged to see

⁶¹ Ukah, 2009, pp.200-211.

⁶² Ukah, 2009, p.223.

⁶³ Ukah, 2009, p.226.

‘self’ and ‘worth’ in relation to the quality and, perhaps, quantity of religious and non-religious items consumed.⁶⁴

Different groups, who use the video medium for evangelism, also make it the avenue to create visibility for the ministries, for themselves, and to create a market for their goods and services. Through the videos needs and desires are created, inter alia, as shown above, by the excavating the dark underside of African culture, the reinvention of fear and the exploitation of greed in some cases. The spirit of fear and greed that many of these videos depict, guarantees a market of consumers in urgent need of the services of the Pentecostal pastor. Such needs include not simply the cultivation of western desires and tastes or the consumption of western goods but also the consumption of deliverance services, prayer meetings and other Pentecostal paraphernalia.

Concluding his paper Ukah submits however, that, not everyone who watches these videos switches churches in search of miracles, wealth and health. The rhetoric of Pentecostalism and utopian narratives espoused in the films and in Pentecostal advertisements has its limitations, particularly given the hermeneutic filters viewers bring to their viewing, their active and creative interpretation, translation and involvement in the process of making sense of it all, and also given their individual social needs.

The paper does attempt to describe the following:

- i. the structural narratives embedded in Christian video-films in Nigeria,
- ii. the video-films production, circulation and consumption in a complex set of circumstances,
- iii. the complexness and dynamism of the audiences of the narratives as the narratives themselves,
- iv. the films’ are cultural worldview that forms the backcloth against which Pentecostal rhetoric is inscribed and asserted,
- v. the films generation of the desire for change, for a better social life, which is often, but not always, conceived in western terms,
- vi. the students formation into a significant audience of videos and also making a living out of their production and distribution, and
- vii. The opening up of areas for future exploration of the complex relationship between video films and their audiences.

⁶⁴ Ukah, 2009, p.227.

In the other work, 'Piety and Profit: Accounting for Money in West African Pentecostalism' (2007), Ukah observes in the very beginning, that, of [all] the resources of the Pentecostals, membership and money are the most important. He adds that Pentecostals often measure commitment and dedication of members by the amount of money and time they are willing to invest in religious activities. The general view among Pentecostals is that a religious organisation cannot survive; much less grow, unless it obtains sufficient resources from its environment.

If that is true, Ukah argues, then the Pentecostalist churches need to be transparent, inspire confidence in, and show goodwill towards their supporters in order to keep the money and gifts coming. They have to forestall fraud and avoid behaviour that doesn't befit their publicly avowed code of conduct. Considering that religious organisations mobilise sometimes staggering sums of money for their activities, Ukah states that they ought to demonstrate moral responsibility social integrity and good corporate practice of which accounting for their resources should be an integral part.⁶⁵

Ukah dwells on the importance of accounting to provide information on an organisation's past performance as a basis on which to make future plans and projections. One aspect of regulating charities consists in monitoring and scrutinising their accounts and the annual reports on their activities and to make these public (at least on request), since the organisations are beneficiaries of public goodwill and public financial and material support. Unfortunately, such accounting which, when instituted in churches, will help to distinguish piety from profit and profiteering, is in Nigeria ignored and has, inevitably, brought about what Ukah calls 'pious' frauds, flimflam antics and intractable stratagems that conflate piety and profit.⁶⁶

Ukah quotes Marshall-Fratani who calls Pentecostalism multi-stranded with different theologies and practices of which however the socially most contagious remains the variety that demonstrates an uncanny ability to make use of the media and to mobilize financial and material resources for the sake of empire-building.

The emphasis on financial and material blessings as derivable from a life of sacrificial giving to the church and its pastor(s), the combination of spiritual practices and direct economic engagement, as well as a plethora of doctrines on material and financial empowerment characterise the "faith" or prosperity Christianity. Although these new churches insist that they provide their members with a life-transforming relationship with

⁶⁵ Ukah, A. F. K., 2007. "Piety and Profit: Accounting for Money in West African Pentecostalism," Deel Vol. 48 Numbers 3 & 4, p.622.

⁶⁶ Ukah, 2007, p. 623.

God, they also function as commercial fora where business relations are actively cultivated and where channels for the dissemination of business and marketing practices are offered.

Pentecostalist prosperity preachers urge Christians to cultivate a “wealth mentality” and to develop “financial intelligence” in order to acquire the “money power” that demonstrates the triumphant Christian life. The ideas espoused by these prosperity preachers are discernibly influencing the nature of religious thinking and action in West Africa, particularly in urban Nigeria.

These practices, together with a corporate leadership style, aggressive advertising brand design, market-defined and driven strategies of packaging and programming, indicate a visibly monetary turn in much of West African Pentecostalism, particularly in the variety known as prosperity faith. A consequence of this state of affairs is that some churches target the very rich in society. For example, the constitution of a certain parachurch group in Nigeria specifies that members “must be in the middle or upper echelon of their chosen career and society”, “must be a graduate of a tertiary institution” and “must have a visible means of livelihood”, among other criteria.

As virtually no research is available on this very important aspect of Africa’s new religion, Ukah has taken it upon himself to make an empirical investigation of mobilisation and organisation of money in West African Pentecostalism, focusing on selected churches in Cameroon and Nigeria in order to get a comparative perspective on the issue. The social visibility of these new churches, Ukah observes, is enhanced greatly through the material demonstration of their money power in the construction of huge auditoria, large-scale evangelistic crusades, flamboyant lifestyles, expensive and expansive infrastructures. Yet, thus far no study has made an in-depth analysis of the relationship between the new Pentecostals and money.⁶⁷

Ukah feels that, considering the fact that independence and autocracy: are among the most cherished qualities expounded by Pentecostals, it is imperative to study their handling of church finances. More so, because they claim that no individual or group oversees or exercises control over them, in other words, they not only insist on being accountable to no one but God, but they also form an undemocratic and authoritarian leadership.

Quoting Bakare, a popular Pentecostalist in Lagos who recently accused his fellow pastors and his church’s ‘founders–owners’ of not being called by God but by the needs of their bellies, Ukah continues,

[T]he church cannot fight corruption in the country because it is itself corrupt. How can you fight corruption when you are corrupt yourself? ... If the river is polluted

⁶⁷ Ukah, 2007, p.624.

from the fountain it is flowing from, everyone who drinks it will drink poison. When you run a church like a market place, the customer is king. [...] They (the pastors) say what the people want to hear, they no longer talk about sin. When somebody gets born again overnight [...], if they are permanent secretary in Abuja, they are made deacons. They are made elders, [...]. The [Pentecostal] ministry has become a secure place for many people who are jobless. [...] When you are not called by God, the power of God cannot be there.”⁶⁸

The public in Nigeria is increasingly urging churches to demonstrate public accountability in the hope this will inspire political leaders to hold in their turn public officials accountable for mismanaging public funds and resources. It is argued that churches, who have achieved immense social visibility and financial muscle, apparently lack the moral courage to condemn, sanction, or critique the political culture of society and the abuse and mismanagement of public funds by government officials, because they are by the public perceived as short on transparency and accountability themselves.⁶⁹

Other aspects of Pentecostalism that Ukah touches on in his paper include those doctrines and rituals that are tightly linked with “money” (capital, etc.), its acquisition and its function in this world. He says that money has migrated from the periphery of church life, to the centre of the newest generation of churches. It is the theme that is most frequently preached on, with the followers coaxed, persuaded, and even threatened, to “invest in the kingdom” of God as a necessary and sufficient condition for receiving back from God.⁷⁰ The important point is that the money is given as “offering” and “donation” to God through the church and its pastors. Increasingly the new churches are modelling themselves and their activities on commercial or corporate organisations specifically designed and managed for profit. They see themselves as producers and managers of a “fee-for-service religion”.⁷¹

Underpinning this situation is the emphasis on religion as a means of exchange with an undeniable economic value. Ukah tells of an incident in which;

The Lagos branch of Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) through the Presidency invited the American evangelist, Benny Hinn, to Nigeria. The “crusade” started on April 28 and lasted for three days. Hinn claimed to have invested US\$ 4 million (cash 600 million naira) through his Nigerian collaborators to facilitate the organisation of the mega event. Hinn’s Nigerian counterparts promised to mobilise six million people to attend the event at the Holy Ghost Congress Arena of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). On the last day of the event, Hinn screamed from the dais: “Four million dollars [went] down the drain”. Hinn’s rage was that for three days the programme held, less than a million people were able to attend. This means that the invested US\$ 4 million could not be recouped from offerings and donations from the attendees. Further, Hinn discovered to his chagrin that the local organisers charged a

⁶⁸ Ukah, 2007, p. 625.

⁶⁹ Ukah, 2007, pp. 625- 626.

⁷⁰ Ukah, 2007, p. 626.

⁷¹ Ukah, 2007, p. 627.

fee (₦1000 per person; \$ 6.5) from those who attended his “ministers’ Conference” on the last day of the event. Before and during the event, many prominent pastors in PFN were reported to be fighting over control of the event and over who should sit on Hinn’s right hand side during the programme. The Nigerian pastors who felt sidelined and did not get money from the organisation of the event decided to sabotage it, according to the bishop in charge of the local organisation committee. The Pentecostalist pastors, who were dissatisfied, instructed their followers and fans not to attend the programme.⁷²

Ukah’s study was informed by the wish to find reasons for the schisms in the Pentecostal churches and to understand their stance on matters of faith and finance. A few earlier studies have shown that schisms in the new churches are rife and that, more often than not, secessions are caused by questions of control over money, rather than by doctrinal, differences of opinion or heresies. These occurrences indicate the urgent need for a nuanced understanding of the practices of the new churches in relation to faith and finance.⁷³

Ukah is correct in remarking that the laws in Nigeria are not as strict as in the neighbouring Cameroon Republic where the laws of religious association are explicit: groups need to prepare annual accounts of income and expenditure as well as their activities. Groups in Nigeria are free from such legal requirements. This situation has bred procedures and tendencies that support unchecked proliferation of new churches who exercise authority over their followers. In this politico-economical context the citizenry has found itself, Nigerian church owners have emerged as “independent entrepreneurs of salvation” who are primarily engaged in the production, circulation and marketing, as well as the “administration of the goods of salvation”.⁷⁴

In yet another paper, ‘African Christianities: Features, Promises and Problems’, Ukah sees Pentecostalist churches as not just concerned with the material aspects of culture but also with non-material aspects such as names, drinks, organizational systems, and dress codes. He believes that missionary Christianity had not properly engaged with the totality of the African ways of life. This engagement led in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to schisms in these churches in Africa as will be seen shortly.

Africans were conceived of as ‘uncivilised’, because the one important defining social feature of missionary Christianity was, and still is, its immersion in social services, basically education and health care. For example, the Church of Scotland established in 1846 the first printing press in Calabar, Nigeria. Rev. Henry Townsend, a Church Missionary Society missionary in Abeokuta, published the first newspaper in Nigeria, *Iwe Irohin*, on 3

⁷² Ukah, 2007, p. 628.

⁷³ Ukah, 2007, p. 629

⁷⁴ Ukah, 2007, p. 631.

December 1859. Missionary Christianity developed significant strategies for social transformation through the construction of schools and health care facilities in many African cities and rural areas, creating a cadre of educated African elites, needed to man the new colonial bureaucracies. While these projects introduced new forms of learning and knowledge, they further demonized and discredited African indigenous knowledge and medical traditions and systems. What counted as knowledge was the “Whiteman’s ideas” and, in some places, there were legal strictures to stop people from using indigenous medicine and from participating in indigenous religious rituals.

Perhaps the most important feature of missionary Christianity was, and still is, according to Ukah, its identification with colonialism. Missionary Christianity was perceived as a religion of “the Whiteman” and it came with the cultural baggage of Euro-Americans who did not separate the gospel message from western cultural practices and idiosyncrasies.

Because colonialism was seen as unjust, oppressive and repressive, Christianity was perceived as an ally or a collaborator in a system of unwarranted economic, cultural and political exploitation. Such a perception not only bred resentment, but it soon became one of the crucial weaknesses of missionary Christianity. Colonialism was associated with the obnoxious trade in Africans as slaves which was in blatant contradiction with the integrity and the sincerity of purpose of the gospel message that the same group of white men and women claimed to bring. Ukah quotes Isichei, who correctly remarked that, “there was a basic contradiction between converting Africans and purchasing them as slaves.”

Ukah submits that, as the mission churches expanded and took roots, the bible was translated into indigenous languages Africans could appropriate the message of the gospel, according to their local worldviews and often breeding conflicts and disagreements. The African worldview is intensely charismatic and alive and Africans, accordingly, interpreted the gospel in a lively manner and infused it with many elements, relevant to their own context. When schisms came about in the mission churches, there were long debates about finding an appropriate nomenclature for the schismatic churches. Sometimes they were called “Separatist Churches”, a derogatory term, only used by outsiders to signify the “otherness” of the new churches.

In some churches, particularly in South and West Africa, the secessions from the mission churches occurred, according to Ukah, for political reasons. Internalizing the imperative of Psalm 68:31 which reads, “Let Ethiopia hasten to raise its hands to God”, pioneers of the protests against Euro-American domination in the “colonial churches” constructed in 1948 “the self-government of the African church under African leaders.”

“Ethiopian churches” are those churches that broke away from mission churches primarily on racial grounds, or as a result of “the struggle for prestige and power”. The first-African church to break away from a mission church in Nigeria did so in 1888 in protest against American treatment of a local leader. There are many such churches in different parts of Africa who broke away from mission churches for political reasons. They came to be collectively referred to as “Ethiopian churches”, signifying that they are based on indigenous initiatives without foreign financial or doctrinal support and designed to recover indigenous leadership roles and traditions. They are also completely African in ecclesiology, emphasizing autonomous Christian life and administration. Ethiopianism is thus a movement involving religious and cultural protest against the mistreatment of Africans in some mission churches.

Ukah skilfully groups the African Initiated Churches (AIC) in such a way that they can be easily identified and their motivation understood. For example, he presents the large group of AIC churches in Nigeria under the name “the Aladura” (i.e. praying) movement, while in South Africa a similar group is known as the Zionist Churches. The Zionist Churches emerged primarily in protest against political and social discrimination of Africans. Because Africans were restricted in terms of residence, labour, and rights of association and movement, the adherents of these Churches nursed the ambition to construct “Zion”, a land of freedom, a home free from oppression and subjugation. Many of the churches had “Zion” as part of their official names.

Ukah lists the most important characteristics of the AICs as:

- i. self-financing,
- ii. self-governance and,
- iii. Self-supporting. He adds to these:
- iv. the emphasis on cultural appropriation of locally significant themes and practices such as the use of indigenous music and language;
- v. an emphasis on the activities of evil spirits such as witches and demons and the claim by leaders that they have power to deliver people from the influence of these baneful spirits;
- vi. Active roles given to women as some even became church founders. Initially these churches were regarded with great disdain by people who ridiculed them, speaking of “schismatic movements” and regarding them as syncretistic and, therefore, impure.

The spread of the AICs has been phenomenal, not only in Africa where they constitute more than 10% of the Christian population, but also in Europe and North America where they clearly proved attractive to a large segment of diaspora Africans. African migrants to distant locations in search of work, education and a better life, carry their religious traditions with them. As they face new forms of life and crises generated by modernity and its anxieties, these indigenous form of Christianity become even more appealing to Africans whether in Africa or elsewhere.

In Nigeria, for example, the activity of Garrick Braide which started in 1915 in the Anglican Church had all the hallmarks of Pentecostalism such as faith healing, prophecy, exorcism, speaking in tongues, spontaneous prayer, exuberant liturgical expression, stress on dreams and vision but was at this early date not classified as such.

Most scholars agree that this newer form of Christianity “is fast becoming one of the most significant expressions of Christianity on the [African] continent, especially in Africa’s cities”. Ukah submits that in Nigeria, for example, the growth of Pentecostalism occurred in a period characterized by:

- i. post-civil war deprivations and the increased spiritual quest for salvation and for solutions to social and personal problems,
- ii. the expansion of education that provided an important infrastructure facilitating the emergence of an educated elite eager to appropriate what are considered “the goods of modernity”, and
- iii. the economic crisis of the mid-1980s which resulted in the adoption of World Bank/IMF designed structural adjustments leading in the retrenchment of workers, high unemployment among graduates, social disorganization and near economic meltdown.

This situation fuelled the need for spiritual solutions to life’s many problems, but also encouraged the ready acceptance of available religious answers to questions of a social and material nature. Gradually, a new class of religious elite with a university education and a strong appetite for foreign ideas and tastes emerged, bearing a new Pentecostalist message. They believe that they constitute a special “people of God” the only ones who are saved while the rest of humanity is doomed to perdition. Theologically, a saved person is one who is “born again” and regenerated or sanctified by an inward feeling of holiness. Sanctification purifies the believer from sin and from all other forms of pollution. Of special importance is the teaching on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the external manifestation of such baptism

through speaking in tongues. This is both a spiritual and social marker, setting members apart as God's elected people.

The new message promises individuals a comprehensive solution to all their worries on condition that they become born again and give generously to the religious leaders, in exchange for material and spiritual blessings in the form of healing, wealth, abundant life, success and earthly promotion. This new gospel is known by a variety of names:

- i. Prosperity Christianity,
- ii. Health and Wealth Gospel,
- iii. The Faith Movement, and
- iv. Name-it-and-Claim-it.

Several new churches were, as Ukah notes, founded by individuals in the late 1970s and 1980s, consolidated in the turbulent 1990s and are now experiencing a runaway expansion as they open branches in many different countries all over the world. The Nigerian pioneers in this brand of gospel have influenced similar developments in other African countries, through training pastors from these countries, exporting books, videos, CDs, and DVDs, as well as establishing branches in such places as Ghana, the Benin Republic, Cameroon, Kenya, South Africa, etc. In Johannesburg alone, there were in March 2007 well over 100 Nigerian founded new Pentecostal churches.

Ukah makes an important observation in his paper, when he states that, although indigenous religions in Africa are inherently materialistic, that is, their adherents seek material benefits from the worship of gods, the prosperity gospel as preached and practiced by its principal African exponents does not spring from this particular feature of indigenous African cosmology. Part of what accounts for the appeal of the prosperity doctrine is its cultural resonance with indigenous religious ideas.

There are seven distinct features of prosperity churches that give them prominence and appeal:

- i. They are unmistakably of 'American heritage.'
- ii. They lay emphasis on faith healing.
- iii. They have firm-like structural organization.
- iv. The roles of women in the new churches are intriguing, far removed from what it is in the mission churches.
- v. The prosperity leaders are media savvy individuals, often with an academic background, who have introduced commercial practices into their organization and in the production of religion and other goods.

- vi. The increasing use of marketing strategies particularly advertising.
- vii. The tendency to reconstruct religious geography through the construction of religious camps.

However, Ukah concluded that the permeation of liberal market practices into certain strands of Pentecostalism, particularly the increasing usage of business strategies, the excessive recruitment of funds, a display of scandalous wealth by the leaders and an increase in clergy malfeasance, may point to a troubled future for many faithful individuals and the Christian groups they belong to, both in Africa and elsewhere. As one commentator, a former Pentecostal pastor, writes: “the Pentecostal or Charismatic Church is the only legally and politically accepted movement in the world that is fully and completely based upon systematic fraud, deception and cheating”. And another Nigerian Pentecostal pastor said: “the merchandising of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” is “the primary source of all the problems enervating the spiritual life of the church”. Certainly these negative aspects vitiate the transforming power of the prosperity church.

2.2 The Cultures and Possible Worldviews within Nigeria

Nigeria is a large country with many people and cultural variations. In official government analyses about 250 ethnicities are recognized, however, many more ethnicities can be identified. About 35 cultural groupings have been identified according to Google cultural map submission on Nigeria. And, for the sake of this research, I would like to limit myself to the rough religious charting I have made of the country; in so doing, I intend to further develop the assumption that the spiritual mind frame of a people is predicated on the environment in which they live and that their surroundings determine their worldview. The researcher has, therefore, sub-divided the country into five regions: the North, Middle-Belt, West, East and South as can be seen in the ‘Cultural Map of Nigeria’ above on page xviii. This rationalization is purely the author’s assumption and is intended to facilitate understanding of the arguments in this thesis only, and does not represent the official governmental divisions within the country Nigeria. It should also be noted here that Nigeria has six official geo-political zones: the North-East, North-West, North-Central, South- East, South-West and South-South.

Zacchaeus A. Mathema quoting John Fowler defines the term worldview as, A construct about the make-up of life as it struggles with the question of reality, truth, ethics and history. It is a construct that provides a point of departure, a sense of direction, a locus of destination and strategy of unity for human thought, life and action.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Mathema, Z. A., “The African Worldview,” <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/achieve/.../> Accessed 15th

Commenting on Kraft, Mathema established that,

At the core of every person's being lies the worldview that constitutes "control box" of culture that determines thinking, acting or doing, and determining values. Worldview, therefore, exerts a strong, shaping influence and power on a person's life.⁷⁶

Mathema argued further that "worldview exists at the foundational level of culture and at the core of the same cultural expressions and permeates everything that a people think and do by defining reality, truth and values."⁷⁷

Nigerians fit into the definitions above as they share certain common elements that are determinants to their worldviews, especially belief in spirits, but they also have certain departures in their worldviews that can easily be explored to their varied backgrounds and their locations within the country. These are defined in detail here below.

- a. North: The North of Nigeria is pre-dominantly Muslim with a strong traditional religious presence and a fair Christian representation that is strongly resisted. The features of the land are Sahelian mixed with savannah grassland with medium sized rivers and streams that dry up during the dry seasons. There are scattered mountains and highlands with rough bushes. The few ethnic groups living in this part of the country are the Kanuri of the ancient Kanem Kingdom that are deep-rooted in Islam but very fetish, the Hausa tribes basically traditional religionists and also very fetish, the partially Islamized Fulani, the ruling people of most of the north and the Shuwa Arabs that are scattered along the frontiers with Nigeria's Northern neighbours. All these have a world-view influenced by their environment and cultural trappings which have to a certain degree been arabized in language and thought. They have strong belief in *Ginnis* and amulets or talisman as a source of power.
- b. The Middle-Belt: This is where Adamawa is located to the east of the country. It is pre-dominantly Christian with a strong African traditional religion base and a fair Islamic representation. There is strong fetishism and belief in ancestral spirits as well as witches and totems among the people of this zone in Nigeria. The belief in Mami-Water and blood-thirsty spirits is somewhat foreign to the people here because they are a plains people who live in a mountainous land with strong vegetation, well watered by swift wide rivers and streams. There are many lakes

May 2013.

⁷⁶ Mathema, "The African Worldview," 2013.

⁷⁷ Mathema, "The African Worldview," 2013.

in this region. The people as described in 2.3.2 above are virtually farmers, fishermen and hunters. They are good warriors also. Prior to the arrival of western civilization they were quite independent clusters of identical ethnic groups that could easily trace their roots to a common origin. Their neighbours from the North had little influence on them; therefore, the Islamic influence gaining grounds in the North could not transplant or export its peripheral Islamic ideologies and thoughts into the zone. Its world-view remained African, centering on totems, the spirits in big trees, ancestral spirits and re-incarnation. The belief in amulets is also very foreign to the zone.

- c. The Eastern Region: This is basically a Christian zone located in the south-eastern parts of the country. It has a strong Christian presence and a fair representation of the African traditional religion can be found there also. The topography of the region is that of low hills and rain forests traversed by deep muddy streams and gullies. The people are farmers, hunters and fishing is done on a small scale among them. Tree and root crops are the main staples in the region. Animal protein and green vegetables abound in great supply in the region and their world-view centers around ancestral spirits, spirits living in trees and powerful forest birds like the eagle, marine spirits and blood-thirsty spirits. The position of the oracles and mediums are highly respected and sought after by the people of eastern Nigeria. Much of what is seen on Nigerian movies depicts the traditional world-view of the eastern Nigerians. Furthermore, the ethnic –Igbo groups found in the zone are almost homogenous.
- d. The Western Region: This is located within the south western parts of Nigeria. It has a strong Christian presence representing the first spot in modern day Nigeria where Christianity first took roots. It has a strong representation of African traditional religion and a fair representation of the Islamic faith. The terrain is the same as the eastern parts of Nigeria in topography and vegetation. The western Nigerians have an added advantage because their territory reaches to the western coastal shores of Nigeria. This has expanded their world-view to cover marine spirits, *mami-water* – water-mermaid and blood-thirsty spirits. The Yoruba also a homogenous cluster of ethnicities cover this region of Nigeria besides large expanse of adjacent Benin Republic. They believe in *Shango*, the god of thunder and venerate the ancestors and other powerful spirits of the forests. They also hold in great esteem the oracles and the mediums at the numerous shrines all over their

communities. Much of what is seen on Nigerian movies also depicts the traditional worldview of the western Nigerians as much as it does that of the easterners.

- e. The Southern Region: This region covers the shoreline areas of eastern Nigeria known as the coasts of the 'Bight of Benin.' The peoples living in this coastline region are quite heterogeneous. They speak chiefly un-related dialects but have one thing in common and that is their location. This has imbued in them a relatively common worldview because of the main source of their livelihood which is water (primarily the sea, the Niger Delta, Cross River and the Aqua-Ibom River). All the streams of Nigeria empty into the two main watercourses of the country: the Niger and the Benue, which then confluence into one and flow down to the Atlantic Ocean through the region at the Niger Delta. The worldview of the people in the region is basically linked to water. This is where the marine spirits, mami-water and kingdoms of the sea or under water are popularly venerated. If a person tries to dispute their existence. He will be lucky if he is just laughed at. Otherwise, one is regarded as being bad-mannered and impervious and therefore, conceited towards the beliefs of the people and should be raced out of the way. The communities in this region depend virtually on fishing as a means of livelihood. Their worldview is also linked to snakes, the kingdom of the underworld (who rule the visible world) and the kingdom of the sea. The rulers of the so-called kingdoms are recognized as queens, princes and princesses of the mighty kingdom and can be worshipped with blood covenants.

Though cryptic, these assumptions are purely intended to assist in the unpacking of the various possible worldviews prevalent in the Nigerian and Adamawa situations, where Pentecostalism operates under a pluralism of worldviews. There cannot be a single worldview so to say that can capture the total mind-sets of the various communities in the country. Each community has its own stress even though there are commonalities like belief in witches and ancestral spirits. The map on page xviii throws more light on the cultural groupings and possible worldviews of Nigerians.

2.3 The Worldview of Adamawa People

Adamawa people (as would be seen below under 2.4.1) maintain a strong belief in a supreme being, the creator of humanity. They have the concept of a son or a daughter of their Supreme Being but these children of the Supreme Being are not saviours, as in Christianity,

but embody ethnic values. Adamawa people are a warring people who believe in valour. Bravery is an asset; therefore, they do not give up easily or run away from war. The son of the Supreme Being, therefore, can be a warrior who can grant victory or success in war to his ethnic people only and not to humanity in general. Also, since this son does not belong to our humanity, he cannot die.

The Adamawa worldview is positive because it does not conceive evil. Although a tad riverine, Adamawa people do not believe in marine spirits. Instead, they believe in spirits living in trees and mountains. If there are any spirits in the water they give good catches of fish. The ancestral spirits are believed to keep a watch over the community. They do not hurt the people; rather they warn them in situations of eminent danger. In return the people offer them the first fruits of every year. In Adamawa, evil spirits are believed to be white and the good spirits are black.

Being predominantly a plains people whose livelihood depends on fishing, farming and cyclical hunting, the worldview of Adamawa people is different from that of the forest or more riverine and coastal people of Nigeria who have been documented extensively. It is therefore difficult to generalize an African worldview in the case of Nigeria and more particularly Adamawa.

Adamawa people do not just rely on their ancestral spirits but believe strongly in totems. The chief totems are the lion, leopard, hippopotamus, crocodile, baboon, monkey, alligator and hyena. Among the birds they revere the eagle, vulture and hawk as totems. The owl is not beloved because it is considered as the carrier of the spirit of death.

Totems are meant to protect the people associated with them. They are not meant to be dangerous to their human partners; they instead protect. When they are hurt in the bush, their human partners are also hurt. When they die, their human partner also dies. Humans with totems simply share their existence with their totems. This researcher, for example, belongs to the rain cult. His totem is the crocodile. Since he makes rain, he can never be beaten by rain or get drowned in water because a crocodile will always rescue him. However, totems are not worshipped; rather, a covenant is entered into between the human partners and their totems. Anyone who kills or hurts a crocodile's human partner cannot be protected from any evil associated with water.

Initiation rites like *Yondo* or *Laou* and *Magih* both similar to the *Bondo* found in Sierra Leone and Liberia are very popular among various ethnic groups. Some ethnicities like the Bwatiye, have *lakaune* as their circumcision festival, the Mayah and the Yandang also have circumcision ceremony as an important rite of passage to adulthood. All the initiation

rites mentioned above culminate into circumcision ceremonies at the end. Both male and female children have to go through this initiation and be circumcised. Only a few ethnicities do not perform circumcision rites.

The male children are initiated into adulthood. At their “passing out” (re-entry) ceremony they are told, “today you are men.” During their days in the bush they are taught among other things:

- i. Bravery with the sole goal to protect self and the community. Speed and valour come into play here;
- ii. obedience and respect for elders and seniority is almost sacred);
- iii. to keep secrets of their ethnic group and community;
- iv. to use their common sense in decisions they take;
- v. the dignity of labour;
- vi. honesty;
- vii. never to steal except if it is to snatch a woman from another community and never from his community and in case of hunger or during famine, one should take just what he needs to fill his stomach for the moment and nothing more;
- viii. And to be a good father of your children and husband to your wives and be willing to bear responsibility for other children and wives of the community who have lost their fathers and husbands.

A man is trained to be a soldier, a farmer and a hunter. During those days in the bush for training, no females should see the boys, not even their mothers or sisters. They learn a new language, codes and sign language along with whistling technics to alert each other in case of eminent danger. Each group that went to the bush together remains as a peer group. They assess each other’s achievement in life, defend each other, fight together in war, marry around the same time, live together and die together for each other and the community. Each peer group can be likened to a company formation in a military unit. They know and respect their leaders within the group from the days they received training in the bush. Only men train the company of boys.

A man’s wealth or success is assessed by how many children and wives he has and has left behind when he dies and how many people attended his funeral and not how much money, cattle or houses he left.

The female initiates during their days in the bush are also taught among other things:

- i. what it takes to be a mother and a good wife;
- ii. to protect self and community during wars including strategies to protect the

- children;
- iii. never to be unfaithful to their husbands;
 - iv. home management (never to eat before their husbands or children), and
 - v. To ensure that cooked food is kept in the home all the time in case a stranger comes to the family at night.

If a young woman becomes pregnant before marriage, several punishments shall be administered. She will not have any bridal showers when she moves to her husband's house. She will not receive proper farewell from her father. The lady shall be led out of her father's house through the back door and never through the front door. Above all, she cannot give birth no matter the severity of the labour until she confesses who made her pregnant. A woman's wealth is measured by the number of children she has; she will be the proudest woman especially if her children are mostly male.

The age group associations are very powerful union of especially the people of Numan. Possibly borrowing a leaf from traditional initiation groupings, of the *lakaune* initiation camps, the modern age group associations in Numan among the Bwatiye helps in harnessing the efforts of the Bwatiye youth in any given situation (even in religious matters or matters of defence of the community). An age group or peer group is made up of persons whose birth dates fall within two years of their births; for example, those born in 1950 and 1951 would be classed as an age group while those of 1952 and 1953 would also be in the same age group or peer group. They hold meetings at appointed times and in emergencies they convene to find solutions to matters at hand. They plan their lives and community projects together. Individuals work towards making a mark within their age group and their community. They will support each other's individual projects. They also defend each other and will always stick together. They are expected to cry together, laugh together, suffer together and die together if need be.

One could see that there is something continuous in the traditional and the contemporary age groups and the way Pentecostals create a sense of group. The Pentecostals encourage professional groupings of their members; they form associations to support church programmes and activities. For example, architects come together to design buildings for their churches, engineers supervise projects for free, electrical engineers and electricians design and install electrical fittings and maintain them. Bankers advise on financial matters and facilities available in banks, Nurses and Doctors provide free medical services in conventions and crusades. Each profession is grouped to provide services.

Two factors that link Pentecostalism with Adamawa traditional practices are first the offering of the first fruits to the chiefs or the priests at the shrines before any one eats from the harvest. Here a religious ceremony must be performed and the priests and chiefs or kings must eat of the new harvest first before anyone else. This is practised among Pentecostals also (see page 196 below under 7.14 Financial Support). Second, is the promise of deliverance to members who are under the spell of the spirit world. This links them up with the African belief in ancestral spirits, spirits of the underworld, kingdoms of the underwater, witchcraft, water mermaids and blood sucking spirits. In my view there is continuity between indigenous African beliefs and Pentecostal concepts.

2.4 Terms and Titles

Pentecostal churches generally use an extensive system of terms and titles in their churches also for their leaders and other functionaries. A church official may have multiple titles. Some of the popular terms and titles among Pentecostals are:

- a. Bishop: The title of bishop can be claimed by any Pentecostal pastor, even if he has only one congregation under his supervision. On this basis the Bishop networks with other independent Pentecostal congregations that mentor him. A bishop has the final say and authority in his church. Normally, the church belongs to the bishop and he is not appointed by others.
- b. Cathedral: What most Pentecostals (and some mainline Christians) refer to as cathedral, is simply any large church building, even if there is no bishop attached to it as is the case in the Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran settings.
- c. Founder: A founder in a Pentecostal church is the person who has established the church. The church belongs to him and he can transfer ownership of the church to whoever he wishes, for example his wife, his son, or a trusted pastor. Founders decide who takes charge of their churches when they wish to relinquish control. Churches are registered in their founders' names. After the death of the founder, usually his spouse takes over the leadership of his church (or ministry). Examples of this practice are:
 - i. Pastor Philip Paul Makunga of Oasis of Love, after whose death his wife became bishop and leader of his church.
 - ii. Archbishop Benson Idahosa of Church of God Mission who died in May 1998 and whose wife took on the leadership of the church as presiding bishop.

- iii. Pastor David Shekari Adams of Right Way Ministries, whose wife took over after he died.⁷⁸
- d. General Superintendent, General Overseer and Chief Executive Officer are popular titles, used by Pentecostal churches to identify their national leaders. They are business terms and, as such, may hold a reference to the nature of the churches. Nomenclatures vary. Some national leaders have two titles, for example general superintendent and chief executive officer or general overseer and chief executive officer.
- e. Pastor: The pastor performs pastoral duties, is an administrator and runs an office. A pastor does not go out to evangelize or preach at services. If the pastor doubles as a church planter, he requires special training in church planting techniques.
- f. Evangelist: An evangelist in the Pentecostalist church is a person who takes the gospel to new places for the purpose of planting churches. He or she does not have to be a pastor.
- g. Deacons and Deaconesses: These are elders, male and female in the Pentecostalist churches. They are ordained and anointed with olive oil before they take office.
- h. Brother and Sister: These terms are used for 'born again' members of Pentecostalist churches and do not necessarily indicate persons of blood affinity.
- i. Papa and Mama: These are titles that are added to clergy (especially founders and chief executives) and their spouses in the Pentecostalist churches in Nigeria. Sometimes they are called the 'Anointed Man of God' or 'Anointed Baba or Papa, Mama'.

⁷⁸ Empirical knowledge of the researcher: Some of these persons are known to him personally. Most times the members will refuse to disclose the actual reasons for splits in their churches. One has to get really close to put together facts, to get to the real cause of their splits. The Spirit Life Church in Yola is separated only by a wall from the house of the researcher. He therefore, has first hand information about the happenings in this Pentecostal church and the others discussed above. The wives of the founders are always on TV, to be seen as successors of their husbands.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA AND ADAMAWA STATE

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I have reconstructed the histories of Adamawa State and its main churches. The chapter draws on library resources and materials gathered during field work in Nigeria over a period of four years. Among the works consulted are Margret Nissen's history of Adamawa province and the Lutheran church, *An African Church is Born*, Nicholas Pwedon's *A History of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria*, and Rev. Raymond Hickey's *A History of Christianity in Borno State and Northern Gongola*. Other published sources include "Adamawa Past and Present", a diary of the Colonial Residents (Governors) of Adamawa province. Various archival materials from LCCN, EYN and the Catholic Church Archives in Yola and Mubi, and maps and pictures of places and persons of importance have been used. All sources have been carefully scrutinized for reliability. Where there are discrepancies, these have been analytically discussed and where particular sources are preferred above others, they have been pointed out and reasons have been given for the preference. The chapter aims to acquaint the reader with the context of the research and the Christian terrain in Adamawa State.

3.1 Nigeria

The nation today called Nigeria was a creation of the British colonial power. The territory became a British colony in 1861. By 1883 the British named it the Niger Coast Protectorate; and in 1914 it was made into a British Colony and Protectorate. Soon after the Second World War, in 1954, modern day Nigeria became a federation and on October 1, 1960 the country gained independence from Britain. Three years later, in 1963, it became a Republic. On January 15, 1966 Nigeria's democracy was dealt a severe blow when the country came under military rule.⁷⁹ The first Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Premier of Northern Nigeria Sir Ahmadu Bello and his Western Region counterpart Sir Samuel Akintola lost their lives during the military takeover. On May 27, 1967 the military government of General Yakubu Gowon sub-divided Nigeria into 12 states and on 30th May 1967 Col. Chukwu-Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu declared that Eastern Nigeria would henceforth be called the Republic of Biafra and seceded from the rest of Nigeria as an

⁷⁹ Barrett, D.B.; Kurian, G.; and Johnson, T.M. (eds). 2001. *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, Second Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.549.

independent nation. This led to the bloody civil war that broke out in July 1967 and lasted for three years.⁸⁰

Nigeria's population was put by demographers at 111,506,000 in 2005⁸¹, but in April 2006 a national census was conducted on the basis of which Nigeria's population was estimated at 140,431,790.⁸²

Thus Nigeria, the most populous nation in Africa, accounts for 25% of Africa's black inhabitants. Worldwide it ranks as 29th in land mass and 84th in population size with its population density twice as high as the African average.⁸³ Though it is a wealthy nation with abundant human and natural resources, the country faces "ethnic conflicts (sometimes for personal or individual interests), pervasive bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and sector imbalances, all [of which] tend to distort economic growth patterns and slow development initiatives."⁸⁴ Many government projects have come to a standstill because of ethnicity and regionalism, while new governments keep announcing new projects without showing any interest in completing the abandoned projects of former governments.

3.2 Religion in Nigeria from 1970 to the Present

Even though Nigeria is a highly religious country, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states categorically (in part II: Powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, page LL 24 Schedule 10), that "The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion."⁸⁵ Schedule 38 page LL 39 further states:

- I. every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance,
- ii. no person attending any place of education shall be required to receive religious instruction or to take part in or attend any religious ceremony or observance if such instruction, ceremony or observance relates to a religion other than his own or a religion not approved by his parents or guardian, and

⁸⁰ Ishaya, E.R. 1984. "A Search for Identity, Historical Review and Critical Analysis of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria." MTh. Thesis, LNTS, St. Paul Minnesota, p. 19.

⁸¹ Barrett, Kurian and Johnson, (eds). 2001, p.549

⁸² Source: www.population.gov.ng Accessed August 10, 2010

⁸³ Kurian, G., 1993., *Atlas of the Third World*. New York: Facts of File Publications. p.290.

⁸⁴ Kurian, 1993, p.290

⁸⁵ Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended in 1999, Original, p. LL 24.

- iii. no religious community or denomination shall be prevented from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in any place of education maintained wholly by that community or denomination.⁸⁶

This constitutional provision is not completely new. The state had long maintained its neutrality when it came to matters of faith, as evidenced by former constitutions of Nigeria. Nigeria is therefore a “secular state” and the 1999 Constitution merely affirms its secularity.

However, the people of Nigeria are religious to the extent that they greeted the end of the civil war in January 1970 with thanksgiving to God. This period also marked the beginning of cooperation among the various Christian denominations in Nigeria. Before 1970, it was generally believed that Christians were principally found only in the southern part of Nigeria, namely the former Biafra. This perception was not taken kindly to by Christians from the north where deliberate efforts were made to raise awareness among the southern Christians that indigenous people in northern Nigeria also belonged to the Christian faith.

During the 1970s Pentecostal movements in the south-western region started moving into northern and eastern parts of Nigeria. As mentioned earlier, most Pentecostal evangelists were graduates from the universities at Ibadan and Ife, who had been influenced by Pentecostal evangelists and materials from Europe and the U.S.A. The churches in the former Biafra suffered when, after the civil war, the government nationalized church-run hospitals and schools. Barrett explains what happened to the Catholic Church.

After the war in January 1970, the church in Eastern Nigeria experienced great changes. 300 priests and 200 sisters were expelled. All the primary schools and secondary schools were nationalized. The Nigerian priests that were left were inadequate because some priests were put in charge of 5000 Christians to one priest. Vocations, for example the Youth Block Rosary Movement expanded rapidly. The movement gathered people within their quarters for prayers, singing and Bible studies. The movement was officially recognized by the hierarchy and integrated into parish and diocesan structures.⁸⁷

The ‘Youth Block Rosary Movement’ had been started soon after the civil war ended, with the sole aim of encouraging spirituality among Catholic youths in the eastern part of Nigeria. The members of the movement do meet every evening to say the rosary together. In this way, they strengthen one another. The movement is still very active today and its contribution to the growth of the Catholic Church in Nigeria is immense. It has encouraged

⁸⁶ Nigerian Constitution as amended in 1999, p. LL 39-40.

⁸⁷ Barrett; Kurian; and Johnson, (eds.), 2001, p. 551.

many members to join the priesthood or sisterhood as a vocation, and to become models for Christian life.⁸⁸

It was for reasons such as those mentioned by Barrett, that churches were forced to start working together and to, sometimes, even extend a helping hand to each other. In 1967 churches in the North had seen primary schools and hospitals taken away from them and in 1972 all secondary schools were nationalized by the extremely unpopular Government.⁸⁹

Despite this, Nigeria remains fertile ground for the growth of independent church bodies. There were some 1000 distinct denominations or religious bodies registered with government in 1990. The number has been rising steadily since.⁹⁰

Simultaneously, Pentecostal or charismatic renewal movements have spread rapidly. In the mid-2000s the renewal movements boasted over 35,885,000 adherents (8% Pentecostals, 27% Charismatics, and 64% Independents).⁹¹ Several groups of Nigerian origin are involved in the missionary enterprise. They have sent missionaries all over West Africa and to many other parts of Africa. Some have representatives working in Europe and North America. But for most the main mission field remains Nigeria.⁹²

Through the country's constitutional provisions, all religious groupings enjoy a semblance of religious freedom and seemingly have equal rights and an even playing ground. The charts below reflect religious adherence in Nigeria from 1900 to the present day as analysed by Barrett in the second edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*. Barrett's work is based on some 40 major surveys and atlases of Christianity and of the missionary presence. It covers scholars from AD 535 to 1968 and it presents publications as well as comprehensive information on all types of activities of organized Christianity with data on interdenominational or ecumenical events.

The work is deemed reliable in missiological circles. It is primarily based on information provided by the respective churches on their membership. Barrett states that his work is based on, *inter alia*, over 5000 statistical questionnaires that were sent to and returned by churches and their national offices, interviews conducted in over 200 countries, unpublished and primary published documents from many countries and a survey of 8000 dissertations.⁹³

⁸⁸ Eze, Chika, Sister Chika, a Nigerian nun who had been a member of the Youth Block Rosary Movement during her childhood, was encouraged to take up the vocation through the movement. Interviewed at Pietermaritzburg, Kwazulu-Natal, South-Africa, 8/8/2010.

⁸⁹ Barrett; Kurian; and Johnson, (eds). 2001, p. 551.

⁹⁰ Barrett; Kurian; and Johnson, (eds). 2001, p. 551.

⁹¹ Barrett; Kurian; and Johnson, (eds). 2001, p. 551.

⁹² Barrett; Kurian; and Johnson, (eds). 2001, p. 551.

⁹³ Barrett, D.B. *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, First Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 45.

The statistics supplied by Barrett are confirmed by the national statistical data on Nigeria in 1921 and the Nigerian National Population Commission's projections of 2006 on the current population of Nigeria. The fact that there hasn't been any public and/or scholarly refutation of his projections implies that the work could be considered standard and trustworthy for the time being.

The charts are meant to acquaint the reader with the status of Christianity in Nigeria and to make him/her appreciate the growth of, and the challenges faced by Christianity in the last hundred years.

Chart One: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 1900

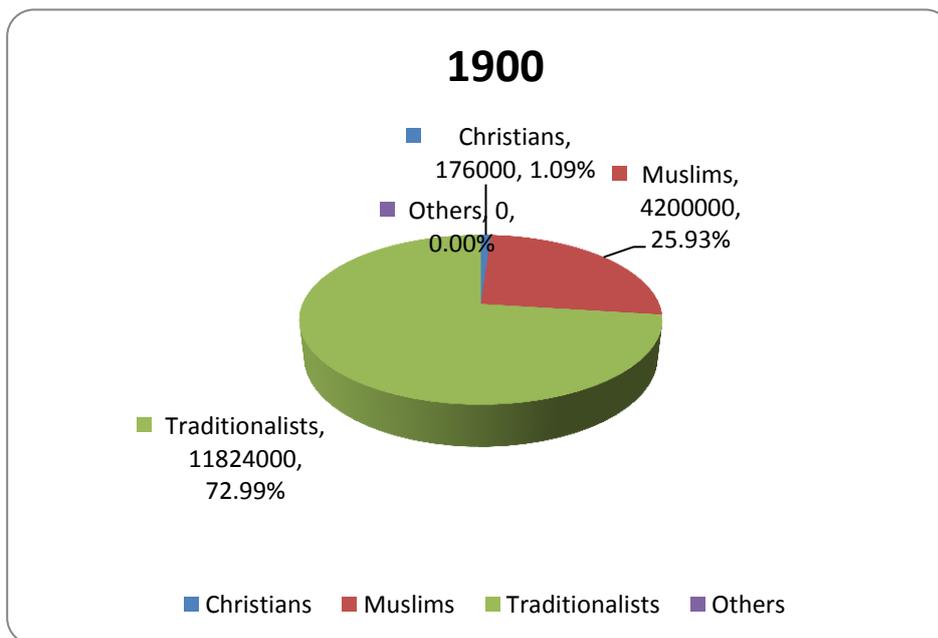


Chart Two: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 1921

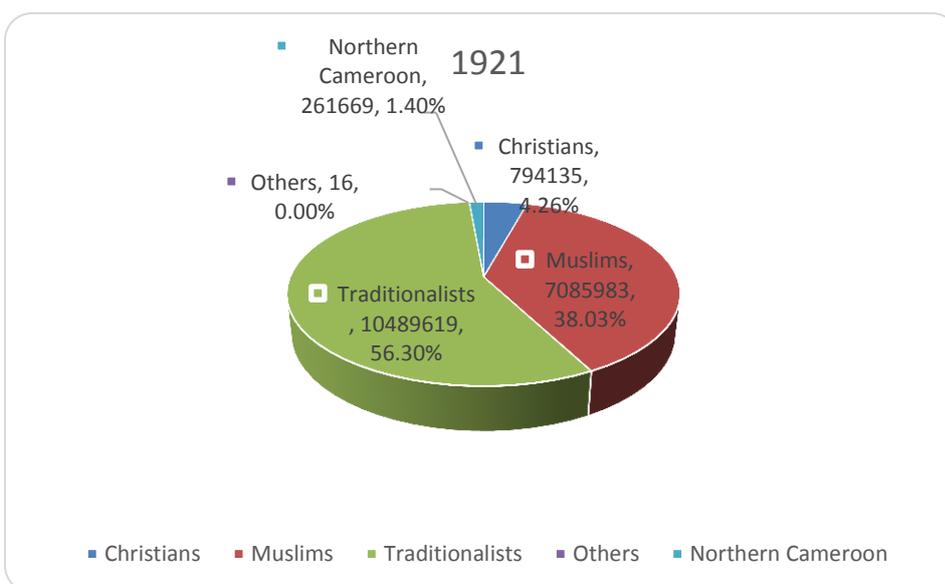


Chart Three: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 1970

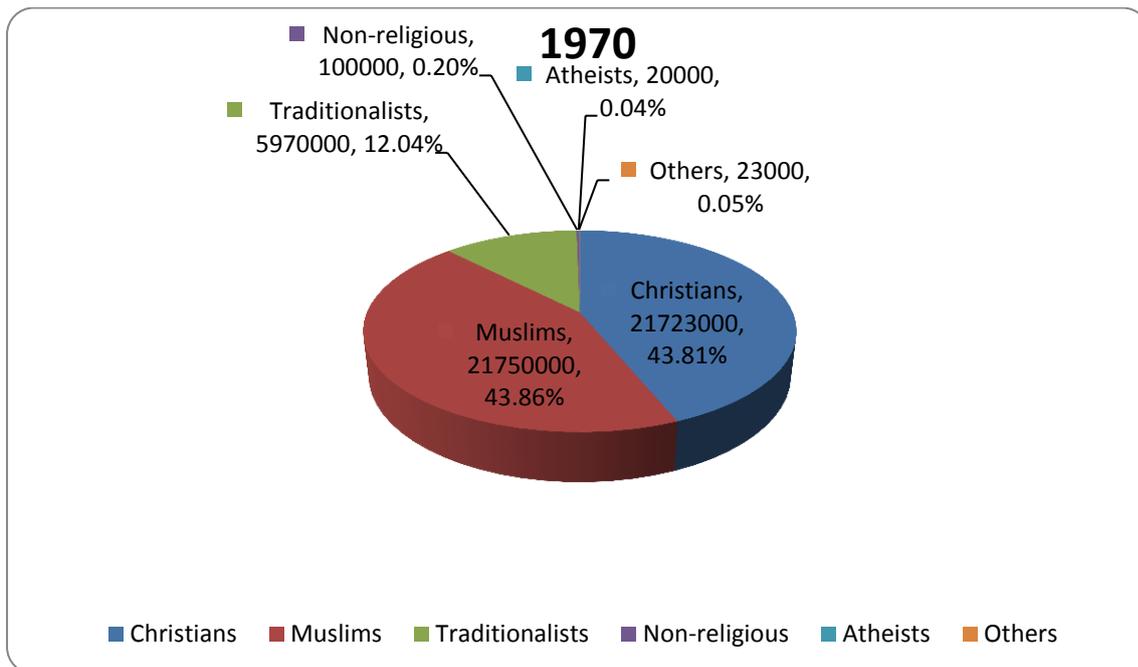


Chart Four: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 2000

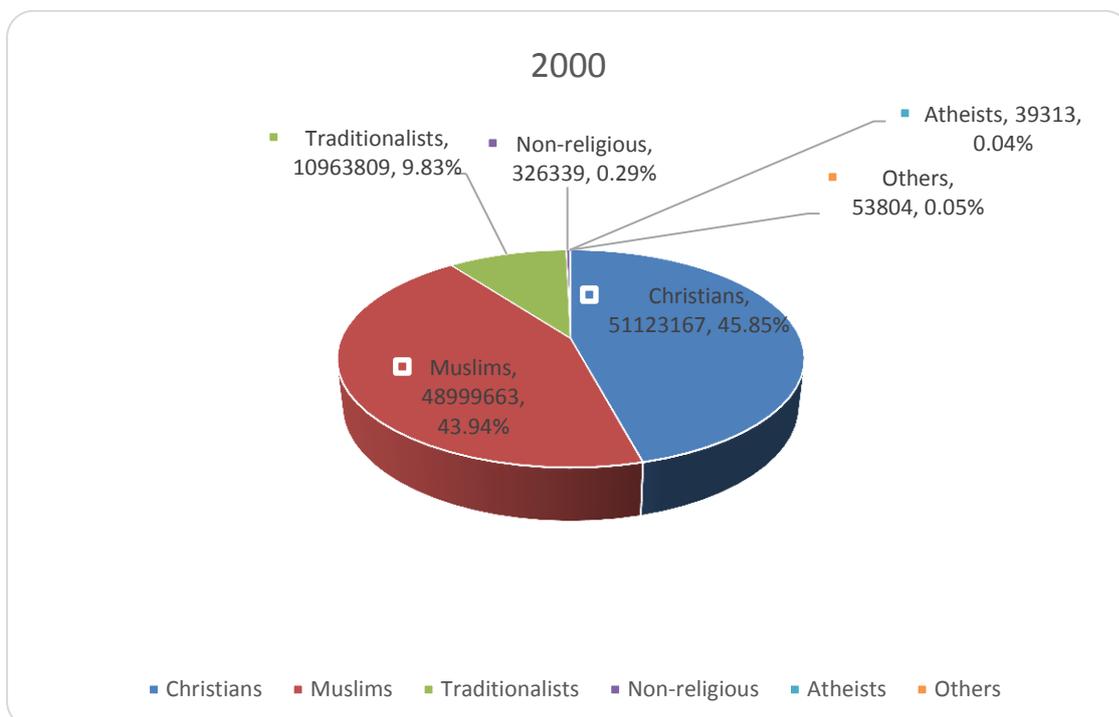


Chart Five: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 2005

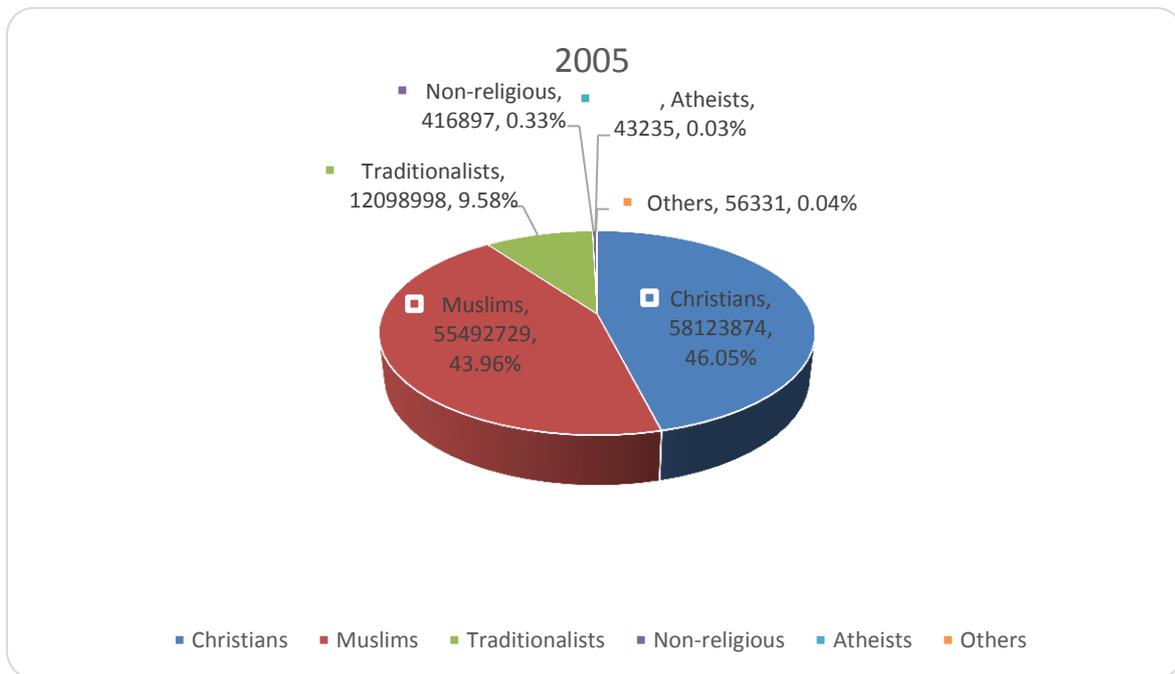


Chart Six: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 2006

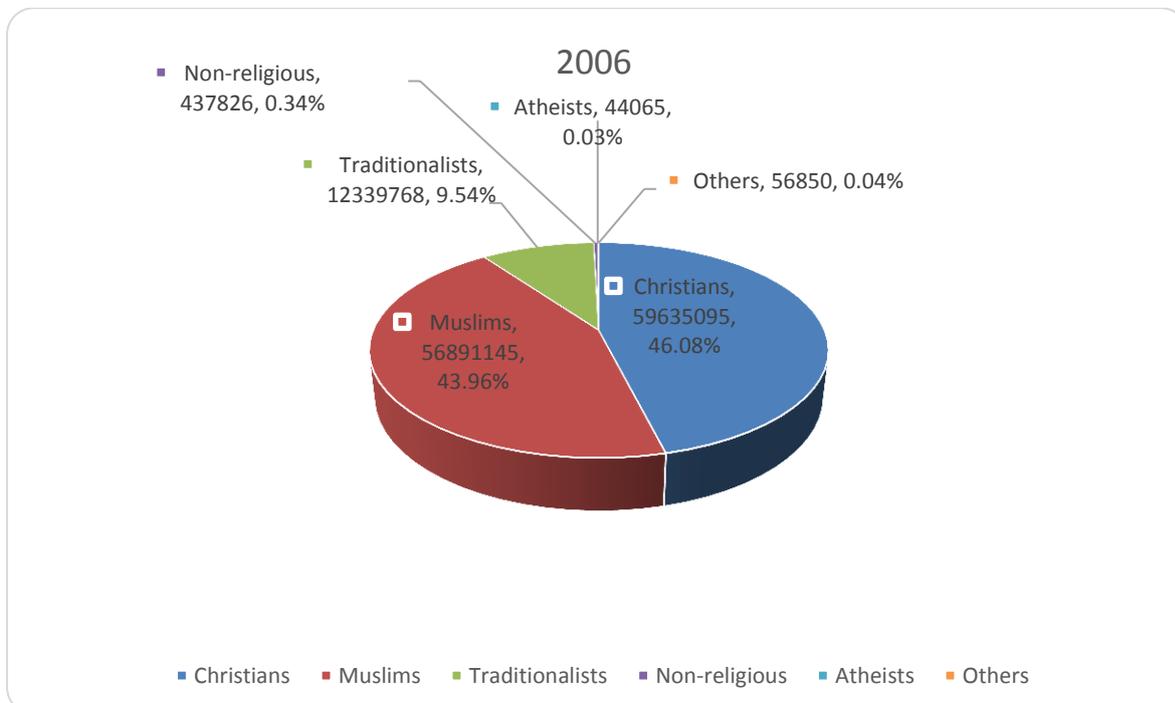


Chart Seven: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria 2007

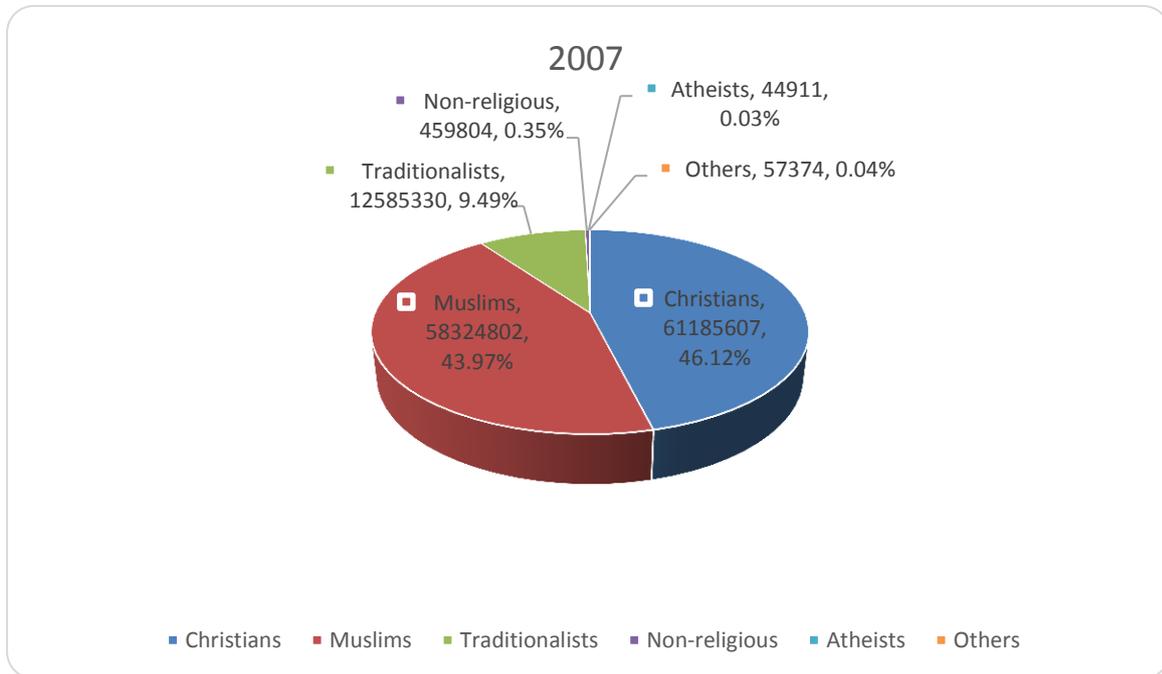
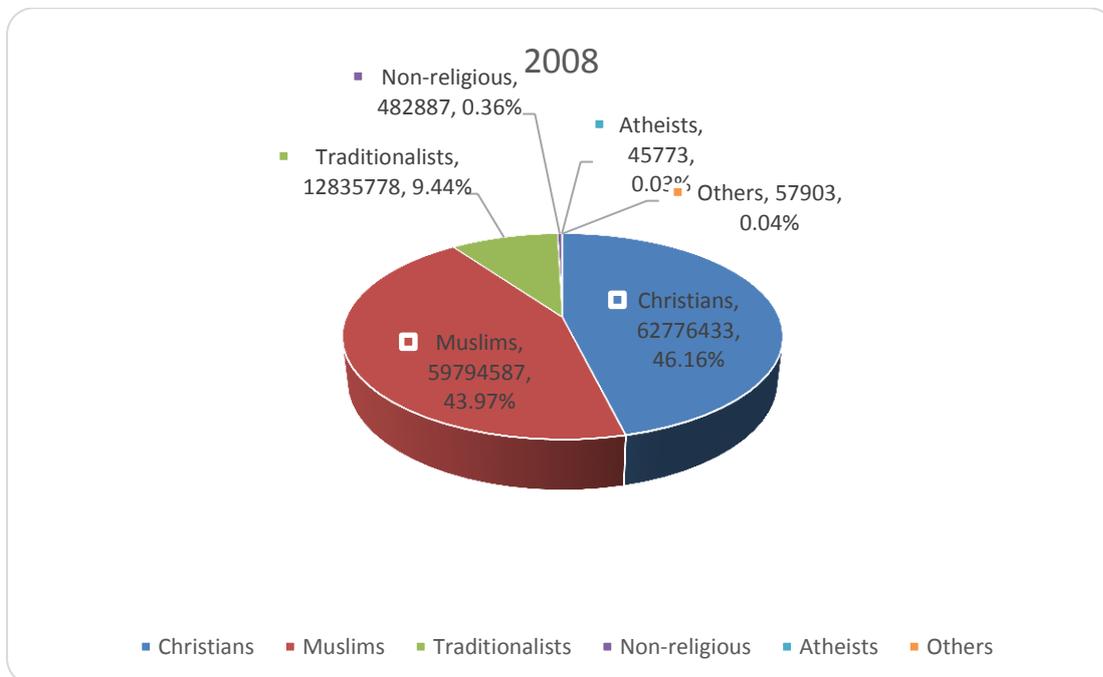


Chart Eight: Status of Religious Adherence in Nigeria in 2008



Summary of the Chart Details Described Above.

1900	Religious Group	Population
	Christians	176000
	Muslims	4200000
	Traditionalists	11824000
	Others	0
	TOTAL	16200000
1921	Christians	794135
	Muslims	7085983
	Traditionalists	10489619
	Others	16
	Northern Cameroon	261669
	TOTAL	18631422
1970	Christians	21723000
	Muslims	21750000
	Traditionalists	5970000
	Non-religious	100000
	Atheists	20000
	Others	23000
	TOTAL	49586000

2000	Christians	51123167
	Muslims	48999663
	Traditionalists	10963809
	Non-religious	326339
	Atheists	39313
	Others	53804
	TOTAL	111506095
2005	Christians	58123874
	Muslims	55492729

	Traditionalists	12098998
	Non-religious	416897
	Atheists	43235
	Others	56331
	TOTAL	126232064
2006	Christians	59635095
	Muslims	56891145
	Traditionalists	12339768
	Non-religious	437826
	Atheists	44065
	Others	56850
	TOTAL	129404749
2007	Christians	61185607
	Muslims	58324802
	Traditionalists	12585330
	Non-religious	459804
	Atheists	44911
	Others	57374
	TOTAL	132657829
2008	Christians	62776433
	Muslims	59794587
	Traditionalists	12835778
	Non-religious	482887
	Atheists	45773
	Others	57903
	TOTAL	135993361

The charts above show a steady growth for Christianity. The greatest increase took place between 2000 and 2008 when Christianity gained over 10,000,000 adherents in just nine years. It is clear that most traditionalists converted to Christianity, while part of the growth might have been gained biologically.

3.3 Adamawa State at a Glance

Many kingdoms had existed in the land known today as Adamawa. These were kingdoms of the Jukun, Chamba, Mummuye, Bata, Lunguda and Marghi. They predated the *Jihad* of Usman dan Fodio in early 19th Century. Those kingdoms were traditionalist in religion. Their people eventually formed the bulk of recipients of the Christian message when it finally came to the region at the beginning of the 20th Century.

However, according to Kirk-Greene:

... the history of Adamawa dates only from the *Jihad* (holy war)... and, among the heterogeneous tribes of modern Adamawa it is unlikely that any represents the aboriginal inhabitants for all of them have traditions of migrations from other lands, and, Adamawa as a kingdom extended over much of modern French Cameroons, as far east as Lere in Chad and south as far as Ngaundere in Cameroon.⁹⁴

The 19th century kingdom was initially known as Fombina. It became the largest of the Emirates in the Sokoto Caliphate.⁹⁵ Its headquarters, since 1841 at Yola, still retains traditional control over the one-third that today remains of Adamawa territory, all of it now situated on the eastern frontier of Nigeria alongside Cameroon. The territory was later named after its first ruler, Modibbo Adama, who headed the Fulani *Jihad* (holy war) of the early 1800s.⁹⁶

Modibo Adama nominally ruled the Adamawa Emirate for 42 years from 1806 to 1848. The indigenous tribes were not permanently subdued and he faced many wars and uprisings. Adama's sway over the acephalous pagan tribes in the Mubi and Numan areas was but shadowy and there were pockets of no-man's land between Adamawa Kingdom and the acquisitive kingdoms of Borno, Muri or Bauchi.⁹⁷ Yola and the Emirate were conquered 60 years later after Modibo Adama by the British who dethroned the *Lamido* (ruler) Zubairu in 1901, and put his loyalist younger brother, Bobbo Ahmadu, on the throne at Yola. By 1903 when Zubairu was killed, the British took full control of the territory. Adamawa as a province was established only in 1926 when the Adamawa and Muri Emirates were combined.⁹⁸ The removal of *Lamido* Zubairu marked a water-shed for the Fulbe (Fulani) of the Adamawa Emirate. It is still being remembered bitterly and when the *Fulbe* language is used incorrectly, it is, by way of easing the bitterness, referred to as *Fulfulde bawo Zubairu*,

⁹⁴ Kirk-Greene, A. H. M. 1969. *Adamawa Past and Present*. London: Dowsons of Pall Mall. p.15.

⁹⁵ Ahmed, P. 1993. *The Cross and the gods*. CAPRO Research Office, P.O. Box 6001, Jos, Nigeria, p. 18.

⁹⁶ Hickey, Rev. Fr. Raymond. 1984. *Christianity in Borno State and Northern Gongola*. Bodija, Ibadan: Claverianum Press, p.19.

⁹⁷ Kirk-Greene, 1969, p.15.

⁹⁸ Ahmed, 1993, p. 20.

meaning “Fulfulde after Zubairu”, or “the language from after the days of Zubairu” (reading, after Zubairu everything went bad, including the language).

Adamawa State today consists of Adamawa Emirate, Numan Division (a federation of chiefdoms), Chamba Division and Mubi Emirate which until the First World War was under German control as a part of Cameroon. After the war the Mubi area came under French and British control. In 1961, Mubi territory voted to become part of Northern Nigeria.⁹⁹

3.3.1 Location

Adamawa State has a very interesting history. Kirk-Greene in his “Adamawa Past and Present” observes that: “So much of modern Adamawa, nearly two thirds of the area and over half the population of the Emirate, lies within the Cameroons and it has, within 25 years, been administered by three European nations”.¹⁰⁰

It is noteworthy that during the First World War (1914-1919), the Alliance of British and French forces was fighting the Germans on Adamawa soil. In other words, by then the territory had known no peace for over a century.

Karl Kumm's Northern Nigerian tour of 1905 was intended to secure definite information on the advance of Islam among the pagan tribes. As a result of his report the Sudan United Mission (S.U.M.) was founded for the purpose of conducting field work, particularly in the region of Northern Nigeria. His report, apart from giving birth to the first S.U.M. station in Adamawa (in 1909, at Dili, Mbula-land), also gives a vivid description of the location of Adamawa and its climatic conditions. Kumm expresses his excitement about the vast mission field offered by Adamawa in his first book, sub-titled “Land of Darkness” and quoted by Kirk-Greene:

Its name sounds like music. But little or no music, little or no harmony lies behind the softly sounding name ... Adamawa, there it lies bathed in tropical sunshine, or bright under its southern moon, stretching from the Kameruns inward to the centre of the great Sudan ... The healthy mountain region of Adamawa, with its vigorous, intelligent heathen tribes, seems most inviting ... a strong basis there for missionary work throughout the Central Sudan.¹⁰¹

Approximately mid-way between the coast of Sudan Republic at the Red Sea and the West African coastal countries like Sierra Leone and Senegal on the Atlantic, Adamawa is situated on the eastern frontier of Nigeria with the Cameroon Republic between the 11th and 14th parallels above the equator. Adamawa State has an area of 39,742.12 sq. kilometres.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ahmed, 1993, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰ Kirk-Greene, 1969, p.79.

¹⁰¹ Kirk-Greene, 1969, p.94.

¹⁰² Source: Adamawa State Ministries of Information and Ministry for Land and Survey, Cartographic Office

Its main features are the Benue River which is the main tributary of the Niger, an international waterway, and the Gongola River that flows into the Benue at Numan. Other features are the Mandara Mountains with their plateaus stretching into Biu in neighboring Borno State and the Alantika mountains, running north to south and forming a natural border between Nigeria and Cameroon.

3.3.2 Inhabitants of Adamawa

The peoples of Adamawa are numerous. According to official government information, roughly 87 different languages or dialects are spoken in Adamawa State. In view of the number of ethnic groups in Adamawa, none of which is aboriginal to the area, it is evident that there has been a compulsory movement of peoples into the region. The population of the state was estimated at 3,106,858 in 2006.¹⁰³ As indicated, the results of the national census conducted in April 2006, specify that Nigeria has well over 140,000,000 people.

However, as stated above, among the heterogeneous ethnic groups of modern Adamawa, there may be no aboriginal inhabitants. Kirk-Greene submits that the ethnic history of the province may be considered in terms of four, more or less successive, waves of immigration though the arrival of many ethnic groups probably preceded these. The four main migratory waves saw the Jukun, Chamba, Bata and Fulani settling in the area of Adamawa.¹⁰⁴ These migratory movements were prominent because they involved kingdoms that had long been very powerful and that, at one time or another, had occupied large territories. Their territories may have shrunk and their powers waned but the kingdoms still exist.

The 1993 CAPRO research project focusing on Adamawa and Taraba States, *The Cross and the gods*, the results of which are widely accepted by churches in Nigeria as sound missiological material, concludes the following:

There are three language families in the two states, Adamawa and Taraba. These are

- i. the Niger-Kordafan,
- ii. the Afro-Asiatic (Chadic branch), and
- ii. unclassified languages.

The three groups are composed as follows.

1. Niger-Kordofanian.

Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2006.

¹⁰³ Adamawa State Ministries of Information and Ministry for Land and Survey, 2006.

¹⁰⁴ Kirk-Greene, 1969, p.15.

- a) Niger Congo: e.g. Koma
 - b) West Atlantic: Fulfulde
 - c) Benue Congo.
 - i) Jukun: both Benue and Central Jukunoid languages,
 - ii) Bantoid languages: spoken on Mambila Plateau and in Kurmi District of Sardauna Local Government Area,
 - iii) Adamawa Eastern: Dadiya, Waja, Bambuka, Gwomu, Lo, Panyam, Lelau, Janjo, Munga, Kwa, Longuda, Lala, Libo, Mboi, Yungur, Bali, Gengle, Kpasham, Kugama, Sate, Teme, Waka, Yandang, Gongla, Mummuye, Kam, Chamba, Kutin, Mumbake, Vere, Wom, Mbum-Laka, Dirim, Lamja, Baya.
2. The Afro-Asiatic (Chadic branch) includes:
Hausa, Kanakuru, Hwana, Ga'anda, Bura, Kilba, Marghi, Higgi, Gudu Nzanyi, Holma, Bwatiye, Gude, Fali, Sukur, Laamang, Tur, Vizik, Vemgo, Wagga, Mandara, Ngoshendhang and Matakam.
3. To the unclassified languages belong:
Banso, Bete, Giziga, Jero, Jirai, Jole, Kambu, Kunini, Lama, Mundang, Ngwaba, Nyamnyam, Poli, Sakbe, Tikar, Wurbo, Yergam, Yotti and Zumo.¹⁰⁵

The linguistic affinities of separate ethnic groups are made clear in the classificatory system of the CAPRO team. For the purpose of this research, I will identify ethnic groups using the names they call themselves by today. This is because some of the linguistic groups as presented above have formed clusters, identifying themselves as one entity. For example, the Bura, Kilba and Marghi are mostly treated as one ethnic group because of their linguistic affinity. Therefore, in relation to the present research, they are also discussed together, as the Marghi.

The larger ethnic groups of Adamawa, as they are known and officially identified in Nigeria, are the Bwatiye, Chamba (Sama), Fulani (Fula or Fulbe), Gwoza, Higgi, Lunguda, Mummuye, Ga'anda and Kanakuru (Dera), the Marghi (Kilba, Bura and Marghi), Mbula, Sukur, Tera and the Bina (Lala and Yungur together). The origins of the ethnic groups can be determined using CAPRO's system above.

¹⁰⁵ Ahmed, 1993, pp.23-24.

3.3.3 Religion in Adamawa State

There are three main religious groupings in Adamawa State. The African traditional religion, sometimes called African indigenous religion, is the oldest. Islam arrived with the Fulani jihadist expansion of the 19th century and Christianity was brought to Adamawa at the beginning of the 20th century. All three religions have a strong following, but Christianity has the larger following while the African traditional religion today attracts the least followers. The indigenous people of Adamawa have converted *en masse* to Christianity rather than Islam. Islam was embraced only by those ethnic groups who were defeated by the Fulani jihadists of the early 1800s. However, there is a strong syncretistic tendency among Christians and Muslims in Adamawa State whereby indigenous African traditions are combined with the newer faiths. It is appropriate to discuss the religious groupings in greater detail.

3.3.3.1 African Traditional Religion

The traditional religion of the Adamawa people forms a strong unifying element, affecting all the ethnic groups. For example, the Bwatiye, Kilba, Ngwaba, Marghi, Chamba and Mayah peoples, all in Adamawa, share a common belief in a supreme God who is sometimes identified as the sky God. Among some of these groups, the supreme God has subordinates that are identified with natural forces, sacred trees, streams, wild animals, fortune and war. Patience Ahmed summarizes the spiritual realm as follows.

Belief in the Supreme God who is far away and can only be reached through mediatory spirits. There are generally four worship patterns in this area:

- i. Worship of the gods kept by heads of families for protection against evil, for blessing of the farms and healing. In most cases, they are represented by a pot and sometimes a calabash.
- ii. The rain cult: There are usually priests who pray on behalf of the ethnic groups in times of drought.
- iii. River spirits: These are common among the Mbula and Bwatiye who live in areas surrounded by rivers. Some of the spirits enforce oaths.
- iv. Worship of ancestral spirits who are responsible for blessings and, when offended, for sickness and misfortune.¹⁰⁶

The Bwatiye in particular stand out among the ethnic groups in Adamawa for their array of gods and goddesses. The most venerated among the Bwatiye gods is Nzeanzo who is

¹⁰⁶ Ahmed, P., Ojo, Y., Dauda, G., and Bawa, L., (eds.). 1993. *Conquered by the Sword*. Jos, Nigeria: CAPRO Research Office, p. 23.

considered the most benevolent and sympathetic of all gods. Sometimes the Bwatiye liken Nzeanzo to Jesus, as captured by Patience Ahmed:

He is always ready and willing to forgive his offenders their sins. His shrine is a sanctuary to any guilty person who escapes there to take refuge. His worshippers believe that one day after death they will be raised by Nzeanzo. People also believe that Nzeanzo heals the sick, sometimes instantaneously...¹⁰⁷

According to a Bwatiye legend, Nzeanzo has been conceived and born supernaturally.

The rain-cult is a powerful cult among all ethnic groups in Adamawa State as they are agriculturists. The community's life depends on the rain maker or priest. People always look beyond themselves for the reasons and manners of their existence and favorable weather is a divine gift. Patience Ahmed, quoting Abubakar, writes:

The people are always afraid of drought because their entire life depends on farming. The onset of rain is of religious significance and harvest commences only after religious rites have been performed. The chief priests are expected to consult the ancestors on behalf of the society. In years past they also acted as chiefs of the tribes. In some cases, like the Aku Uka of the Jukun and the Abenyi of the Kam, the chief priests are considered to be divine. They are believed to be the providers of rain and high yield for the seeds.¹⁰⁸

The belief in totems is common among ethnic groups in Adamawa. For example, clans may be attached to hyenas, lions or crocodiles or they may have baboons, monkeys, buffalos or hippopotami as totems. The choice of totems depends on the location of the group and on its source of livelihood.¹⁰⁹

Another element common to most ethnic groups is respect for the spirits of the ancestors who are considered to be alive and powerful, either for good or for evil. Ancestors are sometimes represented by symbols of war, or of affluence, or security. There is a general belief among religious traditionalists in reincarnation and transmigration. Sacrifice is an important aspect of traditional worship. Through sacrifice, the ancestral spirits, the demons, or the supreme God can be appeased.¹¹⁰ The most venerated places of worship are formally withdrawn from public view. Priests and diviners are the religious leaders. To be a diviner or a diviner's son assures one of a special position in the community.¹¹¹

Moral codes are common, especially codes prescribing respect for elders. Disrespect shown to elders is unacceptable to the community. People seek help through oracles. Their

¹⁰⁷ Ahmed, Ojo, Dauda, and Bawa, (eds.). 1993, p. 82.

¹⁰⁸ Ahmed, Ojo, Dauda, and Bawa, (eds.). 1993, p.26.

¹⁰⁹ Woblai, J. A. A traditional healer and priest who converted to Christianity in 1957 and became a pastor of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria, Interviewed in Yola, Adamawa Nigeria, August, 2009.

¹¹⁰ Ishaya, E. R. 1984. "Search for Identity, Historical Review and Critical Analysis of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria." MTh Thesis. LNTS, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA, p.33.

¹¹¹ This researcher is the son of a diviner and has had firsthand experience of the privileges enjoyed by a diviner.

natural laws restrain them from doing things that are abhorrent to the spirits and to the community in general.¹¹² Shrines dedicated to ancestors or spirits can be found in private homes, clan or ancestral homes and on village squares. The eldest person in family, clan or community is in charge of the shrine where utensils are earthen, wooden, grass or calabash wares, in other words, made of natural materials.¹¹³

Religion and society are completely interlinked and each community is a religious unity, believing in the divine and the diviner. This might actually inform the profound trust that is put in the church and its clergy, especially in the Pentecostal churches in Adamawa today.

It could be observed here that adherents to traditional religion in Adamawa State are more likely to become Christians than Muslims because of Islam's colonizing tendencies which require one to give up kith and kin, ethnic affinity, language and even dress code. Becoming a Muslim implies becoming a new person. One must learn Arabic for worship and adopt Fulfulde as one's spoken language and one can no longer share the same dish of food with one's relatives.

3.3.3.2 Islam

Islam reached Adamawa as a result of the Fulani jihadist activities of the 19th century. The force behind the jihad (holy war) was Usman Dan Fodio, who started to preach jihad from 1786 onwards. Between 1804 and 1810 he led the Fulani from Sokoto to conquer the Hausa states and swept from there south, crossing the River Niger and capturing Ilorin, a city in the Yoruba kingdom of Oyo. For some time he controlled much of Borno. The expansion continued until 1860 by which time Islam had become rooted in Adamawa. Rev. Father Raymond Hickey states that:

The new Fulani emirate of Yola quickly consolidated its base and engaged the non-Muslim communities north of the River Benue. Having subdued the Batta, they carried the holy war to the Kilba, Gude, Fali, Higgi and Marghi communities further north. By 1830 a chain of Fulani ribats or outposts were established at Gombi, Mubi, Uba, Michika and Madagali (and Garoua, Ngaundere, Tibati and Maroua in Cameroon and Binder in Chad Republic were also reached at that time)... The enmity continued until the advent of colonial rule and the non-Muslim clans of the region were never fully subjugated by the Yola Fulani.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Ishaya, 1984, p.34.

¹¹³ Ishaya, 1984, p.34.

¹¹⁴ Hickey, 1984, p. 8.

As will be discussed below, Christians still feel very bitter towards the former colonial government as regards its policy of indirect rule, especially in northern Nigeria. Rev. Fr. Raymond Hickey observes that:

All school history books tell us of the system of Indirect Rule or devolved colonial administration which had been devised by Lord Lugard and his successors in the government of Northern Nigeria. It greatly enhanced the prestige and influence of the traditional Muslim emirs and contributed to the rapid spread of Islam during the colonial era.¹¹⁵

The system allowed for the British colonial administrators to operate through the local traditional rulers of the day in northern Nigeria. The colonial officers had no direct contact with the people. Instead all contact between colonizers and colonized took place through traditional rulers. If sometimes any benefit was intended for the local people, it would reach them via the rulers who most times diverted benefits to their families and friends. The policy also placed people, who had thus far had their own chiefs, under the rulers favoured by Britain.

Islam is the second main religion in Adamawa State. The Muslims of Adamawa are basically Sunnis. The Shiite strand does as yet not have much influence, even though efforts in that direction are being orchestrated by Pakistani elements in higher institutions of learning. Most traditional seats of power in the state are occupied by Muslims which causes frustration among some non-Muslim ethnic groups.

3.3.3.3 Christianity

Reformed Church missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) from South Africa, under the auspices of the Sudan United Mission-South African Branch (SUM-SA), were the first to establish a station among the Mbula people at Dilli near Borrong, the district headquarters of Mbula land. Very little information is available on the DRC mission in Nigeria. Willem Saayman did some work, making an overview of the DRC mission as a whole and explains where the missionary enthusiasm came from. His work provides good background material and helps to understand why the DRC went so far from home while its main work terrain was in Southern Africa.¹¹⁶ The enterprise was apparently not unconnected to the fact that the missionary community increasingly focused on the need to halt Islam's march forward in general, especially in Africa.¹¹⁷ Karl Kumm, the pioneer missionary of the SUM, explained to the British government of the time that "the whole *raison d'etre* of the

¹¹⁵ Hickey, 1984, p.19.

¹¹⁶ Saayman, W. In a letter to Ishaya about the work of the D.R.C. Mission in Mbula land, 15th October 2012.

¹¹⁷ Boer, J. H. 1979. *Missionary Messengers of Liberation in a Colonial Context, A Case Study of the Sudan United Mission*: Amsterdam, p.115.

Mission is to counteract the Moslem advance among the Pagan tribes in the Benue region. This cannot be done by going to the Mohammedans, and therefore our work will lie among the Pagan tribes".¹¹⁸ Although the foundation of the South African branch of the SUM predates Kumm's 1907 visit to Cape Town, Kumm gave it a new impetus.¹¹⁹ This might explain why the South Africans came to the region in 1909.

Earlier in 1905, a tract published by the SUM was sent by a friend in Scotland to Dr. Fallon of Cape Town, South Africa. The tract was called, "Crisis in Hausa land – Cross or Crescent", and Dr. Fallon, being deeply touched by the tract, shared it with Dr. Andrew Murray of Wellington, who advised for a South African Auxiliary of SUM to be formed in 1906. In 1907, when Dr. Kumm visited South Africa and deepened the interest which had already been awakened, "a committee was appointed, representing all the leading churches, and before long, two young men, Rev. J. G. Botha and Mr. V. H. Hosking were in Nigeria".¹²⁰

Conversely, the SUM had also been encouraged by Lord Lugard, governor of Northern Nigeria, to establish a mission station at Wase in Muri Province. This was despite the fact that the colonial administration at the same time practiced the unpopular indirect rule policy in Northern Nigeria. The reasons were obvious. Firstly, there was a crisis in the mission field in the Sudan and, secondly, there was a possible political disaster looming. Jensen writes:

The crisis was said to be due to Moslem traders and missionaries flooding into the country, so there would hardly be a single heathen village left on the banks of the Niger by 1910. The Christian world was hesitating, so the doors would be closed to the Mission, which, also from a political point of view, would be disastrous. Lord Lugard called on the Mission to go out among the heathen tribes, they themselves begging for Christian teachers.¹²¹

Hence, several factors would work against the mission's aims which involved planting missionaries of the Gospel of Christ along the border line between those districts that were by then recognized as Mohammedan, and those that were pagan. ... The ambitious plan, which covered some half of "the vast Sudan, 3,000 miles across, from the heights of Abyssinia to the wide sweeping flood of the Atlantic ..."¹²² was conceived and executed by the SUM, an interdenominational mission society.

¹¹⁸ Boer, 1979, p.115.

¹¹⁹ Boer, 1979, p.115.

¹²⁰ Tett, M. E. (n. d.). *The Road to Freedom, Sudan United Mission, 1904-1968*. ACTS Bookshop Bukuru, Kaduna: Baraka Press, p.29.

¹²¹ Jensen, M. 1992. *Two Men and their Mission*. Christianfeld: Forlaget Savanne, p.25.

¹²² Jensen, 1992, p. 25

Between 1909 and 1911 two missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church settled among the Mbula people at Dilli along the banks of the Benue River. They labored there for two years but, believing the Mbula people were not receptive to their message, they left and went downstream and continued their work outside Adamawa State, in the lower Benue valley. It was here, among the Bantoid Tiv people, that the Reformed Church missionaries made a mark. The church they started has today developed into a strong witness to Christ in Benue State.

The reason why the Dutch Reformed Church mission among the Mbula was abandoned is not entirely clear. Extant reports of the whole episode go thus:

Dr. Kumm and W. H. Hosking observed from the boat that an Mbula village was a continuous town from five to six miles in length. This was “the most populated part of the Benue valley.” This may have been the major factor that decided the South African Branch of the Sudan United Mission to open a station near Borrong in 1909. The Rev. J. G. Botha, W. A. Hosking (Dr. Kumm’s friend), and Carl Zimmerman manned the station. In 1911 the station was abandoned, after only two years of work. To the Government, that proved that the attempt to proselytize Mbula was “premature.” The people appeared to be glued to their old ways. Two children whose parents had hoped they would be the first indigenous literates in the land had to be withdrawn from the school because a reliable and infallible mouth had said they would die of [sic] they continued to learn the new ways. The Government was irked by the chief of Mbula’s complaint that he had been unable to collect taxes because the mission had asked him to help it erect a hut. This was complicated by the chief’s anger at the Mission’s failure to pay him for that work. Although the Mission dismissed the chief’s accusation as “absolutely untrue,” the Government ruled that the chief should not be given any work by the Mission until he had completed his statutory duty of collecting taxes.¹²³

The SUM field secretary at its Sheffield headquarters in England, J. L. Maxwell, had different ideas as to why the mission failed. He was distressed to observe during a visit in December 1910 that the farm, the school and the language work were failures. He noted that the compound was not swept and littered with soiled clothes and dirty water. “To say it kindly, carelessness was visible in the little things that matter ... Only playing hymns at the organ seemed to be good.”¹²⁴

The Danish branch of the SUM, the SUM (D), took quite a different view of the abandonment of the Mbula mission field, claiming that, “... the South Africans had to leave Mbula simply because a more suitable field of work had opened itself in the Munchi (Tiv) tribe.”¹²⁵

¹²³ Pwedor, N. 2005. *A History of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria*. Kaduna: Baraka Press and Publishers Ltd., pp. 2-3.

¹²⁴ Pwedor, 2005, p. 3.

¹²⁵ Pwedor, 2005, p. 3.

Mollie E. Tett recorded that:

Mission H.Q. was at Ibi in those days, and at a conference there in 1909, it was proposed that “somewhere to the east” going up the Benue river, an area should be explored which would be assigned to the South African Branch. Dr. Kumm and Mr. Hosking were the ‘explorers’ and they chose Mbula (some 200 miles from Ibi) up the river to the eastward as a needy area. Here, therefore, Hosking, Zimmerman and Rev. J. G. Botha came to live for a time.

Two years later the three pioneers abandoned this area and came down the river again westwards to the great Tiv tribe, making their home at a place called Salatu. The move was reasonable and subsequent events have justified it. There were many reasons, one being that the Mbula tribe numbered some 7000 and was extremely isolated, whereas the Tiv tribe numbered 250,000 and was much nearer to Ibi.¹²⁶

From the submission above, three arguments for the abandonment of the Mbula mission stand out. Firstly, the lack of success among the Mbula, for whatever reasons, secondly, the missionaries felt isolated from their colleagues at Ibi, and thirdly, the Tiv far outweighed the Mbula ethnic groups in size. The other ethnic groups in the vicinity of the Mbula were not explored, notwithstanding the fact that, the Bakopi, Tambo, Bille and the Bambur belong to the Mbula group and are living in close proximity. Possibly, the size of the total “Mbula-Mwashat” group (including the Jarawa, Wamba, Kagoro and the Bille of Bille Kingdom near Port Harcourt) and of the landmass they inhabit, would have overwhelmed the pioneering missionaries. They simply had not been sufficiently informed about Mbula territory which straddles Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kaduna and Rivers states.

The researcher however notes that the Mbula village, abandoned by the South Africans has today two Lutheran congregations, one Catholic congregation and nine independent Pentecostal churches. The village has not grown beyond its original borders since the time of the first missionary activity which could be explained by the migration of indigenous people to urban areas in search of a better life or employment, especially in the military service. Despite the fact that the community has less than one hundred homes, it has produced three generals in the Nigerian army and air force with several colonels, majors and captains, many of whom are still serving. Many other indigenes of Dilli serve in different professions and various capacities. The story of the missionaries’ withdrawal is still passed on from generation to generation, sometimes with bitterness, but the locality of the first mission station continues to be cherished by the people. Today, the Mbula chief, a Christian of the Lutheran denomination (a son of a former evangelist with the SUM-D and chief of

¹²⁶ Tett, M. E. (n. d.). *The Road to Freedom, Sudan United Mission, 1904-1968*. ACTS Bookshop Bukuru, Kaduna: Baraka Press, p. 29-30.

Mbula), is the most educated among all the chiefs in Adamawa State, with a British wife. He rose to the highest level in the state's civil service but retired before his succession to the throne as chief of his people.

There were no further attempts at missionary work in Adamawa until 1913, two years after the departure of the Dutch Reformed Church. From that time on, the story of Christianity in Adamawa becomes synonymous with, from 1913 onwards, the struggle of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN), with, in 1923 the arrival of the Church of the Brethren or Ekklesiyar' Yan'uwa a Nijeriya (EYN), and also after 1940 with the establishment of the Catholic Church through the efforts of the Augustinian Fathers from Ireland. This research pays particular attention to these three churches because their memberships in Adamawa are largely made up of people indigenous to Adamawa.

3.3.3.3 (a) The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN)

The Sudan United Mission (previously called the Sudan Pioneer Mission) was an offshoot of the 'Holiness Movement' of the last half of the 19th century. It arose in the United States and influenced all evangelical communities in America and Europe.¹²⁷ By 1902 a mission had been formed in England. On 23 July, 1904, a first party of mission workers set sail for Nigeria to work among the ethnic groups living on the Bauchi plateau in Nigeria. They however ended up establishing a station at Wase in Muri province; following the advice of the governor of Northern Nigeria, Lord Lugard, in September 1904. The pioneer missionaries were Dr. Karl Kumm, Dr. Bateman, Mr. L. Maxwell and Mr. J. Burt.¹²⁸

The news of the new missionary society, the Sudan Pioneer Mission, had reached Denmark and brought about the formation of a prayer circle in Aalborg under Pastor Anton Pederson in 1905. The prayer circle selected a young man, Niels Hoegh Bronnum, and sent him to be trained as a medical doctor at Edinburgh University in Scotland where he graduated on 22nd November 1911. On January 22, 1913 Dr. Bronnum, his wife and a nurse, Dogmar Rose, became the first missionaries of the SUM (D) and set sail for West-Africa. Bronnum felt they were like Paul and Barnabas of old, sent out by the people of God to do special service.¹²⁹

Margaret Bronnum gave birth to a son whom they named Holgar after Dr. Bronnum's brother. Two days later on 13th June, 1913, Margaret died of fever. She was buried at Rumasha near Ibi, while the nurse returned to Scotland to take the baby to Margaret's

¹²⁷Jensen, 1992, p. 30

¹²⁸Pwedon, 2005, p. 2

¹²⁹ Pwedon, 2005, p.12.

parents. On the 8th January, 1913, the eve of their departure from the Church of Our Lady in Aalborg, Pastor Anton Pedersen had addressed the three young missionaries as follows. Paul and Barnabas were selected for their mission by their congregation: “this is not just three people running a mission in the Sudan: it is the work of the whole living church. These three are the instruments: but it is the entire church, which stands behind them. They are God’s elected, who have been granted the privilege of conducting a mission. They are not lifting a burden; the Church in Denmark is best served by powerful missionary activity.

Paul and Barnabas suffered on their mission, but through their suffering they conquered. In the same way, there would be almost insurmountable barriers, climatic, linguistic and so on, for these missionaries to the pagan world, which is suffering so terribly but imagine when the black people from Yola say: Denmark brought us the Gospel.¹³⁰

Dr. Bronnum continued on his journey up the river Benue and reached Numan on 29th September 1913. He proceeded to Yola to request clearance for his mission work from the resident (the colonial governor of Adamawa province). Bronnum returned to Numan on 5th October 1913. He applied for land on which to found his mission. On the 8th October, 1913, he wrote the following letter;

Numan
08.10.1913

Sir,

On behalf of the Danish Branch of the Sudan United Mission I beg to ask your permission,

- (1) To build temporary buildings at the town of Numan;*
- (2) To take necessary steps for the learning of the Bachama language;*
- (3) To start clinic work among the natives;*
- (4) To open school-work with free admission for anyone who chooses to join; and*
- (5) To engage in other forms of mission work as opportunity offers itself and time is ripe for it.*

When I interviewed you on the second instant, you told me to apply to headquarters at Zungeru, but as I should like to consult my home committee before applying for a permanent site. I suppose I may defer writing to Zungeru in the meantime.

Yours Faithfully,

Sgd.

*N.H. Bronnum, MB, CHB.*¹³¹

¹³⁰ Jensen, 1992, p.30.

¹³¹ Pwedon, 2005, p.19.

On 22nd April 1914 Dr. Bronnum received permission to tell the Bachama people about God. He felt he could weep for happiness. “God had given me the grace to have this experience.”¹³² He wrote.

With permission granted and demands for help coming in from villages around Numan, Bronnum moved swiftly. A year and a half later the mission conducted its first baptism in Numan (30th January 1916). The second baptism followed on 15th October 1916. Rev. Dr. Bronnum himself presided over the baptisms. In the same year St. John’s Church was built and licensed as a place for the celebration of marriages under the 1914 Marriage Ordinance.¹³³

The mission established its first school in June 1921. The school would teach the local people reading and writing and train evangelists for the mission. By the middle of 1921 there were 22 baptized church members: 8 men, 7 women and 7 children.¹³⁴ The first Church Council was elected (25th June 1921) and installed (26th June, 1921). Thus, in effect, the LCCN was born on that day, although it was at the time part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark. The work was soon extended to neighboring towns like Shelleng, north-west of Numan, Lamurde, to the south-west, and Pella to the north-east, all between 1917 and 1921.¹³⁵

In order to develop Christian fellowship and encourage ethnic groups to get to know one another better, the first annual convention or “Babban Taruwar Ekklesiya” of all Lutheran Christians was held in Lamurde (September 1925).¹³⁶ By 1946 the mission had selected five men to be trained for the ministry. After a two year training programme the first pastors of the church were ordained on 22nd February 1948 in a colourful ceremony at the annual convention that year. The LCCN pastorate did grow from five in 1948 to 506 in 2006. In the intervening years 50 had died. The remaining 506 are serving 1,226,104 adherents who attend the 1568 congregations of the church.¹³⁷

The church became autonomous in 1954, approximately 41 years after the first missionaries set foot on Adamawa soil, taking the name of Lutheran Church of Christ in the Sudan (LCCS). It applied to the governor general of Nigeria for letters of incorporation the following year (1955) and it was granted the Certificate of Incorporation No.402 in March 1956. This enabled the church to appoint seven trustees for the purpose of managing the land that fell under (Perpetual Succession) Ordinance Cap.107, with Numan as the headquarters of

¹³² Pweton, 2005, p. 4.

¹³³ Pweton, 2005, p. 4.

¹³⁴ Pweton, 2005, p. 4.

¹³⁵ Pweton, 2005, p. 4.

¹³⁶ Pweton, 2005, p. 5.

¹³⁷ LCCN Administration Department Office, Numan and LCCN Official Diary 2007.

the Registered Trustees and of the Church. The European field superintendent of the mission, Rev. Pilgaard, remained the leader of the LCCS until 1960 when the Rev. Akila Todi, who had been his deputy, was elected president to succeed him as the first indigenous leader of the LCCS.¹³⁸

There have been four major developments in the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria since the 1970s. The first development was the decision of the LCCS and the Sudan United Mission, Danish branch - the SUM (D) to transfer mission property to the church.

The agreement came into effect in January, 1972. Mission property, formerly under the SUM (D) now fell under the LCCS.¹³⁹

The second development was that the church felt the title 'president', designating the head of the church, was more political than biblical or spiritual. Besides, many organizations in the country use the title 'president' for their principal officer. It was felt that there was no precedent for this in the apostolic tradition.¹⁴⁰

A committee was set up to examine the issue and recommended that the leader of the LCCS should be designated 'bishop' to conform to the apostolic tradition. The recommendation was accepted at the May 1973 "Babban Majalisar Ekklesiya" (BME) [general church council] of the LCCS and the Rev. Akila Todi was elected bishop and consecrated on the 7th October, 1973; 40 years after the first missionaries came to Numan and 25 years after the ordination of the first indigenous pastors. He was re-elected for a second term but could not complete the tenure due to ill health. In November 1986 Rev. David L. Windibiziri was elected the second bishop (consecrated on 22nd February) 1987.

The third development in the church concerned the name of the church. At the May 1975 BME, the Lutheran Church of Christ in the Sudan (LCCS) felt that it should define more clearly its scope of operation and it resolved to drop the 'S' for Sudan and replace it with 'N' for Nigeria so that the name of the church became 'Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria.' This limited its sphere of activities to Nigeria and implied that the whole of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was the LCCN's catchment area, and not just Adamawa that was the area originally allocated to the SUM Danish branch mission.¹⁴¹

A fourth development was the creation of dioceses in the LCCN. At a much earlier date, in the mid-1980s, the idea of creating dioceses was mooted at successive BMEs under the first bishop Dr. Akila Todi. At that time it was thought that a maximum of three dioceses would suffice, considering the size of the LCCN, but in 1994 a committee began to gauge the

¹³⁸ Ishaya, 1984, p.96.

¹³⁹ Ishaya, 1984, p.111.

¹⁴⁰ Ishaya, 1984, p.102.

¹⁴¹ Pweton, 2005, p.6.

general opinion in the church. After a year, the committee recommended the establishment of five dioceses.

These were to be founded in Gongola, with headquarters at Kem, at Kudu (later Bonotem) with headquarters at Ganye, in Shallholma (headquarters at Gombi); Todi (headquarters at Bali) and Yola (headquarters at Jimeta). In addition, two mission fields were created, Abuja and Taraba. The committee recommended that five bishops should be elected to head the dioceses and that the national LCCN leader should be designated 'archbishop'.¹⁴²

The recommendations were adopted and the constitution of the LCCN was accordingly amended in 1995.¹⁴³

In October 1995 the first bishops for the dioceses were elected and on 25th February 1996 they were consecrated. After one year in office they qualified, along with the presiding bishop of the LCCN, to contest for the position of archbishop of the LCCN. At the BME in November 1996 the presiding bishop was elected first archbishop of the LCCN and thus the restructured LCCN entered a new phase, 83 years after the first missionaries set foot in Adamawa.¹⁴⁴

At present the LCCN has 8 dioceses. The sixth Arewa diocese was added by pronouncement of the archbishop at the church's November 2007 General Church Council (GCC) at Jimeta. The seventh diocese of Abuja was established in November 2009 and the eighth, Mayo-Belwa, in November 2010. Taraba had in 2009 declined its proposed upgrading to diocese status and remains a mission field, until it is felt that an improved economic and numerical position justifies the promotion. There are today 8 dioceses, 36 divisions (deaneries) and 255 districts, 2000 congregations, and 1,700,000 adherents who are served by 567 pastors, including retired clergy.¹⁴⁵

Below, is the administrative and power structure of the LCCN.

¹⁴² LCCN Administration Department, Recorded Minutes of the Committee for the Creation of Dioceses in LCCN, 1995.

¹⁴³ LCCN Administration Department, Recorded Minutes of the BME (GCC) of the LCCN, May, 1995.

¹⁴⁴ LCCN Administration Department, Recorded Minutes of the BME of the LCCN, May, 1995. Nov. 1996.

¹⁴⁵ LCCN Administration Department, Official Statistics, 2010, Numan, Nigeria, .2010.

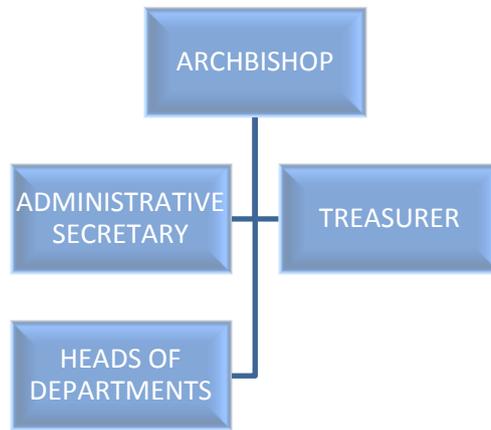


Figure 1: LCCN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

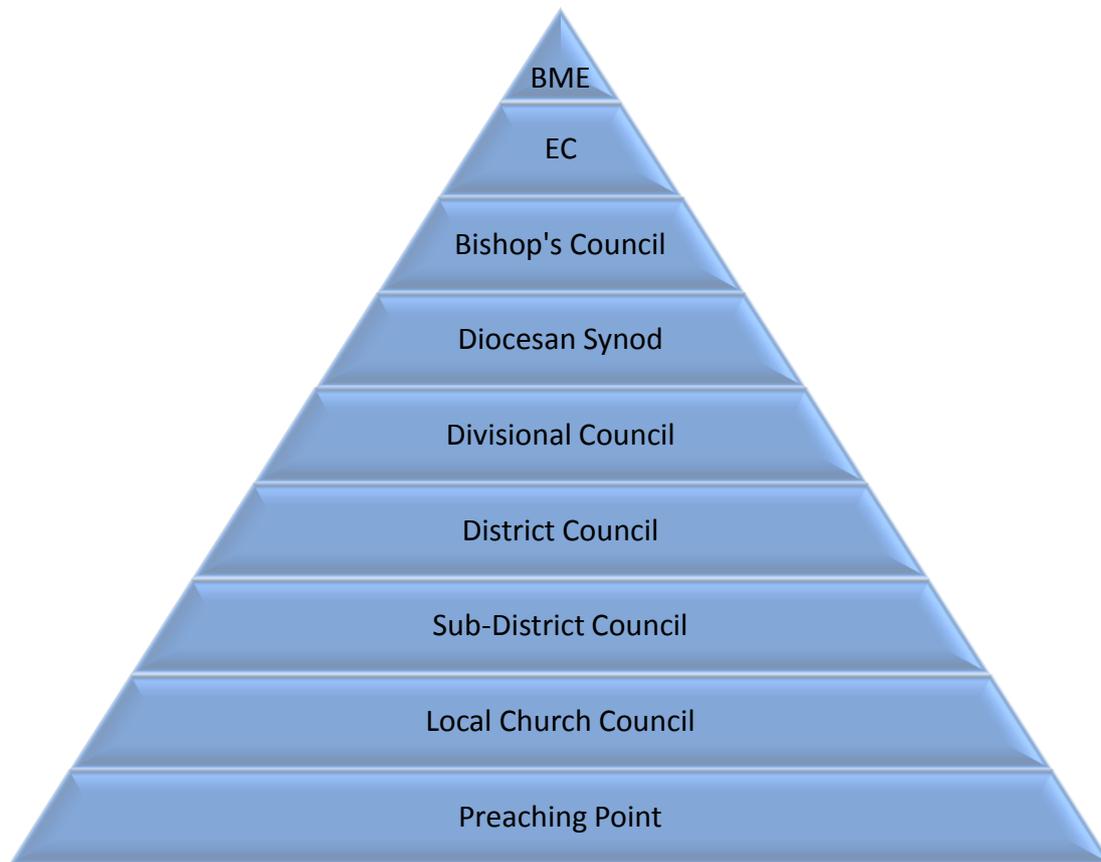


Figure 2: LCCN POWER STRUCTURE

3.3.3.3 (b) The Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nijeriya (EYN)

The Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN), the second largest mainline church in Adamawa state, was established by the Church of the Brethren Mission (CBM) from the

United States of America, who set up their first station at Garkida, then a small village in Borno province (17th March 1923). Neighboring Biu, which is situated on a plateau with a restorative climate, was closed to the pioneer missionaries of the CBM, Mr. Stover Kulp and Rev. Albert Hesler. The British system of indirect rule in Nigeria prohibited Christian evangelization activities in Muslim areas in northern Nigeria. Biu is one such area. The missionaries had trekked throughout Biu Division and then decided to apply for a piece of land outside Biu town. The researcher draws on Rev. Fr. Raymond Hickey's description of events for the following.

Their application was referred by Major Edgar to the resident of Bornu (Borno) province. It took Kulp and Hesler 9 days to trek the 120 miles to Maiduguri. Palmer (the resident), without making a formal refusal as their venture had received the blessing of the governor, pressed them to accept a temporary site at "Gar Kidda" (Bamboo hill), a tiny village on the edge of Bornu province and separated by the river Hawal from the rest of Biu Division. There was no bridge at the time and, once the river began to flow, they might well find their position untenable. If this was Palmer's hope, he had failed to grasp how resolute were these missionaries.¹⁴⁶

In addition to suffering the tough climate and the dreaded malaria fever that eventually claimed the life of Mrs. Kulp, the missionaries were constantly confronted with numerous attempts by the British colonial officer to expel them from Garkida. But they pressed on, determined to sow the seed of Christianity. For the next forty years Dr. Kulp lived in Nigeria, laboring among different ethnic groups in northern Adamawa and southern Borno. His work led to the establishment of a vibrant Nigerian church, called the EKAS Lardin-Gabas, 'Ekklesiyar Kristi a Sudan Lardin-Gabas' ('Church of Christ in the Sudan, Eastern Province'), which from 1976 became known as the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN).¹⁴⁷

The church's headquarter is at Kwarhi, near Mubi in Adamawa, but its main following is found in neighboring Borno state. The Bura, Marghi and Higgi communities in both Adamawa and Borno states embraced the EYN wholeheartedly. The EYN also has city-based congregations in Lagos, Abuja, Jos, Kaduna and Kano.¹⁴⁸

To the north of the EKAS Lardin-Gabas/EYN area, in the Gwoza Division of Borno state, a Protestant mission, the Basel Mission from Europe, established in southern Cameroon, opened in 1959 a station at Gava near Gwoza. Rev. W. Schoeni from Switzerland

¹⁴⁶ Hickey, 1984, p.20.

¹⁴⁷ Discussion with Rev. Gwama, President of the EYN, Kwarhi, Mubi, Adamawa State, 2:8: 2006.

¹⁴⁸ Discussion with Rev. Gwama.

worked among the Glavda people around Gava. His work bore fruit and in April 1963 eight young adults were baptized by Rev. Schoeni. These young Christians would form the nucleus of the first indigenous Christian community at Gava. The Rev. Fillibus K. Gwama, the current national president of the EYN, was among the first eight converts. .¹⁴⁹

The Basel Mission chose to amalgamate with the EKAS Lardin-Gabas in 1963. In 1967 it started work at Gulak and from 1969 to '72 one of the early missionaries from Gava was deployed to the EKAS Lardin-Gabas Kulp Bible School at Kwarhi as a teacher. In this way, the works of the Basel Mission and of the Church of the Brethren Mission were fused into one: "...both are parent bodies to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN-Ekklesiyar' Yan'uwa a Nijeriya), [the former EKAS Lardin-Gabas]. This has proved to be a happy and fruitful union."¹⁵⁰

Dr. Kulp finally was obliged to leave Nigeria in September 1963 for retirement from active service. He left behind a vibrant church and the graves of his first and second wives, his first-born son and his grandchild, in a corner of the mission compound. He had wished to die and be buried in Garkida as well.¹⁵¹

In March 1972 the EKAS Lardin-Gabas became independent of the mission bodies in the USA and Switzerland but continued to maintain close working relations with the mission bodies.¹⁵² By 1976, the name EKAS Lardin-Gabas 'Ekklesiyar Kristi a Sudan Lardin-Gabas' (Church of Christ in the Sudan, Eastern Province) was changed to Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nijeriya (EYN). The headquarters of the EYN were in 1977 moved from Garkida to Kwarhi where in February 1979 the foundations were laid for a new building, a ceremony that the present researcher had the opportunity to attend.¹⁵³ As of 2008 the affiliate membership of the EYN stood at over 185,000 adherents with more than 500 pastors, 1000 congregations, 600 CRIs and 64 district church councils (DCCs).¹⁵⁴

Below see the administrative and authority structures of the EYN.

¹⁴⁹ Discussion with Rev. Gwama.

¹⁵⁰ Hickey, 1984, p. 30.

¹⁵¹ Hickey, 1984, p.30.

¹⁵² Discussion with Rev. Gwama.

¹⁵³ Discussion with Rev. Gwama.

¹⁵⁴ EYN Statistics Office, Kwarhi, Mubi Adamawa State Nigeria, 2008.

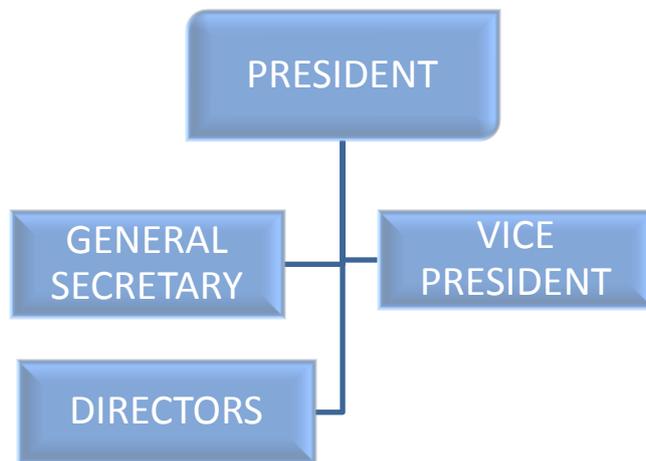


Figure 3 E.Y.N. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



Figure 4: E.Y.N. POWER STRUCTURE

3.3.3.3 (c) The Catholic Church in Adamawa

The Catholic Church in Adamawa came into being as a result of the wider mission work undertaken by the Augustinian Order. It was part of a massive expansion of the

missionary movement in the Catholic Church, which took place during the reigns of the popes Pius XI (1922-39) and Pius XII (1939-58).¹⁵⁵

According to Fr. Hickey, the Augustinian Order was not a missionary society. However, at a chapter of the province at Dublin in 1936, the order decided to offer its services to the missionary church in Africa. Father Thomas Cooney OSA, the Augustinians' superior, inspired his priests and brothers to take up the challenge and go to northern Nigeria.¹⁵⁶

Three years later Frs. P.A. Dalton, D.B. Redmond and G.T Broder, arrived in Yola (January 21st 1940). The territory of Adamawa was at the time part of the prefecture of Jos, the prefecture of Makurdi and Khartoum.¹⁵⁷ There was already a small Catholic community in Yola that had been organized by a remarkable Fulani Catholic, John Bello. He had become a Catholic while working in the south of Nigeria. After returning to his home in Yola, among the Fulani who were staunch Muslims and protagonists of the 19th century jihad, Bello remained a fervent Christian and a pillar of the Yola church until his death.¹⁵⁸ However, his refusal to return to Islam, earned him the wrath of his family. His Fulani brothers nicknamed him 'Bello ka ki jinin Musulmi', meaning, 'Bello the deviation of Muslim blood'. This saying was for many years on the lips of inhabitants of Jimeta and Yola townships and it was familiar to many people who never saw the man himself.

Once the Catholic mission in Yola and among the Chamba people further south was firmly established, Father Dalton and Father Garmen took a tour of northern Adamawa and eventually selected Pakka, a village south of Mubi, as their next station. However, their application was turned down by the colonial administration in 1943. No reason was given. The refusal could have been connected to the fact that Pakka was close to the Lutheran station at Pella. The same Catholic mission had been discriminated against earlier when it attempted to establish a mission at Gulak. In this case the refusal was also thought to have been engineered by the CBM which was working in the neighborhood.

By 1950, Adamawa territory became a prefecture.¹⁵⁹ In the same year a Catholic mission to the Higgi people opened at Bazza. The work in Bazza proved most successful and was done in a tranquil, peaceful atmosphere. The first missionary to Bazza, Fr. John Seary, won the hearts of the Higgi people. He trekked around the surrounding mountainous

¹⁵⁵ Hickey, 1984, p. 75.

¹⁵⁶ Hickey, 1984, p.75.

¹⁵⁷ Fr. Zakaria Samjumi, vicar general, St. Theresa's Catholic Cathedral Yola, Yola diocese, interviewed August 2009 at Yola, Adamawa State.

¹⁵⁸ Hickey, 1984, p.75.

¹⁵⁹ Fr. Zakaria Samjumi, August 2009.

countryside of Higgi-land where he established classes for Christian religious instruction (CRI) which later developed into strong local churches. Bazza was to become the central point for training teachers who would be appointed at the Catholic Church's primary schools in Adamawa and Borno provinces.

Catholic influence in Adamawa was apparent during the colourful ceremony on 1st June 1961 marking northern Cameroon's incorporation into the northern region of Nigeria. It was clear that the Catholic Church had become entrenched in the area. The resident at Mubi, for example, requested that a solemn 'High Mass of Thanksgiving' be celebrated in the open-air. Monsignor Dalton of Yola presided over the mass. Hickey states: "This Catholic participation in a political celebration would have been unthinkable during the colonial era. But Nigeria was now independent and the northern Cameroon was celebrating its independence within the Nigerian Federation in June 1961."¹⁶⁰

On the 2nd July 1962, Adamawa prefecture was promoted to diocese and monsignor Dalton became its first bishop. In 1963, and again in 1968, part of the territory of Yola in the North was transferred to the prefecture of Maiduguri. Bishop Dalton was succeeded by Bishop Patrick Sheehan in January 1971.¹⁶¹ In 1982, two local government areas, Takum and Wukari of Benue/Makurdi diocese were transferred to Yola diocese.

February 1995 witnessed the division of the then Yola diocese in two: Yola and Jalingo dioceses. The new ecclesiastical area now known as Jalingo diocese covers the whole of Taraba state. One local government area, Gombi, was detached from Maiduguri diocese and was added to the diocese of Yola.

On July 16, 1996 Bishop Patrick F. Sheehan was transferred to become Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Kano. He was replaced by Bishop Christopher Abba, formerly of Minna Diocese who was the third Bishop of Yola.¹⁶² Following his death (January 2010), Yola diocese consecrated Bishop Mamza as its new Bishop (April 2011).

The Catholic Church in old Adamawa province is sub-divided into three dioceses, the dioceses of Yola, Maiduguri (principally in Borno state but with Mubi in Adamawa added to its territory), and Jalingo (now covering the whole of Taraba state).

The initially inexperienced Augustinian missionaries have worked hard. Their labour has been most successful with more than 7 dioceses and 2 archdioceses established in Jos and Kaduna. The membership of the Catholic Church in Adamawa state cuts across many ethnic groups, both indigenous and non-indigenous.

¹⁶⁰ Hickey, 1984, p.81.

¹⁶¹ Fr. Zakaria Samjumi.

¹⁶² Fr. Zakaria Samjumi.

The diocese of Yola has 47 ordained priests. The first indigenous priest, Rev. Fr. Patrick Adekola was ordained in 1975. The latest set of priests was ordained in 2011. Over the years five priests have died. The diocese has 24 parishes and 3 chaplaincies, one at the Modibbo Adama University of Technology in Yola, one at the Army Barracks Church in Yola, and the latest one at the Police Barracks, Yola. In addition, the diocese has 3 male and 7 female religious communities. It boasts of 12 schools, one college, two seminaries, four health centres and one hospital.¹⁶³

3.4 Political, Social and Economic Factors

As outlined in the previous chapter, Nigeria enjoyed relative tranquility after independence but political infighting in the mid-1960s dashed the hopes of most Nigerians for a better future. The infighting led to the civil war of 1967-70. At the end of the civil war, the national economy was boosted by the high revenue from the sale of crude oil. These encouraged renewed expectations and the Nigerians put their trust in the leaders of the nation. Civil and public service at the time were still characterized by a considerable level of prudence. This was so, because most of the civil servants were a spill-over from colonial days and maintained the discipline acquired in that period.

On the political front, the successful transition from military to civil rule in 1979 (the high point of which was when General Olusegun Obasanjo handed over political power to the civilian leader, Alhaji Shehu Shagari) brought about widespread optimism regarding political stability. However, the Shagari administration floundered and the opportunity to nurture a democratic ethos, necessary for stability was lost as corrupt politicians steered the state into a downward spiral. The failure and ineptitude of the government were among the reasons given by the military for a second incursion into politics and for the toppling of president Shagari.¹⁶⁴

This time the military held Nigeria in its grip for a decade and a half (1983-1999). The period witnessed the emergence of the generals Muhammad Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Sani Abacha and Abdulsalam Abubakar as military heads of state.¹⁶⁵ The years of military rule effectively put Nigeria into further decline. The period was characterized by “declining

¹⁶³ Fr. Zakaria Samjumi.

¹⁶⁴ Ufo, Whetho, and Ishaya, 2005, 22-23 September.

¹⁶⁵ General Muhammadu Buhari ruled between 31 December 1983 and August 1985. General Babangida, who adopted the title “president,” was Nigeria’s leader for eight years (1985-1993). The late General Sani Abacha in 1994 ousted the Interim National Government (ING) established by Babangida in 1993 in the wake of the crisis which followed the annulment of the 1993 presidential elections, widely believed to have been won by the late Moshood Abiola. Abacha ruled from 1994 until June 1998 when he died while still in power. Following Abacha’s death, the military council appointed General Abdulsalam Abubakar as head of state. He handed over power to the incumbent president, Olusegun Obasanjo in May 1999.

oil revenues, predatory leadership, arbitrary and non-accountable governance, under-funding of institutions of governance, disregard for bureaucratic procedures, cronyism and massive corruption.”¹⁶⁶

The unbridled looting of the national treasury resulted in less government expenditure on essential social services. Whereas the ruling class (the military and their civilian collaborators) amassed wealth, Nigeria’s decrepit infrastructures began to decay and poverty deepened.¹⁶⁷ The cumulative effect of this era includes the “*de facto* decline of institutional capacity, the erosion of citizenship and the promotion of parochial values, loss of territorial control, and the de-legitimization of the Nigerian state’s modernizing and secular ethos.”¹⁶⁸

According to Momoh, Nigeria had, during 15 years of military rule, not only been subjected to authoritarian rule but also to a corrupt administration whose stock in trade had been to make social and material life difficult for the people. There was appalling mass poverty, a collapse of social infrastructure, a lack of state support for basic social services such as education and health. There was monumental unemployment, and hence an explosive crime rate. During that period, systematic de-industrialization reduced capacity utilization to less than 3.5 per cent.¹⁶⁹

The situation in Nigeria could be likened to what transpired in Ghana as outlined by Gifford, “In health care the government had introduced user fees (a system called in Ghana ‘cash and carry’), which put medical care beyond the reach of many if not most (horror stories repeatedly appeared in the media about families not being allowed to leave hospital or to retrieve a body from the morgue until medical bills had been paid; often this was simply impossible). ...Education collapsed”.¹⁷⁰ The situation in Nigeria was equally deplorable. People were perplexed given the fact that government had taken over such institutions as hospitals and schools from the mission churches in the early 1970s, on the grounds that fees were charged for those services by the mission churches. However, the situation had become

¹⁶⁶ Bach, D. 2004. “Nigeria: Towards a Country Without a State?” Paper Presented at the Conference on Nigeria: Maximising Pro-Poor Growth: Regenerating the Socio-Economic Database, Organised by Overseas Development Institute in collaboration with Nigeria Economic Summit Group, London, 16-17 June.

¹⁶⁷ The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the government agency saddled with the task of combating graft, reported in July 2005 that “a succession of military dictators stole or squandered US \$500 billion – equivalent to all Western aid to Africa over the past four decades.” See Ayodele, T.et.al. 2005.

“African Perspectives on Aid: Foreign Assistance Will Not Pull Africa Out of Poverty.” In: *Cato Institute Economic Development Bulletin*, No.2, September, p.2.

¹⁶⁸ Bach, D. 2005. “Nigeria: Towards a Country Without a State?” Paper presented at the conference on Nigeria: Maximising Pro-Poor Growth: Regenerating the Socio-Economic Database, organised by Overseas Development Institute in collaboration with Nigeria Economic Summit Group, London, 16-17 June.

¹⁶⁹ “419” in Nigerian parlance refers to advanced fee fraud. Its application to the elections implies the fraudulent character of the electoral process, rather than an allusion to the fourth month of the year and the nineteenth day of the month on which the elections were held.

¹⁷⁰ Gifford, P., 2004. *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Econom*, Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, p.4.

worse since the missionaries never held corpses back or prevented patients from leaving hospital until bills were settled. It was the military regime of General Gowon had taken over the institutions from the churches and subsequent military regimes proved incapable to sustain them.

The realization of the detrimental effects of military rule led the majority of Nigerians (under the aegis of civil society groups) to fight arduously for the return of democratic rule. Little wonder the enthusiasm that heralded the inauguration of the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo administration in spite of questions regarding its legitimacy that arose from doubts about the credibility of the general elections.

Fraudulent behaviour had not been acceptable to African society. Among some ethnic groups like the Kilba (Marghi), ill-gotten wealth was rejected. To steal was considered most dishonorable and no one would agree to marry the child of a thief. The tide however has changed and today people worship wealth. The ultimate reason for the craving of wealth is a desire for empowerment. People in Africa want to be empowered economically so that they can improve the lot of members of their extended families. This is very different from the traditional approach to success. A person's social status was traditionally assessed in terms of the positive contributions he or she made to the development of the community. These could be the cultivation of large farms, or being a brave, good hunter who had killed large, dangerous animals like buffalos, lions or hippopotami, or just being a good singer and dancer. Such achievements brought the respect and admiration of one's peers and gave the successful person in question self-esteem. Today, status as based on honorable achievements has to a considerable extent been replaced by status resulting from, for example, the emptying of the public treasury.

In Nigeria today, corruption has been identified as the bane of urgently needed development in the country. Arowolo argues that,

Corruption has proved ubiquitous mixing with individual blood and societal life, where officials not only personalize public office but also personify it. The [sic] work ethics has been severely undermined by the get-rich-quick syndrome from corruption. ...not only the officials were corrupt but corruption was official, and 'lootocracy' [culture of looting] became a new diatribe for governance.¹⁷¹

In the past, individualism had no place in the Nigerian social strata because people existed and survived through awareness of each other. One was conscious that society scrutinized one's behaviour. One was living in a glass house so to speak. Today material wealth has become a primary indicator of status, so much so that even the political classes are

¹⁷¹ Arowolo, Dare. "Academic Leadership:" *The Online Journal*, Volume 8 Issue 3 Summer 2010, p. 1.

in politics, not because they desire to serve the people, but for financial gain and for the prestige of their office. Some people also go into politics to shield and protect their wealth therefore, “the civil politicians who were not superior to the inherited public bureaucracy (from the colonial government), decided to use the already ‘pathologised’ bureaucracy as a tool of self-enrichment.”¹⁷² Families proudly parade those among them who have made it in life. Some encourage their children to go abroad for jobs, because society will respect them better and they are assured of getting support in one form or another.

It was observed during the present research that, despite the effect of modernity on the Nigerian society, the general public is still strongly attached to the, now polluted, mindset that dictates them to achieve something in their lives. With “Nigeria classified as a poor nation, a situation which can be described as a bewildering paradox given the vast resource base of the country,”¹⁷³ every Nigerian wants to feel relevant in his community or, at least, achieve status in his surroundings. Thus, the struggle to be successful dominates many Nigerians’ lives.

However, continuing massive unemployment, an epileptic electricity power supply resulting in economic losses to the tune of N66 billion yearly.¹⁷⁴ Incessant industrial action by labour unions over poor wages, unpaid salaries, decay of infrastructure, poor social service delivery, and falling educational standards are the sad realities of life in Nigeria today. Despite the government’s initiatives for reducing poverty, “...the country suffers from extreme poverty with per capita income amounting to just 30 (pence) per person per day. 75 million of the country’s estimated 130 million people live in absolute poverty. Nigeria has some of the worst social indicators in the world.”¹⁷⁵

Paradoxically, Nigeria, one of Africa’s leading oil exporting countries, is witnessing deepening poverty in a period characterized by high crude oil prices in the international market. The general socioeconomic conditions of Nigerians are difficult. Civil servants in some states may go for several months without salaries being paid with those in the teaching profession suffering most.

Many Nigerians (including some political leaders) are disappointed by the trend of events. They are in need of some form of hope to survive excruciating circumstances. Where the state seems to provide little or no hope for the future, Nigerians have turned to religion,

¹⁷² Arowolo, p.2.

¹⁷³ Oshewolo, S., “Gallop ing Poverty in Nigeria: An Appraisal of the Government’s Intervention Policies,” Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, vol.12, No.6, 2010, p.267.

¹⁷⁴ Ibiam, A. 2004. “Nigeria Loses N66bn Yearly Through Power Failure,” <http://nm.onlinenigeria.com/templates/?a=293&z=2> (Accessed 20 September 2005).

¹⁷⁵ <http://www.dfid.gov.co.uk/countries/africa/nigeria.asp>. (Accessed 20 September 2005).

specifically to the Pentecostal churches (and in some cases to criminality). The Pentecostal churches seem to provide an opening towards a better life, however defined or conceptualized.¹⁷⁶

Interviews conducted in the course of this research in December 2004 and January 2005, as well as personal experience and observation have made the researcher realize that the Nigerian government, in spite of its avowed commitment to lifting the nation out of a morass of political instability, economic recession and social dislocation, has not fulfilled even the most basic expectations of the citizenry as far as the provision of essential services is concerned.

Widespread corruption and continued ineptitude on the part of the political class have been disincentives to patriotism, nationalism and faith in the state. The observation by the Commission for Africa to the effect that "... (m)uch of the nationalism generated around or prior to independence, on which the African state has depended, now appears to be exhausted"¹⁷⁷, perhaps has more relevance to Nigeria than to any other country on the continent. The report adds, that "religion is moving into the vacuum" created by the state. Religious "networks, Pentecostal churches in the main, appear to be gaining a new attractiveness where the state is perceived as unable to deliver." Indeed, many Africans are now attracted to religious communities "for purposes that go beyond a strictly religious aspect as religion is held to provide a language of hope and aspiration."¹⁷⁸

On the whole, government programmes designed to eradicate poverty have failed because the programmes were impaired by corruption, a weak administration and by poor inter-sectoral governance systems.¹⁷⁹ How government can be reformed to enhance its capacity to effect poverty alleviation remains a mirage and, until the citizenry is re-oriented through the acquisition of quality education relevant for capacity building, the nation shall continue to grapple with poverty.

In the meantime, the vital roles that religion can play in circumstances of severe distress as identified in the Commission for Africa report, are being performed by Pentecostal churches.

¹⁷⁶ Ufo, Whetho, and Ishaya, 2005, 22-23 September.

¹⁷⁷ Commission for Africa. 2005. *Our Common Interest: Report of the Commission for Africa.*

¹⁷⁸ Commission for Africa. 2005.

¹⁷⁹ Oshewolo, S., "Gallop ing Poverty in Nigeria: An Appraisal of the Government's Intervention Policies," Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, vol.12, No.6, 2010, p.272.

3.5 The Church and the State in Nigeria

The 1999 constitution stipulates that “the government of the Federation or that of a State shall not adopt any religion as State Religion”.¹⁸⁰ The constitution states under its provision subtitled “non-establishment norm” that:

Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom (either alone or in community with others, and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.¹⁸¹

Despite this provision, governments in Nigeria have consistently meddled in religious affairs. Ukah is of the opinion that religion occupies an ambiguous position in Nigeria as evidenced by the fact that:

The state meddles in religious matters, for example, by subsidising pilgrimages and religious festivals, appointing the leader of the Muslims in the country (the Sultan of Sokoto), and funding the construction of places of worship such as mosques and the Christian Ecumenical Centre in Abuja. Muslims and Christians benefit from overt and covert state patronage, but member (sic) of indigenous religions are marginalised. An obvious case may be the establishment of military chaplaincy for Christians and Muslims without any provision for members of indigenous religion (sic). Religion is neither fully established nor totally disestablished and free from government interference.¹⁸²

As recently as 2003, the government of Nigeria placed a ban on television broadcasts of miracle - and healing services of Pentecostal churches and preachers. It is also common knowledge that some state governments in predominantly Muslim states, especially in the far north of the country, have denied the right of occupancy of land to Christians for the building of churches. Christians view such denials as a contradiction of the constitutional stipulations as stated earlier. Christians sometimes see such intolerance as part of a Muslim agenda to Islamise Nigeria at all costs. Father Matthew H. Kukah expresses those suspicions as follows:

To a great extent, Islam has played a major role in helping to shape the reactions of the Christian community to political developments in the Nigerian state. Consequently, in order to appreciate the way Christians have sought to influence the political developments over the last few years, we must look at the whole picture within the context of what one might refer to as the Muslim agenda. There is a popular belief that the British colonial administration sought to tilt the balance of political power in favour of the Muslim population particularly in Northern Nigeria. Thus, the Christian community in Nigeria has constantly sought to keep close watch over every move by the Muslims with the feeling that vigilance is the only remedy.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, Chapter 1, Article 10.

¹⁸¹ The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, Chapter IV, Article 38, sub-section 1.

¹⁸² Ukah. 2005, p. 4.

¹⁸³ Gifford, P., Kukah, M.H., Brill, E.J., eds.1995. *The Christian Churches and Democratisation of Africa: Christians and Nigeria's Aborted Transition*. New York: Brill Academic Publishers, p.225.

The colonial approach to Muslims in the north of the country – so the present researcher has established may have been aimed at placating them and avoiding further antagonism than that which already existed as a result of British colonization of the region. The British policy of indirect rule through Muslim rulers in the north, whatever motivated it, assisted in the spread of Islam in the country. In the same vein, it is important to note that the colonial government had no problem accepting the Anglican Church because its bishops were appointed from England by the king or queen. Since the territory fell under the crown, the Anglican Church also became the state church and eventually, after independence, the “Church of Nigeria”. As outlined above, the Catholic church, although not the first church in modern day Nigeria, became highly popular, gaining wider influence than the Anglican church established in 1842 through the activities of freed slaves from Sierra Leone. The Catholic Church started its work twenty-three years later in 1865.

Since colonial days, the church in Nigeria has been traditionally Catholic and Anglican. The two streams have always been identified as the “Catholic” and the “Protestant” churches. However, eventually, the term “Protestant” came to stand for all churches that were not Catholic. Subsequent governments in Nigeria maintained the religious legacy left by the British after independence and the government continues to treat the Catholic and Protestant traditions as equal, especially in the military service where Catholicism and Protestantism enjoy the same status. The Islamic (basically the Sunni) tradition is also recognized by the military.

After independence, while the national government continued to deal with the two religions on a strictly equal basis, at the provincial level and later also at state levels, the locally dominant Christian denominations were identified and local governments dealt directly with them.

The Catholic cardinal of Lagos and the Anglican archbishop of the Province of Nigeria enjoyed patronage from the Nigerian government. Their voices were heard and respected in government circles. Through them the church could, and still can, criticise government. Ellis and Ter Haar argued in their *World of Power: Religious Thoughts and Political Practice in Africa*, that: “...it is largely through religious ideas that Africans think of the world today, and that religious ideas provide them with a means of becoming social and political actors.”¹⁸⁴ The two authors argue that in Africa, religious belief has a huge impact on politics, from the top of society to the bottom. Religious ideas show what people

¹⁸⁴ Ellis, S. and Ter Haar, *World of Power: Religious Thoughts and Political Practice in Africa*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004, p.2.

actually think about the world and how to deal with it. This is true about Nigeria because no where in Africa is this most pronounced like Nigeria. Thus, the church in Nigeria provides a basis for unity among many ethnic groups because of their religious affinity.

Despite the fact that most Protestant churches quickly indigenised leadership after Nigerian independence in 1960, the Catholic Church nonetheless, retained its foreign priests and bishops for a longer period. This strengthened the Catholic Church's universal out-look as the priests and bishops adopted or created families for themselves in their various parishes and dioceses. As a result, the Catholic Church maintained clearly distinct from Protestant churches in their employment of foreign clergy and workers but when it comes to responsiveness in social and political matters in the country, both protestant and the catholic faithfuls deal with it together.

Ten years after independence, most Protestant churches had indigenous leadership. The government then decided to indigenise or nationalise church schools and church hospitals. This was not well accepted by Christians, especially in northern Nigeria, where Christians were apprehensive as regards the Muslim agenda. Christians believed that this government policy was not in their interest as Muslims had no schools or hospitals to surrender. Correspondingly, the Muslim-controlled governments in the north hastened to take over church schools and hospitals that had thus far been considered as centres of evangelisation by the churches.¹⁸⁵

The role of spokesperson for the church in Nigeria changed as from 1977. This was the year in which the Christian Association of Nigeria was established, mainly on the demand from northern Christian elders. The Northern Nigerian Christian Elders Forum was saddened by the execution of young army officers in 1976 who had been implicated in the aborted coup in February that year. Most were Christians from the north of Nigeria. The feeling among the northern Christian elders was that their young men were being singled out for annihilation. After prolonged negotiations, Christian elders from other parts of Nigeria joined them to create the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), meant to function as the political vanguard for Christians in Nigeria.¹⁸⁶

With the creation of the CAN, the role thus far played by the Catholic cardinal and by the archbishop of the Anglican Church was transferred to the president of CAN. The

¹⁸⁵ Pweton, N. 2005, pp.104-105.

¹⁸⁶ The researcher was one of the founding members of the CAN in 1976. The execution of military officers after the February 1976 failed coup, in which General Murtala was killed, was considered by Christians as being unfair and not proportionate to the crime committed. The officers executed were 95% Christians from the north of the country, therefore, the Christian leaders in the north of Nigeria believed their young officers were being singled out for annihilation. Thus the need for an association like CAN to check the excesses of a Muslim controlled government in Nigeria.

president of CAN became the mouthpiece of Christians and was respected as such by successive governments in Nigeria.¹⁸⁷

Through the CAN, the Christian church in Nigeria enjoys privileges:

- i. It is free to oppose government decisions, even under military dictatorships and to influence government policies;
- ii. It can criticise government policies and actions; and
- iii. It does not hesitate to criticise its bishops or leaders when there is evidence of the leadership playing into the hands of politicians.¹⁸⁸

It could be observed that, on several occasions, certain CAN functionaries have played into the hands of government officials who eventually even made a number of CAN officials into 'flying bishops'. On the whole however, government has refrained from harassing or imprisoning church leaders or preachers in answer to statements coming from the pulpits. On the other hand however, government became more apprehensive of the closeness of press, bishops and community.

The researcher observed that politicians have also become aware of the fact that they will be termed good politicians by the church only if they come to church and support church programmes. Ogbu Kalu puts his finger on exactly this point when he writes, referring to the Pentecostals:

In the last few decades, the relationship between charismatism and political mobilization has intensified. Many presidents have declared themselves to be born-again, so have myriads of politicians who seek the powerful prayers and group intercessions of the Pentecostal and charismatic leaders and sodalities. There is a conscious use of charismatic mass appeal to build up potential voters for godly candidates. Since mission-founded churches have always sought the ears of rulers, the new Christianity wants to forge a link with any ruler who wants to yield to Christ'.¹⁸⁹

Governments have thus been able to use the CAN to their own advantage. Many politicians quote the Bible during election campaigns to convince the church that they are good Christians, despite the fact that they do not always do what the Bible verses say. The politicians also provide patronage to crusades. They are eager to be invited to such events at the beginning of their tenures, but often soon lose interest.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷The presidency of the CAN however was held throughout the Military Regime in Nigeria by the Catholic cardinal in Nigeria out of respect for his position in the church in Nigeria. In the last two years the president of the PFN has taken over from the Catholic archbishop of Abuja as CAN national president.

¹⁸⁸Christian Association of Nigeria, Adamawa State Secretariat, Yola, Classified files. 2009.

¹⁸⁹Kalu, Ogbu U. 2008. *African Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, p.221.

¹⁹⁰During a discussion with members of the Living Faith Church in Jimeta the question was asked as to how many of the politicians that went round soliciting support and that got political offices came back to worship with the church. The answer was: none came back after the elections. The following question was: why don't

The politicians know that the moment they show evidence of being morally corrupt, the very church they have been supporting may turn against them. Therefore, politicians are very careful in their dealings with the church. In other words, politicians in Nigeria know that the church will stand by its views, even if the president of the country ignores these. The church, therefore, has powers at its disposal.

It is clear that the Nigerian population considers the church as the only organ that can speak to the conscience of every citizen, but many get disappointed as the following outpouring by a social scientist indicates.

Most of the downtrodden in Nigeria believe that the church is capable of filling the role of 'conscience of the nation' and that it could function as a moral arbiter with regard to national issues. But what do we see instead? The church is still too divided and not able to transcend its history, to unite and to confront government. Leaders of the church are playing into the hands of politicians and greedy government officials who use them for personal interest. We have Muslim fundamentalism which is a great threat to peace in Nigeria. Muslim intention is to remain a determining factor in the selection of who rules Nigeria. Why should the church shy away from its responsibility to be the promoter of good moral conduct in Nigeria? ... Unfortunately, just as materialism is destroying the church, after that it will destroy the nation.¹⁹¹

Barrett claims that by mid-2000 the Nigerian population was for 45.9% Christian, 43.9% Muslim and the remaining 11.2% consisted of ethno-religionists, non-religionists and others.¹⁹² Hence, the perception of Muslim supremacy in Nigeria is not a reality. Rather Muslims feel threatened by the Christian majority and are putting up a bold face.

Expected future trends, Barrett claims, indicate that, "declines in tribal religions (73% in 1900 to 7.7% projected by 2025) are picked up as gains shared between Christians and Muslims. Christians are expected to grow from 43.8% in 1970 to 47.0% by 2025. Muslims are expected to grow from 43.9% in 1970 to 44.9% by 2025."¹⁹³

they come back? The response was, that the church doesn't know. It however wants to believe the politicians have their own churches. In the main Baptist congregation in Yola, one of the politicians who won in the elections had organized a thanksgiving service for his new office. The present researcher was in attendance. The local pastor in his sermon decried how politicians would come to his church, soliciting votes, but, after winning the elections, they do not remember to come to thank God. He addressed specifically the celebrant for the service, saying, "I know today may be the last day you will come to the church as you did not use to come in the past. After today's service we may see you only occasionally."

Much of the lack of interest on the part of politicians comes obviously from having to deal with the responsibilities and demands associated with their public office. Some lack of interest could result from fear that appeals to their conscience will be made from the pulpit. Other politicians may want to avoid being prodded by the public to fulfill the promises they made during electioneering campaigns.

¹⁹¹A social scientist interviewed in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, 11th January, 2005.

¹⁹² Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson, (eds.). 2001, p.549.

¹⁹³ Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson, (eds.). 2001, p.552.

As mentioned previously, it remains a painful point for Christians that the colonial policy of indirect rule in northern Nigeria allowed traditional Muslim leaders to retain and increase their influence, contributing to the spread of Islam at the time.¹⁹⁴

Muslims gained a good deal of strength during the colonial era to the detriment of those non-Muslim communities which eventually became Christian. The Christian community still believes that, if it doesn't remain vigilant, the Muslims, many of whom have become exceedingly wealthy and who are believed to receive support from Muslim countries for the islamisation of Nigeria, will take control of the country.

The desire of Muslims that Nigeria rejoins the OIC and the implementation of Islamic law (Sharia) in northern Nigeria, have informed some militant CAN publications that challenge certain pro-Islamic Nigerian leaders. The implementation of Sharia by certain state governments has created a sense of unease in much of Nigeria and, although the real intention of those trying to enforce Islamic law is not known, the advent of Sharia was greeted with cynicism by Muslims and Christians alike in many quarters. Islamic law is no longer fervently embraced, even in states at whose inception it was first introduced. The benefit Nigeria has derived from implementation of the Sharia remains a subject for further research.

A crucial aspect of church-state relations in Nigeria is determined by what Christians think their role should be in the face of the social, economic and political trends in the country. This point is the focus of the present thesis. Ruth Marshall believes that, when it comes to politics and democratization and a failing government, "...churches are expected to take on a role similar to that of human rights groups, (but as it is now) little attention is paid to the huge body of believers, to popular forms of Christian belief and practice."¹⁹⁵ In other words, the leaders can talk and attack state machinery but, as Marshall says, while it is important "for Christian leaders to speak out in favour of democratisation ... we must ask how representative this discourse is – is there a body of believers constructing this discourse, and giving weight to it, or are leaders simply speaking out because they have a voice?"¹⁹⁶

The leaders indeed do have a voice and speak out from time to time, but their voices do not always carry weight as many church leaders have in one way or other accepted favours from the political class. If they have received gifts in cash or kind from particular politicians whose conscience needs to be addressed, it becomes difficult to do so fearlessly and unbiased.

¹⁹⁴ Hickey, 1984, p.19.

¹⁹⁵ Gifford P; Ruth Marshall, E.J. Brill (eds.). 1995. *The Christian Churches and The Democratisation of Africa: Pentecostalism and Democratisation in Nigeria*. New York: Brill Academic Publishers, p.240.

¹⁹⁶ Gifford, Marshall and Brill (eds.), 1995, p.243.

Despite the fact that the Pentecostals have impacted on Nigerian Christianity and society in ways that the mainline churches have not, Matthew A. Ojo, in a paper delivered at a seminar of the Centre for Law and Social Action (CLASA), states that, "...generally, leaders of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements have largely responded to political events, and have not formulated any critical opinion about governance."¹⁹⁷ Many committed Christians however, are beginning to realise that in order to make an impact, the church needs to look inward and re-focus on providing effective service and to do more than only criticizing the government.

In the last few decades, the relationship between charismatism and political mobilization has intensified. Many presidents and politicians have declared themselves born-again and there is a conscious use of charismatic mass appeal by politicians to get voters on their side. Mission-founded churches have always sought the ear of rulers and, following this example, the new Christianity forges links with any ruler willing to yield to Christ.

The Pentecostal churches respond to the socio-economic disintegration of the country in ways that are by the population perceived as practically, psychologically, and spiritually helpful, as opposed to mainline churches who limit themselves mostly to making public statements against corruption. Pentecostals are popular due to interest in the problems of daily living of Nigerians. They offer material assistance, encouragement, and hope in the face of socio-economic turmoil. For example, T. B. Joshua, a Pentecostal preacher, has been most supportive of people in trouble. He offers monetary and material assistance, helps to build hospitals and provides scholarships to students.¹⁹⁸

The CLASA seminar, mentioned above, aimed to define the role of the church in the political process – in enhancing good, accountable, and stable governance and in stimulating the evolution of civil society. Ojo states that, "...the gathering, seeks to understand the role Pentecostal and charismatic churches can play in the upliftment of the standard of governance and to combat corruption in the country."¹⁹⁹ In his presentation at a seminar in Leeds (September 1993), Matthew H. Kukah argued that:

The church in its bid to stamp out corruption and uplift the standard of governance in Nigeria has encouraged Christians and clergy to go into politics and stand for elected offices. This is interesting that Christians of the mainline strand who always stood against their members going into politics are changing their attitude towards politics, as the Pentecostals individually and as a group spear-head the drive for getting into politics by Christians. They align with politicians in State houses and some of them

¹⁹⁷ Ojo, M.A. 2004. "Pentecostalism, Public Accountability and Governance in Nigeria". Lagos, Oct18, p.2

¹⁹⁸ <http://pmnewsnigeria.com/2011/06/17/i/u2014m-not-among-richest-pastors-/u2014tb-joshua/> Accessed 2nd August 2011, p. 2.

¹⁹⁹ <http://pmnewsnigeria.com/2011/06/17/i/u2014m-not-among-richest-pastors-/u2014tb-joshua/> Accessed 2nd August 2011, p.2.

vied for political office and are now holding offices. The transformation they hope to bring into politics and governance is nowhere to be found as corruption continues unabated in governance.²⁰⁰

3.6 Summary

In this chapter the history of modern day Adamawa (not the whole geopolitical region) has been traced as linked to the Fulani Jihad of the early 19th century, led by Modibo Adama who went on to nominally rule the Adamawa Emirate for 42 years (1806-1848). The British took control of the territory in 1901 and Adamawa as a province was formed in 1926.

About 87 languages or dialects are spoken in Adamawa State today, but these can be sub-divided into three language families thus: 1. Kordofanian, 2. Afro-Asiatic and 3. Unclassified. It is not likely that any of the heterogeneous ethnic groups of modern Adamawa represent the aboriginal inhabitants of the state as all have traditions of migrations.

The larger ethnic groups of Adamawa are the Bwatiye, Chamba (Sama), Fulani (Fula or Fulbe), Gwoza, Higgi, Lunguda, Mummuye, Ga'anda and Kanakuru (Dera). Others are the Marghi (Kilba, Bura and Marghi), Mbula, Sukur, Tera and the Bina (Lala and Yungur).

There are three main religious groupings: traditional religion, Islam and Christianity. The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN) established in 1913, the Church of the Brethren or Ekklesiyar' Yan'uwa a Nijeriya (EYN) established 1923, and the Catholic Church established in 1940 remain the largest mainline churches. This research gives particular attention to these three churches because their membership in Adamawa is made up largely of indigenous people. On the political and socio-economic front chapter 2 points out that the political class flounders and that the opportunity to nurture a democratic ethos, necessary for stability, was lost as corrupt politicians steered the state into a downward spiral.

It has been observed that, due to the continuing massive unemployment, industrial action by labour unions over poor wages and unpaid salaries, poor social service delivery and falling educational standards, the Nigerian citizenry in general has lost faith in the state. We submit that the type of problems confronting those who seek solace in religion could be adequately addressed by a functional state apparatus and that, in that case, solutions to such problems would pass, not for divine miracles, but for miracles performed by the state. Religion is moving to fill the vacuum created by a profoundly corrupt and inept governing class. This implies that, today, people are attracted to religious communities for purposes that go beyond the strictly religious, because religion is perceived as offering hope and fulfillment of aspirations.

²⁰⁰ Gifford, Kukah and Brill, (eds.) 1995, p.236.

The chapter states that recently the church, in its bid to stamp out corruption and uplift the standard of governance in Nigeria, has encouraged members and clergy to go into politics and stand for elected office. This is interesting because the mainline churches traditionally advised members against joining political activities. The Pentecostals meanwhile, individually and as a group, are spearheading the drive to inspire Christians to enter the political arena.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This thesis is a qualitative and empirical study that uses both phenomenological and qualitative methods of analyzing data generated. Chapter four therefore, presents the data collected during field work in Nigeria over a period of five years, from 2005 to 2010. The data is analysed and further discussed. References to the data and their analysis appear also in other chapters of this study. The findings and some concluding observations are offered in this chapter.

Sources of material for this chapter are the results of questionnaires and structured and un-structured interviews with Pentecostal leaders and members. Mainline church leaders, members and additional prominent Christians representing all the denominations studied has contributed in one way or the other to this chapter. The questionnaires that were administered on both mainline and Pentecostal Christians have some similarities because they have both open ended closed ended questions for the Pentecostals. The intention was to use one inquiry form but because some of the Pentecostals elude questions, it became necessary to administer separate questionnaires on them in order to get definite responses from them. More so, the Pentecostals are the ones being studied in this research and the type of questions directed to them should make a difference. Examples are questions 2,3,4,5,8,9,11,13,15a &b,16 and 31 in the questionnaires administered on the mainline can only be answered by mainline Christians while questions 2,3,4,5a & b, 6,15,24 and 28 among others in the questionnaires administered on the Pentecostals can only be answered aptly by Pentecostals.

Other sources are the results of participatory observations made by the researcher during some functions and services of Pentecostal churches and other relevant experiences.

4.1 Responses and Categories of Respondents

In an attempt to gain insight into the views of mainline church leaders and members, to help in analysing the Pentecostal phenomenon in Adamawa state, a targeted group of church leaders and lay church-administrators from some mainline churches in Adamawa, were identified and administered with questionnaire. Both Catholics and evangelicals were among this targeted group. The massive response by the Anglicans is informed by the kind interest of their bishop who helped in stressing the importance of the research to his pastors at a retreat. The Pentecostals on the other hand were hesitant at responding to the questionnaire.

All in all one hundred and fifty-five (155) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to this group and one hundred and three (103) copies were filled out and returned. Of this number only eleven (11) were sent back by females while ninety-two (92) came from males. The respondents were Pentecostal and mainline Christians. For the personal data of the respondents, according to their church affiliations, see below.

Table 1: Table Showing Categories of Respondents to the Questionnaire

Name of Church	Location	Position	Ages	Male	Female
Pentecostals	Jimeta/Numan	Clergy/Members	39-48yrs	4	1
HEKA N	Kaduna	Admin/Clergy	40-58yrs	2	0
LCCN	Numan/Jimeta	Clergy/Members/Admin	28-53yrs	17	3
Baptist	Jimeta	Member	41yrs	1	0
Catholic	Jimeta	Clergy/Members	30-60yrs	5	0
COCIN	Jos	Clergy/Admin	45-51yrs	2	0
Reformed	Wukari/Akwanga	Clergy/Admin	39-58yrs	9	0
EYN	Mubi	Clergy/Members	36-61yrs	6	0
UMCN	Jalingo	Clergy/Admin	43-49yrs	3	0
Anglican	Jos/Yola	Clergy/Admin	20-60yrs	43	7

In response to the question concerning the official stand of their church as regards Pentecostalism, most church leaders admitted ignorance. In other words they had not received any official statement from their church leadership referring to Pentecostalism. The researcher found that there is virtually no documentation about Pentecostals in any mainline church archives in Adamawa. The responses presented here are purely a product of this research and they convey personal impressions of the respondents. A few church leaders simply stated that ‘Pentecostals are ‘sheep thieves’, while some said, ‘we accept them’.²⁰¹

The perceptions however, of ordinary Christians vary considerably. Some insisted that Pentecostalism is the ‘heartbeat of God’. Others maintained that Pentecostalism is the embodiment of the divine and extra-ordinary power of God to transform the pathetic condition of humanity in Nigeria.²⁰² There are Christians in Adamawa who think differently about Pentecostalism. They feel, for example, that Pentecostalism is ‘superfluous for divine reality and an empty and futile spiritual celebration.’²⁰³

²⁰¹ Response to question 2 in the questionnaire administered by Ishaya E. R. in Nigeria, January 2005.

²⁰² Response during an interview session in Yola, Adamawa, Nigeria, April 2010.

²⁰³ A Response from an interviewee during discussions in Yola, Adamawa, Nigeria, April, 2010.

Whatever the conceptions of Pentecostalism in Adamawa may be, the leaders of the various mainline churches in the state expressed varying degrees of opposition to the youths and their Pentecostal movements. In fact, analyses of the responses of leaders, involved in the administration of mainline churches in Adamawa state, reveals a strong resistance to Pentecostalism, especially from Catholics and Lutherans. This confirms Kalu's observation that, "The Roman Catholic Church was initially hostile, defrocking two priests who succoured charismatic spirituality, (when they were) in a hurry to rebuild (their church) after the Nigerian-Biafran civil war."²⁰⁴ The Anglicans, EYN and COCIN, are milder in their opposition to Pentecostal movements. Kalu also found that "the Anglicans were friendly while the Presbyterians were downright hostile."²⁰⁵

Ordinary church members responded slightly different to the question regarding what they personally feel about Pentecostalism. Ninety-three persons out of a hundred and fourteen answered this particular question and the results show the majority of respondents were not really comfortable with Pentecostalism but hurried to add that they are not frightened by them either. But, unquestionably, the issue of migration from their churches to Pentecostal movements is what the mainline churches are most concerned about. Asked whether they are losing members to Pentecostal churches, all mainline Christians and their church leaders admitted, on questionnaires or in interviews, that some of their members have joined Pentecostal congregations. As to what age groups are involved, responses indicate that especially the younger generation is vulnerable. Youths between the ages of 12 and 35 form the majority of the Pentecostal membership. Very few persons who are older than 40 years join the Pentecostals and most of these falls in the leadership category.

As opposed to the Pentecostals, the mainline churches continue to attract persons of all age groups and they are all active in the church, from the children to the oldest members of the communities.

The study found that most of those who attend Pentecostal churches are highly qualified young people (with secondary school certificates or university graduates some of whom are unemployed) are mostly attracted to Pentecostalism.²⁰⁶ Among those who responded to the questionnaire were many middle class people and they stated that their members are highly educated persons, among them are some professionals in the banking industry, engineering, nursing and business people. Also, during participatory observation at some Pentecostal services and programmes it was discovered that some people in these

²⁰⁴ Kalu, O. U., "Pentecostalism and Mission in Africa, 1970 – 2000", *Mission Studies* 24, (2007) 9-45, p. 16.

²⁰⁵ Kalu, 2007, p. 17.

²⁰⁶ Response to question 6 in the questionnaire, 2005.

category of professionals have become members in the Pentecostal churches in Adamawa. The reasons could be because many of them are persons from other states, especially from the south of Nigeria who come to Adamawa to work.

4.2 Reasons Pentecostals Give for Leaving Mainline Churches

The most common reasons given by Pentecostals for leaving mainline churches are that:

- i. mainline churches are dead;
- ii. Mainline churches do not express spiritual gifts, or are afraid of changes;
- iii. Mainline churches are too strict and rigid on doctrine and liturgy;
- iv. Preaching on prosperity is not allowed in the mainline churches;
- v. the power of the Holy Spirit is not allowed to work in mainline churches;
- vi. The promise of God could not be appropriated within the traditional churches, neither are the spiritual needs of the members being met;
- vii. The members of mainline churches are not free to express thankfulness to God because the mainliners are too dogmatic and stress denominationalism; and
- viii. Some respondents had moved to Pentecostal churches because they had not been elected as leaders in mainline churches while others moved in search of miracles and opportunities to express themselves.²⁰⁷

4.3 Reasons for which the Mainline Churches Believe their Members Leave for Pentecostal Churches

The mainline Christians stated that those who move to Pentecostal churches question among other things:

- i. the spirituality of the mainline churches;
- ii. The dress code of the mainline churches as being too strict, and
- iii. The general strictness of the mainline churches.

Mainline Christians suspect that those who go to Pentecostal churches are deceived by the movement's leaders. They believe that Pentecostals have no faith, and that they look for miracles and are 'solution seekers' who are not comfortable with the orderliness and the gerontocratic leadership in mainline churches all conditions which, the Pentecostals say, make of the mainline churches 'dead churches'.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Response to question 7 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²⁰⁸ Response to question 8 in the questionnaires, 2005.

4.4 What the Mainline Christians Hear the Pentecostals Say about Mainline Churches

What Pentecostals, according to mainline Christians, say about mainline churches is reflected in the following remarks.

- i. the mainline churches lack teaching and the spirit;
- ii. mainline churches are archaic;
- iii. the members of mainline churches are not born again;
- iv. the mainline churches claim relevance over and above the Pentecostals;
- v. the mainline churches worship Mary, idols and do confessions; and
- vi. the mainline churches do not allow speaking in tongues and are spiritually dead.²⁰⁹

4.5 Challenges Pentecostals Pose to Mainline Churches

Whereas many mainline Christians agree that Pentecostalism poses a great challenge to mainliners, there are some who think that Pentecostalism could never be a match for their faith. Mainliners see the points listed below as possible challenges.

- i. Pentecostals look better after their members;
- ii. Pentecostal pastors preach more spiritually;
- iii. the mode of worship of the Pentecostals, which is already being adopted by mainline churches, is the main challenge;
- iv. Pentecostals recognize the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in worship in the African way;
- v. Pentecostals address the need for life, deliverance, change and spirit in the church,
- vi. they teach on tithing, offering and prayers;
- vii. They challenge the mainline churches to stand firm on the correct teaching;
- viii. They pay more attention to the youth of their churches; and
- ix. Pentecostals are a threat to mainline church growth.²¹⁰

Despite remarks and observations made by respondents, most mainline Christians with whom the researcher had random conversations did not agree that mainline churches should adopt Pentecostal styles of worship because, according to them, these are characterized by much emptiness. However, the issues mentioned below, are by some

²⁰⁹ Response to question 9 in the questionnaire, 2005.

²¹⁰ Response to question 12 in the questionnaire, 2005.

identified as major challenges posed by Pentecostals to mainline churches. The Pentecostals themselves think that they are a challenge to mainline Christians because they (the Pentecostals) are:

- i. good in Bible study and prayer life;
- ii. tolerant of their pastors, giving them a lot of freedom;
- iii. Always modifying and adapting to new ideas, especially in technology;
- iv. Accommodating in the pulpit (allowing women and youth to use it freely),
- v. good at displaying their spirituality in preaching, tithing and offering;
- vi. Good in encouraging women leadership in the church;
- vii. firm in that what they believe, teach it and abide by it;
- viii. Faithful and persistent in preaching what they believe;
- ix. Firm against false propaganda;
- x. innovative in the use of electronic media.²¹¹

Some members of the mainline churches appeared in their responses to the questionnaire uncertain of what could be lacking in their churches. They maintained that nothing is really wrong with their places of worship but that, possibly, a few changes might help to retain the youth in the church. There are some others who believe that it would be good to fellowship with the Pentecostals.²¹²

4.6 Factors Leading to the Growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa

The reasons for the growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa in particular according to the interviewees and respondents to the questionnaire are its

- i. commitment in prayer;
- ii. Visitation of members;
- iii. Aggressive evangelism;
- iv. Bible studies and style of worship;
- v. claim to offer solutions to problems;
- vi. Prosperity messages and the lack of accountability;
- vii. Claim of meeting African needs;
- viii. Aggressive and persuasive posture;
- ix. Use of modern musical instruments;
- x. good communication and use of electronic medium;

²¹¹ Response to question 32 in the questionnaire, 2005

²¹² Responses to question 13 in the questionnaire, 2005.

- xi. Ability to adapt to what people want and like to hear; and
- xii. Claim to perform miracles, display of wealth and healing powers.²¹³

The responses above represent the replies received from respondents and what people in Adamawa in particular and Nigeria in general say they believe motivate growth for Pentecostalism. These responses however, are indicative of perceptions rather than of tested evidence.

Interrogations were made as to if the Pentecostals have something that is missing in the mainline churches? Or, better, what is it the Pentecostals have which the mainline do not have? In answer to this question, most persons interviewed argued that Pentecostals have:

- i. lively worship styles;
- ii. adopted contextualization in their theology;
- iii. modernised their church administration;
- iv. zeal for matters affecting the Christian cause;
- v. encouraged tithing;
- vi. Prayer warriors and serious Bible study programmes;
- vii. Use of power from the devil; and
- viii. Encourage emotionalism and illiterate clergy.

What Pentecostals, according to respondents, do not have, is

- i. any tradition;
- ii. Anything the traditional churches do not have;
- iii. Anything to copy from;
- iv. Any liturgy; and
- v. any philosophy.²¹⁴

One question remains a puzzle. The question is whether Pentecostals succeed where the mainline churches have failed? Any answer given to this question should be judged against the background of the respondent's level of understanding and knowledge of the history of the church. There is evidence of the church responding to social events throughout history. However, the prophets of Israel and other prophets of world religions did address social problems not so much for their own sake as for other reasons that were, to their minds, of primary importance. Weber puts it succinctly:

The Israelite prophets were concerned with the social and other types of injustice as a violation of the Mosaic code primarily in order to explain God's wrath, and not in order to institute a programme of social reform. It is noteworthy that the real theoretician of social reform, Ezekiel, was a priestly theorist who can scarcely be

²¹³ Response to question 14 in the questionnaire, 2005.

²¹⁴ Response to question 15 in the questionnaire, 2005.

categorized as a prophet at all. Finally, Jesus was not at all interested in social reform as such.²¹⁵

What type of reform are the Pentecostals introducing? What is their primary concern? All the reforms, throughout history introduced by the church, had primary objectives. Even John Wesley, father of the Holiness Movement, had a primary concern to address. What then is the primary concern of the new Pentecostals in Nigeria?

The African way of worship in combination with the American mega-church styles of worship provided a fertile ground for Pentecostal religiosity in Nigeria. It is mainly the instruments and the heavy metal music that was responsible for attracting young people to Pentecostalism. Another factor, possibly responsible for the influx of converts, is the Pentecostals' ever increasing quest for signs and wonders. This quest for the extraordinary, for drama, is expressed in the Pentecostal worship style, for example in the violent conversion experience that some Pentecostals speak of and that enhances their image in the community.

It was interesting to discover during the research that many people maintain dual church membership. Some members of the Lutheran Church who live in cities such as Abuja, Lagos, Port-Harcourt and Kaduna, pass the Lutheran churches by, preferring to worship in Pentecostal churches. But when they return home, to their place of birth, they go back to their original Lutheran congregations. The reasons they give are that they want a break from the usual, or that they like the liveliness of the Pentecostal churches. Two persons said that worshiping in different churches gives them more peace but, when they are home, they want to worship where their parents go because that is where they came from.²¹⁶ It is possible that there is more to this behavior than they let on. They may feel oppressed by the style of mainline church buildings in the cities, by the systems of administration, or by the sermons that still preach the same old messages about the evil of seeking wealth and the need for Christians to steer clear of (political) power. Such messages may not seem relevant to city dwellers.

No individual or community in Nigeria wants to be classified as 'poor'. Everyone desires to be rich and successful in life. It is in this context, that the Pentecostal message can sweep the masses along: it announces that prosperity comes from God and the protagonists of the prosperity gospel quote scriptural promises of success, wellbeing and riches to support their claims. When people see the magnificent churches, schools and universities established

²¹⁵ Eisenstaedt, S. N.(ed.) 1968. *Max Weber On Charisma And Institution Building*. Selected Papers. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 258.

²¹⁶ Interview with five Lutheran Christians in December 2008 who live in the cities. Their names are being withheld for anonymity. There are however, many others who would rather trace their home churches and worship there.

by Pentecostal churches, they assume that these herald success. After all, which mainline church can afford to build such edifices? An intriguing question is: in whose name are those institutions registered?

The responses of mainline Christians to the question whether the Pentecostals do succeed where the mainline churches are not doing so well, are mostly in the affirmative with only a few denials and another small number uncertain. The various responses demonstrate how liberal the mainline Christian mind is.

The fact remains that the average person in Nigeria has a desperate desire to experience prosperity and success. With this at the back of their minds, Nigerians consider these Pentecostal messages of success in a positive light, even when there is no evidence that their lives are changing for the better. In general, even without the attraction of messages promising prosperity and success, when it comes to issues of spirituality, the mindset of the average Nigerian is uncritical.

When asked in the questionnaire as to whether the marginally economically successful in the mainline churches are comfortable with their lot, the majority of respondents said 'no'. Equal numbers of respondents said 'yes' or were uncertain.²¹⁷

The 'Nigerian phenomenon' has great bearing on the growth of Pentecostalism. The 'Nigerian phenomenon' refers to the 'survival spirit' of Nigerians and, in many ways; it encourages the proliferation of Pentecostal movements in the country. Despite the unquestioning nature of the Nigerians, not all of them visit Pentecostal churches in search of prosperity. The craving for prosperity, wealth and prestige would appear to be more insidious among the Pentecostal clergy than the laity. Followers of the Pentecostals are made to contribute large sums to meet the demands of the ministry. Such contributions are rarely mentioned in public, because the money thus offered belongs to God.²¹⁸

4.7 Theological Education

Theological education in the churches of Adamawa State was before the mid-1980s mainly directed at pastors and church workers in training. Such training was conducted in the vernacular and attracted people who had enjoyed a basic education at primary school level. This study argues that the mainline churches were not perceptibly prepared for changes in the socio-economic and educational systems in Nigeria. The years 1970-1975 saw the economic and educational transformation of Nigeria with the opening of many new primary and secondary schools and several new universities which meant that more people could get

²¹⁷ Response to question 23 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²¹⁸ Response to question 17 in questionnaires, 2005.

higher education and many more learned to read and write English. Shortly after 1975, a great amount of Pentecostal literature was brought into the country from the United States and distributed freely in schools and at universities. At this moment in time, the churches were still short of pastors, trained in English and able to cope with the increased literacy levels in the country.

Young people felt that pastors, who could only use the vernacular in worship and teaching, did not meet their needs. A cleavage became apparent. The churches made frantic efforts to bring theological education up to date, for example through the establishment of the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) programme which aimed to enhance theological education of pastors and members. But even this could not stem the tide of change among the youth. The TEE had come too late and, besides, in the beginning the programme was still presented only in the local vernacular.

The Pentecostal Christian literature that flooded Nigeria in the mid-1970s permeated the churches. The youth were the target group and by the time they left high schools and universities, they had become restive and began to ask for changes in the way things were done in their various churches. They asked many questions and, as Bishop Abba of the Catholic Church's Yola diocese said: "When they start asking questions, know that they are ready to go."

The questions asked by the youth in the mid-1970s were not promptly answered by members of the clergy, not so much because they knew no answers but rather because they were shocked by the kind of questions they were posed by their own children, or by children they had baptized. The pastors of the mainline churches wondered why the youth asked questions such as "Why do you turn your back on the people when you are praying during worship?" "Why do you baptize children or read prayers in worship?" The questions did not go down well with the mainline clergy, but indicated a general lack of theological education in the church.

The following question, aimed at investigating the level of theological education among members of the mainline churches, was part of question 22 of the questionnaire which was sent out by the researcher. The question is: "Do you think the members of your church receive enough theological teaching to understand what is happening today among the Pentecostals?" The respondents were clergy and church administrators, and there are a total of one hundred and three. Of these, more than half could not provide any concrete answer to

this particular question, while a significant number responded in the affirmative with a few not responding at all.²¹⁹

4.8 The End of Times

According to members of mainline churches, the Pentecostal churches are strong in their preaching about the end of times and about Christ being alive and talking to them because they believe God is with them as the last prophets of our time. Therefore, they want to draw members close to God by preaching sermons that will frighten and inspire fear in people, causing them to believe in Christ. In this state of fear they will give their money to the church voluntarily, knowing that Christ is coming back soon.²²⁰

However, one interviewee stated categorically that, “the Pentecostals just got it all wrong.”²²¹ God talks to his people directly in the church today, through the scripture, preaching, priests, visions and the Holy Spirit. In response to a subsequent question as to whether mainline pastors preach the word of God well and live up to what they preach, most mainline Christian respondents reacted positively, praising the preaching of their pastors and in some cases, adding that the Pentecostals do not know how to preach and are involved with occultism.²²²

Mainline Christians and church leaders agree that the Holy Spirit has an important role in the life of the church. They confirm their churches use the gifts of the Holy Spirit but do not advertise these very effectively when it concerns the gifts such as healing and prophecy.²²³ Pentecostals, on the other hand, advertise the gifts and promise miracles which, they claim are performed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The mainline churches argue that Pentecostals lack theological training and the teaching ministry. They consider Pentecostal sermons to be shallow in content and often repetitive. They suggest, that Pentecostals have to shift away gradually from spiritual matters because they lack the ability to properly interpret scriptural texts. The mainline Christians believe that these limitations lead Pentecostals to preach mostly from the Old Testament and the epistles. Thus, the Pentecostals are not able to balance their messages. From the mainliners’ point of view the other problem confronting Pentecostalists is their inability to

²¹⁹ Response to question 22 in the questionnaire, 2005.

²²⁰ Response to question 20 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²²¹ Response to question 20 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²²² Response to question 24 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²²³ Response to question 28 in the questionnaires, 2005.

accept to study philosophy and sociology alongside religion. In all, the mainliners believe that Pentecostals need good Christian education.²²⁴

In answer to an inquiry as to what could be done for Pentecostals, mainline church leaders and clergy suggested they should be offered some good theological education and interaction with mainline theologians at seminars.²²⁵

4.9 Interviews, Discussions and Responses from Pentecostals

A total of thirty-nine (39) persons along with groups of targeted members of Pentecostal churches were interviewed. The interviews with the Pentecostals, especially their leaders, were conducted as rigorously as possible taking into account the natural tendency of the respondents to try and make their discourse acceptable. Some of them avoided the researcher for two years and others evaded questions. The following submissions are extracts from the interviews. From those interviews Pentecostals agree that, although they have members of all ages, the average age falls between 20 and 40 years. Reasons offered for becoming Pentecostals are a desire for spiritual growth and knowledge and ‘the spirit-filled word’ preached by the Pentecostal churches which they see as ‘evidence of Holy Ghost power’. For some, Pentecostalism is a quest for knowledge and the application thereof, vibrant worship patterns, clear teaching of the Bible, and constant, strict application of biblical principles to day-to-day living. One person stated that the closeness of the Pentecostal church to his residence, the mode of services and spiritual learning and the Pentecostal development style led him to join. Most interviewees said that they have been members of the Pentecostal movement for over ten years.²²⁶

They also mentioned that they felt their services were more needed in the Pentecostal than mainline church and that God wanted them to become Pentecostals. Others maintained that they were initially invited to Pentecostal meetings by friends and liked what they saw and stayed on. The interviewees said that they have been blessed spiritually and economically because they had become Pentecostals.²²⁷

When asked about the position of the Holy Spirit and its actions for the church, the Pentecostals emphasized strongly that, the Holy Spirit is the power of the church. It empowers and directs the affairs of the church and is the divine partner of the church in true worship.

²²⁴ Response to question 31 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²²⁵ Response to question 31 in the questionnaires, 2005.

²²⁶ Responses from Pentecostal Christians who left their mainline churches to join the movement, interviewed January 2005.

²²⁷ Responses from Pentecostal Christians interviewed in January, 2005.

The Pentecostal understanding of the role of the clergy is unique. The role of the pastors is to teach lay members while remembering that all are believers so that there should be no difference between clergy and laity. Whatever the pastor contributes should be regarded as complementary. Pentecostals maintain that the relationship between church and the world should be corrective, educational and inspirational because the church is the salt, the light and the living epistle and intercessor for the lost world. The church should not be yoked with the world as equals, but be the arbiter of truth and morality. The church is in the world but not of the world. Therefore, the church should be pacesetter and determine who should be the political leaders. It should however, not connive with such political leaders to allow injustice in the land, rather, the church should show the world the love of Christ and the need to obey God and be the proponent of the true gospel of Jesus in the world as the shining example of the name of God reconciling the world to God.²²⁸

Some of those interviewed had already reached leadership positions in Pentecostal movements. Those who were not that far expressed a willingness to be trained for leading positions in their churches, if they were needed. They felt that there are very few signs of power struggle in their churches because their leaders are teachable, maybe open-minded or receptive and knowledgeable people, working harmoniously and in dedication to the call of God for service. They also believe that their pastors have no problems because they are well taken care of.²²⁹

As regards their economic interests, respondents were largely in agreement that their economic situation has improved and that, hence, God's promise is true. A few said that life is still up and down and that things were not yet working out as expected.²³⁰

One aspect of their spirituality, interviewees said, is the practice of fasting which they describe as part of service to God and which assists them to get a particular task done. Fasting can strengthen a person spiritually and is a sure way to humble the flesh while one is seeking and approaching the spirit and the face of God for intervention in case of sickness, danger or a desired success. Fasting brings spiritual upliftment and answers from God.²³¹

The researcher was greatly surprised by the degree of collaboration offered by indigenous Pentecostals and Pentecostal interviewees during his research. There was clear evidence of a wish to express their knowledge and their feelings about what they did as Pentecostals and why. They contentedly granted interviews. Only one person was difficult to

²²⁸ Responses from Pentecostal Christians interviewed in January, 2005.

²²⁹ Responses from Pentecostal Christians interviewed in January, 2005.

²³⁰ Responses from Pentecostal Christians interviewed in January, 2005.

²³¹ Responses from Pentecostal Christians interviewed in January, 2005.

convince. The percentage of questionnaires that was returned confirms the impression that people were keen to discuss the issues.

Pastors and leaders of the more nationally spread Pentecostal groups however did refuse to cooperate and insisted that they needed the permission of their national offices in the south of Nigeria before they could discuss the church with anyone.

The level of tolerance of Pentecostals exhibited by certain mainline churches, for example the EYN, the Anglican Church and the COCIN, was surprising. Least tolerant were the Baptists, followed by the Catholics and the Lutherans. Even though these major mainline churches show little tolerance for Pentecostals, they still said they were willing to assist them.

Many of the findings as analyzed in data presented above are not new. Among them is a fair amount of known facts but in the framework of the current research, it was necessary to get them confirmed so as to be able to sort truths from untruths in what people say about Pentecostals in Nigeria.

Thus I attempted to analyze which age and ethnic groups in Adamawa are most likely to join the Pentecostal movements. Tonmoso the director for administration of the TFM responded without mincing words that; “Our members are mostly youth and are of the middle class, level.”²³² A pilot survey carried out in February 2014 at the headquarters church of the TFM, an indigenous Pentecostal church at Numan, provided some insights into the membership of the Pentecostal churches in Adamawa.

Table: 2 Age Distribution of Members of TFM in Numan

Age Range	Male		Female		Total		%	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
15-30 yrs.	25	36.76	17	31.48	42	34.42%		
31-40 yrs.	35	51.47	26	48.14	61	50.00%		
41-50 yrs.	5	7.35	11	20.37	16	13.11%		
51 & Above	3	4.41	0	0.00	3	2.45%		
Total	68	100%	54	100%	122	100%		

Table: 3 Educational Qualifications of Members of TFM in Numan

Highest Educational Qualification	Distribution by Sex and Percentage					
	Male		Female		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
High School Certificate	27	39.70	16	29.62	43	35.24
National Diploma	15	22.05	10	18.51	25	20.49
Higher National Diploma	10	14.70	10	18.51	20	16.39
Bachelor’s Degree	10	14.70	15	27.77	25	20.49
Master’s Degree	4	5.88	3	5.55	7	5.73
Ph. D.	2	2.94	0	00.00	2	1.63
Total	68	100%	54	100%	122	100%

²³² Tonmoso, in response to a follow-up question, interviewed at Numan, Adamawa State, Nigeria, 25th Feb. 2014.

The data above could trigger more research by scholars and statisticians but it presents Pentecostalism as a religion of the middle class with about 63.1% of those surveyed having attended tertiary institutions or having university education. Furthermore, 84.4% of those surveyed fall within the age bracket of 15 to 40 years. We consider this as something of an unearthing because certain assumptions have now been corroborated or contradicted. If the findings were to be used as the starting point for a statistical analysis of Pentecostalized communities in Nigeria, we would get an even better perspective on Pentecostalism in the country and the number of assumptions might be further reduced.

4.10 Observations during Pentecostal Services Attended

The researcher undertook between 2005 and 2008 participatory observation visits to eight different Pentecostal church services. He also attended the crusades of Reinhard Bonnke, held in Yola between the 8th and 11th January, 2008. The visits caused some uneasiness among the worshippers, because most of them know the researcher as their former pastor and many had been baptized by him, including some of the pastors. The congregations visited were the Upper Room Cathedral, in August 2005 for a funeral service and in January 2006 for a wedding ceremony. The other visits were to the Truth Foundation Ministries at Numan in 2006, the Rhema Bible Church and Ministries International (in Yola), the Ancient Path Assembly (Jimeta), Life Spring Chapel International (Yola), and the Deeper Life Bible Church (Jimeta) in November 2008.

In spite of the uneasiness caused by his visits, the researcher was by pastors invited to join them at the altar. It became clear that Pentecostal churches welcome clergy from all denominations to take a seat at their altars. In case of visiting pastors bringing their wives, these too are invited to the altar. This experience was quite new to the researcher.

Many observations made during the visits and the results of interviews conducted during these visits have been used in chapters four and five below. When it comes to worship styles, the different Pentecostal churches have many features in common.

The normal order of services was simple and virtually the same in all the visited churches. The service began with a Sunday school session, followed by songs after which the leader said the opening prayer. After the prayer there were notices and pastoral greetings from the pastor. At intervals there were scriptural readings, prayer sessions, testimonies, a sermon and offerings. The service ended with a benediction. The researcher noted that in none of the churches he visited were personal confessions of sins allowed. The general

confession of faith and the Lord's Prayer which are normal features in structured mainline services were completely absent. The services may be simple and flexible to meet the needs of worshippers but, careful observation makes one aware of elements of entertainment, showmanship and self-projection of leaders and singers in the church. Somewhat reminiscent of what is obtainable in clubs and other entertainment centres.

Many Pentecostal churches retain rented spaces in the shopping complex of Yola, capital of Adamawa State, for their activities. This can pose problems for holding wedding and funeral services in their sanctuaries which they call 'church auditoriums'. The neo-Pentecostal churches generally do not allow their dead to be brought into the church for funeral services. They believe and teach that the church is not for the dead but only for the living. Death is associated with decay and bad odour which have no place in the house of worship. Funeral services therefore are held in the deceased's compound or at the mortuary and must be as lively as possible.

The funeral service, attended by this researcher in August 2005, was well attended. There were testimonies by members of the church about the deceased. There were music, praise singing, and a brief sermon by the pastor. Most striking was the cheerfulness of the occasion which would not be tolerated in mainline churches.

The researcher managed to attend services of the Living Faith and the Redeemed Christian Church of God without being recognized as most of its members are not indigenous to Adamawa State. Despite having much in common with other Pentecostals, these two churches were distinguished by their own peculiar characteristics.

(i) The Living Faith (aka Winners Chapel)

This congregation was visited January 2, 2005, in Jimeta, and I made the following observations:

- i. Several offerings were taken during the worship, but no mention was made of what was offered the previous Sunday.
- ii. The church building has no symbols inside or outside the building.
- iii. The church does not have an altar in the church hall. They have a raised stage with a fanciful lectern and beautiful curtains with lavish inscriptions as well as rich furnishings. Pentecostal churches do not have pews, they use individual seats. There was a complete absence of the cross outside and inside the worship hall.
- iv. Women and men designated as deacons moved up and down, observing people during worship services, in case they fell asleep.

- v. The sermon for the day was interspersed with rhetorical questions e.g. “Did I hear someone say, ‘Hallelujah?’” or “Let me hear a big, ‘Amen’”.
- vi. Offering envelopes were sold at the gate of the church hall and all members needed to buy one for their offerings for the day. They resell the same, used envelopes repeatedly.²³³

(ii). RCCG

To firsthand appreciate worship for the purpose of this research, I attended a service of the RCCG at Ikeja, Lagos State on 8th February, 2005. The service was typical of Pentecostal services with loud music, several announcements and a very long sermon. The sermon was without a particular text or theme. Several quotations were made from the Old Testament and a few from Pauline epistles. There were continuous references to what the leader had said during a camp held during the last two nights (The leader of the RCCG was a professor of mathematics at the University of Lagos. He was addressed as ‘General Overseer’ (G.O.).

Five different offerings were taken that Sunday, there was also a special ‘thanks giving offering’ by a newly wedded couple. Those who were worshipping in the church for the first time were invited to the front for prayers which I joined. After the prayers and blessings, we were directed to a room where we had to fill out cards with our names, home addresses and times we would be available at home for visitations and follow-ups by elders or deacons of the church. The elder or deacon, a woman, pleaded with us to give honest answers and correct addresses. Experience has learnt that some people give wrong addresses. She lamented that, “when we go to their given addresses, we don’t find them. Some give us numbers of uncompleted buildings with no one living in them.”²³⁴ One was automatically considered a new convert and a potential member. The pastor of this RCCG congregation came up only once during this service to make announcements and to invite people to make offerings.

(iii) Summary of Interviews

The pastor of the Winners Chapel at Jimeta during an interview stated that the secret behind the success of his church is: “Dogged addiction to the scriptures, living it and not just preaching it.” In response as to why they take people who are already Christians to form their church, he said, “there are hundreds of people who go to the Lutheran, Catholic or Anglican

²³³ Participatory observation in Living Faith Church, Jimeta, Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2nd January 2005.

²³⁴ Participatory observation in RCCG, Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria, 4th February 2005.

churches but who are waiting to be harvested by the Pentecostals. They go to those churches, but they actually belong here. Therefore, we must take them or else they will die without Christ.” In answer to a question how the mainline churches feel about the Living Faith Church taking away their members, he replied: “The sky is too wide for birds to collide and even if you take all these people away; I assure you, I will fill this church again in one month.” The pastor made an analogy with goats and food: “Food is very important. If you don’t feed your goats very well they will move to your neighbour’s house where there is food”. And the pastor concluded, “meet the needs of the people, they will follow you.”²³⁵

4.11 Summary

We have established that Pentecostalism has come to stay in Adamawa State and is flourishing because the movement has been embraced by Adamawa indigenous Christians. Secondly, the ‘Nigerian phenomenon’ and how the movement appeals to their felt needs are among the most essential factors contributing to the proliferation of Pentecostalism in Adamawa. These members embrace Pentecostalism based on what they see the Pentecostals do that appeal to their minds without considering whether it is theologically sound. Some of the main challenges to the mainline churches have been identified in this chapter along with observations about Pentecostal worship services and sites.

²³⁵ Response during interview with the Pastor of Winners Chapel at Jimeta on Sunday 2nd January 2005.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEWER PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN ADAMAWA STATE

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter an attempt is made to reconstruct the histories of the various Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State. The chapter draws on materials gathered during field work in Adamawa over a period of four years. Interviews were conducted with leaders and principal players of the Pentecostal and mainline churches in Adamawa. Structured and unstructured questions have been used in collecting the material for this chapter. Sources have been carefully scrutinized for reliability. The chapter aims to acquaint the reader with the early beginnings of the first Pentecostal churches, namely the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and the Assemblies of God Church (AG) in Adamawa.

A more detailed study of specific prominent and locally initiated Pentecostal churches is presented, supported by images of church leaders and places of relevance. The chapter includes a classification of Pentecostal churches, as seen and understood by the Pentecostals themselves as well as by mainline churches. The reasons for the shift in style and the teachings of the newer Pentecostals have been highlighted along with further information what makes these churches attractive.

Sources for the material in this chapter include, in addition to fieldwork, the researcher's observations and experience. Part of the information comes from books by leaders of the Pentecostal churches, church manuals, bulletins for worship and annual reports of churches.

5.1 Nigeria and the Development of Pentecostalism 1970-2005

In the night of 10th and morning of 11th January 1970, Nigeria emerged from its bloody civil war. The end of the civil war marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the country. The Eastern part, which during the war was named 'Biafra', was re-united with the rest of the country and an impressive programme of "Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation" was embarked upon by the general Gowon regime. The head of state declared at the end of the war that, "there was no victor, no vanquished."²³⁶ This meant that "the process of reconciliation" was made easier as the Igbo community, which chose to be on

²³⁶Ishaya, 1984, p.22.

the Biafran side, could not officially be discriminated against. With fears allayed and tensions calmed, the nation became united again and people were free to travel and live in any part of the country without fear of molestation. The Igbos, who had left the northern parts of the country en-masse in 1966, returned there, they were more than pleased to be re-united with their old friends, and could claim their land and properties back and reactivate their dormant bank accounts. The researcher has met several Igbos who returned to Adamawa in the middle of 1970. The same Igbos quickly sold their properties and returned to their homeland in the eastern part of the country, possibly to renovate their homes that had been damaged during the war, while some relocated to other parts of the country to establish new businesses.

The Igbo traders who went to the north to startup businesses had young evangelists also following on their trails. They brought Pentecostal messages, determined to bring Christianity to the Muslim north of Nigeria. A similar group of charismatic preachers all of them basically young Igbo people came to Adamawa. They were instrumental to the introduction of new Pentecostal churches in the state. Kalu argues:

Some of the southern youths who had not gone through universities but drank their charismatic spirituality in secondary schools surged through Muslim northern Nigeria founding ministries just at the time when many southerners were returning to the north after the civil war.²³⁷

Youthful evangelists, flooding northern Nigeria, were helped in their endeavours by the recent civil war that worked as a catalyst for the development of Pentecostalism, starting from Igbo land where the war had taken place and spreading to the rest of the country. Kalu gives a graphic description of the situation:

The religious landscape during the Nigerian-Biafran civil war situation is [...] an important backdrop. It took many forms: there was a cultural renaissance because scarcity of money and social suffering enlarged the space for native doctors, the ancient cultures of communities, and especially social control models. Occult groups flourished because dire times needed quick solutions. The *Aladura*, who had not been very successful in certain parts of the country because of the strength of the mission churches, now proliferated as the prayer houses were established in the hinterland at the heels of fleeing refugees. The mission churches had much competition because their organized structures could not be maintained. Priests and nuns ran for safety after losing their congregations in the urban areas. British support for the Nigerian government disillusioned and angered many who thought that “Christian” England would easily recognize that eastern Nigerians constituted the bulwark of Christianity in the country. Patriotic propaganda harped on this perfidy, leaving the insinuation that western-type Christianity was not a reliable path. Many turned to the syncretistic prayer houses to deal with the inner and physical needs of the war condition. So

²³⁷ Kalu, 2007, pp.15-16, Accessed 15/3/2013.

ironically, the middle ground of Christianity gave way as the culture shifted to either the prayer houses or to the young radicalised SU boys and girls.²³⁸

These young and radicalized SU boys and girls were the Scripture Union members of the universities who became charismatics in their student days. It is clear from Kalu's submission, that anger, disillusionment over British government support for the Nigerian side during the civil war, and the inability of the mainline churches to address the poverty and situation of suffering among the Igbos during the war led them to embrace Pentecostalism *en masse*, producing thousands of evangelists who began to traverse Nigeria immediately after the war came to an end. It is however not clear why these youths took to evangelism in such great numbers.

Also the National Youth Service Corps had a great deal to do with the introduction of Pentecostalism in many parts of Nigeria. In Adamawa in particular, the corps members complemented the work of the young evangelists from the south.

The first move to bring Pentecostalism (its classical strand) to Nigeria had been made in the 1930s when several indigenous Aladura churches in Yoruba land began to link up with Pentecostal groups in Europe and America. The mainline churches had been established by mission societies. The Anglican Church for example is a product of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) from England. The fact that Britain was the colonial power in Nigeria, it was generally believed that the Anglican Church was favoured by the colonialists because it was their church. The Aladura church members were drawn mainly from the same Anglican Church. They joined up with European (mainly British) and American Pentecostal churches in order to obtain legitimacy and to get the moral and material support that the mainline churches enjoyed. As Kalu observes:

The Precious Stone Society in Ijebu-Ode and in Lagos, both Yoruba-speaking churches, became affiliated with the Apostolic Church in 1930. An Igbo congregation of Umuahia, a tongue-speaking group, calling itself the Church of Jesus Christ, invited the Assemblies of God from the USA to Nigeria in 1939.²³⁹

The two Pentecostal churches, namely the Apostolic Church and the Assemblies of God Church described by Kalu, were introduced into Adamawa State in 1960. The coming of the Apostolic Church and the Assemblies of God Church into Nigeria formed, according to Musa Gaiya, quoting Ojo, "...the beginning of modern Pentecostalism in Nigeria which occurred in the 1970s among students in the few existing tertiary institutions and secondary

²³⁸ Kalu, 2007, pp.13, Accessed 15/3/2013.

²³⁹ Kalu, Ogbu U. 1998. "Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Christian Experience in Africa, 1970-1995." *Journal of African Thought*, Vol.1 No.2, December, p.7.

schools. At tertiary level the Universities of Ibadan and Ife (Obafemi Awolowo University) became hotbeds of Pentecostalism.”²⁴⁰

The majority of students at these universities were from the south of Nigeria. Many had been adherents of Pentecostalism before they got to university. During student fellowships in the various universities in the South-West of Nigeria, their Pentecostal teachings influenced other students.

The Nigerian government’s policies on education and its attempt to calm the nation socially and politically, aided the rapid circulation of Pentecostal ideas which until then had been a southern phenomenon but after the civil war speedily spread to the north. All this occurred between 1973 and 1975 with 'Unity Schools' being opened in all the states of the Federation as a way of integrating the children of Nigeria. During the same period seven new universities were opened.

By July 1973, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) had been introduced with the aim of making the youth serve in Nigerian states, cultures or environments, other than their own. It was hoped that the young graduates would learn more about their country, possibly take up appointments in their host states and communities and hopefully end up residing anywhere in the country without fear of intimidation.

All these changes could only be introduced successfully because of the expertise of young graduates, already influenced by Pentecostal ideas from the South-Western colleges of Lagos, Ibadan and Ife universities. The north had only one university, at Zaria, where the Pentecostals had little or no influence prior to the late seventies. The Sunday services in the chapel at Zaria University offered alternating Anglican and Baptist liturgies for Protestants, while the Catholics had their regular Sunday Mass. The east also had only one university at Nsuka that had been destroyed during the civil war and the early seventies were years of repairing war damage in the various university faculties.

The NYSC scheme has from its inception unintentionally sent fervent Pentecostal preachers around Nigeria. The scheme's decree states that:

The ultimate objective of the NYSC Scheme is to achieve national unity through mobilisation of the youths of this country for service in the NYSC Scheme. Corps members are to be exposed to life in other parts of the country and to learn at first hand the many similarities and diversities of culture and traditions of the various ethnic groups in the country with a view to eliminating any inherent prejudices, etc. Corps members therefore have no choice as to where they would like to serve. Corps members are discouraged from lobbying for choice stations.²⁴¹

²⁴⁰ Gaiya, M. A. B. 2002. “The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria.” Occasional paper, Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen, p.4.

²⁴¹ Available on <http://www.nysc.gov.ng>, Accessed 10th August, 2010.

The NYSC scheme did not only achieve its objectives but, in addition, the young Nigerian graduates who were sent to work all over Nigeria took with them their faith in the type of Christianity they had embraced at universities in the south, namely the Pentecostalism so prevalent in modern day Nigeria. Many of these students had already taken to Pentecostalism before they went to university. In the 1980s they became avid readers of the plentiful available Pentecostal literature from Europe and America.²⁴² The new religious passion led to the establishment of evangelistic ministries, the best known of which is William Kumuyi's Deeper Life Christian Ministry.²⁴³

Ojo, quoted by Gaiya, notes that, "this was helpful to the growth of Christianity because these youths, being young, strong, agile and zealous could be found everywhere in the country preaching the Pentecostal gospel".²⁴⁴

It should be added that the Corps (NYSC) members who from 1973 were posted in schools all over the country as teachers, used the opportunity to familiarize children in secondary schools with Pentecostal ideas. Towards 1975 several new universities were opened in the northern parts of Nigeria. Many young people who had been influenced by Pentecostalized teachers in secondary schools eventually entered universities and in turn, influenced others, thus strengthening the Pentecostal faith and the spread of its doctrines. By the time they left the universities they were convinced they had the right ideas about Christianity and set out to change the perceived coldness in their 'mother churches'. This was the situation described by the CAPRO Research Office in Jos, Nigeria in a 1991 publication, "The Cross and the gods". The authors write:

For over 6 years now, the church generally has been having problems with their youths. Those in schools and higher institutions were introduced to Pentecostal doctrines in their campus fellowship groups and came home critical of their home churches. This has caused a storm in many congregations. Today a lot of independent youth ministries have started as a result, such as Truth Foundation with headquarters in Numan. All the members were at one time members of LCCN but because of this doctrinal disagreement, they were sent out of the church. Today Truth Foundation has a church in Numan and plans to open others in various towns.²⁴⁵

The LCCN is the oldest and largest church in Adamawa State. Its headquarters are in Numan. The situation described above is discussed in more detail in this chapter under 5.3.2 below. It is however of note that the first leaders of the indigenous Pentecostal churches in

²⁴² The works of popular Pentecostal preachers like Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts, Robert Tilton, Kenneth Copeland were the most commonly available books in the 1980s.

²⁴³ Gaiya, 2002, p.4.

²⁴⁴ Gaiya, 2002, p.4.

²⁴⁵ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p.91.

Adamawa were products of the new universities who had at high school been influenced by their Pentecostal teachers. They were young, energetic, and they zealously promoted the Gospel. In addition they were eloquent English-speakers and their command of the language added to their effectiveness.

The mainline churches did not seem prepared for the emergence of a new, highly educated and talented group of youngsters in Nigeria. The years 1970 to 1975 were characterized by the economic and educational transformation of Nigeria with many new schools at primary and secondary levels in every state and with seven new universities having been opened by 1975. The level of literacy was raised dramatically. Hence, the mass of Pentecostal literature from the USA and Europe could be read and readily understood at schools and universities. Meanwhile, the mainline churches were at a marked disadvantage, as mentioned earlier, because not enough English-speaking pastors had been trained. Pastors lacked the literacy levels and the communication skills to cope with a better educated congregation and, in fact, they found that, in terms of education, they had been left behind by many congregants.

The researcher found during field work in Adamawa State that in particular the younger people at the time had felt that their pastors were not well prepared for their tasks and communication was seriously hampered by their exclusive use of the vernacular. The establishment of a 'Theological Education by Extension' (TEE) programme (still planned in the vernacular!), came too late to turn the tide. The youths were for the most part probably unaware that they were actually introducing a new strand of Christianity into Adamawa State. They believed, as they clearly stated, that they were helping the evangelization of the state and that the mother churches stood to benefit from the programmes they set out to introduce.²⁴⁶

The NYSC scheme, discussed above, did achieve its professed objectives but unwittingly also aided the spread of Pentecostalism in Nigeria.

5.2 Ethnic Groups that are Most Christianized and Most Prone to Pentecostalism

The peoples of Adamawa State have been discussed in chapter three under 3.4.2. In this section the most Christianized ethnic groups in Adamawa are considered. These have been identified in a survey, compiled during field work between 2005 and 2008. They are groups among which the Lutheran church, the Church of the Brethren and the Catholic missions to Adamawa, have worked assiduously for almost a century. Over that period they

²⁴⁶ Empirical knowledge of the researcher. The researcher has been involved in the administration of the Church in Adamawa State over the past 38 years.

have embraced mainline Christianity. Here and there one finds still some traditionalists. Very few groups have converted in large numbers to Islam. The Christian ethnic groups now have Christian chiefs. Before the arrival of the British they have always managed to remain independent from the Fulani Emirs at Yola. Most Christianized are the Bwatiye (Bachama and Batta but the Bachama in particular), Chamba, Higgi, Marghi (Kilba, Bura and Marghi) Mbula, Lunguda, Yandang, Yungur, Bali, Bura, Bile and Ga'anda groups.

Among these, the Christian youths of the Bwatiye, Marghi, Mbula and Kilba, adhere more generally to Pentecostalism than the young members of other ethnic groupings. It is among the Bwatiye and Mbula, that classical Pentecostalism first took hold, in 1944 and 1962 respectively. (It is interesting to note that the Bwatiye were also the first to receive the Gospel in 1913 at Numan, after the Mbula apparently had rejected Christianity between 1909 and 1911. The Marghi received the Gospel in 1925, making them the first to do so in their region in northern Adamawa). These groups account for almost two thirds of the Christian population in Adamawa. In general their members belonged to mainline Christianity and their youths were brought up by parents who had received their instruction in Christianity from the Catholic, Lutheran and Brethren missions.

These same groups, the Bwatiye, Marghi and Mbula, turned out to be most inclined to converting to Pentecostalism and they have provided most of the leaders and founders of the new indigenous Pentecostal churches and movements in Adamawa. Several factors may have contributed to their prominent role in Pentecostalism, for example: The three ethnic groups had more youths enrolled in schools than any other group at the time that neo Pentecostalism was being introduced in Adamawa State.

The youngsters had relatives who were well educated because of their exposure to mission education. During school vacations they would visit their relatives in cities around Nigeria where those relations work. It is likely that in the cities they came into contact with Pentecostalism.

The three ethnic groups allowed their women at a very early stage to acquire western education. Most female university graduates in Adamawa belong to these ethnic groups. Despite the contradiction between the adherence to traditionalism and modern education for women, the gain of Christianity is it ushered in a complex situation as regards the modern-traditionalist dilemma. The opening of a Girls Boarding School by the LCCN at Numan, a Provincial Girl's School by the colonial government at Yola and a Women Teachers' College by the Catholic church at Sugu, all in Adamawa along combined primary schools for boys and girls gave incentive to women education and yet women were expected to remain humble

and silent where men spoke. The arrival of modern education positively broadened the worldview of women in Adamawa state and also made them more independent in matters of faith.

The three ethnic groups maintained a strong belief in African traditional religion; they believed in spirits and held on to their totems. This is obvious from the way they maintain traditional shrines. It is prospective that their traditional background played a role in their conversion to Christianity and their religiosity or spirituality.

Also, the very fact that the mission churches have taken roots and have started translating portions of the bible especially the gospels, into local Adamawa languages as was being done in other parts of Nigeria at that time, many Adamawa indigenes and especially the enlightened youth; from the ethnic groups mentioned above started to:

Appropriate the message of the gospel according to their local worldviews, often breeding conflicts and disagreements. The African [Nigerian] worldview is [being] intensely charismatic and alive. The gospel [which they heard] was interpreted in a lively manner and infused with many culturally relevant elements.²⁴⁷

This appreciation of their culture and traditional religion may have encouraged the demand of the youths for more spiritual answers to their problems and it could have inspired in them a belief that their parents had strayed from Christian tenets or, perhaps, that their parents could not break free from traditionalism. Having noted the syncretism evident among their people, the youth got attracted to the Pentecostalists who challenged syncretistic behaviour yet, what gave reason for the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa is actually not too far from:

The emphasis on cultural appropriation of significant themes, and practices such as the use of indigenous music and language, emphasis on the activities of evil spirits such as witches and demons and the claim by the leaders to have power to deliver people from the influences of these baneful spirits and the active role of women as some even became church founders.²⁴⁸

The founders of Pentecostal churches and former leaders of the youth groups who are now more mature have confessed to youthful exuberance as one of the reasons for breaking away from mainline churches.

The non-Muslim clans of Adamawa were never fully subjugated by the Muslim Fulani of Yola continued in antagonism towards the Fulani. At the time the British and the Christian missionaries arrived in the region, the Fulani had certainly not extended their power

²⁴⁷Ukah, A. "African Christianities: Features Promises and Problems," Arbeitspapiere/Working Paper Nr.79
Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien/Department of Anthropology and African Studies, Gutenberg
Universität, 2007, p.6.

²⁴⁸ Ukah, 2007. P.8.

and faith over the Bachama (the other half of the Bwatiye group), Mbula, Kanakuru, Lunguda, Chamba, Kilba, Yungur, Lala, Ga'anda and Mummuye. All these peoples remained traditionalists and live within a hundred miles or so from Yola.²⁴⁹ This situation left them open to the new Christian faith that was to be introduced in the region at the beginning of the 20th century.

5.3 The Formative Period of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State

Two phases can be distinguished in the formation of Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State. The first phase concerns the emergence of Classical-Pentecostal churches, from the mid-1940s to the early 1960s. This period saw the establishment of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), and the much smaller Apostolic Church (AC) and Assemblies of God Church (AG). These strands of Pentecostalism are highly spiritual and inclined to focus more on “holiness” and less on “prosperity” preaching. Their origins lie in Europe and the USA and they belong to the older forms of Pentecostalism, evolved as far back as 1906 on Azusa Street, Los Angeles. This sets them apart from the later groups that started in the 1960s in the USA with an emphasis on crusades and campus ministries at universities. This form of Pentecostalism is discussed more fully below in chapter 6, ‘The Types of Pentecostal Churches in Adamawa’.

The second phase concerns the newest and most vibrant Pentecostal churches in Adamawa. The newer Pentecostal churches reached Adamawa in the mid-1970s. By 1976 there were clear indications that these Pentecostals had made their first footholds in the state. At the time they exhibited elements of spirituality and holiness along with an insistence on a return to biblical teaching, rather than the traditionalism and the formality in worship that was characteristic of, in particular, the Lutheran and the Catholic churches which were the dominant denominations in the state capital.

5.3.1 The First Phase of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State

The first (classical) phase for Pentecostalist churches in Adamawa State saw the establishment of the Christ Apostolic Church, the Assemblies of God Church and the Apostolic Church of which we discuss the first two because they have indigenous members and are well spread in Adamawa.

²⁴⁹ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p. 48.

5.3.1 (a) The Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)

The Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) was the first Pentecostal denomination introduced into Adamawa State. According to a CAPRO publication, the CAC was introduced in reaction to discontentment in the LCCN, especially in the Bwatiye areas. The CAPRO researchers write:

Over time, the LCCN lost some of its members to the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). Some left the LCCN because they were discontented with the LCCN leadership in the area. Nominalism also forced some members out to start other churches like the CAC, which seemed more zealous.²⁵⁰

The CAC through its Zonal Secretary maintains that the CAC was introduced through the zealous efforts and commitment of members of the Bwatiye and Mbula ethnic groups. These groups were the main occupants of the upper Benue River valley and had moved westwards down the river as migrant commercial fishermen. In the course of their journey they came into contact with the CAC at Agenebode, a town in Edo State in southern Nigeria.²⁵¹

At Agenebode one Stephen Kuta Nzofite was converted. He became a CAC member in 1939 and he introduced other members of the Bwatiye and Mbula who accompanied him on fishing trips, to the new faith. They converted as well. In 1944 two Bwatiye converts, Iliya Kajila and Medan Tanei, returned to their home town, Imburu, where they established the CAC. Imburu, on the northern bank of the Benue River, directly opposite Numan, became CAC's first headquarters in Adamawa.²⁵²

Within a few years CAC followers were found in many Bwatiye, Mbula, Bali (Maya), Yandang, Kwah and Chobo (Pire) villages. For example, the CAC arrived in the Mbula village Dwam in 1946, at Bomni among the Maya in 1947, at Yandang in 1948, at Kwah in 1950 and by 1958 the CAC had been introduced among the Chobo people.²⁵³ (Yandang and Kwah are the names of two ethnicities as well as their towns).

According to Datti, a one-time assembly, district and zone-secretary and now a pastor of the CAC in Adamawa, the rapid spread of the CAC in the state was believed to be caused by the Holy Spirit who attracts new converts to the faith and uses them as agents for further expansion of the CAC in their areas of origin. Furthermore, many who were converted during

²⁵⁰ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds.), 1993, p. 91.

²⁵¹ Datti, D. B. Note: The report is presented by Pastor Datti, D. Bitrus. Pastor Datti is a lecturer in the Adamawa State Polytechnic, Yola. He has served the CAC at various times as assembly, district and zonal secretary. He has conducted interviews with many pastors and other functionaries in the CAC including Stephen Nzofite, the first Bwatiye man won over to the CAC. Datti has written a book on the CAC that is yet to be published, titled *A History of the CAC Adamawa/Taraba States* July, 2009.

²⁵² Datti, July, 2009.

²⁵³ Datti, July, 2009.

commercial fishing trips in the south returned full of zeal, longing to establish the church in their home villages. In addition, many young people wanted to break away from the restrictive ways of their parents, as young people do, and wanted change, for example the change offered by the mode of worship of the CAC which allowed worshippers to freely sing and dance, pray aloud, and express their emotions. Although this was an exciting new experience, it also in a sense pointed back to ancient African traditions. The Apostolic Church and the Christ Apostolic Church are not seen as Pentecostal by most people in Adamawa. This is because their practices and mode of worship were at variance with mainline churches and they were nicknamed *Ja'boko*, a word the meaning of which could probably mean 'anti-book' in the Hausa language, referring to the fact that initially they were seen not to use hymnals from the very beginning of their introduction to the northern parts of Nigeria (they taught and sang only choruses in their services).

Alisabatu Aliyuda, a Maya woman, remembers her childhood days when the CAC was introduced in her village: "...it was great fun because we could sing and dance for a very long time whenever we came to church".²⁵⁴ One of the songs they sang was:

Apostoli da dadi, Apostoli da dadi,
 Abinda ya sa, dokan sa da wuya.
 Im bada wuya ba, da dukammu zamu tsira,
 Apostoli da dadi.²⁵⁵

Or, translated:

Apostolic is sweet, Apostolic is sweet,
 The only difficulty, its rules are too stringent.
 Had they not been stringent, all of us shall be saved,
 Apostolic is sweet.

Worshippers in the CAC would sing, dance and pray for several hours. While the song above says that its rules are too stringent, the CAC did continue to allow syncretistic practices on other aspects of religious life in worship and prayer styles and as regards obedience to the Ten Commandments. In general though, the CAC observes strict rules, especially in regard to prayer life. The church believes in exorcism and followers wake up very early every morning to pray and cast out demons. This phenomenon is common also in traditional religion as practiced in African societies.

The final, may be most important, reason for the appeal of CAC was that this church opened its doors to polygamists, many of whom, though interested in Christianity, had

²⁵⁴ Alisabatu, A. Interviewed in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria, February 2010

²⁵⁵ Alisabatu, February, 2010.

hitherto been shut out by the Lutheran SUM (D). In fact, in many villages, the CAC was introduced and led by people who were polygamists who converted to Pentecostalism. The efforts of a few itinerant evangelists, both men and women, contributed further to the rapid expansion of the CAC in Adamawa.²⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the CAC has remained predominantly a Bwatiye and Mbula church in Adamawa State as most of its membership is drawn from these ethnic groups.

5.3.1 (b) The Assemblies of God Church (AG)

The Assemblies of God Church in Nigeria also known as ‘AG’ was first established in 1939 in south eastern Nigeria among the Igbo people. Igbo traders, at work in Adamawa, mooted the idea of starting a congregation of their own in Jimeta, the seat of the British Colonial Government of Adamawa Province, in 1960. As these traders did not want to attend the Catholic or Anglican churches in town, they started prayer meetings and eventually founded their own church to meet their spiritual needs. One participant of the group suggested the name ‘Assemblies of God’ for their church. He obviously had had contact with AG. In the words of Christopher Busari, AG supervisor in the Yola area, “the group started a fellowship in Nassarawo quarters in Jimeta, on the veranda of one Godwin Omekara’s house. By 1962 a congregation was formed and moved to Luggere sector where the AG had acquired a property”.²⁵⁷

The AG got its first pastor in 1964, Rev. Osondu Okereke. In the same year another group was started in Njoboliyo with 12 men who had broken away from the LCCN. The CAPRO publication records:

In 1964 there was a split in the church which led to the first convert and others to leave and start the Assemblies of God church. The break-aways faced great persecution, and some were imprisoned. This is the only Assemblies of God church in the midst of all the LCCN churches in the Bata villages around Njoboliyo”.²⁵⁸

Busari corroborates that this took place, “...because they observed some insincerity in the life of some of the church leaders of the local LCCN congregation at Njoboliyo. The twelve men had complained to the Bishop Akila Todi of LCCN who did not respond to the said complaint. The group then broke away to start their own AG congregation, led by Chesed Dan-Pullo, one of their young men who was a student at an AG Bible College. Dan-Pullo later became their pastor and was imprisoned for six months with six other pioneer AG

²⁵⁶ Datti, July, 2009.

²⁵⁷ Rev. Busari, C. is the area supervisor of the Assemblies of God church Yola area. He is one of the sons of Batalmawus Busari, the first convert to Christianity in Njoboliyo village near Yola, Adamawa State. He was interviewed at Jimeta, 6th September, 2007.

²⁵⁸ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds), 1993, p.86.

members from Njoboliyo. The AG pastor Rev. Okereke and Mr. Anthony William kept encouraging the imprisoned members of the AG from Njoboliyo”.²⁵⁹

The arrest and imprisonment of the AG members was unrelated to their migration from the Lutheran church to the AG, says Rev. Theman Muradu, one of the first LCCN pastors from Njoboliyo. Along with them, some Lutheran church members had been arrested and imprisoned as well. Rev. Muradu explains:

The arrest and imprisonment of the six persons had nothing to do with their faith either as Christians or AG members. My elder brother was one of them. It was a political issue. The men had organized the people in Njoboliyo to oppose the imposition of a particular political party on them. The local authorities wanted everyone in their domain to belong to a particular party, the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) but we refused at that time. The six people arrested had been identified as ring leaders of the protest who wanted our people to join the party known as Action Group (AG) of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. They were therefore arrested for this and this reason only. Some of them were Lutherans while the others were members of the just introduced AG church.²⁶⁰

Busari’s version of the establishment of the AG was not corroborated by Rev. Bulus Ndera either. Ndera maintained that the AG was introduced to his village for a different reason altogether and not because of any insincerity on the part of LCCN church leaders. Rev. Bulus Ndera, who was a young council member at the LCCN in Njoboliyo at the time, had this to say:

In 1960 the council of the local LCCN church and the District Council identified and called one of its sons, Irmiya Mwasache, who was working as a ward attendant at the Numan Christian Hospital to be trained as pastor. Mr. Batalmawus Busari who was an elder in the church at Njoboliyo had wanted to be called, but this was denied him. He protested and wanted to spoil the name of Irmiya Mwasache. Busari along with Mallam Istifanus and Mallam Elisha opposed the call of Irmiya and so the three wrote a letter to the president of the LCCN, Rev. Akila Todi in 1960, stating among other things that, “Irmiya Mwasache shall never be useful to the church; he should therefore not be trained for ordination as pastor in the church.”²⁶¹

The president of the LCCN however sent the petition to the district council of the church at Njoboliyo for verification. The district council took great offence at

- i. the inclusion of the names of council members in the petition they never wrote or saw, and
- ii. The fact that their consent had not been sought before the petition was sent to Numan.

²⁵⁹ Rev. Busari, interviewed at Jimeta, 6th September, 2007.

²⁶⁰ Muradu, T., interviewed in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria, 18th August, 2009.

²⁶¹ Ndera, B., interviewed at Jimeta Adamawa State, Nigeria, 16th January, 2009.

The district council, therefore, resolved to suspend the writers of the petition namely, Busari, Istifanus and Elisha from the congregational and district councils until the three had apologized and recanted their action. Instead, in 1962 the three asked Chesed Dan Pullo to become their leader when they went to invite the AG in Jimeta to establish a church in Njoboliyo. Despite the continued efforts of the LCCN District Council, they refused to apologize, recant or return to the LCCN”.²⁶² This according to Rev. Bulus Ndera was how the AG emerged in Njoboliyo.

According to the two narrations above, the AG had by 1962 been firmly established in both Jimeta and Njoboliyo.

Rev. Muradu in his contribution insists that AG for Action Group and AG for the Assemblies of God Church should not be confused, saying “...we were there; we know what exactly took place.”²⁶³ As regards the introduction of the AG to his village Njoboliyo, Muradu stated:

Chessed Dan-Pullo, the first Pastor of the AG in Njoboliyo was sent to the Bible School by the Lutheran church but somehow was convinced by his relatives among the AG members to decamp and join them since Irmiya was selected to go in for pastoral training. They were dissatisfied with the selection of Irmiya for the training but the real problem was that of the caste system among our people. Those who competed with Irmiya for selection for the training into the priesthood were considered to be *Kissai*, or ‘slaves’ by our people in Njoboliyo. That is a very big problem among our people since becoming a pastor entails ascending to a leadership position. Our people do not accept easily the leadership of a person considered to be of obscure lineage. This is why those people got annoyed since they were considered unfit or unacceptable to hold a leadership position, even in the church. They therefore went and brought the AG, a church which they will have control over and call their own²⁶⁴.

It could be deduced from the arguments above that the actual background to the introduction of the AG in Njoboliyo and hence the AG’s first inroad among local indigenous people consisted in a power tussle and the desire of the first convert in the village to become the first pastor as well. Another factor was the perpetuation of a caste system among the locals. Today, the AG has spread over all of Adamawa State. Its growth, starting in 1978, is outlined below.

1962-1977: the establishment of three congregations: Jimeta, Njoboliyo and Gwamba.

1978-1990: 15 new congregations are planted.

1991-1993: following a National Programme named the “Decade of Harvest”, 40 new congregations are initiated in Adamawa.

²⁶² Ndera, interviewed, 16th January, 2009.

²⁶³ Muradu, interviewed, 18th August, 2009.

²⁶⁴ Muradu, interviewed, 18th August, 2009.

1994-1996: a further 13 congregations are established.

1999-2007: 20 new congregations are planted.²⁶⁵

At present, the AG has a presence in all the 21 local government areas of Adamawa. The church has 94 pastors and a Bible college in Demsa near Yola. The college has offered diplomas since 1997 and also offers BA degrees by distance learning.²⁶⁶

At the time of compiling the present chapter, the AG had 96 congregations all over Adamawa and was led by an area supervisor, Rev. Christopher B. Busari.²⁶⁷ Rev. Busari happens to be a son of the elder at Njoboliyo Lutheran church who co-authored the petition to the LCCN headquarters and who played a role in the establishment of the AG at Njoboliyo in the early 1960s.

5.3.2 Second Phase of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State

Leonard Nzadon, the Deputy President of Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM), described the events around the arrival of newer Pentecostalism in Adamawa as follows:

We have to go back to 1976, which was the watershed in a lot [sic] of youth in the church. That was a time of revival. That year, the Lord visited some youth at the North East College of Arts and Science (NECAS), namely George Moses, Ibrahim Andrew Welye, Damien B. Datti and Phillip Makunga. The first two are Lutherans, Damien is a member of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and Philip was brought up away from home, his parents are Lutheran.²⁶⁸

His story was corroborated by George Moses, the president of TFM himself. George believes he had a genuine experience that touched Muslim and Christian students alike. He states:

This wind of revival/awakening was experienced in Maiduguri at the then North-East College of Arts and Science in 1976 specifically. There was great conviction in the hearts of students both Muslim and Christian as the Holy Spirit moved on the campus. Notorious students who had nothing to do with the Fellowship of Christian Students [FCS] which existed on the campus were arrested by the Holy Spirit one by one. Among such early converts were Ibrahim Andrew Welye, Phillip Paul Makunga and Emmanuel Bakie. Later there was the conversion of George Moses who was campus musician and DJ. Most of these students were members of churches and at one time or another, members of FCS. Their conversion was radical and the transformation that they experienced was genuine. One night after his conversion, on the way to the dining hall, Brother George Moses received a call to go back to Numan and share with the youths, to whom he was a role model, his conversion experience he shared this with Brother Ibrahim Andrew and Brother Phillip who all incidentally came from the same locality. These new converts together with Brother Damien Bitrus (Datti) went to Numan where they met Rev. Danu Wonosikou (Bishop) of LCCN, Brother

²⁶⁵ Busari, interviewed, 6th September, 2007.

²⁶⁶ Busari, interviewed, 6th September, 2007.

²⁶⁷ Busari, interviewed, 6th September, 2007.

²⁶⁸ Nzadon, L. Extracts from interview conducted in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. 21st July, 2006.

Christopher, two Youth Corps members, Bro Timothy and Sis Ebum. They went from school to school sharing their testimonies. Later they requested to use the Lutheran Youth Centre as venue for fellowship where they started Bible studies, teachings and other activities. Their goal was having been [sic] transformed they saw themselves as transforming agents who would take the message of the gospel to the ends of the world.²⁶⁹

The students who came from Maiduguri included a Pentecostal, Damien Bitrus Datti, who eventually became the assembly, district and zonal-secretary of the CAC mentioned above in 4.3.1 (a). They also met Christopher Busari, now the area supervisor of the Assemblies of God church, Yola area, who is the son of the earlier mentioned Batalmawus Busari. (4.3.1 (b)). These two gentlemen have been Pentecostals all their lives. It is unlikely that they did not influence the group in one way or another. Besides, the two corps members of the NYSC, Bro Timothy and Sis Ebum, must have come from the south-west, judging by their names. Therefore, they too must have been influenced by Pentecostalism at the universities of Ibadan or Ife, or at other tertiary educational institutions.

Because of the background of these persons which was definitely known to pastors and church elders at Numan, it is not surprising that the Lutheran church council opposed the group from its inception as will be discussed later in this chapter.

The four young men met with Rev. Danu Wonosikou who was a teacher at the government secondary school in Numan and together they started the Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) in 1976. Their aim was to “...strengthen their faith in the Lord and to witness to the youth around Numan.”²⁷⁰

Nzadon’s version of events is confirmed by Japhet E. Tonmoso who was one of the youth that benefited from the LYF. He said:

At that time in 1976, we the youth had problems with elders at the church in Numan. The church elders thought we were over-stepping doctrinal bounds. We had formed a group known as Maranatha, “The Lord Cometh.” The church council asked us to disband the group, but, we refused to leave the group. The group stayed on from 1976 to 1990. Eventually we formed the Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM).²⁷¹

It is not clear how the ‘LYF’ became ‘Maranatha’. The leaders were not keen to discuss how the two groups related. The LYF would have been expected to operate under the Lutheran church structure and constitution. The elders of the church at Numan might perhaps have sensed the onset of alienation between church and LYF but the former youth leaders are not willing to disclose, even today and for the present research, what exactly transpired

²⁶⁹ George Moses, National President of Truth Foundation Ministries, interviewed in Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. 22nd October, 2012.

²⁷⁰ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

²⁷¹ Tonmwaso, J. E. Extracts from interview conducted at Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. 17th July 2006.

between the church and its youth. However, the youth leaders resisted any attempt by the elders to resolve the issues. They were ready to face excommunication from the church. (It should be noted that the term ‘excommunication’ was used by the interviewees themselves during the interview).

According to Tonmoso, “The elders could not understand us. They excommunicated us, refusing us communion and denying our members marriage rites when one of them was getting married”.²⁷² Not even the intervention of the Bishop of the LCCN could get the youth group to concede. The Bishop David Windibiziri had tried to reconcile youth and elders but the youth had difficulties even with the bishop himself. They felt, “he was all the time trying to project Lutheran doctrines. The bishop felt offended because the group remained adamant and so the bishop left us in the office at his house. That was how we parted.”²⁷³ This parting was to usher in a long period during which an association was formed which prepared the ground for the newer Pentecostals to eventually emerge. Tonmwaso argues, “...We were disappointed but then we hung on for some years and then on 1st January 1990 the TFM started its own arm of the church.”²⁷⁴

These events are mentioned in the CAPRO publication which states that it was the acceptance of the teachings of one William Braham that discredited the youth in the opinion of the elders at Numan. CAPRO stresses that:

Another doctrine found among the youths especially in Bachama villages is the teaching of William Braham. The youth’s acceptance of this has discredited them in the sight of the elders. He taught among other things that one must be baptized in the name of Jesus only (not the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit), so the youth are searching to be re-baptized through the leader of their fellowship called Yeshua Ministry, led by a Bachama youth. In most villages, the youth have started youth fellowships, and these doctrines have been the most controversial issues discussed because of the Braham books that are being circulated amongst them.²⁷⁵

The CAPRO submission throws more light on the issue. It is likely that the youth had difficulties with the Lutheran bishop because they accepted the Braham teachings.

In 1978 Tonmwaso had joined the group that had started the LYF with Rev. Danu. The youth group had at the time a great influence on the young people at Numan. They formed the Numan Christian Youth Group (NCYG) and during school holidays the group would become active. They shared their experiences of Christian life and faith through Bible studies and led the youth on evangelism trips in and around Numan. As the NCYG grew, it attracted youth from many other Christian denominations in Numan. The membership

²⁷² Tonmwaso, interviewed 17th July 2006.

²⁷³ Tonmwaso, interviewed 17th July 2006.

²⁷⁴ Tonmwaso, interviewed 17th July 2006.

²⁷⁵ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p.91-92.

however was over 90% Lutheran. “The group gave us some Pentecostal flavour and we wanted to share what we had experienced with everyone in the church. Therefore, we formed the Maranatha group between 1980 and 1984.”²⁷⁶ A chronology of the development of the Maranatha group is provided below and indicates that the formation of the group had in fact already taken place in 1976.

Initially the Maranatha group wanted to remain part of the LCCN and aimed to:

- i. create continuity for fellowship between school and home,
- ii. Reach out to youth in order to transfer the group’s Christian experience to them,
- iii. Mobilize the youth for evangelism in villages surrounding Numan, and,
- iv. Widen their scope, reach out to all youth in the former Gongola State, and invite them to embrace the fellowship.²⁷⁷

This vision for the Maranatha group gives credence to observations raised in chapter two, that school fellowships, influenced by Pentecostalized teachers who were graduates of southern Nigerian universities, were responsible for the Pentecostal upsurge in the country and subsequently in Adamawa. The seed that was sowed at school was in the holidays planted and tended in order to create continuity between school and home and to transfer their Christian experience to the youth in their home towns. These activities ultimately gave birth to Pentecostal movements all over Adamawa State.

The vision statement of the Maranatha group was: “To Know Christ, Make Him Known and Present All Men Perfect (blameless) unto Him”.²⁷⁸ The youth were looking for role models and when they could not find them among the elders of their church, they turned to the Pentecostals where they found role models who spoke good English and were educated. The traditional sermons of the mainline churches, that are formal and read from accepted texts, now seemed inadequate to the youth. Besides, the prayers “did not have the Holy Spirit in them”.²⁷⁹

See below for a summing up of the development of Maranatha.

- (a) 1976 – 1986: The Maranatha group still part of the LCCN at Numan Youth Centre.
- (b) 1986 – 1988: Elders of the Numan LCCN church virtually push the Maranatha group out. It moves to old St. Patrick’s Catholic Primary School, presently the Numan II Primary School.

²⁷⁶ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p. 92

²⁷⁷ I Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p. 92.

²⁷⁸ Ahmed, Bawa, Dauda and Ojo, (eds). 1993, p. 92.

²⁷⁹ Tonmwaso, interviewed 17th July 2006.

- (c) 1989 – 1990: The Maranatha group moves to the Vocational Training Centre Numan as its fellowship venue.
- (d) 1990, 1st January: The first church service of the Maranatha group is organized. It marks the beginning of the Truth Foundation Ministries (i.e. the Maranatha group had become the TFM).
- (e) 1990, October: The TFM moves to its permanent site in Numan, where its cathedral is now built.²⁸⁰

During this same period another Pentecostal group was being formed in Jimeta-Yola. The Associate Fellowship of Christian Students (AFCS), a group that held meetings at the local Lutheran church in Jimeta, attracted members from different Christian denominations in and around Jimeta and Yola. At one of its meetings in 1977, a Rev. Thompson and his associates of the Pentecostal Redeemed Peoples’ Mission church addressed the AFCS group, announcing a one week crusade in Jimeta. The AFCS group supported him, the crusade was held, but thereafter “...the organizers of the crusade extended the invitation for ... [the AFCS] to worship on Sunday at the crusade ground instead of everyone going to their church for the normal Sunday morning worship.”²⁸¹ Some in the group refused the invitation. Their reasons were,

I refused because that was not what we went for. I had no intention to leave my church. We were extremely blessed by the crusade and the crusade fired me on. However, that is why today I am not one of the foundation members of the Redeemed People’s Mission (RPM). But you might say by the grace of God we were the first to be there.²⁸²

The first crusade turned out to be the beginning of a new Pentecostal church in Jimeta. Students and AFCS members had been invited to the crusade, because Rev. Thompson and his associates of the Pentecostal Redeemed Peoples’ Mission wished for a Pentecostal church to be started in Jimeta. The AFCS group was used as a launching pad. Nzadon may not have accepted to worship with the crusaders, but he was enough influenced by them to decide to go and see the leader of the elders of the LCCN at his hometown, where he met the Bishop of the LCCN. He narrates: “...I saw the need for revival in the church, I sought from the Lord [sic] and I went to the pastor. Pastor Paul Faruk was at Numan then. It was a Saturday and I had been fasting. This was the last day of the fast; there was no one to preach on Sunday, so I

²⁸⁰ Nzadon and Tonmwaso. Extracts from interviews conducted at Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. 17th-21st July 2006.

²⁸¹ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

²⁸² Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

was asked to preach.”²⁸³ The engagement of Nzadon as impromptu preacher may by the young man and his Maranatha friends been perceived as a sign that God wanted to use the group for a purpose. It was now 1978, two years after they had formed the group.

From its inception, the LYF had made regular evangelizing trips in the environs of Numan. As a result of these trips, “there was a revival among the youth of LCCN in and around Numan.” The youth wanted to effect a similar revival in the LCCN and to ‘reform’ the church, in particular liturgically. They wanted the LCCN to embrace “...youthful exuberance [and a] literal belief in scripture in contrast to Lutheran doctrine. [The other problems were] ... the fact that the LCCN could not tolerate (a) clapping of hands during worship (b) speaking in tongues, and (c) ... [the youths’] view on infant baptism.”²⁸⁴ The youth had somehow been led to believe only in adult baptism and held Anabaptist views with regard to infant baptism. They insisted that children should be left alone to grow up and make the choice for Christ by themselves. They held that baptising children was un-biblical.

There were more causes for the uneasy relationship of Lutheran youngsters and elders at Numan. The developments, centred on Numan and Jimeta, coincided with the formative period of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State. Numan had been the first city to receive Christianity. Its colleges were full of young people and so were the colleges and the University of Technology in Jimeta and Yola, the twin cities that formed the state capital of Adamawa. And during the holidays even more youngsters flocked to the capital. The youth at Numan eventually decided to form their Pentecostal church. They gave the following motivation:

- i. the refusal of the LCCN to conduct the marriages of the first generation leaders of the youth between 1980 and 1983. (George Moses got married in 1980, Bulus Taiya and Yakubu Gebgon in 1983),
- ii. The controversy as to whether their children should be baptized or not. In 1987/8 the first child of Taiya was not baptized, even though his father was on the board of elders,
- iii. The second generation leaders of the youth group were also denied the marriage rites in the church as well as the burial rites when one of them died,
- iv. Wesley Penuel Nyaru who was denied marriage rites in the Lutheran church eventually got married in the Catholic Chapel at Villanova Secondary School, Numan, in 1988, and finally
- v. Rev. Danu Wonosikou in 1988/89 was said to have declared before a

²⁸³ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

²⁸⁴ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

gathering of youth and elders of the church in Numan: “I started this, but from today I wash my hands off it”.²⁸⁵

According to the youth in Numan, they were disappointed by Wonosikou’s attitude. There was clearly a wide gap between the youth and the elders. Hence, the youth “... decided to form a church out of necessity ... intolerance was a factor in the break”.²⁸⁶

Rev. Danu, who is a theologian of repute in the church, had accompanied the youth from the inception of their movement. He is a pastor, a teacher by profession, a father and an elder of the church. I therefore asked him to confirm the youth leaders’ version of events. He willingly responded that:

The church elders in the Numan congregation had asked me to help the youth as a youth group, and as they remained a youth group within the church I agreed to work with them. But as events developed, they wanted to form a denomination, an idea I objected to. However, after they had formed their own church and were recognized as an independent church denomination they asked me to be on their Board of Trustees [to] which I agreed.²⁸⁷

From this response it is clear that Rev. Danu Wonosikou had to guide the LYF which he had helped to establish. He had always been a mentor to young people of different denominations in Adamawa State. His withdrawal from the LYF group could be informed by awareness on his part of their plan to break away and go their own way a move in which he wanted no part. He did nevertheless not entirely withdraw from them and serves on the Board of Trustees of the TFM to this day.

What the young people did perhaps not realize was, that the alienation between themselves and the church elders was based on theological insights the kind of debate which is always difficult to win outright. Once the youth group had broken away, their leaders did not stick together for long and after a power tussle amongst them, each one went his own way. And this informed the beginning of the proliferation of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State. For example, Agabus Bamaiyi, LYF president at Numan in 1988, now lives in Lagos and has his own Pentecostal movement. Pwanedo Jediel is leader of the ‘Numan Tabernacle’ and Bulus Taiya of ‘Shalom Christian Ministries’ in Numan; Rhema Bulus started his ‘Abundant Life Christian Ministries’; and Edwin Jerome is in Abuja and Kaduna with his Pentecostal movement. Peter Makanto has become bishop of the ‘Upper Room Cathedral’ in Yola and has founded the ‘Upper Room Churches Worldwide’, which he claims has branches in many parts of Nigeria and international connections as well. Penuel Nyaru is national

²⁸⁵ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

²⁸⁶ Nzadon, interviewed 21st July, 2006.

²⁸⁷ Wonosikou, D. Interviewed by phone at his place of retirement, Jos, Nigeria. 31st May, 2012.

secretary of 'Oasis of Love' while Tanko Alle is in Lagos and has a Pentecostal movement of his own.²⁸⁸

When asked why they left the LCCN, bishop Makanto said, "I knew from 1976 that I was going to be a preacher. It became more evident in 1978 but I did not know how it was going to happen. Then I followed the yearnings of my spirit and started a church. The details cannot be articulated but the fact remains that the LCCN could just not contain us."²⁸⁹

When pressed further on the reasons for starting a new church, the bishop said, "The system and structure of the LCCN did not tolerate us. They exorcised us. I thank God for LCCN."²⁹⁰

The LCCN has in its records not much information about the Pentecostals. The church has barely responded to some of the events discussed in chapter 4. Apart from some murmurings about the behaviour of the youth, nothing has been documented officially in the archives. This may not be unconnected to the general belief among pastors and leaders of the church that the youth could never go far with their ideas. The church, therefore, did not take the time to discuss or to critically analyze the situation at the time. The youth went on though, to prove to the church that they could manage on their own by establishing the Truth Foundation Ministries. The name of their ministry and its success says it all.

5.4 Consolidation of Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism in Adamawa began to be consolidated in the mid to late 1990s in a process that is still continuing. During this period the Pentecostal leaders discovered that their members had many theological questions to which they had no answer. Hence, they started to build churches, establish Bible schools, and send their pastors to train in established theological institutions.

Dan Babayi, a Lutheran who became a Pentecostal and who ended up as the proprietor of the Trinity Theological Seminary in Yola, stated in an interview on the consolidation of Pentecostalism in Adamawa that "...the drive to learn the Bible at a faster pace encouraged me to start the seminary. ...the LCCN has been too slow in developing the seminary. There is also the desire for personal development."²⁹¹ In 1997 Babayi started a teaching ministry in Lagos, called Trinity Bible Ministries, and in 1998 he moved to Yola and joined the Rhema Bible Church. He began training students at certificate, diploma and Bachelor's Degree levels. In 2005 Babayi established the Trinity Theological Seminary in

²⁸⁸Tonmwaso, interviewed in Jimeta, 17th July 2006.

²⁸⁹ Makanto, P., interviewed in his office at Yola, Adamawa State. 6 July, 2007.

²⁹⁰ Makanto, interviewed 6 July, 2007.

²⁹¹ Babayi, Dan, interviewed at Yola, Adamawa State. 15th July 2006.

Yola. The first group of Masters in Theology and Christian Education graduated in 2006. The seminary is affiliated to the Central Christian University, Blytheville, Arkansas in the U.S.A. Pentecostal leaders list the needs that have to be met in their communities as:

- i. clearing wrong perceptions among Pentecostals who believe they are called by God and need no training,
- ii. Filling the intellectual gap between pastors and followers through spiritual education,
- iii. Transforming education. Pentecostals recognize the so-called affective, cognitive and devotional arms of education. Most Pentecostals dwell on the affective arm of education which is virtually emotional. Leaders also focus on the affective, but concentrate more on the cognitive and spiritual and they never relent in their pursuit of these educational goals. There is a plan for every level. The emphasis is on spiritual and church education. The seminary's degrees come from the USA, from the Central Christian University.²⁹²

Education is one way in which the Pentecostals try to consolidate their gains. The striving for consolidation gave impetus to virtually all Pentecostal groups in Yola to establish their own Bible schools. Along with this development in theological and spiritual education, many Pentecostal churches have established primary and secondary schools. The Deeper Life Bible Church and the Living Faith Church are examples of Pentecostal churches that are making efforts towards formal education for children in Adamawa State.

The period of consolidation also has seen the establishment of net-working and international connections with American Pentecostal churches and ministries. The evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, a free-lance evangelist born in Germany, who moved to Denmark and was a missionary in Lesotho, launched his evangelistic crusade from South Africa and now lives in the United States of America. Bonnke has no particular church affiliation, but has staged a crusade in Yola, Adamawa State (8th to 11th January 2008). He has visited Adamawa twice thereafter (Numan in January 2009 and Mubi in January 2010) to organize crusades. Before Bonnke, Archbishop Benson Idahosa of the Church of God Mission with headquarters in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, had been a mentor for Christians and Pentecostal churches in Adamawa. Idahosa had visited Adamawa in 1998. He was hosted by the Adamawa State government (as had Reinhard Bonnke). This event marked the acceptance and recognition of

²⁹² Babayi, interviewed 15th July 2006.

the Pentecostals by the governments of the day and added to their prestige and self-confidence.²⁹³

Recently, another tendency is emerging: many members of the newer Pentecostal churches who are by now of a mature age, are beginning to return to their initial churches and congregations. Simultaneously, younger people in the traditional churches are clamouring for the adoption of Pentecostal forms of worship in their churches and, failing this, they leave and join the Pentecostals.²⁹⁴ By 1990 the newer Pentecostals were firmly established in Adamawa State. The 1990s saw them competing with the mainline churches for relevance in the community and in the political arena. The influence of the Pentecostals did, in the 1990s, not just permeate the mainline churches, where their style of singing and worship became very popular with younger members, but they also began to play a role in government circles, influencing political leaders and the decision-making organs of government. We see politicians when canvassing for votes align themselves with Pentecostal churches.

The researcher observed that Pentecostal denominations in Nigeria have a unique way of organizing themselves. They are quite independent of each other but maintain close networking links. They are divided, but support each other and meet under the umbrella of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). The present research showed that all strands of Pentecostalism can be found in Adamawa State, including several locally initiated and well developed Pentecostal and charismatic movements, some of them loosely connected to older and nationally spread Pentecostal denominations.

5.5 The Characteristics of Pentecostalism and the Charismatization of Christianity in Adamawa State

In the late 1990s and the early 2000s, mainline churches in Adamawa State fought an up-hill battle in trying to cope with the challenge posed by Pentecostals. The mainline churches found themselves adapting to Pentecostal terminologies and, unofficially, they allowed some modifications in their mode of worship. A few liturgical aspects of the Lutheran, Catholic and Anglican services were subtly altered to cope with the pressure of Pentecostalism and to prevent the exodus of youngsters to Pentecostal worship centres. As a Lutheran pastor said, “We are losing our members, so we cannot fold our arms and watch

²⁹³ Empirical knowledge from involvement with Pentecostals in Adamawa State. 1998, 2008-2010.

²⁹⁴ Discussion with people who left Pentecostalism and returned to the Lutheran Church. Some of them are shy to talk about their experiences. Of the younger people spoken to, several maintain that many of their friends are coming back quietly to the mainline churches. The interviewees were selected randomly from Numan, Jimeta and Yola, after Bonnke's crusade at Numa in January 2009.

them go”.²⁹⁵ Pastors and priests of the mainline churches alike frantically tried to stop the trend, but with little success.

The mainline churches asked questions, for example, what are the Pentecostals doing that the traditional churches are not doing? Do pastors of the traditional churches sufficiently motivate church members to make use of the spiritual gifts? Is the liturgy too rigid, inflexible? Are the worship services lively enough? In trying to answer these questions, Christians in Adamawa State and, indeed, in Nigeria as a whole, found themselves towing the line of the Pentecostals in both language and outlook on worship. According to the vicar of the Lutheran cathedral in Yola, this is allowed in order to stem the tide of members migrating from the mainline to the Pentecostal churches. The vicar expected that, with time, the Pentecostal fervour would die down and therefore, he said, the situation had to be handled with caution.

For some churchmen imitating Pentecostals had some benefits. One of the benefits was that it saved them from facing troubles with the youth in their churches. Another benefit concerns the offerings. The mainline congregations learned to take offerings in the manner of the Pentecostals, without accounting for the collected total and, like the Pentecostals, without bothering with financial reports. There was a marked improvement in the wellbeing of some mainline pastors as their churches, in imitation of the Pentecostals, learned how to take care of their pastors.

The Pentecostal style of worship is considered modern, full of variety, and therefore appealing to younger people. Pentecostals believe that their ways of worship allow the worshipper to experience the Holy Spirit at work. The language used is free and like everyday language. It is not theologically ‘heavy’. During one of the field work tours, in a worship session, the researcher heard, as the pastor preached, moving up and down in front of the *ambo*, and members of the congregation cheering him on. There came a shout from one corner of the church: "pastor pose!" And the pastor stopped and posed as though for a photo. Next, everyone clapped for the pastor, others whistled, suddenly the pastor got an ovation and after the noise had died down, he continued with his sermon. Such occurrences are quite common during Pentecostal worship sessions and this is what generates the so-called 'worship experience' in their churches.

The mainline churches nowadays copy even the church settings of the Pentecostals. An example are the two pictures below of a new Lutheran church, constructed by a congregation in Jimeta; On plate 1, the altar area hardly resembles a traditional Lutheran

²⁹⁵ Interview with pastors and members of mainline churches. Yola, Adamawa State in August 2007.

altar in the LCCN, except for the cross resting on the drapes and the catechist in his robes at the altar. When compared to the Pentecostal church altar in plate: 2, one notices very little difference.

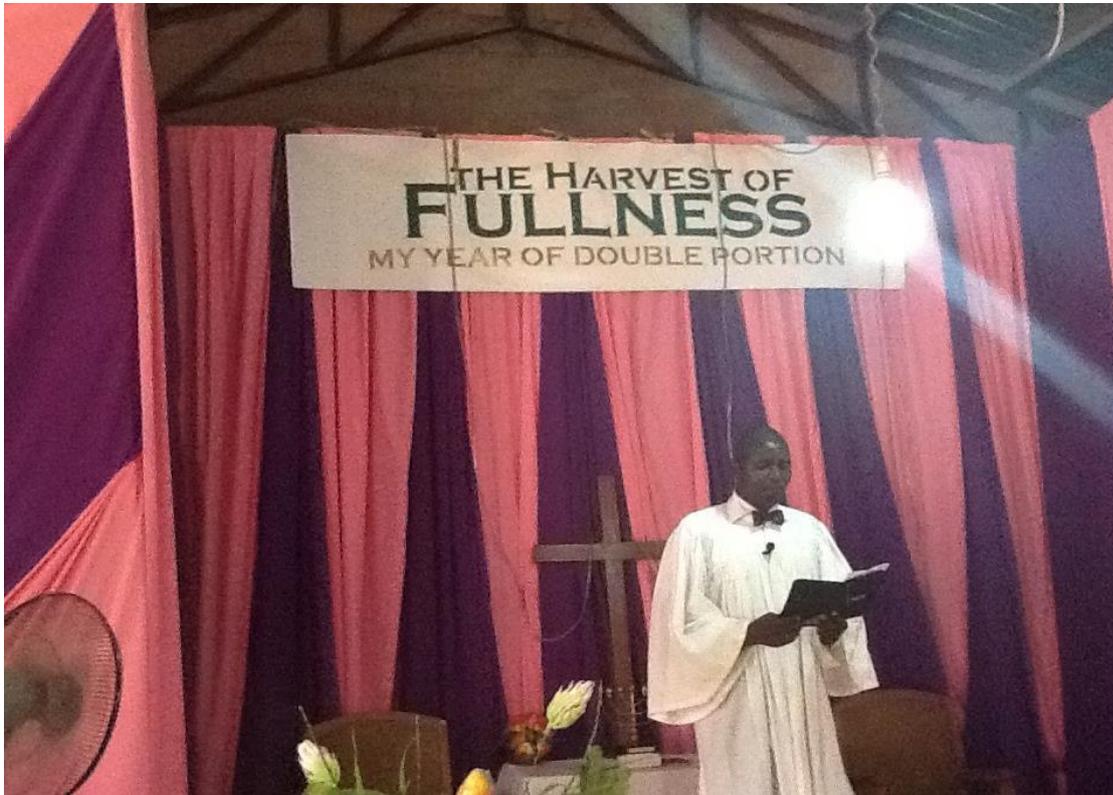


Plate: 1, A Lutheran Church adopts a Pentecostal type slogan for the Year 2012 in Jimeta-Yola, Adamawa State. Photographed with permission by Ishaya, ER. April, 2012.



Plate: 2, A typical Pentecostal Altar. Notice the absence of the cross even at the altar. This Altar of the Grace Cathedral Numan, photographed with permission by Ishaya, E. R April 2012.

The slogan on one drape is as appealing as the other. This is a clear evidence of Pentecostal influence on the mainline churches.

The removal of the altar and the setting of the Pentecostal churches with individual chairs please many people. Similarly, the opportunity given to lay persons by Pentecostals to say prayers and sometimes to ask questions during Sunday worship appeals positively to some of the worshippers.

As stated earlier, the main reason why mainline churches adapt to Pentecostal styles is to stem the migration of their members to Pentecostalism. Mainline churches however do not tend to question members about their reasons for moving to the Pentecostals. During field work in Adamawa, in May 2005 and repeated in 2008, a particular target group consisting of persons who had left the mainline churches and had joined Pentecostal movements was asked about their reasons for moving to Pentecostalism. The reasons most commonly provided them are:

- i. we go there to see what is happening,
- ii. We want to know if it is true that miracles do happen,
- iii. we want to see the healings,
- iv. We want to see the man himself,

- v. it is a Christian gathering, and
- vi. We want to see the wonders of God.²⁹⁶

The interest Pentecostal messages have generated in the public is phenomenal. At crusades, Christians, Muslims and traditional believers respond in practically the same way to Pentecostal messages. Most times, when huge crowds are drawn to Pentecostal crusade grounds, observers assume that those in attendance are converts or at least supporters. Tonmoso, in a response to the question, "What do you hope to achieve through the ministry of your organization, the TFM?" said: "We hope to reform the church."²⁹⁷ It is the same old desire for reforming the church that inspired the youth of the LCCN, the church that didn't listen to them and that, as a result, drove them to persist in their dissenting views. The president of the TFM, George Moses, confirmed the youth's initial goal: "...having been transformed, we saw ourselves as transforming agents who would take the message of the gospel to the ends of the world." He maintains that it was due to the fallout between the (youth) fellowship and the LCCN in regard to the issue of being "born again", that the ministry (TFM) started its church branch. Conversely, the TFM is still undergoing structural changes as it has embarked on its own 25 year 'Strategic Plan'.²⁹⁸ Allan Anderson sees the growth of Pentecostal, Charismatic and Spirit churches in the twentieth century as:

...An African Reformation. Such a fundamental change has indeed taken place in African Christianity that Pentecostalism has become its dominant expression in many countries. This has been further accelerated by the enormous growth of new Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Africa since the 1970s (see chapter 8). This remarkable growth and the corresponding decline in membership among many older churches give us pause to consider the reasons. Searching questions about the relevance of the faith and life of older churches in Africa can be posed. If people perceive their teaching and practices as powerless to meet their everyday felt needs, then these churches cannot continue with business as usual in the face of obvious shortcomings. Older churches in Africa are now rethinking their entire strategy and are being changed by the Pentecostalization process taking place. Without such a serious reappraisal their decline will probably continue and may be terminal.²⁹⁹

The notions of rethinking and the search for relevance have led many people to consider God as knowable only through his miracles. Some feel they must be part of this power experience, while others simply need help. They want the men of God to support them and they trust that God will answer their prayers. A number of such people keep attending Pentecostal services because they hope that one day the miracle will occur. It is becoming

²⁹⁶ Response from various people interviewed during Reinhard Bonnke's Crusade in Yola. 14th January 2008.

²⁹⁷ Tonmoso, interviewed 17th August 2006.

²⁹⁸ Moses, interviewed 22nd October, 2012.

²⁹⁹ Anderson, Allan. 2010. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.121-122.

more and more obvious that, even among clergy of the mainline churches, there is a need for a more profound understanding of the liturgy and the place of faith in worship, because the dignity of worship is rapidly being eroded by the desire for a free style this in the name of innovative or contemporary worship as borrowed from Pentecostalism radicalism.

5.6 The Shifting Focus of Pentecostalism from 'Holiness' to 'Prosperity'

Many Pentecostals dodge the issue of prosperity preaching and therefore, made it difficult for the current research. To get around some of these difficulties, the researcher had to rely on personal interaction with members of Pentecostal movements, in order to gain some insight. Literary resources were used to further unpack what happens in Nigerian and Adamawa Pentecostalism.

The members of Pentecostal churches themselves testified to the excesses of their leaders. During a conversation between the researcher and two members of a prominent Pentecostal church in Jimeta, Adamawa, the man and woman complained bitterly and said: “We need to rest a little bit. Our bishop went to a car dealer, took an expensive Toyota Jeep and came to the church to ask us to go and pay for it. We had to go and negotiate the terms of payment. We have just finished paying the dealer. We need a break.” When asked, how did you raise the money for the car? They answered, “We had to tax ourselves until we cleared the debt”.³⁰⁰ The impression left by these two people was that they thought these things happen in every church and that the clergy should slow down a little.

The lifestyle of Pentecostal pastors is what determines their themes in preaching. ‘Lifestyle’ denotes a pattern of life by which a person distinguishes him/herself and is recognized. It can have a positive or negative effect on the community. The lifestyle of many Pentecostal leaders has to a degree negatively affected the communities they claim to serve. Pastor Oyedepo, after having been criticized for preaching prosperity, responded, “Do you love poverty? If anybody wishes you long life and prosperity, will you answer ‘no’? But I am happier if they don’t say that I am the poorest man in the world”.³⁰¹ Put simply, prosperity preaching Pentecostals do not believe in rejection or sorrow and are not willing to be familiar with suffering (Isaiah 53.2-3). They cherish wellbeing. Akinwale and Kenny sum the situation up as follows:

Over-zealous Charismatics try to ‘sweet-talk’ the faithful into believing that all their problems will be over as soon as they join Charismatic prayer meetings. A barren

³⁰⁰ Interaction with two Pentecostals in Jimeta, Adamawa State. October 2011. Despite their dodging of questions on prosperity, one might gain insights from them if one persists on friendship with them.

³⁰¹ Chigbo, M. (ed) *Report and Interview, Newswatch Magazine*. Ikeja, 14th November, 2011, p.29, Sited by Igbo, S. C. in his MTh. Thesis, UJ/TCNN, Bukuru, 2010, not published.

woman will be assured that the God of Sarah, Hannah and Elizabeth must bless her with a child. A jobless man will be sure of a job from God or one of the brethren. Not only will a dead business be resurrected, but the caring or welfare Ministry will advance a juicy interest-free loan to the frustrated businessman. Other dividends of Christ via the Charismatics promised to these bread-seekers include: a Charismatic wedding (to be partially sponsored by the Charismatics), a free gospel musical band for all your social functions, leasing of the Evangelical bus (for a small token fee), and the biggest of them all, giving a charismatic burial to the members; only a few individuals resist these mouth-watering carrots being dangled before them in the name of evangelization so we are swelling in number with thunderous shouts of 'JESUS, IGWE' rending the air, but how many are committed? How many are heavenly bound?³⁰²

The earliest Pentecostals to come to Adamawa were of the 'praying' and 'holiness' group. Among the first of the newer Pentecostals, the stress was also on prayer, holiness and evangelism. However, towards the end of the 1990s there has been a shift from holiness to prosperity a shift, in other words, to the mentality described by Akinwale and Kenny. Why has the message changed?

Pentecostalism at the time widened its perspective to include a focus on social and economic situations worldwide and more specifically in the areas of its establishment, including Nigeria and Adamawa state. This widened perspective coincided with the appearance of the worldwide increased capitalism of Thatcherism and Reaganomics of the late 1970s to the late 1980s which were at top gear, culminating in the fall of the Soviet Union and the flourishing of global capitalism. The message from the Pentecostal pulpits began to include promises of prosperity. In addition to the warning that "you must be born again", sermons now stated that "God is not poor" and "His followers are not expected to be poor". And thus, a shift in Pentecostal thought, style, and teaching became apparent that had been long in the coming. The roots of twentieth century Pentecostalism, as Anderson and Pillay observe, can be traced to:

The eighteenth and nineteenth century Methodist and holiness movements, especially John Wesley's concept of "Christian perfection" or "entire sanctification," imparted to the believer in a "second blessing" crises subsequent to, and separate from, an initial conversion or justification (confession and forgiveness of sin). ...But there was a significant shift in emphasis on the nature of the second blessing, from seeing it as an imparting of "perfection" or "holiness" to a "baptism of the Holy Ghost," which would give the believer the "power for service." ... by 1900 the shift in the Holiness movement, "from Christian perfection to Baptism of the Holy Spirit was nearly

³⁰² Akinwale, A.OP and Kenny, J. OP. 2004. *Tradition and Compromises, Essays on the Challenge of Pentecostalism*. Lagos: Dominican Press, pp.64-65.

universal. A large section of the Holiness movement was also now beginning to espouse divine healing as a central tenet.³⁰³

The second blessing appears to have initiated materialistic tendencies in the Christian mind at that time because the idea seems to favour the individual. Therefore, the shift, in recent times, towards the adoption of the prosperity gospel, is also to a significant degree associated with high levels of competition among leaders and founders of the Pentecostal churches in terms of, for example, the type of cars they drive or the clothes they wear. Pentecostal leaders with expensive cars and personalised number plates like Tiger 1, Lion 1, and Leopard 1, are common. Some tax the members of their congregations in order to be able to buy particular types of cars that enhance their status and that of their office.

Others have private jets. Bishop Oyedepo of the Living Faith Church has four such planes to his name and is planning to build private hangars for them. Oyedepo was by the *Christian Hints Magazine* of July 2011, reported as having spent \$225 million on the purchase of his jet collection. The latest addition is a Gulfstream V jet reported to cost \$30 million.³⁰⁴ Many Pentecostal pastors seem to aim for a life in luxury and the list of pastors with private jets in Nigeria is growing. Enoch Adeboye of the RCCG has a jet and was, when criticized, fiercely defended by members of his church who think that their leader, while on active service for the Lord, should not have to wait around at airports for commercial flights. The latest Pentecostal pastor to join the list of aircraft owners is the current president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Pastor Oritsejafor who got his aircraft in 2012 to mark his birthday. The hankering for wealth and for the display of it may not be unconnected to what Hollinger notes below:

Since material wealth was part of the Abrahamic covenant and since Christ has overturned the curse of the law which included poverty, Christians are said to have a right to claim prosperity... the adherents of the [Pentecostalist] movement find further support in the New Testament with passages like the KJV rendition of 3 John 2, Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.³⁰⁵

Whatever the reason for the acquisition of such expensive machines in the name of the gospel of Christ, one wonders whether these Pentecostalists take the needs of the teeming membership of their churches into consideration, most of who are enduring far below acceptable standards of living. Some can hardly afford a meal a day while their leaders,

³⁰³ Anderson, A. H. & Pillay, G. J. (eds). 2011. *The Segregated Spirit: The Pentecostals*. In: Elphick, Richard, and Davenport, Rodney. *Christianity in South Africa, A Political, Social and Cultural History*. Claremont: David Philip Publishers (Pty) Ltd, pp.227-228.

³⁰⁴ Akintola, O., 2011. "Wealthy Nigerian Pastor." *Christian Hints*. Abuja: Sodom Concepts International July, 2011 Edition, p.9.

³⁰⁵ Hollinger, Dennis. 1989. "Enjoying God forever; Historical/Sociological Profile of the Health and Wealth Gospel." *Biblical Forum Series Volume 2. Trinity Journal*: Illinois. Kregel publications. pp.13-26.

accepting their offerings, enjoy lavish life styles, owning mansions, in some cases in major cities around the world.

The major Pentecostal movements in Nigeria follow Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts and Kenneth Copeland. These are health and wealth gospel preachers who believe in prosperity: a genuine Christian is sure to prosper. Hagin, for example, preaches: "God did not bless [him] because [he] was a sinner. [He] received God's blessing because [he] honoured God. God has a certain law of prosperity and when you get into contact with that law... it just works for you whoever you are." Teachings such as these have influenced Pentecostalism in Nigeria. Those Pentecostal leaders, who find themselves at middle class levels in society, are desirous for higher class life styles. Young school leavers admire the life styles of successful Pentecostal preachers as well as aspire to become like them.

This is corroborated by a Pentecostal bishop who during an interview said: "When we see what others own, we also want to be like them. We then split and start our own ministry, with the hope that we shall get rich, like the others".³⁰⁶ Some Pentecostal pastors are said to have been involved in oil bunkering. If this is hard to believe, it was confirmed by a Pentecostal bishop who himself told this researcher that he took part in the business. He said: "I have three medium sized ships that convey crude oil to bigger ships on the high seas and ...man, I make good cash! I get hard currency my man!! I am setting up a television station now!!!"³⁰⁷

Oyedepo built his Faith Tabernacle at Ota in Ogun State. It was dedicated in December 1998 with seating for 50,000 people. It was at the time considered the largest church in the world.³⁰⁸ In Adamawa State, the Pentecostals have built beautiful churches provided with such luxuries as air conditioning. The resulting impression is of a display of riches and power.

All over Nigeria, there has been a deliberate push by Pentecostals to take over chaplaincy duties from mainline priests and pastors in government house chapels, including the chapel at the Presidency. In a discussion with a Pentecostal who had been involved in one such chaplaincy, the researcher was made to understand, that the power, financial benefits and opportunities for collecting wealth associated with these chaplaincies, are enormous. My informant gave the example of a chaplain who gets close to the governor or the deputy-governor or even the president and his ministers. This opens the opportunity for the chaplain to receive special favours through contracts or gifts of money. My discussion partner stated

³⁰⁶ Makanto, interviewed, 6th July, 2008.

³⁰⁷ Discussion with a Pentecostal bishop at Lagos Airport, name withheld. August 2005.

³⁰⁸ Igboh, S. C. 2010. "The Doctrine of Prosperity in the Theology of David O. Oyedepo." M. Th. Thesis, TCNN/University of Jos, unpublished, p.30.

categorically that, "You mainline pastors do not know how to speak in tongues. Come let me teach you how to speak in tongues and then I'll take you where you will get millions of Naira in no time for praying for big men in tongues." ³⁰⁹

During one important worship service with top government officials and a governor in attendance, I experienced an example of tongues speaking or praying. Ten pastors were asked to pray, including the researcher. Of these, only the researcher was not a Pentecostal. One of the Pentecostal pastors decided to pray in tongues. I could understand him, because he was praying in German. Being there in my capacity as a researcher of Pentecostal procedures, I listened and observed the faces of the congregation and noticed the confusion on their faces and yet everyone shouted amen at the end of it.

Some Pentecostal Bishops now wear cassocks and attires like mainline bishops. I saw one who used the pope's colours in his cassock. The general shift in focus of Pentecostalism has also affected matters such as prestige of office and position. Titles like apostle, prophet, deacon and elder, are no longer popular. Instead founder, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), General Overseer (GO), General Superintendent (GS), Papa and Mammy and Leader, are preferred. These titles contribute to the prestige of their bearer. Together with the power exuded by one standing at the altar, in the pulpit, or being called upon to say prayers in public, they create an aura around the person.

The Pentecostalist focus has thus changed from holiness to material benefits, titles and power, just as the holiness movement had moved away from the Wesleyan balance of Christocentric theology to an emphasis on Holy Spirit and a gradually increasing accentuation of experience. Reasoner submits:

The message of early Methodism was Christocentric. However, the holiness movement moved away from Wesleyan balance and placed the emphasis on Holy Spirit. In their desire to be led by the Spirit, they departed from the word of God and emphasized experience. The holiness movement became a transition to Pentecostalism and today there is a growing tolerance of glossolalia among holiness churches.³¹⁰

Pentecostalism, transiting from the holiness movement, does not only insist on glossolalia but has an added flavour which is prosperity. Has the departure from a theology, based on the word of God, produced an emphasis on the desire for the things of the world? It seems that the human factor has become prominent over and above the spiritual or Christ factor.

³⁰⁹ Discussion with a Pentecostal pastor in Abuja, Nigeria, April, 2012.

³¹⁰ Reasoner, V. 1991. *The Hole in the Holiness Movement*. Evansville, Indiana:: Fundamental Wesleyan Publishers, p.128-129.

Prosperity is a controversial issue among Pentecostals. This is because, although many of their preachers give the appearance of being in the ministry for the sake of becoming economically successful, they deny this. The explanation mostly given for the Pentecostal doctrine of prosperity is confusing. Dennis Hollinger writes:

The doctrine of prosperity, while the most controversial of the movement's teachings, has certainly been a major factor in its popularity. The concept is understood in broad terms: "Prosperity is the condition of being successful and thriving in all areas: spiritually strong, physically strong (healthy), and mentally solid." But there is no question that for the faith adherents financial prosperity is a divine promise signifying God's blessing upon those whose faith is great enough to expect it.³¹¹

No matter the denials, the prosperity message is needed for the maintenance of the ministries and for sustenance of the preachers and the realization of their projects. The RCCG leader needed NGN300,000,000.00 (three-hundred million Naira, that is, about \$1,935,483.00) to take 600 members of his church to Israel for a pilgrimage in 2011. During a Sunday service on the camp grounds near Lagos, he announced to his huge congregation that he needed donations for the full amount by the next day. He stressed: "I don't want pledges. I need cash, because I want to pay for the trip immediately." Ten persons got up and issued cheques to cover the costs. The amount raised was in excess of the demand.³¹²

It is clear that fund raising is an important reason for preaching prosperity messages. Many Pentecostal preachers who need to raise money, but who do not have the massive congregation of the RCCG, resort to crusades to raise cash. Some sell books and tapes produced by their ministries, in order to maintain a cash flow.

Among the different strategies, adopted by Pentecostals for raising funds, the liberal market strategies are the most popular. This leads to problems and scandals in Pentecostal churches and, ultimately, in the church as a whole, as the mainline clergy and churches in Nigeria are beginning to learn from the Pentecostal example. The mainliners even adopt the language of Pentecostals when it comes to soliciting the necessary funding for their ministries. The old method of lifting offerings and tithes no longer yield sufficiently large sums, so it is argued. But, in the trail of these developments, controversies and scandalous behaviour follow, as Ukah describes:

However, the permeation of liberal market practices and strategies into certain strands of these Christianities, particularly the increasing use of business strategies, excessive recruitment of funds, display of scandalous wealth by the leaders and increase in instances of clergy malfeasance, indicate a troubling future for many individuals and groups of Christians both in Africa and outside. It is as a result of these latter features

³¹¹ Hollinger, 1989, p.15.

³¹² Observation by a proxy who went on National Sensitisation for the Nigerian Pilgrimage Programme in Lagos State in 2011. The researcher himself was involved in the sensitisation programme for Adamawa State in 2011.

of the latest strand of Christianity that prompts [sic] one commentator, a former Pentecostal pastor, to write that ‘the Pentecostal or Charismatic Church is the only legally and politically accepted movement in the world that is fully and completely based upon systematic fraud, deception and cheating’. As one Nigerian Pentecostal pastor put it, ‘the merchandising of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ’ is ‘the primary source of all problems enervating the spiritual life of the church’. Certainly, this vitiates the transforming power of an otherwise socially and economically visible strong religion.³¹³

One problem with prosperity preachers is that those who promote it do not really have time for the poor and downtrodden among their followers. They have thousands in their congregations who live in abject poverty. There are orphans who cannot feed or go to school. There are among their members, school drop-outs and others who have completed their education and who have acquired skills but are unemployed while leaders and pastors of prosperity Pentecostal churches live in affluence. Bishop David Oyedepo, for example, is reckoned to be “...one of the richest pastors in the world today. His father was ...the first to buy a lorry in my town. That was in 1954; he was also the first man to build a storey building in the family”.³¹⁴

Oyedepo’s father was a Muslim and yet he became rich so that, ironically, God in his sovereignty and providence apparently gives riches to people regardless of their faith.³¹⁵

Oyedepo asserts that the worshipper is tremendously important: “...you are in God’s class of beings as a new creation [sic] person. ...you have his nature, his life, his Spirit, his love. Everything about him has been made available to you through the new creation.”³¹⁶

In this trend, Pentecostals compare, classify and compete for positions, even in relation to God and as mere mortals. Prosperity preachers preach dangerous metaphysical concepts influencing thousands of Christians in Nigeria, including members of mainline churches.

An uneasy situation has also resulted from the fierce competition among ministries. Every Pentecostalist church wants to gain prominence over every other one. This leads to competitive advertising on TV and radio and the cost of TV programmes, use of satellite networks, and travel, is immense. In this context, the temptation to promise economic wellbeing in exchange for giving freely to God, via the particular ministries concerned, is

³¹³ Ukah A. F. K., 2007. “African Christianities: Features, Promises and Problems,” Arbeitspapiere/Working Paper Nr.79 Johannes Mainz, Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien:Department of Anthropology and African Studies, Gutenberg Universität, p.18.

³¹⁴ Igboh, S. C. 2010, p.40.

³¹⁵ Igboh, S. C. 2010, p.40.

³¹⁶ Oyedepo, D. O. 1986. *Born to Win*: Dominion House, Ikeja, Lagos. p.56.

undoubtedly strong. Seen from a functionalist perspective, the selected theological distinctives of the movement serve to ensure their financial solvency.³¹⁷

During field work the researcher attended a service of the House of Refuge church in Yola, where the pastor, after appealing to the congregation for funds to continue the building of a church, turned, facing the audience, in the direction of the bank buildings, lining the street not far from his church, and shouted, "money come, money come". The congregation joined him, waving for money to come from the banks for their building project.³¹⁸ Money did come and so, to their credit, did the church building, a beautiful edifice, comparable to the nearby bank structures. However, at some point, the pastors of this church were reported to have sold their cars in order to pay for floor tiles for the new church. This was a very rare occurrence and a demonstration of leadership by example and true commitment to the ministry. In the Pentecostal churches, generous people may make offerings out of love for a just cause, but, often, they appear to offer gifts in exchange for blessings promised by preachers.

In many instances, prosperity is not only preached but also advertised on billboards during church services. Where Christ and the word of God are set aside, as appears to be the case in many Pentecostal churches, something is needed to take their place, something that seems equally desirable. Hence, the shift from messages of holiness to messages of prosperity and the shift from leading a prayerful life to the fancy of being on the same level as God, speaking on His behalf, and commanding the Spirits. The perceived ability to possess and use spiritual powers inspires congregations with confidence in, and esteem for, the Pentecostal clergy. The Pentecostals' shifts of focus were necessary to maintain their power and keep their audiences and admirers spellbound, hopeful and obedient.

In desperate economic times people welcome positive prosperity messages. The shift was thus also psychologically based. The Nigerian spirit of determination, never giving up in the face of difficulty, has been brought to bear on their religiosity. The quest for wealth has driven many people to do odd things in order to achieve, so that they can be counted among the rich and successful. Everyone believes in the possibility of becoming rich and many imagine what it would be like. The Nigerian psyche appears to be informed by belief in possibilities rather than failures. This is what the Pentecostals have grasped and used to manipulate their followers.

³¹⁷ Hollinger, 1989, p.26.

³¹⁸ Observation at one of the services of House of Refuge Pentecostal church Yola, September 2010.

5.7 The Type of People Most Attracted to Pentecostalism

From the analysis of the questionnaire, distributed during field work, it becomes clear that Pentecostal churches mostly attract young people that are secondary school leavers and university graduates. This goes to confirm our earlier submission that, schools, colleges and universities, are seedbeds for Pentecostalism in Nigeria.

The questionnaire was distributed to Pentecostals as well as mainline Christians. Both open-ended and close-ended questions were asked. The responses reveal that unmarried women, bank executives, and clerks are among those attracted to Pentecostalism. Among the most fervent adherents are younger people in private businesses. The results of the present research show the age groups represented in Pentecostal churches in Adamawa, and interviews with Pentecostal leaders, elders and ushers have further clarified the impact of the age factor.

The interviewees varied from bankers to single women, all highly qualified. All of them had at some stage in their lives been actively doing research; they knew what research involves and appreciated the value of the present study. The ages of the Pentecostal Christians were supplied by the leaders themselves. The membership was between 12 and 61 years of age with the majority between 25 and 45.³¹⁹ Certain Pentecostal churches like Praise Chapel and House of Refuge specifically target students at the University in Yola and buses are run to transport students to worship on Sundays.

Until now, it was generally believed that the poor and the sick were among those most attracted to Pentecostalism. Age was not considered a factor as Pentecostal crusades are visibly attended by people of all ages. However, Pentecostal evangelistic drives are predominantly directed towards the youth and the impact on the average age of their membership is evident. They maintain a steady flow of young persons joining their congregations.

5.8 Reasons Given by Pentecostals for Their Attraction to the Movement

Pentecostals, interviewed during fieldwork, were asked: What is it that attracts you to Pentecostalism? All respondents agreed that they liked the emphasis on faith and the worship style, the insistence on personal confession or acceptance of Christ as one's saviour, and the promise of deliverance from forces of evil and human wickedness by the Pentecostals. Also mentioned were the experience of the power of the Holy Spirit and the leadership style in Pentecostal churches. Despite the recent tendency among Pentecostal preachers to highlight

³¹⁹ Results of research conducted in Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2005.

material prosperity as a sign of God's blessing, the respondents refrained (perhaps deliberately?) from mentioning this aspect as a reason for their attraction to the movement.

The Pentecostal respondents expressed criticism of mainline churches and gave various reasons as to why people move away from the mainliners to join the Pentecostals.

Dominant arguments were:

- i. mainline churches are dead;
- ii. mainline churches do not express spiritual gifts;
- iii. Mainline churches are too strict and rigid on doctrine and liturgy and do not accept changes;
- iv. Mainline churches do not allow preaching on prosperity;
- v. the power of the Holy Spirit is not allowed to work in the mainline churches;
- vi. the promise of God is not appropriated within the traditional churches, neither are the spiritual needs of the members being met;
- vii. the members of mainline churches are not free to express thankfulness to God;
- viii. the mainline churches are too dogmatic and denominational.³²⁰

In answer to the same question one respondent remarked, "I saw no visible spiritual training and development that suit my needs. Ironically, the knowledge of spirituality is deficient and the application of biblical principles to life style is not practiced in the mainline churches due to doctrinal beliefs..." Another said he was dissatisfied and had been living in sin, "...free to do as I wish, with no fear of God, when I was in my former church." A third respondent said: "I deserved to grow spiritually so it was time for me to leave and become a Pentecostal."³²¹

Allan Anderson writes about growing Pentecostalism in Africa that:

One of the reasons for the growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches may be that they have succeeded where western founded churches have often failed to provide a contextualized Christianity in Africa. They are essentially of African origin (even when founded by western Pentecostal missionaries) and fulfill African aspirations, with roots in a marginalized and underprivileged society struggling to find dignity and identity in the face of brutal colonialism and oppression. In some parts of Africa, Pentecostalism expanded initially among people who were neglected, misunderstood and deprived of anything but token leadership by their white ecclesiastical masters. But despite these important social and historical factors, fundamentally it is the ability of African Pentecostalism to adapt to and fulfill religious aspirations that continues to be in main strength. An African style of worship, a liturgy and a holistic Christianity that offers tangible help in this world as well as in the next together form a uniquely African contextualization of Christianity.

³²⁰ Results of field work done in Adamawa State, Nigeria, January 2005.

³²¹ Extracts from various interviews. in Adamawa State, Nigeria, January 2005.

This contextual Christianity meets needs more substantially than the often sterile Christianity imported from Europe. If older churches fail to address and remedy these shortcomings, they may continue to minister to decreasing membership content either to practice Christianity side by side with African traditional religions or to succumb to a secular society and disappear.³²²

The ‘African contextualization of Christianity’, as suggested by Anderson is a major factor in the growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria in general and particularly in Adamawa. In the early 1970s Christians in Adamawa, both young and old, saw nothing wrong in using traditional African musical instruments like drums, gongs and xylophones in worship, in the same way as pianos and organs were used. Some [mainline] churches introduced the talking-drum which is a common instrument of the Hausa people (who are Muslims) in Christian worship.

Some of the most serious Pentecostal concerns with regard to the mainline churches is that, while mainline clergymen are educated and knowledgeable, they do not let people get to know God personally, in spirit and in truth. Therefore Pentecostals feel that the mainline churches need reformation and revival, that they ought to take spiritual training and development seriously and to improve on the following-up on needs of their members.³²³

It is noteworthy that most of the growth in the last two decades in the Christian church generally, and the Pentecostal churches in particular, happened through migration of the younger generation. At Pentecostal meetings of the PFN, it is obvious that most of the pastors are under forty years of age. Similarly, attending services in many of the living churches in Nigeria and West Africa, one finds that most of the congregation is much younger than followers of church services in the West. Also, the Pentecostal congregations consist of people from different backgrounds and ethnic groups, whereas mainline churches tend historically to have links with particular ethnic groups.³²⁴

The promise of prosperity as preached by Pentecostals is commonly considered to be one of the factors that make them attractive, especially in view of the socio-economic crisis in which Nigeria finds itself. Pentecostal church leaders and prominent members, some of whom have amassed wealth and high social status and therewith, considerable power in their congregations and in society in general provide the less successful believers with role models.

Bishop Ibrahim Markus Amfani of the Anglican Diocese of Yola believes that tradition is another important factor contributing to the growth of Pentecostalism. The African, he says, believes in the worship of idols and is therein encouraged by African

³²² Anderson, A. 2010. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.122.

³²³ Various interviews in Adamawa State, Nigeria in January 2005.

³²⁴ McCain, D. 2000. “The Church in Africa in the Twenty-First Century: Characteristics, Challenges and Opportunities” www.iics.com/church_in_africa.html. Accessed February 2005.

traditional religion. This worship is being translated into Pentecostal fervour. The promise of prosperity, he argued, further enhances Pentecostal popularity because people are hungry and look for easy answers from the Gospel.³²⁵

The attraction to Pentecostalism is more or less a global trend, the late Bishop Abba of the Catholic Diocese of Yola said. He observed that "...the younger people want to have their way. They think the older churches are traditional and liberal. Therefore, there is need for a change. Some just want their own way so they give excuses."³²⁶ The Pentecostals feel that older people dominate leadership in the mainline churches, making them "dead" churches. The young believe that older people resist or fear change. They also suggested that pastors, trained by the mission, tend to imitate white missionaries in their behaviour. Thus, they get to be viewed as an extension of western tradition in worship and leadership styles. Older people who are not Christians are by the Pentecostals considered as demonic and pagan in their ways.

The newer Pentecostals in Adamawa are particularly opposed to African traditional religion. During this research it was observed that in Farai, the village where the main shrine of the Bwatiye people is located, two Pentecostal churches have acquired property along the route, used by the traditional priests of Nzeanzo for ritual dances as they go to and from the shrine. When asked about the acquisition of property nearby the traditional shrine, a pastor of one of the churches concerned said that Pentecostal presence there was deliberate, in the hope that "one day we will be able to wipe out the worship of the demi-god Nzeanzo". The young Bwatiye Pentecostals want the worship of idols in their region to be brought to a total halt. But, simultaneously and inadvertently, they also believe in the existence of evil spirits or demons that enter and possess people who eventually will need deliverance. The fear of the priests of the traditional religions is high among Pentecostals. The younger people believe they needed protection from the spirits and the powers of the idols therefore they turn to Pentecostalism because the Pentecostalist message claims it actually offers deliverance. Bishop Mayo Jinga of the Pentecostal group Life Spring Chapel International states:

People are attracted to Pentecostalism for obvious reasons and as a good leader I sought to know why Christians leave their churches to become Pentecostals or why brother 'A' leaves church 'A' to come to church 'B'. For some, it is because they had to run away from church discipline, and [for] some [others] because they are not known [i.e. understood or recognized] in their churches so they move to us.³²⁷

³²⁵ Bishop Ibrahim, M. A., interviewed at Yola, Adamawa State. 10th July, 2006.

³²⁶ Bishop Abba, C., interviewed at Yola, Adamawa State. 5th August, 2006.

³²⁷ Bishop Mayo, J., interviewed at Yola, Adamawa State. 5th September, 2007.

The Pentecostals themselves are not insulated against the membership drain either. In the year 2008, a Pentecostal church in Jimeta experienced a split because of financial matters. The bishop of the group was said to have demanded for huge sums to settle his hotel bills whenever he traveled out of town. This did not go down well with his pastors and church council members. As a result two pastors left the Pentecostal group taking with them a substantial number of the membership and started the House of Refuge Ministries at a distance of just 500 metres from the group they broke from.

For some people issues of spirituality are central. The mainline churches are regarded as not being spiritual enough, while for others it is the dress codes of the mainline churches that are too strict. They see the mainline churches as archaic and not 'born again.' They point out that mainline churches worship Mary and other idols, have confession, and do not allow speaking in tongues. One prominent Pentecostal felt that, since he has joined the Pentecostals, he is more successful in life, his prayer life has become more effective and he is a blessing to others.³²⁸

5.9 Summary

The research found that there were two phases in the formation of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State. The first phase covered the years from the 1940s to the 1960s and saw the establishment of Classical Pentecostalist movements. The second phase started when a newer and more vibrant Pentecostalism arrived in Adamawa in the mid-1970s.

The earliest contacts with the newer Pentecostalism occurred through the LYF and its leadership. A second group to be confronted with the Pentecostals was the AFCS/FCS in schools and colleges. The fact that tensions between generations were a major factor, contributing to ecclesiological change, has been discussed in this chapter.

The consolidation of Pentecostalism began in the 1990s and to date. During this time, the Pentecostals were faced with many theological questions they could not answer and the period marked the beginning of structural development within the Pentecostal set-up as they realised the need to build Bible schools and to seek formal theological education.

The research found that Pentecostal churches are quite independent from each other but that, at the same time, they maintain close networking links to support each other through the PFN. Evidence was presented that the age groups, most attracted to Pentecostalism, are those of high school leavers and university graduates. The researcher found that professionals, among whom many unmarried and some divorced women who are working as

³²⁸ Responses from interviews and questionnaires. 2005/2006.

engineers, economists, accountants and bank executives, are among the fervent adherents of Pentecostalism. The engagement of professionals with Pentecostal churches is corroborated by, among others, Kalu:

A gospel bankers group formed in Jos to assist missionaries. But many of the missionary associations encourage professionals to offer short term free services. For instance, at the end of the Liberian crisis, the Intercessors for Africa (Nigeria Prayer House) sent volunteer professionals to serve for agreed periods of time at their own costs, Doctors, nurses, teachers, and others went to Liberia as led and sustained by the spirit.³²⁹

The current research found that Pentecostals are mostly between 12 and 41 years old. Towards the end of the 1990s, a marked shift occurred when the Pentecostal emphasis on holiness was partly replaced by a focus on prosperity. At this time the Pentecostal churches became more interested in the social and economic situation in Nigeria and the messages, propagated from the pulpits, increasingly contained promises of prosperity. Sometimes a sermon went so far as to suggest that ‘born agains’ form a ‘new creation’ and therefore are like God.

Among the reasons, most commonly proffered by Adamawa people for their conversion to Pentecostalism, is an appreciation of the Pentecostal style of worship which they, to an extent, understand as close to certain aspects of African indigenous religions. The claim of deliverance from the power of evil and negative forces affecting humanity, the transformative experience of the Holy Spirit (discussed in chapter six below), an inspired leadership and the art of expressive praise-singing, were identified as further reasons for the attraction of the movement. Some interviewees highlighted an interest in material prosperity as a reason for joining Pentecostalism.

The chapter also mentions the issue of polygamy and observes that, to a large degree, Pentecostals [especially those of the Classical strand] accept polygamy while some among those of the newer strand, accept divorce. This has encouraged polygamists to attend Pentecostal fellowship meetings and encouraged divorce among younger couples and clergy alike within the ranks of Neo-Pentecostals.

³²⁹ Kalu, 2007, p.38.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TYPES OF PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES FOUND IN ADAMAWA STATE

6.0 Introduction

In chapter six an attempt is made to reconstruct the histories of various Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State. The chapter draws on library materials, particularly scholarly works on Pentecostalism, and on materials gathered during four years of field work in Adamawa. Interviews were conducted with leaders and principal players in Pentecostal and mainline churches. Structured and unstructured questions have been used in gathering materials. All sources have been carefully scrutinized for reliability. The chapter aims to acquaint the reader with the definition of the terms Pentecostals and Pentecostalism.

The chapter also presents a detailed study of specific prominent and locally initiated Pentecostal churches in Adamawa including a classification of Pentecostal churches, as seen and understood by Pentecostals as well the mainline churches. An analysis of the reasons for the shift in style and teaching of the newer Pentecostals and their popularity, which have been discussed in earlier chapters, are further highlighted in this chapter.

6.1 Scholars' Definition of Pentecostals and Pentecostalism

Scholars and researchers have, depending on their geographical areas of interest, defined Pentecostalism in its universal and African forms in general, and in its Nigerian forms in particular. These definitions are now outlined.

Wayne A. Grudem describes a Pentecostal church or ministry as:

Any denomination or group that traces its historical origin back to the Pentecostal revival that began in the United States in 1901 and that holds the following doctrines: (1) All the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament are intended for today; (2) baptism in the Holy Spirit is an empowering experience subsequent to conversion and should be sought by Christians today; and (3) when baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs, people will speak in tongues as a "sign" that they have received this experience.³³⁰

He describes Charismatics as:

Any groups (or people) that trace their origin to the charismatic renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s and that seek to practice all the gifts mentioned in the New Testament (including prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation and distinguishing between spirits). Among charismatics there are differing viewpoints on whether baptism in the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion and whether speaking

³³⁰ Grudem, Wayne A. 1996. *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, p11.

in tongues are a sign of baptism in the Spirit. Charismatics by and large have refrained from forming their own denominations, but view themselves as a force for renewal within existing Protestant and Roman Catholic churches.³³¹

Vinson Synan, a historian and author in the Pentecostal movement, published 16 books, 15 of which are related to Pentecostal and Charismatic history. He is a professor of Church History, Dean Emeritus at Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia, and he has co-founded the Society for Pentecostal Studies in 1970. As a historian and a Pentecostal himself, Synan stands out for being an authority in this field with all its ramifications. His book, “Aspects of Pentecostal/Charismatic Origins”, and some of his writings provide a behind-the-scenes assessment of Pentecostalism. His analyses are scholarly, historically correct and easily understandable. The most helpful part of his analysis of the origins and development of Pentecostalism is his breaking up of the history into periods. It helps in putting events into perspective. Synan states that the various Pentecostal churches or movements are all, in one way or another, part “...of one Holy Spirit movement with one common factor of Spirit Baptism, accompanied by glossolalia and/or other gifts of the Spirit.”³³² He confirms that the earliest phase of Pentecostalism “...was essentially Wesleyan in its theology, worship, and hymnody.”³³³

Synan outlines the main historical phases of Pentecostalism as follows:

- i. The “Holiness” Pentecostal movement began with Charles Parham in 1901 and included the Azusa Street revival of William Seymour from 1906 to 1909.
- ii. The “Finished Work” Pentecostal movement began with William Durham from Chicago in 1910 and includes the Assemblies of God and most of the Pentecostal groups organized after 1914.
- iii. The “Oneness” or Pentecostal Unitarian movement began in 1913 and caused a major schism in the Assemblies of God in 1916.
- iv. The Protestant “neo-Pentecostal” movement dates from about 1960, and
- v. The “Catholic charismatic” Pentecostal movement traces its beginning to 1966.³³⁴

³³¹ Grudem, 1996, p. 11.

³³² Vinson Synan. 1975. *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins*. Plainfield Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, p.2.

³³³ Vinson Synan. 1975, p.2.

³³⁴ Vinson Synan. 1975, pp.2-3.

There are differences between universal and African typologies of Pentecostal movements. The universal movements can be seen as having broken clear of traditional churches in theology and outlook. Their roots, as described above, are found in older holiness movements in Europe and the United States. Some of these became prototypes for African Pentecostal movements who had asked them for assistance and who eventually adopted the names and styles of their European or American examples. Some African movements however were started in Africa, without European or American assistance, and did later link up with foreign partners. Others steered clear of foreign influence altogether, because they wanted to remain African, or they claimed to be Africa's contribution to Christianity.

Anderson defines African Pentecostalism in various contexts. There are the mission churches, established by missionaries from Pentecostal denominations in North America and Europe, such as the Assemblies of God Church and the Apostolic Church. They are classified as 'Classical Pentecostals'. There are also Charismatic movements in the mainstream non-Pentecostal denominations. These are independent schismatic offshoots of the mission churches. In addition, there are wholly indigenous movements.³³⁵

Also Ogbu U. Kalu denotes subdivisions in African Pentecostalism. They comprise inter-denominational fellowships (e.g. Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International and Women's Aglow), evangelistic ministries (Deeper Life Bible Church), deliverance ministries (specializing in exorcisms), prosperity or faith ministries (sometimes tending toward positive thinking), and Intercessors (part of Intercessors Africa). He furthermore identifies Bible distribution agencies (Gideon Bible International, accepting only born-again members) and the classical Pentecostals (Four Square Gospel Church, Assemblies of God Church).³³⁶

Matthew Ojo recognizes three streams in the course of more than five decades of Pentecostalist development in Nigeria. The first consists of classical Pentecostal churches which are products of the activities of Western missionaries in Nigeria. The second stream includes indigenous Pentecostal churches which owe their origin to visionary experiences and activities of specific men and women between the 1940s and the 1960s. The third strand of Pentecostalism consists of the newer charismatic churches that started flourishing in Nigeria from the mid-1970s and that were the products of university circles.³³⁷

The classification of Anderson seems easy to work with as it neatly fits the Pentecostal landscape in Nigeria. Kalu's classification is rather detailed and some of the

³³⁵ Anderson, R.M. 1986. *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, pp.229-235.

³³⁶ Kalu, 1998, p.9.

³³⁷ Ojo, 1988, pp. 175-192.

groups can easily be clustered together. For example, the first division can be combined with the fifth and the sixth, while the second, third and fourth divisions can be considered as one. The seventh strand stands alone. Ojo, on the other hand, defines three strands, but in his classification, the second strand is not easily identifiable. His recent contribution is apt and most important our understanding of the type of pentecostals that operate in Adamawa State. This is discussed below on pages 172 and 173. Adamawa Pentecostalism despite all its present traits today, started as a Reformist movement that failed in its bid to reform the Lutheran, EYN and Catholic churches in the state, ended up as schismatic groups of independent Pentecostal movements all over the state. They actually copied from other parts of Nigeria and the world, what Pentecostals practice and teach.

The present research has identified three strands of Pentecostal groups in Nigeria, and in Adamawa State in particular. The following subdivisions will be employed for the purpose of this thesis. They are:

- i. First strand: Classical Pentecostals;
- ii. Second strand: Wholly Indigenous/Neo-Pentecostals; and
- iii. Third strand: Charismatic Movements in the Mainline Churches.

As noted earlier, Pentecostal denominations in Nigeria, though independent of one another, maintain close networking links. They support each other and meet under the umbrella of an organization known as the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). All the strands of Nigerian Pentecostalism can be found in Adamawa State. For the purpose of the current research, some Pentecostal churches in Adamawa had to be visited by proxies who observed activities and interviewed members and pastors. The general aim was to determine to which type of Pentecostalism the churches belong and how they relate to each other. Two sets of assistants were sent out, first in April 2009 and again in August 2009. The assistants were pastors themselves and understood what the research was about. They had to find out *inter alia* (a) the doctrinal emphasis, (b) operational methods, (c) founding dates and (d) particular type of the Pentecostal churches concerned. The use of proxies was necessitated by the fact that the researcher is a Lutheran which made some of the Pentecostal pastors hesitant to grant interviews. The material gathered through assistants was analysed and collated to produce the chart below. The researcher found that Adamawa state, like other regions on Nigeria, has its own, locally developed charismatic movements that exist side by side with mainstream Pentecostal churches. In some circumstances such charismatic groups are loosely associated with older, and more nationally spread, Pentecostal denominations. They are therefore listed under the second strand (numbers 18-22) in the table.

Table: 4 A working Classification of Some Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria and Adamawa State.

1 st Strand	2 nd Strand	3 rd Strand	Founding Date	Doctrinal Emphasis	Operational Method
1. Assemblies of God			1934/1939	Holiness	Church Planting
2. Four Square Gospel Church			-	Holiness	Church Planting
3. Christ Apostolic Church			1944 Adamawa State	Holiness	Church Planting
4. Apostolic Church			1930s	Holiness	Church Planting
5. New Apostolic Church				Holiness	Church Planting
	Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG)		1952	Holiness and Prosperity	Crusades and Camps
	Living Faith		1970s	Prosperity	Crusades and Camps
	Church of God Mission		1968	Prosperity	Crusades
	Redeemed People's Mission		1976	Holiness/Prosperity	Crusades
	Deeper Life Bible Church		1982	Holiness	Crusades and Camps
	Mountain of Fire and Miracles(MFM)		1989	Deliverance	Crusades and Camps
	Christ Embassy		1992	Prosperity	Televangelism
	Fountain of Life Ministries		1992	Prosperity	Crusades

	House on the Rock		1994	Prosperity	Crusades
	Daystar Christian Centre		1995	Prosperity	Crusades
		Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship	-	Holiness	Fellowship and Prayer Meetings
		Women Aglow	-	Holiness	Fellowship and Prayer Meetings
		Gideon's International	1987 (In Adamawa State)	Holiness	Bible Distribution
		Catholic Charismatics	1966/1970	Holiness/Prosperity	Fellowship Meetings
	Upper Room Cathedral		1988	Prosperity	Crusades
	Praise Chapel for All Nations		1988	Prosperity	Crusades
	Truth Foundation Ministries/Grace Cathedral		1990	Holiness/Prosperity	Crusades
	Global Church		1990	Prosperity	Crusades
	Life Spring Ministries		1993	Prosperity	Crusades
	Rhema Bible Church			Holiness	Teaching
			1994	Holiness/Miracles	Evangelism
	Spirit Life Power Embassy		2008	Prosperity	Splitting

While the presentation of the historical development and the present proliferation of Pentecostal churches in this tabular form may appear to be reductionist, these generalisations are useful in analysing the movements. The research findings of the present study have confirmed the above classifications. Besides, a typology of Charismatic movements as supplied by Mathew Ojo in his paper *Pentecostalism and African Christianity in Historical*

Perspectives provide us with a useful analysis of the movement in Nigeria in general and Adamawa in particular. I find it suitable because it goes into greater details and agrees with the chart above from a scholarly angle.

Ojo's six established typology on Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in Nigeria are:

- i. Faith Seekers: These believe in the acquisition of power by individuals to establish a relationship with God through conversion,
- ii. Faith Builders: They emphasize the realization of the potentials in individuals to overcome contemporary difficulties of life or to achieve rapid social mobility through the acquisition of material comfort or societal recognition,
- iii. Faith Transformers: They seek to alter the socio-cultural and religious milieu of large groups of people, frequently along ethnic or national lines,
- iv. Reformers: These are individuals and sectarian groups within the mainline Protestant denominations seeking to rekindle revival and renewal on the basis of Pentecostal spirituality,
- v. Deliverance Churches: They are preoccupied with liberating or extricating Christians from their traditional past, which they consider as stumbling blocks to a fulfilling life in the contemporary world, they also try to resolve the dilemma of the traditional past within a modern westernized context but not fully a rational empirical context, and
- vi. Modernists: These churches have adopted or are trying to adopt the religious style of the Charismatics and Pentecostals. Their preoccupation is how to present the old "Zionist or Aladura religion to the modern world of the educated."³³⁸

Ojo's typology describes in full the type of Pentecostal groups found in Adamawa State, however type four was the initial prevalent type in Adamawa. The socio-economic and socio-cultural arguments or the pre-modern and modernity arguments for the growth of Pentecostalism applied to Adamawa only after their reformist agenda failed.

³³⁸ Ojo, M. A., Pentecostalism and African Christianity in Historical Perspectives, Department of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. A Paper Presented at the Theological Education in Africa (TEA) conference, held at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, Jos Plateau State, Nigeria, August 8:2012, pp.6-7.

6.2 Prominent New Pentecostal Churches in Adamawa State and their Organizational Structures

Among the Pentecostal churches discussed in this section are the first two Neo-Pentecostal churches to come to Adamawa State. They are the Redeemed People's Mission (RPM) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). These two are well established in Adamawa State. The other three churches that will be discussed are chosen because they have been initiated by indigenous founders from Adamawa State in addition to being well established. These are the Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM), Upper Room Cathedral of the Upper Room Churches Worldwide and the Life Spring Ministries.

6.2.1 Redeemed People's Mission (RPM)

The Redeemed People's Mission was founded in 1973 by Rev. N.C. Thompson. The church was established in Adamawa State in 1978. Rev. Thompson came to Yola that same year and visited the local Lutheran congregation, where he became involved with the Associate Fellowship of Christian Students (AFCS). He had earlier planned to hold a crusade in Yola but needed to associate himself with an existing church to get the crusade going. It was only at the end of the crusade that his real intentions became clear when he invited those in attendance to return to the crusade grounds for the Sunday service. That is how he started his church in Adamawa State.³³⁹

The first pastor of the RPM Yola was Rev. Kenneth Eze. Today the church has sixteen branches in Yola District which also covers the Biu area in neighbouring Borno State. In Adamawa itself, the RPM has six congregations. The total membership stands at about 700 members in Adamawa State. The main congregation in Yola has between 500 and 600 members. The present pastor in Yola is Rev. Livinus Obi.³⁴⁰

The RPM's programmes include the preaching of the gospel to the community and the teaching of the word of God. In addition, the RPM has programmes for widows and orphans and has constructed schools. The administrative structure of the RPM is very simple and consists of: a general church council, headed by a general superintendent, district councils headed by a district superintendent, and church committees headed by a local pastor.

³³⁹Interview with a pastor of the Redeemed People's Mission, Jimeta, Adamawa State. 8th May 2009.

³⁴⁰Interview with a pastor of the Redeemed People's Mission, 8th May 2009.

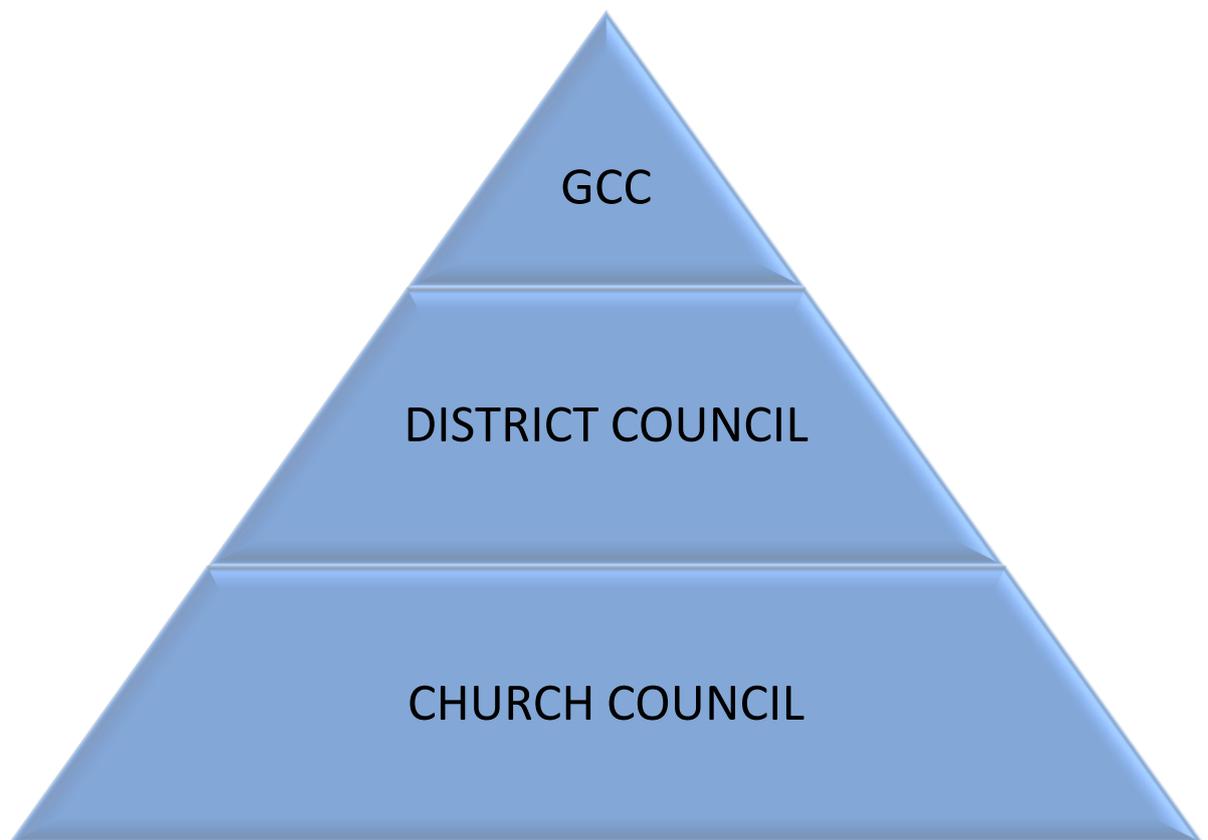


Figure 6 Structure of Redeemed People's Mission Church

6.2.2 Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC)

The Deeper Life Bible Church was founded in 1973 as a Bible study unit by William F. Kumuyi who was a lecturer of mathematics at the University of Lagos. In 1982 the Bible study unit became a church. It was established in Adamawa State in 1985 and its first pastor was James Akpofore.³⁴¹

The Deeper Life Bible Church has 5000 congregations all over Nigeria. In Adamawa the church declares itself committed to preaching the gospel of Christ through vigorous evangelism, the performance of miracles, and the care for widows and orphans. It carries out Bible studies and Bible teaching, as well as programmes of visitation and caring.³⁴²

The Deeper Life Bible Church is opposed to worldliness. It does not allow its members to wear ornaments like earrings, necklaces and bangles, or to use make-up. Television sets and any form of electronics are forbidden in members' homes although their leader, Dr. Kumuyi, was recently observed preaching on television, causing controversy in the church. The structure of the Deeper Life Bible Church is presented below. The abbreviations GO at the top of the pyramid stands for 'general overseer'.

³⁴¹ Interview with a pastor of Deeper Life Bible Church Jimeta, Adamawa State, 31st July 2009.

³⁴² Interview with a pastor of Deeper Life, 31st July 2009.



Figure 7 Structure of the Deeper Life Bible Church

6.2.3 Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM)

Truth Foundation Ministries was one of the first wholly indigenous Pentecostal churches established in 1990. The church was established by four young men who, according to Rev. Japhet Tonmoso, after they had a vision, decided to evangelize within the LCCN and to create a continuity of youth fellowship between school and home. They hoped to reach out to the youth in order to transfer their own Christian experience to them and mobilize them for evangelism in villages surrounding their town, Numan. They intended to, eventually widen their scope and reach out to all youths in the former Gongola State (now part of Adamawa) and invite them to embrace the fellowship. To do so, they established the Lutheran Youth Fellowship and then, during the 1970s and 1980s, they became Maranatha Youth Fellowship groups.³⁴³

³⁴³ Tonmwaso, interviewed, 17th July, 2006.

As mentioned previously, the vision statement of the ministry is “To Know Christ, Make and Present All Men Perfect (blameless) unto him”. Discipleship, evangelism and making the youth into perfect saints were their expressed aims. They felt that, since God had changed them, they wanted others to experience the same transformation.³⁴⁴

The ministry went through a prolonged tussle with the elders of their original church, mainly concerning liturgical and worship related issues. The LCCN elders demanded that they either exclusively attend church-sanctioned programmes, or be denied the Eucharist, marriage and burial rites in the church. Thus, the Maranatha-TFM youth fellowship group, which was established to strengthen evangelism in the Lutheran Church, became on January 1, 1990 an independent Pentecostal church. Hence, the ministry that was intended to work within the very first Christian congregation to be established in Adamawa in 1916 by the LCCN became also the first local or indigenous Pentecostal church in Adamawa State.³⁴⁵

The TFM is a holiness group. It does not subscribe to prosperity ministry. Its vice-president observes that:

One can see the church being dragged into the world. The spirit of the world has crept into the church and American Pentecostalism is what is affecting the Nigerian church. Everyone is opening churches because their leaders have become rich and are not allowing them to get any [part of the riches]. This is what is happening in the church today.³⁴⁶

The leaders of the TFM are George Moses, president, and Japhet E. Tonmoso and Leonard Nzadon, vice presidents. All attempts to get details of the administrative and power structure of the Truth Foundation Ministry proved futile.



³⁴⁴ Tonmwaso, interviewed, 17th July, 2006.

³⁴⁵ Tonmwaso, interviewed, 17th July, 2006.

³⁴⁶ Tonmwaso, interviewed, 17th July, 2006.

Plate: 3, The Grace Cathedral, National Headquarters Church Building of the TFM at Numan, Adamawa State: Photo by E.R.Ishaya.

The TFM has 15 congregations scattered around Adamawa and Taraba states. The first, and still the main, congregation is at Numan in Adamawa State. The congregation has between 250 to 300 worshippers every Sunday. There also is a much smaller congregation in Numan that records about 60 worshippers on Sundays. The congregation at Mubi in Northern Adamawa has 200 worshippers and is located near the Adamawa State University possibly targeting the student population there. The remaining congregations are in Abuja and other towns.

6.2.4 The Upper Room Cathedral

The founder of the Upper Room Cathedral, Bishop Peter Makanto, says: “I felt uncomfortable working in government service. So I left. I did not see money or go for money. I just wanted to bring that which I believe was necessary. The changes are coming in #trickles. There is no flood gate. If God did not call you, you will be in trouble.”³⁴⁷

He states that in 1976 he saw a vision in which he was a preacher. His path became clearer in 1978. “Then I followed the yearnings of my spirit and started a church. The details cannot be articulated.”³⁴⁸

The core of the Upper Room Cathedral is its focus on prayer and the ministry of the word, following Acts 6:4. The church now also wants to contribute to the areas of education and health, thus taking on both a spiritual and a social mission. The Upper Room Cathedral is planning for younger persons to take over its leadership. According to the bishop, “funding comes from within and without, from members and friends and well-wishers”³⁴⁹

The church was started because “the system and structure of the LCCN did not allow us. They exorcised us. The LCCN could not contain us; therefore we had to leave to start our ministries and churches.” The founder of Upper Room Cathedral was part of the TFM, but chose to establish his own church, beside the TFM, as have all the other founding members of the TFM [they however, maintained links with the TFM].

The Upper Room Church believes in the ‘prosperity Gospel’. The bishop states: “I believe in prosperity. I preach it. I have even written on it. We believe in divine healing but we go to hospital because “all healing comes from God”.”³⁵⁰ This statement is noteworthy and

³⁴⁷ Makanto, interviewed 6th July, 2008.

³⁴⁸ Makanto, interviewed 6th July, 2008.

³⁴⁹ Makanto, interviewed 6th July, 2008.

³⁵⁰ Makanto, interviewed 6th July, 2008.

rather unique as it says something about prosperity preaching. The researcher has found a tendency among Pentecostal church leaders to dodge that issue.

The Cathedral is the only congregation of the Upper Room church and the bishop is also vicar and sole administrator. The administrative and power structure of the church was not made available during this study.

6.2.5 Life Spring Ministries

The founder of the Life Spring Ministries, Bishop Jinga A. Mayo, was a member of the Lutheran and Baptist churches before he became ‘born again’. He also had joined the Living Faith and Love Divine Ministries in Kaduna and when he came to Yola, he worshipped with the Praise Chapel church. “From there”, he explains, “I started Life Spring Chapel.”³⁵¹

Previously, in 1987, Bishop Mayo had established a youth ministry called ‘Set Go Free Mission’ at the YMCA in Kaduna. It was a campus youth ministry, aimed at mobilizing the indigenes of the then Gongola State at universities and colleges so that they would return home and evangelize their state.

Bishop Mayo established Life Spring Chapel in 1993 in Yola, beginning with eight Muslim converts, one of whom had offered his house as a church venue. “I was running from being a fully-fledged pastor. I believed in being a free-lance evangelist, but God impressed on my spirit that I must start a church. He gave me a name [for the church] and asked me to give him a date to convince me that the church was going to come into being. It was in January, the first of January, very close to the time of the discourse with God. I could not believe that God could provide a venue at short notice.”³⁵²

The following morning Mayo and his converts gathered at the Muslim’s house. Their singing and clapping attracted three passersby. The topic for the message that day was “I can do all things”, taken from Philippians 4:13. The bishop describes the ensuing period as both painful and joyful, whereby he was always that “tomorrow promises to be better”. “I taught converts, but now I teach leaders. God has raised more hands to support the work for the task yet ahead.”³⁵³

The Life Spring Ministries has educated seven batches of trainee ministers (as well as the bishop himself) in various fields. The training programme is assisted by an American group, the ‘Millennium Leaders Training’, run by John C. Maxwell’s Leadership Institute.

³⁵¹ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵² Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵³ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

Representatives of the institute officiate at the graduations of the trainees. The bishop himself attended the ASCOT Theological School, affiliated to the University of Nigeria, Nsuka. The institution organizes periodic theological training for busy pastors.³⁵⁴

The church grows its membership by sending out invitations to Christians and non-Christians to attend programmes. The church also conducts evangelization in other ways. According to the bishop, "... a church is a market place; there are those who have permanent shops and those who display their wares on the street."³⁵⁵ When asked about allegations by mainline or traditional churches, that the Pentecostals 'steal' their members, the bishop said: "Yes, the church is one. All that we have are apartments within the same estate. Denominations are apartments. The church is one."³⁵⁶

The Life Spring Ministries church preaches prosperity but in a slightly different way from other Pentecostals. Their understanding of 3rd John v. 2 is that prosperity is firstly spiritual in nature, and only in the second place physical. 'Wellbeing' is equated to soundness of the soul that gives vitality and life to the body. The emphasis is on the decoration of the inner, rather than the outer man. A person can be without a roof over his head, but, that does not mean he is not prospering. In addition the church refers to Jesus' words that 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God'.³⁵⁷

This Pentecostal church aims, through the thriving of the soul, to establish wellbeing of the body. It sees to the personal needs of individual members and helps them to develop personal relationships and to interact. Bishop Mayo argues that: "...you hear of no food, clothes, shelter, etc. First we take care of the inner man and then the outer needs come into play. That way you meet the total needs of man, spiritual and physical."³⁵⁸

The church intends to inculcate a good leadership spirit among members and to stimulate political, social and economic development in the community. Its funding comes exclusively from church members.

The church has four branches, one each in Yola, Adamawa State, in Jos Plateau State, in Abuja, and one in the USA. The following list presents the Life Spring Ministries leadership. Its complex structure is depicted in figure 5, below.

- i. BOT: Board of Trustees (bishop as chairman);
- ii. AC: Agape Council (bishop as chairman, VP, ministry admin, chairman council, resident pastor);

³⁵⁴ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵⁵ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵⁶ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵⁷ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

³⁵⁸ Mayo, interviewed 5th September, 2007.

- iii. PC: Pastoral Council (bishop as chairman, all pastors as members);
- iv. CEC: Church Executive Council (resident pastor as chairman, church administrator, chairman elders council, finance director, director projects, youth leader, Kadesh Fresh (choir) director, chairman board of deacons, P31 woman leader (married women fellowship), promise keepers leader (married men fellowship), 3 members nominated by floor members);
- v. TPC: Temple Pastors (assistant pastors), Council (assistant resident pastor as chairman);
- vi. BOE: Board of Elders (elders, deacons, deaconesses);
- vii. CHD: Council of Heads of Departments; and
- viii. TFC: Family Council (General Council, only full church members. During meetings a member is free to express feelings, views, misunderstandings, misconceptions, even if directed against the bishop). The church administrator chairs meetings.³⁵⁹

Judging from the structure, the church seems quite developed. One would expect it to have a very large number of followers, but this is not the case. The church is in that respect an exception among Pentecostal churches in Adamawa. Although the church stresses spirituality above physical wellbeing, its leader shows clearly features of the businessman. He receives free housing with electricity and water rates paid by the government. This is a rare privilege.

That there is only a single congregation of the Life Spring Ministries in Yola, the town where the church was founded, is the result of a split whereby one pastor went his own way, taking many followers with him, to create a different Pentecostal church with a new name. Life Spring Ministries was left with less than half of its original membership of about 200 persons.

³⁵⁹ Mayo, interviewed 5th September 2007.

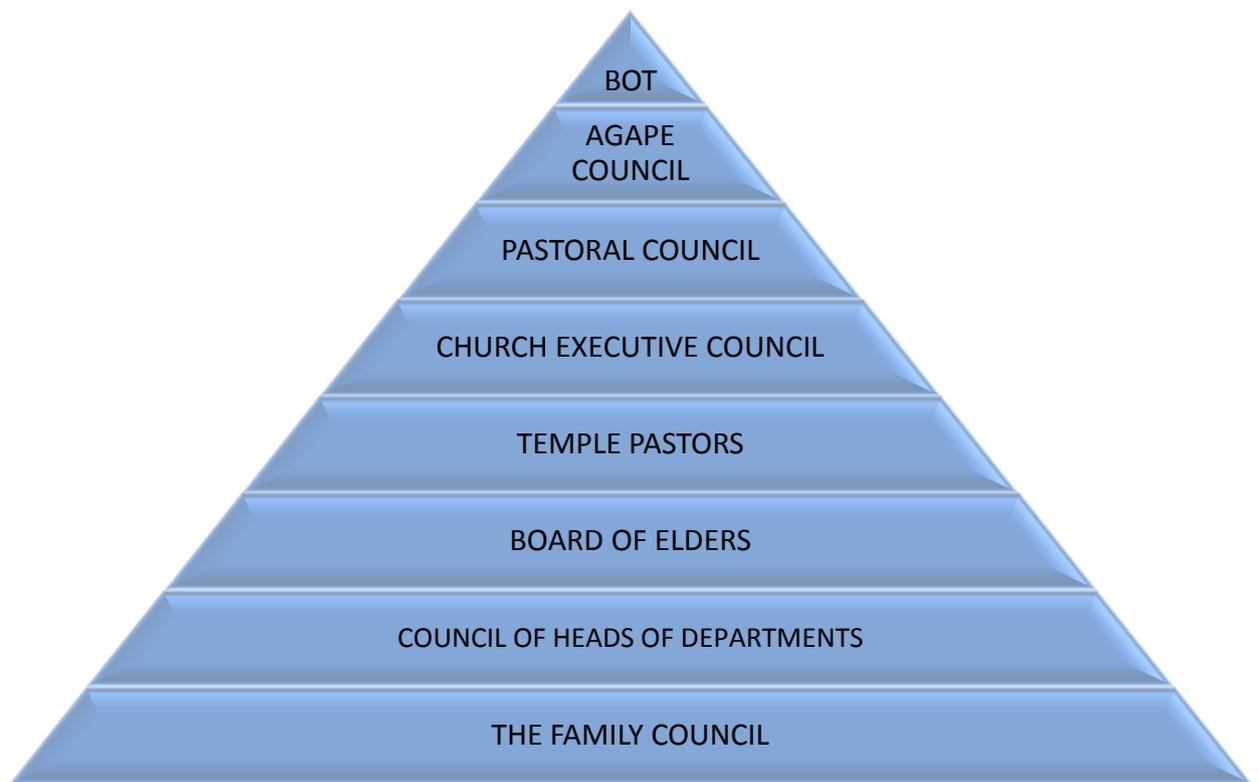


Figure 5: Life Spring Ministries' Church Structure

In relation to its modest size, the leadership structure of the church speaks volumes. It tells us that the church, which is basically business oriented, expects the complex structure to enhance its profile and impress potential supporters.

6.3 Summary

In chapter 6 we have given general definitions of Pentecostal churches and movements. They are Christian institutions that see themselves as Holy Spirit movements. They have in common Spirit Baptism, accompanied by glossolalia and/or other gifts of the Spirit. Such denominations or groups trace their historical origins to the Pentecostal revival that began in the United States on Azusa Street in 1906. We have defined Charismatics on the other hand as groups (or persons) that trace their origin to the charismatic renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s and that seek to practice all the gifts mentioned in the New Testament (including prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, interpretations and the distinguishing between spirits).

We have identified three strands of Pentecostals in Nigeria and Adamawa State that were particularly in evidence during the research period. They are 1. Classical Pentecostals, 2. Wholly indigenous neo-Pentecostals and 3. Charismatic movements in the mainline churches.

We have developed a working classification of some Pentecostal churches, found in Adamawa State, according to how they describe themselves and what we understand to be their characteristics.

Among the Pentecostal churches discussed in this chapter are the first Neo-Pentecostal groups to come to Adamawa State, the Redeemed People's Mission (RPM) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). Both are well established in Adamawa. The other three churches discussed are the first Pentecostal groups that were initiated and established by indigenous founders from Adamawa State: the Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM), Upper Room Cathedral of the Upper Room Churches Worldwide and the Life Spring Ministries. These groups have only in recent years seen the need to establish themselves outside Adamawa State.

We have seen that the TFM had hoped to reach out to the youth in order, *inter alia*, to mobilize them for tasks of evangelisation around Numan. They intended to get all youths in the then Gongola State among their followers. Thereto they established the Lutheran Youth Fellowship and thereafter the Maranatha Youth Fellowship in the 1970s and 1980s.

The vision statement of the ministry is “To Know Christ, Make and Present All Men Perfect (blameless) unto him” (Christ) and, along with stimulating discipleship and evangelism, the TFM aims to make the youths into perfect saints. As God has changed the youths, the church’s leader’s state, so should they make others share in their transformation.

After prolonged confrontations with the church elders, the youth fellowship group, which was formed to strengthen evangelism in the Lutheran Church, went its own way and became on January 1, 1990 the first indigenous and independent Pentecostal church in Adamawa.

The central concerns of the Upper Room Cathedral are prayer and the ministry of the word following Acts 6:4. The founder of Upper Room Cathedral belonged originally to the TFM, but established his own church, as did all the other founding members of the TFM. The bishop of the Upper Room Church believes in the prosperity Gospel. The Life Spring Ministries church preaches prosperity in a slightly different way. According to them, 3rd John v. 2 identifies prosperity as; in the first place, spiritual and thereafter physical, in other words, well-being of the soul leads to well-being of the body.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ATTRactions, STYLES AND OFFICES OF THE NEW PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

7.0 Introduction

Chapter seven continues discussions, initiated in chapters 3 and 4. These two chapters form the nucleus of the study. Having discussed the structures of Pentecostal churches in chapter six, chapter seven focuses on how Pentecostals understand and use certain terms, titles and offices in their structures.

The Pentecostals' development strategies, their sources of finance and their international connections will be considered as well as their extensive use of the media; both print and electronic as a tool for their work. The chapter attempts to understand how Pentecostals plan their work and how they execute it.

Sources for the material are empirical knowledge in addition to information collected during five years of fieldwork among Pentecostals in Nigeria. Other sources are the internet, church magazines, church bulletins, and interviews with prominent members and selected pastors of Pentecostal churches.

7.1 Worship Style

The worship style of the Pentecostals is probably its main attraction for its followers. In Africa people dance, because it uplifts and brings them in contact with their ancestors. This mindset fits in readily with the Pentecostal worship style. Pentecostals have no liturgy or rubrics. Their worship is 'free to air' since the worshipper is led by the Holy Spirit. Freely expressed emotion is a fundamental part of Pentecostal worship.

Pentecostalism has in the mid-seventies found a Nigerian audience that was ready for the message of free expression in worship.³⁶⁰ "Africans (Nigerians in particular) have always clapped and danced and been loud and boisterous in their celebrations. Pentecostalism demonstrated that this same kind of physical and emotional expression is legitimate in church."³⁶¹ It should, however, be noted that, as opposed to African tradition, the Pentecostal church does not clearly separate worship from celebration. Africans in fact, do not traditionally practice public worship; instead they have public celebrations. Traditionally,

³⁶⁰ McCain, 2000, Accessed February 2005.

³⁶¹ McCain, 2000, Accessed February 2005.

Africans send their priests to worship for them. Everyone else men, women and children - remain at home, awaiting the result of the worship that is performed at shrines, secluded in nature. If the priests return to the village with a favourable answer, the community bursts out in celebration, drumming, singing, clapping and dancing. But if the result of the worship is negative, the community remains indoors, fearful in contrition and self-searching. Public recognition of divine favour always calls for dancing, singing and merry-making in African societies. Christian worship, on the other hand, does include joyful singing in celebration, but balanced with the dignity of bowing down and kneeling. As Biyela aptly puts it, "In Christian worship, we keep alive the tension between Good Friday and Easter in every worship service. Good Friday calls for dignity and Easter calls for an explosion of joyful celebration".³⁶²

The Pentecostal worship style thus mirrors the African manner of celebrating divine favour. This may to a significant degree inform the attraction of Africans to the Pentecostal worship style which is often described as vibrant and claims to lift worshippers up towards the spiritual realm of angels and into the presence of God. This is, according to Pentecostals, what one should experience during true worship.

7.2 Music

Ogbu Kalu states in his work, "African Pentecostalism" that Pentecostalism is reshaping the religious landscape in Africa by creating a new religious culture the force of which is mirrored in its response to popular culture. He writes:

This is best illustrated with charismatic liturgy that is one of the biggest attractions to the movement. Dubbed "praise-co," Pentecostal music and dance traditions have attempted to supplant the music and dance of discotheques. A number of high-profile secular or "juju" musicians (who create new rhythms from indigenous musical culture) have become gospel singers, evangelists, and pastors, politicians and the celebrants of rites of passage borrow freely from gospel music and dance.³⁶³

Kalu maintains that Pentecostals were initially wary of popular cultures which negotiate between sacred and popular music and dance. But today Pentecostal preachers entertain and amuse their audiences with choreographed diatribes pretending horror of the influence of popular culture on believers. The resulting change in the style of gospel music is unstoppable, because of the creativity and rivalry involved, and because of the pressure of popular culture and the development of technology allowing for easy digital recording and video production. In addition gospel recordings are widely distributed with pirated versions

³⁶² Biyela, M. 2008. "In Spirit and Truth: Liturgy in Dialogue with Pentecostalism: Lutherans Respond to Pentecostalism: Theology in the Life of the Church," Vol.4, LWF, Lutheran University Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, p.94.

³⁶³ Kalu, 2008, p.121.

for sale in trailer parks, on buses, in churches and on convention grounds. Thus, music and dance constitute an important dimension in the prolific mass mediation of religion among the Pentecostals.³⁶⁴ This was, throughout the period of his research, confirmed by the researcher's observations. Obviously, the prominent role of music and dance in Pentecostalism appeals especially to younger people. The mainline churches with their choirs, organs and pianos, are fashioned after western churches. The classical Pentecostal churches use traditional African instruments such as drums and gongs, because their point of entry into Nigeria was in areas where those were the principal musical instruments. The newer Pentecostals however organise bands and full-blown orchestras with electronic equipment and sets of drums and they like the sounds of guitars, trumpets, saxophones, and portable organs or electronic keyboards to enhance their services. ,

The researcher noted that the music in Pentecostal churches is normally heavy and rhythmic, involving much clapping. Most of it is in one musical key with few variations. The styles are 'Reggae' and 'Makossa' and from time to time local tunes and beats are used. Music is what makes the Pentecostal churches vibrant and different from the so-called 'dead' mainline churches. It dominates every Pentecostal gathering, from the weekly Sunday worship to the daily prayer and Bible study meetings. At funerals the music is as lively as in regular Sunday celebrations.

In addition to all the singing and music, it was observed that Pentecostals allocate a special time in their services to what they call 'praise worship'. This practice sets the Pentecostal movement apart. As Tönsing, quoting Webber puts it: "A distinguishing feature of the movement is its tendency to distinguish praise from worship and to see worship as a process that moves people into an ever more intimate experience of God."³⁶⁵ Praise worship sessions can last any amount of time upward of fifteen minutes. They involve singing while lifting the hands in praise of God.

Most of the songs in Pentecostal churches are concerned with praise, unlike the traditional or mainline churches who subdivide singing into categories of praise, prayer, thanksgiving and meditation for normal services, and who include, for special services, solemn and/or celebratory music as the occasion requires. Pentecostal singing consists mostly of choruses and often includes repetition of the same short lines. So much do the Pentecostals

³⁶⁴ Kalu, 2008, p. p.122

³⁶⁵ Tönsing, G. 2008. "In Spirit and Truth: Liturgy in Dialogue with Pentecostalism: Lutherans Respond to Pentecostalism: Theology in the Life of the Church," Vol.4, LWF, Lutheran University Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, P.99.

believe in praise worship, that one of the newer Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State named itself 'Praise Chapel' and its members are identified as "praise children."³⁶⁶

The youthful nature of the newer Pentecostal churches will continue to determine the type of music and the styles of singing in its worship sessions, imparting energy and enthusiasm. Music is, in the context of the Pentecostal ministry, indeed a major instrument for evangelism.

7.3 Church Buildings

One of the important contributions of Pentecostalism to Christianity in Adamawa State consists in its many beautiful and huge church buildings. The Pentecostal edifices that dot Adamawa towns and cities are a reflection in architecture, not just of Christian dominance in the state, but also of Pentecostalism's demonstrative faith and the consolidation of its position in Adamawa.

The researcher noticed that the newer Pentecostals use the most modern architectural designs and the best engineering talents available. The first generation Pentecostals in Adamawa, and indeed Nigeria, were of the classical strand and their members were simple and poor people with very little education. Today these classical Pentecostals behave very much like mainline Christians. Their church structures and their modest life styles express their piety by being somewhat withdrawn. They lack the fanciful features of the newer Pentecostals, who have shelved modesty as a Christian characteristic and who have entered the mainstream of Nigerian society. As McCain observes, "More and more Pentecostals occupy positions in government, the banking industry and university faculties, and are officers of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)."³⁶⁷ It is this type of members of the newer Pentecostals that informs how they present themselves in public.

Their church buildings are beautiful and large. They are lavishly furnished with individual plastic chairs and they have good public address systems. There are lecterns, but no pulpits, no altars and no baptisteries. The absence of the cross, both inside and outside their church buildings, is conspicuous. Upon enquiry, a member of a Pentecostal church explained: "Christ is raised; he is no longer on the cross in the church."³⁶⁸ The buildings are built to allow for the free movement of worshippers and the seating arrangements allow for self-expression during worship sessions.

³⁶⁶ Observation at the Praise Chapel Jambutu, Jimeta-Yola, Adamawa Stat. 29th October 2006.

³⁶⁷ McCain, D. 2000, Accessed February 2005.

³⁶⁸ Extracts from interview and discussions with Pentecostals in Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2nd January 2007.



Plate: 4. the House of Refuge Pentecostal Church in Yola. Photo: courtesy, Sajo, B. E. 2010.



Plate 5: House of Refuge Pentecostal Church, Jimeta-Yola, the Sanctuary. Photo: courtesy, B.E. Sajo, 2010.



PlatPlate: 6, The House of Refuge Pentecostal Church in Yola, the “Altar” area. Photo: Courtesy B.E. Sajo. 2010.

The absence of the cross does not get clearly explained by the Pentecostals. The House of Refuge church building, seen in the pictures above, demonstrates the total absence of the cross, typical of Pentecostal churches. The *ambo*, as can be seen, replaces the altar. In all Adamawa Pentecostal churches, banners take the place of the cross. The ambo in plate 6 is decorated with the Cherubim and Seraphim. It is not likely that the absence of the cross in Pentecostal churches is a result of Calvinist influence. Calvinism opposes icons, pictures and other symbols, the use of which it considers as pagan practice. Only the cross is allowed to be used in Calvinist churches. The layout of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria is fashioned after those of Presbyterian and Reformed churches which are Calvinist in tradition and theology. However, the Pentecostal position is far removed from Calvinism. Although they claim for themselves the pietistic position of Calvinism, they are against infant baptism and also their interpretation of salvation and the Holy Spirit is a far cry from the Calvinist understanding.

7.4 Prayer

Pentecostals believe fervently in the power of prayer. They teach their members how to pray. One of the reasons, given by converts for joining the Pentecostal church, is the yearning to pray and a desire to learn how to pray according to the will of God. A female pastor in one of the Pentecostal churches in Jimeta said:

I left my church because I did not know how to pray when I was there. I mean fervent prayer according to the will of God. The Bible says: pray according to the will of

God, and then I will hear you. I became worried and started asking myself how to pray according to the will of God. I became thirsty. A pastor told me that for me to pray according to the will of God, I must be born again, so I could have spiritual understanding. He told me that the Bible says “Behold I stand at the door of your heart. If you open the door, I will enter and dine with you.” That means: teach you all things. Then I said, I am ever ready and then I gave my life to Christ and my eyes of understanding were enlightened bit by bit and I could understand the Bible beyond the written text. That was how I left the Lutheran Church. Now I am spiritually and socially fulfilled.”³⁶⁹

Surprisingly, this interviewee does not mention prayers in tongues as a phenomenon that is stressed in Pentecostal circles. Praying in general is fervent and dominant in Pentecostal worship and praying in tongues is a superior form of praying because it is believed to elevate one to the level of speaking to God in the heavenly language of angels. The researcher however noticed during his observation of Pentecostal services that speaking in tongues mostly appear to involve an adaptation of some foreign language, often Zulu or Swahili.

Most of the words, used when Pentecostals are speaking in tongues, are Greek or Hebrew words that they have picked up and memorized, and that they launch in sessions of glossolalia. Swahili, Setswana, Sesotho and IsiZulu terms are at the moment very popular with Nigerian practitioners of glossolalia. Swahili expressions like “Hakuna Matata” which means “there is no problem,” are often used in prayer by Pentecostals who are then believed to be speaking in tongues. Nigeria is so far from East Africa that no one recognizes the language. Another term, popular with Nigerian Pentecostals, is “Jabulani,” a word from isiZulu, meaning “happiness” or “rejoice”. However, the use of “Jabulani” by reporters on the 2010 soccer World Cup in South Africa in 2010, has given the term wide exposure,⁷ and as a result the vocabulary of Nigerian tongue speakers may well be subjected to greater scrutiny.

Pentecostals, who find themselves in a tight corner and need to enhance their image, sometimes pray in their little-known home language in order to be counted among the tongue speakers. One woman prayed in her mother tongue in order to convince the preacher to declare her born again”. “I had to”, she said, “because he was pressing hard on my temple, and as a nurse I knew the effect of that on a person. Therefore, I spoke in my language so he might release me and it worked. He released me and I felt lightheaded for some time afterwards.”³⁷⁰ A male visitor to a Pentecostalist worship session found himself fixated by a pastor who kept announcing to the congregation that one person in the audience was under

³⁶⁹ Gelbe, E., pastor of overcomers Faith Chapel, Jimeta. Interviewed 15th October, 2008.

³⁷⁰ Response during interview at Jimeta Yola on 2nd January 2007.

the influence of the devil and could not speak in tongues. The man as he told the researcher had to think of something, raised his hands and shouted: “*Shaw i mua! shaw i mua!! shaw i mua!!!*” in Berom, his mother tongue. It means: ‘greetings to you all’. After that act he was counted among the holy ones.

The issue of speaking or praying in tongues has generated so much controversy in relation to Nigerian Pentecostalism that it would justify a separate study.

7.5 Tithing

Among the important topics in Pentecostal teaching are tithes and offerings. Pentecostals teach that poverty can be avoided or turned around if, within the principles of God, one practices tithing and ‘seed sowing’ in the lives of less privileged people. Tithing, it is believed, will make God provide one with opportunities, but for this to happen one must be receptive to the Holy Spirit. Pastor Gelbe elucidates:

God will open the windows, not of money or wealth, but God will give you ideas of how to get money, ideas for doing business and these lead to a breakthrough. If the breakthrough does not happen, it could mean you are not sensitive to the Holy Spirit. You should not neglect any idea that comes to mind. It could be the Spirit talking to you.³⁷¹

With one’s chances for success and riches tied to the power of the Holy Spirit, it is not likely that one will refuse to give ten percent of what one owns to the church. Tithing is part of the funding strategy of Pentecostals. More so, it is a biblical injunction. The researcher observed the overbearing emphasis on the need for members to invest in the church. Pastors identify a project or a programme and invite members to whom the Holy Spirit has spoken, to lend their support through donations and through paying tithes to the church. Those who willingly and regularly pay their tithes are promised multiple blessings by God. The question arises, whether members pay tithes as a token of their recognition of God’s blessings, or for the purpose of inviting more of the same.

Tithing however a biblical is command and therefore mandatory for all Bible believers. The command is by the Pentecostals used to the maximum with a strong impact on their projects and programmes. The Pentecostal strategy has awakened also mainline Christians to the need to comply with the biblical injunction on tithing.

‘Seed sowing’, sometimes called ‘seed offering’, also plays an important role among Pentecostals. It entails a member of the church whether well to do or living from hand to mouth taking whatever amount he can afford, praying over it, and giving it to the pastor. This

³⁷¹ Response during interview at Jimeta Yola on 2nd January 2007.

is called ‘seed sowing in the life of the man of God.’³⁷² ‘Seed sowing’ is analogous to putting a seed in fertile ground like the farmer does, and wait for the harvest. Pastor Kilka commented:

For example if you want to tap from the grace given to a pastor who is anointed and has the ‘Grace of God’ upon his life; who is comfortable in life, has financial rest (is wealthy), divine health (does not get ill), long life or has succeeded in his ministry, ...you can come with your seed offering and sow into his life, no matter how small. You must desire something in particular that you have seen in the life of this man of God (the pastor): the seed you are sowing is to serve as an exchange for what you desire. You know what you want as you sow the seed and when the man of God prays for you or simply utters the words ‘God bless you’, it is enough for you to receive your heart’s desire which can be material, academic, financial, spiritual or health blessings. Anything the man of God, who is superior, pronounces for you, stays. When you sow in the life of the man of God, it must have a meaning.³⁷³

That “meaning” is simply the thing that one wishes for. One sows the seed purposefully to get that which is desired and which has been given to “the man of God”. The ready scriptural back-ups for tithing are found in the Old Testament, Proverbs 11.18, and 22.8, while the New Testament text, 2 Corinthians 9.6, is quoted to give further support to the teaching.

“Seed Sowing” is at other times referred to as ‘Seed Faith’. This is a special offering, different from the normal collection or tithes and offerings. It is believed that its practice gives a believer the power to gain financial and material prosperity. Another important offering is called “Prophet Offering”. Members of the congregation are expected to make a “Prophet Offering” to their pastor and it involves a special blessing. Members are encouraged to lavish their spiritual leaders with abundant gifts of money, a car, houses, good clothing, paid holidays abroad for the leader and his family with a handsome amount of pocket money to spend, possibly an airplane and whatever might please the spiritual leader enough to bless the givers.

Such generous donations will lead to financial and material prosperity whereas failure to bless one’s spiritual leader with lavish gifts has serious consequences, the very least one of which is being denied one’s heart’s desires by God. The title of this last offering by the way is incorrect because prophets don’t receive gifts or donations of money. A better name would be “Priest Offering,” but this won’t really bother the Pentecostals who often use terms without awareness of their theological value.

³⁷² Pastor Miriam B. Kilka, of Harvest Time Bible Church, Jimeta Shopping Complex. Interviewed 6th September, 2011.

³⁷³ Kilka, 2011..

7.6 Calling

Pentecostals understand the concept of ‘calling’ as ‘being called’ to do God’s work. God’s work can be done in many ways. One may receive:

- i. a call to preach holiness and to lead a holy life;
- ii. a call for deliverance, when one is called to deliver people from demons, or to cast out demons and deliver people from witches and wizards;
- iii. a call to preach salvation and to get people to believe;
- iv. a call to the healing ministry, where one prays for the sick to be healed from all ailments; and
- v. a call to the prophetic ministry which involves the predicting of and warning against impending dangers.³⁷⁴

Each call has its value and should be used to attract people to God. For example, if one is called to lead a holy life and succeeds in doing so, one will inspire other people with a longing to be nearer God. Those called to be prophets should prophesize correctly, and those called to preach salvation should preach well. These are God-given talents that must be used to a maximum, so as to according to Pentecostals, benefit God. One individual does not necessarily receive all these calls and, in fact, no one should try to claim having been called to fulfill all the office.

A person called to deliver people should be able to handle situations of,

- i. Oppression: he has to help those who are constantly ill without a medical remedy or those whose behaviour cannot be rectified medically.
- ii. Possession: he should be able to deliver those who are ruled by a demon. An individual could be possessed by up to two thousand demons (for example, the demonic healed by Jesus at the sea of Gennesaret). The healer may enquire from the demons how many they are. The demons in the possessed person will talk to the healer who needs to be experienced, because demons are deceptive. A demon may for example pretend to be a mermaid spirit. While receiving deliverance, the person involved moves like a fish or a snake. That tells the deliverer what the demon-spirit is made of.
- iii. Activities; he should be able to deliver a person who is as an agent directly involved in demonic practices. Agents are people who are embroiled in secret

³⁷⁴ Gelbe, interviewed 15th October, 2008.

societies. They serve human blood and flesh at meetings. People who have totems can also be said to be agents.³⁷⁵

The researcher has found some narratives concerning possession difficult to comprehend. In addition, several of the issues could not be verified as no one, willing to corroborate them, could be found. At the same time, it is the most inconceivable events that belong to those aspects of Pentecostalism that specifically draw large audiences to preachers and healers. Pastor David Oyedepo is an example of Pentecostals who claim to have received a call.

Oyedepo claimed that he received a call which, is termed by Nigerian Pentecostals as having been “well used”. Oyedepo was raised as a Muslim. At the age of 17, in 1969, became born again and got involved with the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) in Ilorin. In the same year he was also miraculously healed of tuberculosis which had plagued him since childhood. Oyedepo’s impact was first felt when he spent about 70 days as a relief teacher in a village in Kwara state. When it was time for him to leave, the whole village organized a sendoff during which he was presented with a lantern and told that the light he had brought to the village will shine around the world.³⁷⁶ These were prophetic words.

Oyedepo had read architecture and earned a Higher National Diploma (HND) in 1982. Earlier, in May 1981, he had received the call to ministry in his hotel room at Ilesha. He had been praying for 18 hours during which, in a vision, he had an encounter with God. God told him: “The hour has come to liberate the world from all oppression of the Devil through the preaching of the word of faith, and I am sending you to undertake this task”.³⁷⁷ There are many such stories in Pentecostalism but Oyedepo went on to act on God’s message and was successful in securing a very large following.

The researcher has tried to discover whether Pentecostals actually manage to deliver believers of their predicaments. One respondent stipulated: “I have healed the blind. HIV/AIDS victims got healed. However, it cannot always be done. Anyone who claims that he can perform healing every day, must possess some talisman. God only uses you occasionally. When it becomes habitual then it becomes occultic”.³⁷⁸ Pastor Kilka maintains: “If you know that God has given you grace, you should operate to bring it out. People will follow you; they will worship you because they believe you can bless them”.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁵Barde, M. M., Pentecostal pastor interviewed in Jimeta, Adamawa State. 4:6:2007 and 4:7:2007 .

³⁷⁶Igboh, 2010, p.29.

³⁷⁷Oyedepo, D. O., 2006. *Signs and Wonders Today*, Dominion Publishing House, Ikeja, Lagos, p.15.

³⁷⁸Barde, 2007.

³⁷⁹Kilka, interviewed, 6th September, 2011.

7.7 Quality and Styles of Pastors

The vast majority of newer Pentecostal pastors are university graduates, very eloquent speakers, well dressed, and they appear to believe passionately in what they are doing.

They don't subscribe to using hermeneutical tools for interpreting the Bible. In particular they reject form criticism, the tool commonly used by biblical scholars in modern times for the interpretation or understanding of biblical texts. They believe in revelation and the power of the Holy Spirit to give them the interpretation of any given text.

In addition to their secular university degrees, they may take courses in theology by correspondence or study for a diploma in theology, a Masters of divinity, or a PhD of theology by distance learning. In a paper titled "Us and Them, Pentecostals and Others Challenging and Learning from Each Other", presented at the Theological Educators of Africa conference (8th August 2011) McCain states:

One of the interesting phenomena of Pentecostalism in the last 30 years is that it has largely been led by leaders with little or no theological education. The current leaders of Pentecostalism include architects (Paul Adefarasin and Sam Adeyemi), academics (W. F. Kumuyi, Enoch Adeboye and Daniel Olukoya), management experts (Wale Adefarasin), medical doctors (Tony Rapu), businessmen (William Okoye), and other professions. Although not everyone is agreed that this has been a positive thing, one result that has come out of it is that these modern Pentecostal leaders have tended to have more of a practical needs-based ministry than a ministry based purely on theology. That means that, since many of the modern Pentecostal leaders have spent at least part of their adult lives in the "real world", they tend to be more in tune with the contemporary issues and therefore try to make their ministries more relevant to modern needs and problems.³⁸⁰

McCain's submission is supported by Ukah in his analysis of Nigerian Christian video-films and their consumption power. Ukah argues: "The young pastors who emerged in the late 1990s as religious leaders of the proliferating Christian groups were, in main, self-trained or video-trained by listening to and viewing the audio-visual recordings of American televangelists whom they regarded as role models."³⁸¹ This indicates that video films serve as tutorials in the training of Pentecostal pastors.

However, formal theological and ministerial training is usually absent among the Pentecostals because of their belief in the power of the Holy Spirit to give guidance in interpreting scripture. Most of their sermons are conducted without an in-depth theological

³⁸⁰ Danny McCain. 2011. Us and Them: Pentecostals and Others Challenging and Learning from Each Other. Presented at Theological Educators of Africa (TEA) conference on 8 August 2011, pp.1-13.

³⁸¹ Ukah, 2009, pp.303–23,1BRILL:StableURL:<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581655><http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. Accessed 09/03/2013 03:33, p.211.

analysis of a particular text of scripture. The sermons are rather topical speeches, peppered with many Bible verses.³⁸²

The researcher observed that there is a lot of mentoring going on among the pastors of the newer Pentecostals. The mentor is popularly known as the ‘Man of God.’ Every pastor attempts to mentor: one ‘Man of God’ or the other. Mentors are imitated in style both of speech and dress. Some mentors or Men of God are flamboyant, riding bullet-proof cars, flying private jets, and when they are on official visits they expect red-carpet reception at government houses. Motorcades are usually organised for them, with personal body guards in attendance.

Pentecostal pastors are often seen as parental figures and, as a result, followers tend to obey them to the letter. I overheard a telephone conversation between a Pentecostal church member and her pastor. The pastor told her: “Do exactly as I am telling you now...” His reaction to her response was: “You are being stubborn” and cut the line. Almost immediately his phone rang again: the same woman was now apologising profusely.³⁸³ In fact, pastors are often raised well above the level of parental figures. They are viewed as men and women whose mere presence and touch are a blessing. Their leftover food, the beds, towels and soap they use and the chairs they sit on when visiting, become sacred and sources of blessings.³⁸⁴

7.8 Promises of Prosperity and Self-Actualization

Not all Pentecostal churches preach or promise prosperity. Rev. Livinus Obi of the Redeemed People’s Mission and the current president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), Adamawa State chapter, states:

We preach the whole word. We do not preach holiness alone and leave prosperity or vice versa: we believe in miracles, tongues. You can be a pauper, but as your body prospers your spirit also prospers and as your spirit prospers your body also prospers. As a child of God you ‘should be rich’ and not ‘must be rich’. One should be rich enough to help oneself and others.³⁸⁵

But the prosperity, that is preached publicly is not the bodily or spiritual prosperity mentioned by Pastor Obi. Instead it is the obtaining of material prosperity and of opportunities to achieve one’s dreams that Pentecostals preach and promise their followers.

³⁸²Participatory observation at two different Pentecostal Worship services at Living Faith Church, Yola 2nd January, 2005 and RCCG, Lagos, 8th February 2005.

³⁸³ Conversation witnessed by the researcher in August, 2007.

³⁸⁴ Discussions with a hotel attendant at the Yola International Hotel, Yola, Adamawa State, after the visit of Archbishop Benson Idahosa after the latter’s Crusade at Yola in 1998.

³⁸⁵ Obi, L., pastor of the Redeemed People’s Mission, Jimeta, and president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Adamawa State chapter, interviewed at Jimeta, 8th Feb. 2009.

In general, Pentecostals deny this. However, prosperity preaching is a characteristic of most Pentecostal churches as Bishop Makanto said: “I believe in prosperity. I preach it. I have even written on it. Of the five books I have written one is on prosperity. These are my titles: “Victory over Untimely Death”, “The Prayer Life of a Believer”, “The Footprint of a Champion”, “The Hiding Place of Power”, and “Your Guiding Star to Riches”. I believe God prospers [sic] people to meet their needs.”³⁸⁶

Pentecostals, interviewed for the purpose of this study, stated that they had been blessed both spiritually and economically since they joined their Pentecostal denominations. They confirm that they have gained considerably in financial matters, that they are very successful in their businesses and in control of life.³⁸⁷ Pentecostal church members believe that their lives have changed because God wants them to prosper and because the promises of God are true.

As mentioned before, the researcher has carefully observed some of the prosperity preachers who happen to be church leaders and pastors as well and it is evident that they are themselves very rich. Are they a demonstration of what they preach? Is the preaching on prosperity aimed at justifying their accumulation of massive wealth in the name of the gospel? Another possibility could be that prosperity messages are perhaps preached in order to re-model the mind frame of ordinary Christians in Nigeria, who have by the early missionaries been led to believe that a Christian is not supposed to be wealthy on earth, for his reward is in heaven. Whatever their reasons, the gospel does not condemn poverty as an unacceptable condition of human existence which is what Pentecostals preach. The social scientist with which I discussed the issue is of the opinion that the aggressive preaching of the prosperity gospel in Pentecostal churches is the result of a failed social and political system in Nigeria. The link between aggressive prosperity preaching and the socio-political system of Nigeria could be seen in the way successive governments in Nigeria failed in providing the basic infrastructure for the social wellbeing of the citizenry. Educational standards have fallen, social amenities like good roads, portable drinking water, health facilities and a healthy air for trade is none existent. There are no jobs for the teeming youth who graduated from Universities and schools. The situation in the country could not encourage foreign investors because of fraudulent practices in both the public and private sectors. On the political scene, sectionalism, tribalism and greed subtly disguised themselves into religious passion, with politicians becoming religious faithfuls overnight, thus an imagined fear of one religious sect overshadowing the other in the country was introduced by the political class

³⁸⁶ Makanto, interviewed 8th July, 2007.

³⁸⁷ Response to question 14 in the questionnaire 2005.

into the social fabric of Nigeria. This did not help the socio-political wellbeing of the nation. All these created fertile grounds for an aggressive approach to the needs of the people through aggressive prosperity messages by Pentecostals.

Despite the flood of prosperity messages disseminated by Pentecostal preachers, the Christian in the street remains in general cautious, for which he deserves credit. Most ordinary citizens who attend Pentecostal meetings do not go there because they want to be rich. It is however the preachers and the leaders of Pentecostal crusades and church services that benefit from prosperity messages because followers obey them to a fault, making voluntary donations for the cause of the gospel. A convert to a Pentecostal church in Jimeta, when asked how he feels now that he is a Pentecostal, reacted: "These people took all my money and left me damned in my sins." This comment, among many others, reveals the frustration of a number of Pentecostal church members. In some Pentecostal churches, members are known to have donated their cars and surrendered their properties to the church, or to the pastor for his use and comfort. Naomi Waya, a member of the local Deeper Life Bible Church congregation in Jimeta makes gifts of food and money to her church so that there will be food on her pastor's table.

Most members of Pentecostal churches have been led to believe that they are duty-bound to assure the welfare of their pastors, whatever the odds and no matter how they get the means to do so. Some wealthy members give large amounts of money to the church without anyone questioning the source of the money and afterwards these donors often behave as they like because in certain Pentecostal churches discipline is almost non-existent.

7.9 Ministers and Ministries

In the Pentecostal context, the word 'ministry' and its plural stand for organizations, associations or functions of Pentecostal movements, as against the meaning given in the dictionary which is 'collective name for all those who hold governing and teaching offices in the church, who administer sacraments, or who in virtue of sacrament orders assist at their administration: pope, bishops, priests, deacons, etc.'³⁸⁸

Ministry may refer to the clergy collectively, or to the fivefold office enumerated by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-12, namely apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher and, by extension, any person who does similar work in the church. Sometimes ministry denotes the service to which all Christians are called by God.³⁸⁹ Ministry may also refer to the profession of being a minister. The minister is a servant, ordained to the office of leadership in a local

³⁸⁸ Atwater, Donald (gen.-ed.) 1997. *A Catholic Dictionary*, Rockford (Ill): TAN Books and Publisher, p.322.

³⁸⁹ Kurian, G.T.(ed).2005. *Nelson's Dictionary of Christianity*. Nashville, Tenn. Thomas Nelson, p.463.

church after fulfilling certain conditions of training and after making vows. The minister presides at public or private worship, at the administration of sacraments and other congregational rituals, gives pastoral care, and generally oversees the congregation. But principally he is a servant.³⁹⁰

With a basic understanding of the term ‘ministry’, we can now look at the Pentecostal understanding and use of ‘ministry’ and ‘ministries’.

Over the six year period of this study it has been observed that the Pentecostal churches use these words to designate special programmes, frameworks or projects, used by an individual or a group of individuals to achieve, or to prospect for, particular goals within the ambit of the Christian faith. The Pentecostal usage of ‘ministries’ serves many purposes as indicated by the names, titles and objectives of the ministries listed below. The researcher has also realized that most indigenous Pentecostal churches in Adamawa state started out as ministries. These ministries include the following types:

- i. Healing ministry,
- ii. Bible study ministry,
- iii. Visitation ministry,
- iv. Counseling ministry,
- v. Charity (support for widows, orphans and the needy) ministry,
- vi. Student vocational camp/ministry,
- vii. Evangelism and church planting ministry,
- viii. University/College ministry, and
- i. Entrepreneurship ministry, etc.³⁹¹

These ministries are formed as organizations or associations rather than as offices, services or functions for Christian churches, interest groups or individuals. The ministries are always identified with a founder or leader who eventually gains respect as the ‘owner’ of the ministry, especially if the particular ministry attains a level of success and hence, acceptability in the community. A few ministries have started out as private Christian schools. It is on the premises of such schools that other ministries can emerge which eventually may become churches.

An example is the Jesus Family Outreach Ministry of evangelist Musa M. Wudiri. The ministry is interdenominational in outlook and its vision is “to reach the unreachable”. The goals of the ministry are “to win souls through programmes, person to person

³⁹⁰ Kurian, (ed), 2005, p.463.

³⁹¹ Samples from research done in Nigeria 2005-2009.

evangelism, ministering to the broken-hearted, city crusades and leadership training at village level”.³⁹² The ministry is focused on organizing village outreach programmes, counseling sessions, follow-up visits, all night vigils, youth seminars, and discipleship training.³⁹³

The Jesus Family Outreach programme is not based in Adamawa State, but it provided the present study with an example of a typical Pentecostal ministry programme. This particular ministry distributes leaflets and proposals, soliciting support throughout Nigeria, despite the fact that the catchment area or mission field of the ministry falls within three local government areas in Borno State, north of Adamawa State.³⁹⁴

The ministry chooses particular target areas, locations or situations, and addresses these squarely which is why, they claim, “we succeed.”³⁹⁵ They observe situations carefully and try to proffer solutions to problems. The creation of ministries is one method, one tool, in the hands of Pentecostals for establishing new movements or for promoting the expansion of existing movements into new areas and communities.

The researcher observed in the course of his fieldwork that most Pentecostal churches adopt the ‘church growth’ principle. The basic law of congregational life has it that churches grow while they intentionally reach out to people, rather than concentrating on their institutional organization and needs. As William M. Easum states, “churches die when they concentrate on their needs.”³⁹⁶ Pentecostals are flexible enough in their structure and in their operations to be able to do both: looking out for areas of opportunity and reaching out. This is evidenced by their numerous outreach programmes and related strategies. They know whom to target and when to do so.

7.10 Offices

Offices used by Pentecostals vary from one group to another. They can be quite elaborate which makes sense in view of the growth of their churches and consequently their large administrative bodies. Offices, however, are also used as part of the church’s transmission of an image of success.

The Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) has offices and uses terms, different from those of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). The Deeper Life church has offices: general overseer, national overseer, missionaries sent out for mission work in Nigeria

³⁹² Wudiri, M. 2010. Letter of Appeal for support of Jesus Family Outreach Ministry, p.2.

³⁹³ Wudiri, 2010. p.2.

³⁹⁴ Wudiri 2010. p 3.

³⁹⁵ Mayo, interviewed on 5th September, 2007

³⁹⁶ Easum, W.M. 1990.. *The Church Growth Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, p.24.

and abroad, state overseer, group coordinator, district pastor, zonal leader, and house caring fellowship teacher.³⁹⁷

The offices of the RCCG include a general overseer, the leader of the church nationally, five assistant general overseers (each in charge of one region or section, namely West Coast, Nigeria, Central Africa, South Africa, and administration), a governing council with 8 members: (GO, AGOs, a national elder, an assistant national elder and a regional evangelist), and 12 special assistants (SA) who serve as regional coordinators. Regional coordinators are answerable directly to the GO and their responsibilities are:

- i. SA Region 1, administration and personnel;
- ii. SA Region 2;
- iii. SA Region 3, church growth;
- iv. SA Region 4, prayers and youth affairs;
- v. SA Region 5, technical matters;
- vi. SA Region 6, youth affairs;
- vii. SA Region 7, special duties;
- viii. SA Region 8, training;
- ix. SA Region 9, family affairs;
- x. SA 10; and
- xi. SA 11 and 12,
- xii. regional coordinators, regional evangelists in charge of 12 regions.

Furthermore, there are provincial pastors and assistants; a national secretary; church planters, responsible for the planting of churches in new areas (at least one church a month), who are sent out from national headquarters and answerable directly to the general overseer, and zonal pastors placed in charge of zones. A zone is a cluster of up to six states.³⁹⁸ Area pastors are pastors in charge of a state. Adamawa State has one area pastor.

7.11 Outreach Programmes

Outreach is one of the great assets of the Pentecostals in Adamawa State. All of the 15 pastors and leaders of the Pentecostal churches interviewed, responded eagerly when ‘outreach’ was mentioned. Pentecostal movements train their members to reach out to non-Pentecostals with the gospel message. After asking people, “Are you born again?” they

³⁹⁷ Response from interview conducted in Yola Adamawa state, 3rd May 2010

³⁹⁸ Responses from interviews conducted in Yola, Adamawa state 3rd May 2010

engage them in discussions about matters of faith and salvation. This same question, “Are you born again” is posed to Christians and non-Christians alike.

Pentecostals are aggressively active when it comes to their outreach programmes, particularly in schools and cities. The pastor of the local Deeper Life Bible Church in Yola confirmed that “outreach is the most important aspect of our ministry.”³⁹⁹

7.12 Growth

Pentecostal churches measure growth by the number of members and congregations established. The Deeper Life Bible Church is considered the fastest growing Pentecostal church in Nigeria today. Pastor Ayeyemi said: “We are found in all towns and villages in Nigeria, we are found in African countries and abroad in Europe and the USA.”⁴⁰⁰

The church represents indeed one of the largest holiness groups that have, early on, found a footing in Adamawa. Since then it has permeated schools, villages and towns, whereas other Pentecostal groups, for example the Redeemed People’s Mission, have basically remained urban phenomena.

Also the RCCG has experienced rapid growth, helped by the structure of the church and more specifically by the church planters: the church is strongly evangelical in its outlook which has informed its growth.⁴⁰¹

7.13 Attractions for Members

For numerous reasons citizens of Adamawa are attracted to Pentecostalism. The Pentecostals themselves believe that they draw people to their churches through their (a) messages (b) visitations (c) miracles and testimonies (d) fellowship, love and care offered by the church leadership and among members.⁴⁰²

The RCCG posits that “the programmes and activities of the church are the sources of attraction for members”. Special offices, programmes and activities are aimed at specific groups of people, such as women, youth and families. The programmes are organized for all levels at which the respective groups exist, from local to national. The programmes are concerned with caring for members, spiritually as well as physically. This gives members a sense of belonging, while at the same time attracting newcomers.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁹ Ayeyemi, interview conducted in Yola, 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁰⁰ Ayeyemi, 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁰¹ Response during interview with pastor Okonkwo in Yola, 4th May 2010.

⁴⁰² Ayeyemi, interview, 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁰³ Okonkwo, interview, 4th May 2010.

As mentioned above, especially young people and members of other denominations who live in the vicinity of Pentecostal churches are targeted. Although Pentecostal church members may have problems with their churches (they may for example be uncomfortable with subsidizing the lavish lifestyles of their leaders and clergy), when engaging with outsiders they take a positive stance and present a united front.

The Pentecostals are at universities represented by Campus Ministries and chaplaincies. This is how they attract students to their congregations. DLBC in Adamawa State has such a campus ministry at the University of Technology in Yola and has a bus running between the university and the church.

Other Pentecostal groups establish congregations near universities and give students who attend worship money for transport, so that they will come back the following Sunday.

7.14 Financial Support

Much financial support for Pentecostal churches comes from members' offerings. The present study however, found that Pentecostal churches have many ways of raising money. The standard way is that of all Christian churches: offerings and tithing. But the Pentecostals have introduced and emphasized more aggressive methods of fund raising. In response to the question "How do you get financial support for the work of your church?" fifteen interviewees gave virtually the same answers. They emphasized that, their members are encouraged to become involved in legally gainful business ventures so that they become financially strong in order to support the church".⁴⁰⁴ Thus, church funds may be generated locally through membership efforts, for example in the RCCG which has no external sources of financial support.⁴⁰⁵ Similarly, funds for the Deeper Life Bible Church are raised by members through offerings, tithes, sacrificial giving and other invited or voluntary donations.

How, then, do Pentecostals get funds for their massive projects? How are they capable of establishing and running universities? How do they pay for their huge church structures and media outfits?

In interviews, conducted as part of the present research, some non-Pentecostals argued that government patronage is a source of Pentecostal income, whereas others maintained that some Pentecostals resort to illegal deals to finance their projects. It is rumoured that Pentecostal churches have investments in major Nigerian companies and banks. Their connections with American mega-churches and televangelists such as Reinhard

⁴⁰⁴ Responses from interviews with some Pentecostals in Adamawa State on 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁰⁵ Ayeyemi, interview, 3rd May 2010

Bonnke, T.L Osborn, Gordon Lindsay, Elton and Oral Roberts, provide Nigerian Pentecostals with valuable contacts and may give them access to overseas resources.

This study established that during the first Reinhard Bonnke crusade in Adamawa, in January 2008, over N6,000,000.00 (\$41,380.00 or SAR300,000.00) was raised in four days from daily offerings only. The offerings were left uncounted throughout the crusade and afterwards turned over to the local crusade organizers who announced the figures. The way in which the money was shared caused some murmurings among the organizers. Sharp accusations were leveled against the custodians of the offerings. Accusations flew back and forth, the issue at stake soon became an open secret and there was major fallout between the organizers.

The following year, January 2009, Bonnke came to Mubi, the largest town in northern Adamawa. There again, millions of Naira were collected. It was rumoured that the total was higher than the year before in Yola but the total amount raised was not announced. Both crusades in Yola and Mubi were organized by Pentecostals and mainliners who are charismatics together. In this case too, there was some controversy about the distribution of the money among the organizers, both mainline and Pentecostals. In January 2010, Bonnke was invited to Numan still in Adamawa, where the Lutheran church has its headquarters. On this occasion it became clear that Bonnke thought he had done enough for the Adamawa crusades organizers because he himself did not turn up.

The researcher observed that between the visits by Bonnke himself, his associates were invited to organize crusades in Adamawa State because the economic benefits of the Bonnke campaigns to the Pentecostals were enormous. The mainliners who joined in the planning and sharing of the benefits of the crusades are actually the charismatics who remained in their mainline denominations. The mainline churches had not officially joined the planners and have not shared the benefits. Apart from the financial profits, the Pentecostals gained in popularity and self-esteem. Governors and high level politicians attended the crusades and, since they were there as brothers in the Lord, many opportunities for close contact and interaction with government officials were created. Hence, protocols were during Bonnke's visits temporarily suspended and rumours had it that government representatives made, without hesitation, disbursements to those organizers of the crusades who happened to be Pentecostals.

Five years of close observation of Pentecostal worship services for the purpose of this study have revealed many ways in which the Pentecostals collect money from their congregations. Pentecostal churches have for example embraced terms such as "seed

sowing”, and “first fruits.” Seed sowing, discussed in 7.5 above, is a viable method for raising funds. Members, who make a contribution, expect a blessing in return, the size of which depends on the size of the seed sown. If a member donates a monthly amount, he or she is rewarded with monthly blessings. If a donation of \$50.00 is good for 50 blessings, then a donation of \$1000.00 earns 1000 blessings. Biblical passages such as 2 Cor. 9.6-7 are used to inspire generosity in followers.

The ‘first fruits’ method encourages members to give their complete, first ever earned salaries, or all the profits from a first business transaction, to the church as “first fruits” of their labour. The idea is taken from the Old Testament, especially Exodus 23.16, 19; Numbers 15.19-21 and Deuteronomy 26.2. Scriptural precedence obviously is an important tool in the hands of Pentecostals when dealing with financial matters. Verses such as “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20.35c), quoting the words that the Lord Jesus himself uses in 1 Clement 46.7 (a rare instance of a saying by Jesus that is not found in the canonical Gospels), is extensively used by Pentecostal preachers. For the poor, Old Testament verses are quoted, for example “Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be open-handed toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land” (Deut. 15.10-11). For tithes, Lev. 27.30; Num. 18.21 and Mal. 3.8 provide useful quotes. Popular and handy sayings in the New Testament verses include: “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10.8b). “Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6.38). In the application of biblical texts, the stresses by the Pentecostals is on the Old Testament model of tithes and on the New Testament teaching of Paul when caring for the needy and working for the cause of the gospel are concerned.

During the fieldwork for the present study it became clear that some Pentecostal church members do not understand the biblical teachings on giving, but simply obey the pastor whose word is their law. Pentecostal leaders quote scriptures easily and interpret passages literally without ever presenting their context. At one Pentecostal church daily services are held, in addition to the routine Sunday, midweek and Friday services. Offerings are received at every service. The pastor announces: “Offering time is blessing time.” Members of the congregation are expected to empty their pockets and hold the money up in the air. The pastor says a prayer to bless the money and it is dropped into the offering bag.

One cannot put some of the money back into one's pocket: it all belongs to God now. It is normal practice that the total amount of offerings, taken at a Sunday service or during another church programme, is not announced to the congregation at the next meeting. Nobody asks questions in this regard. Such a practice would not be tolerated in a mainline church.

While the above mentioned means of fund raising are used by recently established or smaller churches, those with memberships in the hundreds adopt more sophisticated strategies. For example, an up-coming pastor identifies a big name in his area. He approaches the person and asks him to become his mentor. If the person accepts to be a mentor, he usually becomes a sponsor of the pastor's ministry as well. There are so many Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and in Adamawa State in particular, that the financial benefit of collaboration with Pentecostal movements overseas is limited. However, international crusade ministries help Nigerian Pentecostals to build up their funding by participating in their crusades.

7.15 Management

Most Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State have adopted the management styles of churches in the south of Nigeria which are run like businesses and managed by executive officers, etc. As discussed above, church leaders call themselves by titles common in the commercial world, such as general overseer and CEO. They use modern management techniques and business outfits. The dress codes of such leaders are of a very high standard and their stylish suits are complemented by their lavishly furnished offices with modern equipment. Access to a Pentecostal leader or bishop can be granted only after submitting to an interrogation. One may need to make a booking to see a Pentecostal leader. Some have body guards, personal assistants and protocol departments in their offices. Members with special management skills provide free services as part of their contributions to the development of their church. Upon retirement, some members offer their skills and expertise to serve in the church. This has in no small way raised management standards in the Pentecostal churches.

Planning and management of Pentecostal movements is often organized along highly efficient lines, especially as regards their strategies for sourcing and channeling finances. This efficiency benefits their levels of development as well as the fundraising efforts among their membership. The RCCG policy is that all tithes of the church (100%) are sent to the headquarters of the church in Lagos and so are 30% of offerings.⁴⁰⁶ With such centralized

⁴⁰⁶ Okonkwo, interviewed, 4th May 2010.

control of finances, the church is assured of a steady flow of funding for staff and project maintenance.

7.16 International Connections

Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State deny having international connections. The leaders argue that they only have “friends” abroad. They receive visitors from outside Nigeria, especially from the USA. ‘Connections’, in their understanding, refers to supporters, motivators or mission bodies that send missionaries and financial backing from abroad. Such connections, they claim, they do not have.⁴⁰⁷

However, many Nigerian and, indeed, Adamawa State initiated Pentecostal churches are establishing themselves abroad, in Europe, the USA, East Africa and South Africa. Nigerian Pentecostal movements may not be supported by mission bodies overseas, but they themselves are now sending missionaries abroad to get established there as mission churches. It is RCCG policy to establish a church in every major city in Nigeria, Europe and the USA. The researcher has noticed that some Pentecostal churches in Yola, the state capital of Adamawa, have the flags of other nations flying in front of their buildings, indicating the countries where the church has missionaries. Today there are many Nigerian Pentecostal missionaries in South Africa. From there they move on to Europe, the USA and Canada, and even to Korea, China and Japan.

It indicates the church’s determination that church planters plant churches in new areas one church per month, as pointed out above.

Pentecostals in Adamawa, as in general in Nigeria, have decided that they will re-evangelize Europe and America. The bishop of Life Spring Ministries in Yola said that after “establishing my church in Jos and Abuja I am thinking of going to the USA to establish a church there.”⁴⁰⁸

Partnership between Nigerian Pentecostals, including the Adamawa churches, and Pentecostals abroad is not extensive. The mission-established Pentecostal churches maintain fellowship with their founding missions, but the newer Pentecostals who are the subject of the present study claim not to have partners outside Nigeria. “Our church has no partnership with any church or Christian organization in respect of our operation. But we have church and ministry affiliates,”⁴⁰⁹ in the words of one interviewee. The interviewee was unwilling to elaborate on what he meant by ‘affiliates’, but it later transpired that he was referring to

⁴⁰⁷ Makanto, P. Upper Room Cathedral, Jimeta, Adamawa State. Discussions on 6th, July, 2007.

⁴⁰⁸ Mayo, interviewed, 5th September 2007.

⁴⁰⁹ Okonkwo, interviewed 4th May 2010.

Christian Pentecostal groups abroad that are assisted in the establishment of their own congregations. Groups receiving this type of assistance from Pentecostal churches in Nigeria are made up of diaspora Nigerians.

Other Pentecostal groups also maintain that they have no partners beyond Nigeria's borders, stating that they prefer to be involved in mentoring and networking practices which provide them with the experience needed to be able to support each other. Founders of new Pentecostal churches such as Idahosa of the Church of God Mission have among their mentors "T.L. Osborn, Gordon Lindsay, Oral Roberts and Elton. Idahosa learned a lot from these men of God and believed that the word of God should be practiced, especially with regard to prosperity and healing."⁴¹⁰ In spite of the denials presented above, it is highly likely that there is some form of partnership between Pentecostals in Nigeria and abroad. With reference to Idahosa, for example, the researcher was informed by an American in Litchfield (Illinois) in 1982 that Idahosa "was here and visits from time to time. He has a wonderful ministry and we helped him to start and are supporting him. We helped him when he was a student and had problems. He came to our church, and he decided to give up engineering studies to go and start a gospel ministry. He is now doing very well. We do send money to him to continue the work."⁴¹¹ It seems likely that Idahosa's case is not unique, but that Pentecostal leaders prefer not to advertise links with, and support from overseas in order to protect their local income, sourced from members of their congregations.

7.17 Pentecostals and the Media

The following submission by Kalu is most appropriate. He writes that:

Media use became most prominent in the period from the 1980s onward and, therefore, reflects the Pentecostal response to contemporary or emergent culture. Since Pentecostals image themselves as being engaged in the re-evangelization of modern Africa, how has the intensive use of media enhanced, reshaped, and even endangered Pentecostal missionary strategy?⁴¹²

Pentecostals believe strongly in the use of the media for propagating the gospel and promoting their churches. It could be said that their accomplishment depends on it. In its formative days, the Deeper Life Bible Church prevented its members from listening to the radio and gramophone music, and from watching TV because these were viewed as distractive mediums that could be used by the devil to destroy faith and lead members to a sinful life. There was consternation when the founder of the Deeper Life Bible Church was

⁴¹⁰ The sun online C:\Users\Ishaya\Documents\The Sun News Online Woman of the Sun.mht. (accessed 20/7/2010).

⁴¹¹ Personal conversation with an American woman, in Litchfield Illinois USA, October, 1982.

⁴¹² Kalu, Ogbu U. 2008. *African Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, p.103,

seen on TV by members of his church who demanded an explanation for his apparent change of heart. From that point onward, the church has relaxed its position on the use of electronics and the media and, today, they are at the forefront, using the media for propagating the gospel.

The Deeper Life Bible Church now operates its own media house, in electronic and print formats. The electronic medium is employed by the general superintendent to preach and teach, while the print medium is used for magazines and other publications aimed at informing members and attracting non-members.⁴¹³ The publications include *Life Magazine*, *Search the Scripture* for Sunday Bible study, and the *Christian Women Mirror*. The church has a satellite TV station called “24/7 World Connections” which broadcasts special programmes.⁴¹⁴

Also the RCCG has its own media outfit. The church launched its media, both electronic and print, for local use in activities related to mission and evangelism.⁴¹⁵ T.B. Joshua’s Emmanuel TV is used for similar purposes. The Christ Embassy of Chris Oyakhilome has a channel called Dove TV.⁴¹⁶

Importantly, electronic media technology became available round the same time to the American Pentecostals and their African networks and elicited much enthusiasm as a new instrument for forging transnational relationships and for reaching massive audiences that could experience direct ‘encounters’ with preachers. Obviously, the new technology had great potential for promoting the Pentecostal church and for world evangelism and the Pentecostals saw a medium that could reinforce their message and their vision.⁴¹⁷

Ogbu Kalu distinguishes between two cultural contexts in which media technology functions, namely an ‘external’, or western context and an African, or local, context. He reminds us that in the United States, the Evangelicals and Pentecostals accessed print, radio, and television at different points in time and that the success of media technology in reshaping the character of Pentecostalism was fuelled by its combination of power and novelty.⁴¹⁸

The novelty of the electronic media has undoubtedly been a strong motivation for its usage by the Pentecostals. Suddenly, audiences expanded phenomenally. The fact, for example, that Muslims, including their women in ‘purda’, could access channels without

⁴¹³ Ayeyemi, interviewed 3rd May 2010.

⁴¹⁴ Ayeyemi, interviewed 3rd May 2010.

⁴¹⁵ Okonkwo, interviewed, 4th May 2010.

⁴¹⁶ These media outfits are on the Free to Air cable channels. They are accessed free of charge worldwide.

⁴¹⁷ Kalu, 2008, p.105.

⁴¹⁸ Kalu, 2008. p.105.

hindrance, makes electronic media a powerful and valuable instrument in the hands of both Pentecostals and mainline Christians.

The researcher observed that, in Nigeria, those who cannot afford to set up their own channels buy chunks of weekly air time on public media outfits. Public broadcasters, however, do not allow the broadcasting of Pentecostal miracle sessions, because the government doubts the veracity of the miracles. The indigenous Pentecostal groups in Adamawa State lack the capacity to run their own media outfits. Instead, they depend on the public broadcasting of Sunday services and occasional programmes.

Their whole-hearted adoptions of the electronic and print media to propagate themselves and their messages, and, as a result, their high profile on radio and television, have made the Pentecostals popular all over Nigeria. The researcher was informed that also journalists, many of them Pentecostalist converts, have, through their reporting contributed to the increased popularity of Pentecostalism.⁴¹⁹ Thus, the use of mass media has given the movement a higher public visibility, a more prominent profile, and a larger influence, than is warranted by its statistical share of the contemporary religious market in Nigeria.⁴²⁰

7.18 Women and Youth

Women and youth form the backbone of every church. No church can afford to lose them. For a church to grow and maintain its membership, it must find ways to stem the tide of members departing. In the Nigerian context it is common knowledge in mainline churches that young women and men, when not properly attended to, will vote with their feet and join the Pentecostals, even though there is evidence of many of them eventually returning to their mainline churches.

Pentecostals do not inhibit the participation of women and youngsters in any of their activities and structures. Women and youth are a powerful force, if not the most powerful force in Pentecostalism. As noted above, women have become archbishops, bishops, pastors and even national leaders in Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. They direct departments in their churches and have their own leagues and fellowships. Over and above that, the young people in Pentecostal churches are often among the most committed and energetic members in terms of growing and strengthening the church.

Mainline churches in Nigeria have also integrated women and youth at different levels into their leadership structures. However, whereas youths are fully functioning in the

⁴¹⁹ Kanyido, J. T., TV producer with one of the state owned television stations in Yola, explaining why the Pentecostals dominate the TV and Radio air time in government Media Houses. Interviewed in Jimeta, Adamawa State in 2008.

⁴²⁰ Kalu, 2008, p.122.

leadership structures of all mainline churches, the Anglican Church and the Catholic Church do not accept women as clergy. Women in these churches do have their guilds and they function in certain societies in the church alongside men, while the Catholic Church, because of the roles played by the nuns, cannot be compared to any other church in Nigeria. The Catholic women religious orders contribute immensely to the lives of the faithful and the ministry of the church.

In Nigeria there are about forty-three religious congregations, or orders, of women of the Catholic Church. Adamawa State has three such orders, the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (CSM) in Jimeta, the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) in Yola, and the Sisters of the Infant Jesus (SIJ) in Ganye.⁴²¹

The LCCN and the EYN have strong women and youth organisations that form the backbone of the two churches. The women organisation of both LCCN and EYN is called *Zumuntar Mata Ekklesiya* (ZME), Christian Women Fellowship. The Catholic women also call their group *Zumuntar Mata Ekklesiyar Katolika*, Women Fellowship of the Catholic Church. The LCCN ordained its first female pastor in February 1996 and has since then ordained more than a dozen women into the ministry. Until 1996, women could only become catechists and teach Sunday school. The church has failed to develop nunneries in Nigeria, even though some of its missionaries from Denmark are nuns. At the inception of women ordination many things were considered, but two issues stood out. It was decided that a woman who wishes to be ordained, must be married or, if she is widowed, she has to declare explicitly whether she intends to re-marry or not. The second decision concerned the husband of the woman-to-be-ordained, who has to sign and grant approval before his wife can join the ministry.

Unlike in mainline churches, women in the Pentecostal churches are given the opportunity to serve in all capacities. Women can be pastors and bishops, founders and chief executives. Pastors' wives among the Pentecostals can become pastors as well and sit side by side with their husbands in the ambo. A female pastor of the Harvest Time Bible Church in Jimeta stated,

I was ordained in March 2008. I am one of six female Pentecostal pastors in Adamawa State. My senior pastor saw the call of God upon me; therefore he trained me and sent me for further training at the Living Faith Bible Institute. I also received further training in leadership from a satellite school in Singapore to equip me for the ministry.⁴²²

⁴²¹ Catholic Secretariat Abuja, 2000. *Religious Orders of Women in Nigeria*. Lagos: Sovereign Ventures, January, pp. 7, 17, 37.

⁴²² Kilka, interviewed, 6th September 2011.

Training is short but intensive with very little theology or philosophy which is understandable because the Pentecostals are not comfortable with these subjects. The interviewee added “We have equal chances with men and if God calls you to start a church, you can start one.”⁴²³

The youth in the Pentecostal churches claim that they have no problems because, in their opinion, Pentecostal churches are youth churches. The position, accorded to women in Adamawa, is the same as elsewhere in Pentecostal churches on the African continent, where women are generally only in rare cases given an elevated status in the community, mostly on the basis of their high age or special talents, especially if the woman is adept at handling herbs. The church is, historically, male dominated as are communities in Adamawa and generally in Africa. As we have seen, women were until recently excluded from ordination and there still are mainline churches where women may hold Sunday school with children, but not with grown-ups.

The male bias has biblical precedents. The Old Testament excludes women from priesthood and leadership with few exceptions. The New Testament tells of Paul refusing to allow women in positions of leadership or instruction over men (1 Cor. 14:34-35, 1 Tim. 2:11-15). However, the exclusion of women from leadership positions in the church should rather be seen as a cultural issue. McCain observes that “... the church has simply been a reflection of the society as a whole which has been male dominated. The last decades of the 20th century has brought remarkable changes to the world with regard to the place of women in the society.”⁴²⁴

In contemporary Nigeria, as elsewhere in Africa, women have demonstrated great ability in the business world where they reach high positions as managers and chief executive officers. They have made important contributions to education and medicine. They have also advanced in the areas of politics, the military, and religion. Against this background many churches have changed their rules and admitted women to the ministry.

Pentecostals in Nigeria did take the lead in ordaining women. Therefore, Adamawa State counts a high number of women priests today. It is common, in Pentecostal churches as well as in the LCCN, to come across married couples with the partners both ordained. The Pentecostals take their cue in this respect from their mentor, founder of the Church of God Mission, Archbishop Benson Idahosa, whose wife was ordained during his life time. After his death she became leader of his church and was as such accepted by the church and by society

⁴²³ Kilka, interviewed, 6th September 2011.

⁴²⁴ McCain, 2000 Accessed February 2005.

at large.⁴²⁵ Other Pentecostal churches also have female pastors. An example is Mrs. Folu Adeboye, wife of the RCCG leader, who has been given the title ‘Mother in Israel, RCCG.’⁴²⁶

There are plenty examples of Pentecostal pastors’ wives in Adamawa who are ordained, for example the wife of the bishop and founder of Upper Room Cathedral, Yola. The wives of pastors are accorded special positions in the Pentecostal churches.

In the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC), the late wife of the general superintendent was head of the women’s fellowship of the church and organized programmes for women. She also founded the “Christian Women Mirror”, a magazine used to reach out to women around Nigeria, irrespective of their denominations. The women’s fellowship of the DLBC is highly organized with leadership structures extending from state to district levels.⁴²⁷

The RCCG has appointed a special assistant who focuses on, and coordinates activities for, women and youth. The youth have, besides, a special assistant as their national leader. The special assistant for family issues is the national head of the women’s fellowship. Women function as regional, provincial, zonal, area and parish pastors and coordinators. Pastors organize fellowships and programmes aimed at strengthening the faith and the unity of the women of the church.⁴²⁸

The RCCG has regional and provincial pastors for youth as well as coordinators of the youth in zones and parishes. The fact that the Pentecostal movement is particularly attractive to the youth makes the younger generation a highly valued and effective medium through which to grow the church.⁴²⁹

7.19 Training

The training of staff for the ministry was among Pentecostals in Adamawa initially not encouraged because of their perception that the study of theology can destroy faith. The Pentecostals did not hold training seminaries, but depended on the Holy Spirit to give them guidance and inspiration.⁴³⁰

As they are now becoming more or less institutionalized, Pentecostal churches have begun to see the need to train pastors. They have opened their own Bible schools, but avoid the concept of theology because it opens the Bible up to questioning. The Bible schools run

⁴²⁵ McCain, 2000 Accessed February 2005.

⁴²⁶ Brochure of the RCCG ‘Women in Ministry’ conference 2009.

⁴²⁷ Response during interview by Pentecostal pastor, Yola, April 2010.

⁴²⁸ Response during interview by pastor of RCCG, Jimeta, April, 2010.

⁴²⁹ Pastor of RCCG, April 2010.

⁴³⁰ Responses from Pentecostal respondents and interviewees in Adamawa State. Available at: www.iics.com/church_in_africa.html. 2006.

various programmes, directed at preparing people for the ministry. Some programmes run for one month, some for three or six months leading to a certificate, or up to nine months leading to a diploma. Nationally, some Pentecostal churches are linked to theological institutions and Bible schools that offer degrees in theology outside Nigeria, especially in the USA.⁴³¹

Larger Pentecostal churches, like the RCCG, continue to train their pastors in Bible schools after providing them with ‘discipleship’ training. The training is not theologically extensive and the highest qualifications offered are certificates and diplomas. Students that attend the training are often highly educated and in some cases professionals.⁴³²

The researcher found that the DLBC also has training institutions for pastors, such as the International Bible Training Centre in Lagos and Jos that offers degrees in Bible studies. This is by the way one of the earliest Pentecostal churches to introduce lay leadership and that did not consider theological training necessary.

In interviews and conversations with Pentecostals, the researcher kept hammering on the subject of the training of pastors. Why are the Pentecostal churches suddenly setting up Bible Schools for pastor training at this moment in time, whereas they have always and decidedly rejected any form of theological training and acquiesced only to the Holy Spirit. Today, most of their leaders learn biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) to add credence to their teaching. They have apparently also realized that knowledge of theology is imperative if they want to continue to preach and proclaim their message convincingly. They are also challenged by their members, many of them well versed in various disciplines, who want their pastors to be well prepared for their ministries. Attending Bible school has now become mandatory in most Pentecostal churches for aspiring pastors.

7.20 Summary

We have seen in chapter six that an important contribution of Pentecostalism to Christianity consists in its liberalism as regards church music and church architecture. Pentecostal churches are huge, beautifully built with the most modern designs and depending on considerable engineering talent. The overall results convincingly demonstrate their confident attempts to consolidate their presence in Adamawa.

When it comes to teaching, it is difficult to locate them from a theological viewpoint. They have high regard for women in leadership positions but allow divorce even among their clergy. The types of Pentecostals found in Adamawa State cut across the three strands of

⁴³¹ Information supplied by Pentecostal leaders and bishop who offer possibilities study to Pentecostals for studies in theology up to Masters level in theology with Pentecostal institutions in the USA. 2007.

⁴³² Okonkwo, interviewed 4th May 2010.

Pentecostalism. There are classical, wholly indigenous neo-Pentecostals and Charismatic movements within the mainline churches.

It was found that Pentecostals use many terms and titles that belong in the sphere of governance or of commerce. They consider their outreach strategies as their greatest asset. Their members are trained to reach-out to non-Pentecostals in order to convert them. The Pentecostals are particularly aggressive in outreach programmes presented in schools, universities and cities. Youth from other denominations, remaining in the vicinity of local Pentecostal churches, are especially targeted.

Despite members not being uncritical, for example as regards the expectation that they subsidize the lavish lifestyles of leaders and clergy, they present themselves as positive and united when faced with outsiders. Pentecostals claim that financial support for their activities comes from members' offerings, but the present study uncovered many other ways in which they raise funds for projects and self-sustenance. Some of the money is likely to come from foreign partners or 'friends', as well as from local business, but Pentecostals often deny this. "Seed-sowing" and "first-fruits" are further means of collecting cash for the clergy, while funding on a large scale is obtained through crusades and conventions. Pentecostals administer their churches, using methods current in the corporate world. Members with special management skills help to run their affairs. Externally, they maintain partnerships with some Pentecostal 'Mega Church' preachers from the USA.

The Pentecostal churches are particularly strong in the use they make of print and electronic media for the purpose of propagating themselves and their messages. This has made them popular with the Nigerian public. Pentecostals are happy to incorporate women and youth in their activities. Women may be appointed at the highest levels in their structures. With the institutionalization of Pentecostalism, the need for pastor training has become evident.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DOCTRINAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE PENTECOSTALS

8.0 Introduction

Chapter eight explores the Pentecostal understanding of specific aspects of Christian life and teaching. It also shows how the Pentecostal phenomenon relates to African traditional beliefs and practices. The major religious views and practices of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State are specifically examined. Also a glossary of terms was analyzed.

Sources for this chapter are discussions held with various Pentecostal leaders, literature as well as video and audio recordings from Pentecostal services and other gatherings. All in all, seventeen pastors and leaders of Pentecostal churches were interviewed. Their church manuals and magazines were consulted. It is important to point out here that the DLBC is one of the oldest and most spread of the newer Pentecostal churches in Adamawa. It has congregations in both villages and cities in Adamawa and thus this particular church, apart from being well documented, is representative of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State.

8.1 The Pentecostals

Anderson, Bergunder, Droogers and van der Lan argue that:

The term [Pentecostals] *Pentecostalism* is now widely used by scholars of religion, most of them assuming they know what it means. It [the term] embraces churches as widely diverse as the celibacy-practicing Ceylon Pentecostal Mission; the Sabbatarian True Jesus Church in China with a “Oneness” theology; the enormous, uniform-wearing, ritualistic Zion Christian Church in Southern Africa; and Brazil’s equally enormous and ritualistic, prosperity-oriented Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. These are lumped together with the Assemblies of God, various Churches of God, the Catholic Charismatic movement, “neo-Charismatic” independent churches that espouse prosperity and “Word of Faith” theologies, the “Third Wave” evangelical movement, with its use of spiritual gifts framed within a theology that does not posit a subsequent experience of spiritual baptism, and many other forms of Charismatic Christianity as diverse as Christianity itself. All these are labeled [Pentecostals] “Pentecostalism”.⁴³³

This description of Pentecostals gives us their universal identity. Two events are considered fundamental in scholarly circles for the emergence of Pentecostalism. The first is the outbreak of speaking in tongues at Topeka, Kansas, in early 1901, at a school run by Charles Parham. The second is the revival that began at Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles

⁴³³ Anderson, A.(et al.), 2010. *Studying Global Pentecostalism:Theories and Methods*, Berkeley Los Angeles London, University of Carlifornia Press, p.14.

in 1906.⁴³⁴ However, in his Multi-sites Discourse, Kalu discusses that several, often unconnected “flares of revivals” occurred within a limited period all over the globe. Such revival flares were experienced in Wosan (1903); Wales (1904); Mukti, India (1905); Azusa (1906); Pyongnang/Seoul (1907); Calcutta, India (1910). These events indicate, Kalu maintains, that Azusa Street was just another such occurrence.⁴³⁵

The movement’s stress on freedom in the Spirit [not being dependent on traditional methods developed by Christianity and the conventional way of doing theology rather depending on the Holy Spirit to give guidance in matters of faith and practice of theology] made it flexible and adaptable to different cultural settings, so that it could easily be transplanted and fit into new social contexts. Africa and Nigeria in particular, first embraced Pentecostalism in protest against white missionaries’ lack of confidence in the ability of Africans and against the unequal position of Africans in the mainline churches. The protests gave rise to the emergence of African Independent Churches (AICs).⁴³⁶ The invitation of Pentecostals into Nigeria in the early 1930s to support and strengthen the schismatic groups in the country changed the initial posture of the AICs. The AICs adopted European and American Pentecostal theology and practices but did not give up their African worldview. This left the Nigerian and Adamawa Pentecostal Christians and many mainline Christians in a confused state of mind theologically. Thus, syncretism remained part of their Christian faith and practice. Fundamentalism became popular but Nigerians or Adamawa people attach to it what Martin described as, “...conservative understanding of scripture: The distinction is in (a) Empowerment through spiritual gifts offered to all. (b) Fissiparous and peaceable extension of voluntarism and competitive pluralism. (c) Understanding of “fundamentalisms” as reactions against modernization.”⁴³⁷

As regards teaching, it is difficult to locate Pentecostals theologically. Striking is the high regard they have for women. The Pentecostal churches found in Adamawa state cut across all the three types of Pentecostalism: Classical Pentecostals, wholly indigenous or neo-Pentecostals and Charismatic movements. This situation is not specific to Adamawa state because the Pentecostal groups found in Adamawa have initially been established by evangelists from the southern parts of the country.

⁴³⁴ Hocken, P. 1966. *The Strategy of the Spirit*, Guildford: Eagle, p.34.

⁴³⁵ Kalu, O. U., “A Discursive Interpretation of African Pentecostalism,” *Fides et Historia* 41:1, 2009, pp.76-79

⁴³⁶ Otonko, J., 2009. “Pentecostalism: A Church or a Movement?” SacredHeart Prints, E-mail: sacredheartprints@yahoo.com, p.11

⁴³⁷ Martin, D. 2002. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, p.1.

This explains why they have similar teachings and characteristics as other Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and other parts of the world. The major difference between indigenous Adamawa Pentecostals and the Pentecostal groups from other parts of Nigeria is that Adamawa Pentecostals are not up-front in their preaching of the ‘prosperity messages’. Some of the leaders criticize openly those who preach prosperity although others preach it in a subtle manner. There are in other words a lot of affectations because the social and Christian ethos within the state is very conservative. People still believe strongly that a truly religious person should not be unreasonably rich. The Christian faith was not received on a platter of gold as the case was in the south.

8.1.1 Central Doctrines of the Pentecostals

It is worthy of note here that the doctrines of Pentecostals in Adamawa are not different from Pentecostals elsewhere in Nigeria or around the world. Adamawa Pentecostals simply submitted to the teachings of extant older and newer Pentecostal groups. Therefore, there are no specifics when it comes to doctrines or teachings in Adamawa Pentecostalism.

In order to understand the central doctrines or theology of the Pentecostals one needs to look at the framework of Pentecostal theological reflection. An insight into this framework helps one to perceive how Pentecostals read the Bible. Francois Moller in his article “Pentecostal Theology” writes;

Right from its origin, the accent was on Christ “the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:12)...that Christ is God’s self-revelation. To know God one first has to know Christ. It is through Christology that one comes to theology...the self-revelation of God is not concerned with some doctrine or philosophy. God’s self-revelation concerns a person: Jesus of Nazareth. ...Pentecost emphasizes the need for a personal encounter with Christ:⁴³⁸

Early in the twentieth century, radical views surfaced among certain Pentecostals in the USA. The group broke away from the AG in 1914. At first they were called “New Issue” or the “Jesus Only Movement”, but since 1930 they have called themselves “Jesus Name” or “Apostolic” or “Oneness Pentecostalism”. They hold the view of a single Godhead, thus denying the Trinity while ascribing to Jesus Christ, the deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁸Francois Moller. 1998. “Pentecostal Theology” in Maimela, Simon and Konig, A. (eds), *Initiation Into Theology: The Rich Variety of Theology and Hermeneutics*, Hatfield, Pretoria: JL van Schaik, p. 185.

⁴³⁹ Moller, 1998, p. 185.

The emphasis of the group on Christ, at the expense of the Father and the Spirit, is not representative of Pentecostalism of whose adherents a large, majority accepts the doctrine of the Trinity. Moller argues that the group's Christ-centeredness is no 'Christomonism'. Rather, the group sees Jesus Christ as the acme of God's revelation. He is the centre of their faith and theology: the Saviour, Baptizer in the Spirit, Healer, and the coming King.⁴⁴⁰

Moller maintains that:

In Pentecostal theology, it is not so much "something" that is at stake, but rather "someone," Jesus Christ. All revelation comes and leads back to Christ. So all theological thought should start with Him and end with Him, that is, the light and the truth. This is more than a mere theoretical truth to Pentecostals. The revelation of God in Christ is not only presupposed in, for example, preaching, celebrating the sacraments or in singing, but is constantly expected as a concrete experience in one's life. This existential element in theology is most essential to Pentecostals.⁴⁴¹

The centrality of Christ led to the generally accepted framework for Pentecostal theology. Recent developments in Nigeria and in Adamawa confirm that Pentecostals believe in the constant presence of Christ, wherever they go. The presence of Christ is required in the church and during prayers, as much as at home and on the highway. It is believed among Pentecostals in Nigeria that a tangible involvement with Christ by a Christian is important. This is often expressed by the invocation of the blood of Jesus. Passengers in taxis and buses pray and, thus, 'cover' the driver, the vehicle and the road with the blood of Jesus so that they will be kept safe while travelling. This practice has in Adamawa and some other parts of Nigeria only recently taken root. It came about with the rise of Pentecostalism in Adamawa. The Pentecostal mindset is, according to Moller, focused on getting to know Christ and having a personal encounter with him. However, all the Pentecostals in Adamawa that the researcher has come in contact with stress the Holy Spirit above Christ. The Holy Spirit is, by all indications, the real domain of Adamawa Pentecostals. The views expressed in this chapter are those of interviewees, responding to questions about the important Pentecostal doctrines that are discussed below.

The DLBC, well established in Adamawa, is the only Pentecostal church with a documented set of doctrines. Representatives and members of all other churches, when interviewed for the purpose of the current thesis, gave only spoken information on the teaching of their church. Their contributions cannot be considered as representative of all Pentecostal teaching. The core of the matter is that, most Pentecostal churches do not have written down doctrines or constitutions. This gives the leaders and the founders of such

⁴⁴⁰ Moller, 1998, p. 185.

⁴⁴¹ Moller. 1998, p. 186.

churches or movements the freedom to change their views and teachings at will without any solid piece of rule or teaching with which to pin them down. The DLBC document however, gives guidance for an assessment of the various teachings that are seen as central to the newer Pentecostals in Adamawa. The doctrines listed below are what Pentecostals in Adamawa and in some other parts of Nigeria present as their beliefs and should be understood as such. Their statements should also be seen as representative for their level of theological development.

8.2 Sacramentology

Pentecostals in Nigeria, including Adamawa, describe ‘sacraments’ as the Christian rites performed to meet various biblical requirements.⁴⁴² The number of sacraments they accept and their understanding of these are in accordance with the religious traditions from which they hailed before their migration to Pentecostalism.

For Koshekai, who had been a Catholic and a Lutheran Christian before becoming a Pentecostal, there are five sacraments, namely baptism, Eucharist, dedication of children and property, marriage, funeral and ordination.⁴⁴³ Ngala E. Jonathan, a former Baptist, now a pastor of Global Missionary Network, believes there are four sacraments: baptism, marriage, ordination and Eucharist.⁴⁴⁴ Razack Tajudeen Emmanuel, the provost of the Pentecostal Christian Faith Institute, Bukuru, believes there are three sacraments: Eucharist, baptism and marriage.⁴⁴⁵ Razack has converted from Islam to Christianity. He became first an Anglican and left the prestigious Anglican seminary, Emmanuel College, Ibadan, because of his Pentecostal bent.

It is obvious that the definition of sacraments by the Pentecostals as mentioned above can only have been informed by their respective backgrounds in their former mainline churches. They agree however on the meanings and descriptions of the various sacraments. Their views also demonstrate that Pentecostals at various levels lack basic knowledge of systematic theology and of other areas of theology such as hermeneutics

In the following section we look at descriptions of the various sacraments as understood by Pentecostals.

⁴⁴² Koshekai, B.N, lecturer at the Pentecostal Christian Faith Institute, Bukuru. Interviewed at Bukuru, Jos, Plateau State. 18th November 2011

⁴⁴³ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁴⁴ Ngala, Eric Jonathan interviewed at Bukuru, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁴⁵ Razack, T.E., provost of the Pentecostal Christian Faith Institute Bukuru. Interviewed at Bukuru, Jos, Plateau. 18th November 2011.

8.2.1 Baptism

Baptism is understood entirely in terms of Christ who instituted baptism and determined how and to whom it should be administered. In Jesus we have the fullest and clearest revelation of what God in his grace gives us. The Pentecostals believe that Jesus Christ the light of the world, the one the Spirit opens our eyes to see, is to us the light in whom we understand the O.T., not the other way round. One starts with the bright light and in this light we probe whatever is dim and uncertain. When this view is applied to baptism, it means that the teaching of Jesus is the starting point, along with what the N.T. further teaches on baptism, and only afterwards are related matters considered.⁴⁴⁶

Baptism is primarily related to the cross and the death of Jesus. Other meanings of the sacrament of baptism are to be deduced from this primary given. However, as Moller states, quoting Burgess,

Baptism in the Spirit is not concerned with a spiritual experience but an essential encounter with the glorified Christ as the Baptizer with the Spirit. To encourage people to seek this baptism, they are in fact encouraged to seek Christ. This entails a total surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It primarily concerns a revelation of God in one's life and it is not merely an experience as such. It is a result, the consequence, of the encounter with Jesus Christ as the Baptizer in the Spirit.⁴⁴⁷

Thus, the Pentecostals teach, that baptism in the Spirit and the accompanying spiritual gifts are intended to be expected even in the present day [Pentecostals believe mainliners have down played the spiritual gifts]; and they strongly resist any theology that denies this. Tongues are often referred to as initial evidence that a person has been baptized in the Spirit. This is one of the essentials of Pentecostalism.

The majority of Pentecostal churches administer the sacrament of baptism by immersion in water, sometimes once, but there are churches that perform a three-fold immersion. In most cases, the denominational Charismatics accept the forms of baptism in use in their denominational church where the sprinkling of infants is practiced. But in the independent charismatic churches, baptism is mostly restricted to adult believers and done by once only immersion.⁴⁴⁸

All Pentecostal groups in Adamawa believe in the validity of two types of baptism: water baptism and baptism of the Holy Spirit. They believe that baptism should only be done by immersion, as described by Moller above, and they are against baptism by sprinkling which they understand as unbiblical. Pentecostals do not accept infant baptism. According to

⁴⁴⁶ Razack, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁴⁷ Razack, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁴⁸ Razack, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

them only adults should be baptized and they stipulate a minimum age of 14 years. Some Pentecostal churches require that the candidates attend the 'believers' class' for at least three months, before water baptism is performed.⁴⁴⁹ The distinction between water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism is not always very clear among Pentecostals. Some of them insist on a declaration of being born again, before baptism by water is considered. Others reserve only the Holy Spirit baptism for the moment when a member declares that he or she is born again.⁴⁵⁰

Baptism by the Holy Spirit is reserved for the truly born-again among certain Pentecostal groups. This implies that, among the 'born-again', there are 'truly born-again'. An example is found in the RCCG where the truly born-again are assisted by the pastor in prayers and through fasting to reach the point where they may receive the Holy Spirit baptism. At the moment this baptism takes place, the believer is understood to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to be able to speak in tongues or perform miracles as a sign that he or she has indeed been baptized by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵¹ The Pentecostals understand baptism as a reward for repentance and for persistence in the ways of faith. It is also a catalyst for demonstrating one's faith in Christ.

The researcher observed that the Pentecostals avoid a deeper exploration of the meaning of Holy Spirit baptism. They do, for example, not consider the context in which Holy Spirit baptism takes place in the scriptures. When the mainline churches say that they also have baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Pentecostals don't accept it. The mainline churches believe that, when one is baptized, the Holy Spirit (i.e. God) takes control of one's person.

In interviews, Pentecostals maintained that there is only one baptism which is performed by the Holy Spirit itself and that water baptism is just a reflection of the Holy Spirit baptism. This understanding is drawn from 1Peter 3:20-21 which states that water baptism does not remove sins but, rather, gives confidence before God. Holy Spirit baptism is the fulfillment of that which is begun by water baptism. Holy Spirit baptism is the reality of water baptism.⁴⁵² Baptism should be by immersion and followed by Holy Spirit baptism. Often however, the baptisms take place simultaneously.⁴⁵³

This understanding of baptism is shared by most Pentecostals in Adamawa State. They peg the safe, or the acceptable, age for baptism at the reaching of adulthood which, according to the Nigerian constitution, is at the age of 18. Once a person has turned 18, his or

⁴⁴⁹ Okonkwo, interviewed in Yola, 4th May 2010.

⁴⁵⁰ Ayeyemi, interviewed in Yola, 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁵¹ Ayeyemi, interviewed in Yola, 3rd May 2010

⁴⁵² Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁵³ Ngala, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

her public confession is accepted by the church and he or she can be baptized by immersion. There are however instances of children, aged 13 and 15, who are baptized after they have publicly declared themselves ready.⁴⁵⁴ The general practice of baptizing is much the same in most evangelical churches in Nigeria, but the official age requirement and the possibility that younger persons declare themselves sufficiently mature for baptism are intriguing.

The Pentecostals believe that a person can tell he is being baptized by the Holy Spirit the moment it happens. The Holy Spirit is a gift from God and the minister is serving as a conduit for the spirit. From time to time one hears him utter what are commands from God: "...receive the Holy Spirit". The minister may speak or he may only lay hands and that is how the Spirit baptism takes place. Holy Spirit baptism can occur before or after water baptism, in the same way as, for example, at the baptism of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit came before the baptism was concluded (Acts 10:44-48).

On Pentecost day, people heard the word of God and inquired what they should do. The Apostles told their audience to repent and be baptized; "every one of you in the name of Jesus and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:36-41). Pentecostalists thus believe that the person who repents and confesses will be baptized by the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Ghost upon an individual authenticates water baptism.

(a) Water Baptism

Pentecostals distinguish sharply between water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism. Water baptism is one of the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ who commanded that water baptism should be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matt.28:19). Doing otherwise therefore, is to disobey Jesus Christ. Pentecostals declare that, "signs and wonders" accompany this encounter with Jesus and are certain indications of God's presence.⁴⁵⁵

The DLBC believes that the only correct way of baptizing is by immersion in water. Immersion signifies identification with the burial of Christ in his death, and with his rising up in the newness of life at his resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5). In baptism, the believer shows his faith that Jesus died for his sins and rose again for his justification and that, if he dies he too will be resurrected. He dies to his old life and will rise to walk with Christ in the new life. The immersion should be done once because Jesus was immersed in the river Jordan only once. The Eunuch of Ethiopia as well was immersed in water only once, according to the DLBC.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁴ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁵⁵ Andersen, 2008, p 642.

⁴⁵⁶ Ayeyemi interviewed in Yola, 3rd May 2010.

Submitting oneself to water baptism is an acknowledgment of Christ in a public way. Therefore, it is a public ceremony which is testimony to the fact that one has committed oneself entirely to Christ. Water baptism is for those who fully repent of their sins. This confirms the Pentecostal belief and teaching that only adults who are able to recognize true faith can be baptized and that it is fundamentally wrong to baptize infants and children who have not reached the stage of accountability.⁴⁵⁷

Since they interpret the scriptures literally, Pentecostals do not subscribe to the 'household' argument, presented by those who practice infant baptism. Pentecostals maintain that salvation does not come through baptism, but by grace through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. They also insist that scripture runs a catalogue of those who have been saved without undergoing water baptism: the sick (with palsy) healed by Jesus Christ, the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, Zacchaeus, the thief on the cross, the Eunuch of Ethiopia, and Saul by Ananias before he submitted to water baptism.⁴⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Pentecostals argue that every believer should, in obedience to Christ's command, succumb to water baptism of which the importance was stressed by Jesus Christ in his parting words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16.16).

Once a person has repented of his sins, it is mandatory that he undergoes water baptism as provided for in the scriptures. God-ordained that church leaders must do their utmost to encourage their flocks to attach great importance to this practice. Those who hear and have repented are to be baptized, for the remission of sin.⁴⁵⁹

(b) Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The baptism of the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit involves the imbue ment of power from on high upon the sanctified believer. The first evidence that one has received this gift of the Holy Ghost is that one can speak a language one has never learned, ability referred to as speaking in tongues and inspired by the Spirit.⁴⁶⁰ The Deeper Life Bible Church does not teach people how to speak in tongues; but claims that the Holy Spirit does this.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not a new birth, salvation, conversion or regeneration and it is not a sanctification experience. Jesus prayed for the sanctification of His disciples and at the same time commanded them to wait for the imbue ment of power which is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Sanctification creates purity whereas the baptism of the Holy Spirit gives power. It gives illumination, feelings of joy, liberty, victory in prayer,

⁴⁵⁷ Ayeyemi interviewed in Yola, 3rd May 2010.

⁴⁵⁸ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁵⁹ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁶⁰ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

self-denial or zeal.⁴⁶¹ This may explain why Pentecostals hanker for the baptism of the Holy Spirit as, in their understanding, it gives them much power.

They see the Holy Spirit not as merely an impersonal force, but it is an influence we feel. It is not a power that we can get hold of and use, but on the contrary, the Spirit seeks to get hold of us and use us. The Holy Spirit is a divine personality that we must honour, worship, have fellowship with and listen to. He is referred to as the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of the living God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of life, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of your Father, the comforter, and the eternal spirit. He is eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and holy. He is the inspirer of the Holy Scriptures, the general overseer of the militant church, the great teacher, helper and guide of all the saints, the character builder of all members of the body of Christ. In view of this pertinent Pentecostal vision of the Holy Spirit, mainline churches are puzzled by the Pentecostal practice, whereby preachers emphasize that baptism of the Holy Spirit enables the baptized to use the spirit, in any way they want, at any time, and at any place. The mainline churches argue that the Holy Spirit is not an object that can be used at will. The Pentecostals on the other hand believe that they can be in the Spirit if they thirst for it with a fervent desire. Once they are given the Spirit, they will receive a new heart (the circumcision of the heart) and they will gain faith.

(c) Benefits of Baptism

Pentecostals in Nigeria believe that baptism brings about the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are justification, sanctification, righteousness and remission of sin (Act 2:38-41). It also gives sonship to men as children of God.⁴⁶² An interesting Pentecostalist view with regard to Spirit baptism is, that a person might be open to receive Spirit baptism without even going to church and, in such a case, there is no need for water baptism. In other words, Spirit baptism is superior to water baptism. This teaching is premised on the ministry of John the Baptist who had to give way when Christ came. Christ is superior to John the Baptist, just as the Holy Spirit baptism is reality and, therefore, superior to water baptism.

There are many aspects to Holy Spirit baptism such as the belief that the presence of the Holy Spirit reflects the presence of the Kingdom of God in a person. In essence the baptism of the Spirit is the nucleus of every other Christian doctrine because every doctrine originates from it. For example, the teaching on regeneration, resurrection and the power for service and all other gifts, hinge on the Holy Spirit baptism.

⁴⁶¹ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁶² Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

8.2.2 Holy Communion

Pentecostals have no definite theological statement clarifying their understanding of the Holy Communion. It is clear, however, that they believe that the elements of the communion represent the body and blood of Christ. The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation or the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation is not followed. They lean heavily towards the radical view, stressing that the elements only represent the body and blood of Jesus Christ. They have an interesting view of who may partake in the Holy Communion.

Pentecostals accept generally that a member who is certified to be ‘born again’ can partake in the communion whether he or she is baptized or not.⁴⁶³ The table for the communion is set in a corner and all communicants walk there, break the bread themselves, sip the wine, and walk back to their seats. The bread does not have to be unleavened and the wine doesn’t have to be real. Any red fruit juice will do. There is no blessing or consecration of the ‘host’ because there is no set liturgy for the communion service.⁴⁶⁴

Pentecostal churches prefer to call it the ‘Lord’s Supper’. The doctrine of the Lord’s Supper, clearly presented in the gospels and amplified by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:20-34, is to be understood in the light of the feast of Passover. Only qualified persons can partake of it. The feast of Passover is a holy convocation for which Jews prepare extensively. A hymn is sung (the ‘hallel’ Ps. 113-118), and the story of the Exodus is recounted in memory of the deliverance from Egypt. The feast continues to be observed as a memorial that brings joy and renewed strength to God’s people.⁴⁶⁵

Against the backdrop of this understanding of Passover, Pentecostals believe, that the institution of the Lord’s Supper at the last Passover celebrated by Christ, should by New Testament believers be understood as signifying the end of the Passover as Jesus is now the paschal lamb or Passover because his blood saves. He has delivered all believers from all bondages of sin, sickness and Satan. The stress is on physical deliverance and deliverance of unworthiness, leaving the road free to partake in the Lord’s Supper.⁴⁶⁶ This may also inform the Pentecostalist proclivity for prosperity messages.

The Deeper Life Bible Church based on the interpretation of I Corinthians 11:27-32, teaches that no unbeliever, fornicator, polygamist or drunkard could join in the breaking of the bread. Some are unworthy because of fighting, or because of having malicious thoughts, divisive attitudes, and an unforgiving spirit. If there is need for restitution, the question

⁴⁶³ Response by Pentecostal pastor. Interviewed in Yola April 2010.

⁴⁶⁴ Observation at a Pentecostal worship in Jimeta, Nigeria. 2007.

⁴⁶⁵ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁶⁶ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

should be settled before the hour of the ordinance.⁴⁶⁷ This approach is, however, from the point of view of mainline churches questionable, as all are sinners, all are unworthy. But even so, if we apply self-examination and acknowledge our blasphemy against the body and blood of Christ we are all of us expected to partake in the Lord's Supper.

The Pentecostals recognize that the emblems, 'the fruit of the vine' and the 'unleavened bread' represent or symbolize the Lord's blood that was shed and his broken body. They are emblems that recall his love and the passion on Calvary's cross. The Lord's Supper should be taken as often as practicable in remembrance of the Lord until he comes. The leadership of the church should make adequate preparations, securing the emblems and the location for the ordinance. The worthiness of participants should also be ensured.⁴⁶⁸

Seen from a general Christian perspective, the Holy Communion involves the members of the congregation, sharing in the suffering, death and victory of Christ, as well as enjoying fellowship with one another as they share bread and wine from one table. The researcher observed that, while the Pentecostals focus on the institution of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians, they neglect other institutions described in the gospels. These institution narratives should be studied and understood together to attain their full significance. The Pentecostals understand the Lord's Supper as a fellowship meal for those who are clean and an attestation of one's worthiness to stand before God.

Pentecostals as Bible believing Christians argue that grave consequences can befall him or her who partakes of the Lord's Supper unworthily. Weakness, sickness, and even death could ensue. Adults, youths and children who have current testimony of salvation and holy living are free to partake.⁴⁶⁹ Pentecostal interviewees, when asked for examples of people who have fallen ill because they took communion unworthily, could not readily provide any.

The Pentecostals nonetheless, teach that a person who has received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit does not necessarily have to come to the communion table. It is thought that such a person is already communing with Christ because the Holy Spirit dwells in him or her. However, he or she can still take communion for the sake of being in fellowship with Christ through partaking of his flesh and blood. Elements of the communion are simply symbols for Christ's body and blood (John 6:34, 48-58, 62-63), indicating that the flesh of Jesus is the Spirit and Life of Christ (John 6:39-33). According to the Pentecostals this teaching confirms

⁴⁶⁷ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁶⁸ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

⁴⁶⁹ Deeper Life Bible Church, Convention Manual for 2010.

that Jesus is the Holy Communion through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and that the true “manna” is a person which is Jesus Christ.⁴⁷⁰

However, it was clear to the researcher that the Pentecostals do not all agree on how the Holy Communion should be celebrated. Some of the Pentecostals have a semblance of a set liturgy for communion which definitely was borrowed from the mainline churches while others do not have any set liturgy. This was confirmed by participatory observations at the Pentecostal services at the RCCG in Lagos, the Living Faith church in Jimeta and also the House of Refuge church in Jimeta. These three churches allow their members to come to the front to receive communion. It is administered by a pastor with an abridged liturgy. The Assemblies of God church allows the members to come to the front but the members have to serve themselves without the pastor assisting them. Some of the Pentecostals use the ordinary bread while others insist on using the communion bread specially made for it, which is used by the Anglican or Catholic churches. A full identification and understanding of the differences between the various Pentecostal groups would require another study with a different focus.

8.2.3 Dedication of Children and Property

The issue of dedication is somewhat elusive and, according to Koshekai, difficult to explain. He understands dedication as an acknowledgement of God’s blessings and gifts to his children on earth. The act itself does not bestow any blessing on the child or on the property that is dedicated. After a child has been dedicated, its parents must continue to teach the child the word of God, until it confesses Christ by itself at the age of fourteen.⁴⁷¹ The parents will have to evangelize their children until the children repent and confess their faith by their lips.

8.2.4 Funerals

Pentecostalism teaches that every occasion asks for the creation of order, including death. Pentecostalists approve of funeral services but, whether a funeral service is held or not held, does not affect the deceased’s position as a believer. In contrast to the Pentecostal position, mainline Christians believe that funeral services are the deceased’s right and should be conducted in the church sanctuary and with the priests in full regalia. Anything short of this indicates that the deceased is poorly done by. The Pentecostals however hold that funeral services are for the benefit of the living and that the gathering of many mourners presents an

⁴⁷⁰ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁷¹ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

opportunity for evangelism. Funeral services are held as a means of giving comfort to the deceased's relatives.

Not all Pentecostal churches allow corpses in their sanctuary (they prefer to call it auditorium). They maintain that the sanctuary is a place for the living. The soul is what makes a person. As the soul has departed, the body no longer represents the person who has reverted to his initial state when God first precast man out of dust. The corpse does no longer embody the complete nature of God, but represents the form in which God first created it, before inspiring it with his breath.⁴⁷²

Pentecostal views about funerals and corpses are in inordinate contrast to Indigenous African Religions' and mainline Christianity's. Both the African traditional religion and mainline Christianity regard funerals as extremely important for the deceased as well as for the bereaved and the community of believers. Therefore, relatives and friends of the deceased are not always happy when they observe the Pentecostals' handling of the dead.

In Africa dead people are sacred and remain alive in the next world. Africans believe in life after death; and in continuous contact with the dead. Therefore, funerals are an important religious rite for the traditional African and mainline Christian. Pentecostals need to review their understanding of funeral services as this will bring great relief to Adamawa communities.

8.2.5 Ordination

According to Pentecostals, ordination grants the authority to perform certain Christian sacraments and rites. Ordination is also the acknowledgement that a person, male or female, has been called to serve God. The benefits for the ordained are the following:

- i. it gives confidence that the church has recognized the call of God in the ordained,
- ii. It affects the ordained person in his/her behavior because there are many eyes on him or her,
- iii. It makes the ordained person popular and richer, both materially and in grace, and
- vi. It gives the ordained person power, spiritual and temporal, over those who called him to be ordained.

In the Pentecostal church people are ordained without being trained for the job. Any person, called by God, may be ordained if the church recognizes the calling. If the church

⁴⁷² Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

does not recognize the calling, the person may continue anyway, setting up his or her own ministry and, probably, initiating another movement or church.

8.2.6 Marriage and Christian Life

Pentecostals perform marriages anywhere, whether in a church sanctuary or outside. They approve of civil marriages and maintain that these are not inferior to church marriages or vice versa. This view is at variance with the position generally taken by mainline churches who insist that civil marriages need to be normalized by the church in order to be accepted as authentic.⁴⁷³ This is how the term ‘Holy Matrimony’ came about.

Pentecostal churches consider marriage as a sacrament but do not insist that the church should bless marriages performed in civil courts, or even traditional marriages performed outside the jurisdiction of the church. In mainline Christian churches a sacrament is defined as a ritual with a certain spiritual or theological value. Since the time of St. Augustine, the church has taught that sacraments are an efficient, intelligible sign or means of grace. Pentecostal teaching agrees that marriage in the church indicates a clear acceptance of God’s power over the lives of a couple together in their Christian home.

Pentecostals do not permit their members to marry non-believers. Kalu writes about the need “to avoid being ‘unequally yoked with unbelievers’ by seeking love and courtship only within the boundaries of the born again. Thus marriage would establish a new family for Christ.”⁴⁷⁴ Some Pentecostal leaders have divorced their wives under the pretext that they got married to them under “unbelieving yoke.” They go as far as stating, “if your wife has become a thorn in your flesh, you should get rid of her and marry the one that will not pester your life.”

Some Pentecostals especially their leaders take their spouses as business partners. They divorce their wives sometimes over the allegation that they are not equally yoked. What this means in actual sense is that they are not well-suited as business partners. Being unequally yoked does not necessarily mean being spiritually incompatible. This type of teaching has led to many problems of morality among Pentecostals.

They also make the point that the lack of children in a marriage does not warrant a divorce or imply God’s disapproval of the marriage. After all, non-believers also have children. Christians, wedded in the church, may live their full holy matrimonial lives without children being born to them.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷³ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

⁴⁷⁴ Kalu, 2009, p.88.

⁴⁷⁵ Koshekai, interviewed, 18th November 2011.

Pentecostals teach that marriage is part of God's creation. The spiritual and numerical strength of the church depends on the health of Christian homes and therefore the church is actively involved in marriage processes, even before the beginning of courtship. Usually a church member will inform the church of his or her revelation that a certain 'brother' and 'sister' should get married. After which the church takes responsibility for overseeing the process and will embark on relevant counselling and prayer sessions. In the courtship period the intended couple is not in close contact. Church discipline is applied if pregnancy would occur during the courtship which usually means the cancellation of the wedding. A church marriage committee gives guidance to the couple prior to marriage. The pastor is responsible for counselling on marriage problems.⁴⁷⁶

The Pentecostal church has taken upon itself the full responsibility for marriage arrangements. Traditionally in Adamawa, parents arrange and prepare for the marriages of children. Courtship is minimal. Friends of the lovers negotiate between the two, arrange contacts or visits and generally play the role of messengers of love (*mols*). Discussions are held and counselling is provided by parents, relatives, and friends of the couple. Final arrangements are made with the full participation of the two families, whereby the community is made aware of all decisions taken. The church becomes a role-player only with regard to the final arrangements and the ceremony itself. A period of not more than six weeks is required for notice to be read and for counselling to be conducted by the pastor where after the wedding takes place. .⁴⁷⁷

Pentecostal churches today are performing all these tasks and have taken over the combined roles of parents, *mols*, relatives, community and to a degree, the roles of couple itself. In addition the Pentecostal church performs the usual role of the clergy by blessing the marriage. Parents, *mols*, friends, and in a sense the couple itself, have become mere spectators. This is done in the name of scripture and for the sake of chastity and holiness.

The DLBC states in its Record of Doctrines or Document of Faith that "Marriage is binding for life. Monogamy is the uniform teaching of the Bible. Polygamy is contrary to God's perfect will and institution. Also, under the New Testament dispensation, no one has a right to divorce and remarry while the first spouse lives. When a person becomes converted, necessary restitution, on this line, must be done without delay if he has married wrongly."⁴⁷⁸ The document elaborates: "Marriage is a holy union. It is God's idea and not a derivative of any culture. It is a gift from God to man and it has three basic aspects:

⁴⁷⁶ Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC at Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

⁴⁷⁷ Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC at Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

⁴⁷⁸ IBTC. 2010. Deeper Life Leadership Strategy Congress Manual. Ayobo. Lagos, January 4-9, p. 36.

- i. The man leaves his parents in a public act, pledges himself to his wife;
- ii. The man and woman are joined together by taking responsibility for each other's welfare and by loving their partner above all others; and
- iii. The two become one flesh in the intimacy and commitment to the wonderful union which is reserved for marriage.⁴⁷⁹

By doing so, according to the Pentecostals, marriage “provides the needed fellowship, comfort, companionship and partnership. It is one of God’s methods to keep men and women free from fornication and immorality. With very few exceptions, most men and women are to marry. These few exceptions are to receive God’s guidance and are not to be the product of infantile decisions, misguided imitations, faithless consecration or frivolous religious compassion. Marriage is part of God’s plan to raise the Christian family. But the believer does not have to go searching for a wife or husband, neither are they to resort to sampling or picking and choosing.”⁴⁸⁰

However, during fieldwork, the researcher did meet several persons who have joined the Pentecostal churches for the sole reason that they perceived these as accepting polygamy. These persons have themselves more than one wife and feel, on the basis of their Pentecostal church membership, free to do as they want. It became clear that some attend a Pentecostal church in order to avoid the rejection of polygamy in mainline churches. There are examples of men who have been denied a second marriage in mainline churches and who moved to the Pentecostals where, having abandoned their first wife, they married a younger second one. A specific case is that of Mr. N. who has two wives. The first wife was taken to the altar at the Lutheran church. After he had become rich and was promoted in his job, he took a second wife. He invited his Pentecostal pastor to dedicate his new house. The pastor met the two wives, blessed each woman's bedroom, and did not frown at the situation. Afterwards, Mr. N. donated a parcel of land to the pastor for building a new church to the construction of which he also periodically contributed large sums of money.

Polygamy is thus tolerated by some newly founded Pentecostal movements and the classical CAC. The CAC is, thus, flexible enough to accept polygamy, although the song by Alisabatu, quoted in 4.3.1. (a), complains that its rules are too stringent. During fieldwork, it was observed that some prominent CAC members are polygamists. When the researcher asked one Baba A.K., an elder of a CAC congregation, why he took a second wife he replied: “... it was for more children. I love children, but when my first wife decided not to have more children after our fourth child was born, I discussed the matter with her and she allowed me

⁴⁷⁹ IBTC. 2010, p. 36.

⁴⁸⁰ IBTC. 2010, p. 36.

to marry another woman that would give me more children. Now I have seven children and I have no regrets. The church approved of my taking a second wife and I am an elder in the church.”⁴⁸¹

Polygamy is a common occurrence among adherents of the African Independent Churches (AICs) and the African Church, and the practice has been carried over to some of the classical Pentecostal churches. Whereas the AIC’s permit polygamy, the African Church allows followers, but not pastors to take more wives. The CAC allows a second wife.

More established and bigger movements such as the Deeper Life and the RCCG condemn polygamy but have such large congregations that polygamists among them remain unidentified. Hence, the lack of stringency in married life of which the mainline churches are accused, has found its way also into the Pentecostal churches.

Provisions in the DLBC doctrinal manual clearly stipulate the need for church involvement in the marriage plans of its members. Such involvement helps to hold the conduct of intending couples in check. There is great stress on chastity before marriage. Each step in the selection of partners and their preparation for marriage is taken under the watchful eyes of church and pastor. The church picks and joins partners, emphasizing holiness rather than compatibility. Nobody searches for, or picks, a partner on his or her own. And the members comply, despite the changing times.⁴⁸²

The RCCG follows a process, similar to that of the DLBC. There, a ‘brother’ or ‘sister’ is led to his or her future partner by the Holy Spirit. The pastor is informed and approaches the persons involved who are both told to fast and pray for confirmation that the revelation concerning them does indeed reflect God’s plan. The marriage committee of the church then steps in with counselling sessions and marriage preparations. The pastor engages with the couple, only after their situation has been verified. Thereafter the process of introducing the partners to each other’s parents takes place and a dowry is paid before the wedding is conducted.⁴⁸³

The RCCG has a separate committee that attends to married couples. The committee is responsible for settling family disputes as these arise in the church.⁴⁸⁴ In the DLBC the pastor is responsible for marriage counselling and the solving of marital problems.

It seems to me that the fact that marriages are by Pentecostals arranged – although totally opposite to the strong input of traditional parents - it remains ‘arranged’ without much input of the couple. The Pentecostal preacher seems to act as a kind of parent. Also the strict

⁴⁸¹ Baba A. K., Interviewed in Abuja, Nigeria, 24th October 2010.

⁴⁸² Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC in Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

⁴⁸³ Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC in Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

⁴⁸⁴ Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC in Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

view of pre-marital relations may have something in common with indigenous African culture and religion.

8.3 The Church and the End of Times

This is an important teaching in Christianity. Pentecostals of the 'holiness' group, have appropriated this general Christian teaching and stressed it in their preaching, teachings and say prayers which are filled with references to the 'end-times'. Those of the prosperity message group, however, are less concerned with the end-times. The Pentecostals that are interested in evangelism, an example can be made of those of the classical strand, the Bible and tract distributing groups who believe in soul winning, are seen to find the messages of the end times central.

In the light of this, the DLBC, the Redeemed People's Mission and the TFM and many other smaller holiness groups in Adamawa who stress evangelism and conversion, preach about the end times because they want to loosen and free humans from the grip of evil spirits, witches, forces of darkness, principalities, enemies, bad luck and repeated failures to prepare them for heaven.⁴⁸⁵

The biblical comments on the end of times or the second coming of Christ have been taken literally. It is believed that the end of times and all the accompanying signs thereof are occurring here and now, or are imminent. Therefore, Pentecostal churches have to be ready for the second coming. Many premiums have been placed on the end-of-times teaching and on the Pentecostal insistence that the time is now. Vast numbers of Christians live in the hope to make it to heaven by living a pious life in these perilous times.⁴⁸⁶

The mainline churches on the other hand, stress that the end of times did begin with the coming of Christ and will culminate in the second coming of Christ. The end of times is the period of grace starting with the birth of Christ and giving rise to the establishment of the church or of the kingdom of heaven here on earth. As the prayer says: "...at this end of all the ages, you sent your son who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life."⁴⁸⁷

In the Pentecostal interpretation, the end of times will start with the rapture. Matthew 24:3 provides the details of what will happen on earth, shortly before this 'end of times', i.e. before the rapture there will be wars and rumours of wars, many false Christs will arise, famines (global economic recession), pestilence, earthquakes, persecution of Christ's

⁴⁸⁵ Matthew A. Ojo, 2008, "Pentecostalism and African Christianity in Historical Perspectives," *Department of Religious Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria*, 2008, p.14

⁴⁸⁶ Responses from interviews with Pentecostal pastors of the RCCG and DLBC in Jimeta, 3rd – 4th May 2010.

⁴⁸⁷ 2000. *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, pp.110-11.

followers, emergence of many false prophets, backsliding of many from the faith, and people will be given to pleasure and merry making.

As the Pentecostals take the predictions of the scriptures literally, they believe the conditions for the end of times are here already. The end, they think, will be characterized by a series of denials from within and outside the church, shortly before Christ's return. There will be denial of God and Christ, denial of Christ's return, denial of faith and of authority.⁴⁸⁸

During his fieldwork the researcher got the impression that fear of the end of times and of the rapture are cardinal reasons why people are flocking to Pentecostal churches and programmes. They fear the judgment of Christ and being counted among those who will go to hell. Therefore, they choose to believe wholeheartedly whatever they are promised will lead to their salvation.

As part of the end of times, Pentecostals consider the resurrection of the dead as taught in the Bible as their cardinal doctrine. All who die in this world will undergo physical resurrection before the great 'white throne judgment.' According to this doctrine, the bodies of all human beings that ever lived on earth will be rejoined with their souls to meet the Lord, either in peace and joy, or in condemnation and subject to eternal punishment and torment in hell fire. The resurrection has four phases these are:

- (i) the resurrection of Christ, the first fruit,
- (ii) (ii) the resurrection of the church-age saints,
- (iii) (iii) the resurrection of the tribulation period saints, and
- (iv) (iv) The resurrection of Old Testament saints at the second advent of Christ on earth.

To partake in the resurrection of the saved, a spiritual resurrection in the present life has to take place first. The great tribulation will occur after the rapture and will be a time of terrible suffering on earth. During this time, the Antichrist will take possession of this world for a reign of terror. The millennial reign is the 1000 years of Jesus' literal reign on earth which will be ushered in by the coming of Jesus back to earth with ten thousand of his saints. During this time, the devil will be bound. It will be a reign of peace and blessing. Then, the 'great white throne judgment' shall come. This is for Pentecostals the time, when God finally judges all who have lived on earth, according to their works. The devil and his angels will also be judged at this time and sent to the lake of fire forever. This will be the time when all the wicked and ungodly will face the final judgment of the living God. The new earth

⁴⁸⁸ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

‘wherein righteousness shall dwell’ will be made by God and the redeemed shall dwell therein with God forever.⁴⁸⁹

8.4 Demons and Healing

Pentecostals in Nigeria teach that demons exist and can be exorcized. People can be possessed by demons and activities involved in curing them include counselling, prayer to the Holy Spirit, deliverance and the binding of demons. Most Pentecostals practice exorcism.⁴⁹⁰

The Pentecostals most involved in exorcism are adherents of the deliverance gospel. Nigerians, and especially the indigenous people of Adamawa, believe strongly in the spirit world and are strongly attached to their African world view. Meyer argues that:

Pentecostals distinguish the realm of ‘the physical’, that is the visible world, and ‘the spiritual’, that is the invisible world. ...In their view there is a spiritual war going on between God and the Devil, and this is taking place both in the whole world and within a person’s individual spirit. Pentecostal preachers claim to be able to penetrate the invisible and to bring about physical healing and improvement of material conditions by fighting a spiritual battle against demons.⁴⁹¹

Pentecostals in Adamawa and elsewhere in Nigeria believe strongly in the spirit world, and so do some pastors and Christians in mainline churches as well as non-Christians and Muslims. This belief in the spirit world is what differentiates the Nigerian Pentecostals from Pentecostals in the Western world whose worldview has been influenced by secularization or the 18th Century Enlightenment. Martin argues, “...Pentecostalism manifests and advances in modernity.”⁴⁹²

The spirit world is part of the worldview of all but a very few individuals in Adamawa state. Those few who hold a different view of the spirit world are laughed at. This researcher has once been challenged by members of his congregation because in a sermon, he tried to dispel the notion of evil spirits and of the spirit world. The notion is so strong that an experienced and well educated Christian nick-named himself *Bakin Arne*, meaning ‘black heathen’, because he believes in his ancestral spirits, the Muslim ‘Ginie’, and he takes part in certain cults. He simply believes in all the spirits he has ever heard of and he visits various mediums who consult the spirits on his behalf. He is revered, and sometimes feared, because he is associated with so many spirits.

⁴⁸⁹ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

⁴⁹⁰ Responses from interviews conducted in Adamawa State with randomly selected Pentecostal Christians most of whom hold strong African worldviews about the spirit world. 2007.

⁴⁹¹ Meyer, B. 2000. Commodity and the power of Prayer: Pentecostalist attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana, *Development and Change* Vol. 29 (1998), 751-776, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, p.761.

⁴⁹² Martin, D. 2002. p.1.

On the other hand, Pentecostal Christians teach that healing is a gift from God. They collect evidence and testimonies of people that have been healed. Healing, they teach, is received by faith through prayer. Not all Pentecostals believe in the laying of hands on the sick before a healing can occur.⁴⁹³ Some reason that God does the healing; therefore, there is no need for human hands to be laid on a patient. The healer just needs to pray and God will answer, according to the depth of faith of the sick person in question. Pentecostals, critical of the notion of healing hands, feel that the resulting glory, fame and honour of the healer is undeserved.

Healing and exorcism are miracles. Any extraordinary happening is viewed as a miracle. Miracles happen to both Christians and non-Christians alike, as it is God's way of proving to human beings that he is powerful.⁴⁹⁴

Pentecostals believe that the Christian, being redeemed, has been brought back from servitude, slavery and captivity. The fall of man, as a result of man's disobedience to God, brought about his loss of purity and favour from God. The whole of creation fell under the curse and became captive to sin, sickness, and Satan. Man being sentenced to death, someone else has paid the penalty for him, namely Christ Jesus. Man's redemption is not limited to the removal of guilt but covers all consequences of breaking the law such as disease and satanic oppression. Healing of sickness and disease, as well as continued health, are provided for all men through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.⁴⁹⁵

In the Old Testament diverse sicknesses, pestilences and plagues came upon the children of Israel when they disobeyed God and broke his covenant. When they repented and prayed, fulfilling the covenant condition, they were healed. God still heals today where the conditions of the covenant are met.⁴⁹⁶

8.4.1 Demons and Divination

The Bible uses the term demon to refer to those angels who are loyal to Satan. Matthew 25:41 speaks of demons in these terms. It is nearly impossible to separate the nature and work of demons from the nature and work of their leader, Satan. Isaiah 34:14 speaks of a satyr (a creature with the head and body of a human but the legs of a goat: 'the night monster shall settle in the ruins of Babylon'), while Leviticus 17:7 refers to goat demons and

⁴⁹³ Meyer, 2000, p. 761.

⁴⁹⁴ Response from DLBC pastor interviewed at Jimeta, 4th May 2010.

⁴⁹⁵ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

⁴⁹⁶ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

Revelation 16:13 mentions unclean spirits that look like frogs. There is thus a variety of demons in the spirit world.⁴⁹⁷

In many cultures, there are individuals, called mediums, who communicate with the dead and who are said to be possessed by a familiar spirit. Christians, especially those from the western world whose worldview is founded on scientific positivism and materialism, today question the existence of demons, but the Pentecostals emphasize their reality and the dangers they pose. Already in New Testament times, there was questioning. “The Sadducees, philosophically aligned with Greek thought, had given up all belief in the reality of Satan”.⁴⁹⁸ They asked question such as: Why did God create Satan in such a way that he could fall, could rebel? Why does God tolerate his continued existence? When did Satan fall? Was it before the world began or in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes?⁴⁹⁹

Demonology in New Testament times shared the background of late Judaism when the devil began to appear in the Bible. The appearance of the devil in the Bible coincided with ancient Israel’s shift from national-religious hope towards a cosmic eschatology.⁵⁰⁰ In other words, it was a shift away from focusing on God’s saving of the physical Israel, to focusing on the world and life hereafter. At the same time, in the New Testament, the devil and demons are seen to be behind the suffering and death of Jesus Christ for the salvation of humanity: Jesus’ resurrection is presented as a defeat of the devil and his angels, the demons.

If the Pentecostals are still fighting the demons, does it mean Christ has not conquered the devil and all his evil forces?

Divination is the practice of giving information about the future which is not available by natural means. This information is given to the diviner by higher powers, either through psychic methods involving a special mental ability of the diviner or through spiritual channels enabling the diviner to communicate with the spirit world. The diviner deciphers the information from higher powers with the use of a variety of tools (tarot cards, a crystal ball, the palm of the hand, the liver of an animal, tea leaves in the bottom of a cup, oil added to water, astrology, an Ouija board, etc).⁵⁰¹

The Bible refers to divination, for example in Acts 16:16-19 and Mark 5:1-16. The exorcisms performed by Jesus and his disciples were intended to drive demons out of human beings. Jesus commanded the evil spirits to depart and to afflict their victims no more. There

⁴⁹⁷ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

⁴⁹⁸ Kalos, James. 1975. *The Real Satan, From Biblical Times to the Present*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, p.60.

⁴⁹⁹ Kalos, 1975, p. 61.

⁵⁰⁰ De Villiers, Peter G.R. 1987. *Like A Roaring Lion: Essays on the Bible*. Pretoria: C.B.Powell Bible Centre, Unisa, p.23-24.

⁵⁰¹ De Villiers, 1987, p.72

is hence a strong conviction among Nigerian Pentecostals, and among many mainline Christians as well that the demons referred to in the scriptures are still in existence today and need to be exorcised through deliverance services. Private and individual divination and exorcism are also commonly practiced among Pentecostals. Oritsejafor, the current president of the Christian Association of Nigeria, states:

The powers of darkness in Nigeria are so strong that many people need to see the miraculous in order to believe that there is a power greater than that which they possess...People will always turn from darkness when they see a demonstration of the power of God with their own eyes (see Luke.22).⁵⁰²

Oritsejafor believes that the spiritual world controls the physical world, either for good or evil. In Nigeria, the reality of many spirits is recognized, for example, marine spirits, witchcraft spirits and bloodthirsty spirits. According to Oritsejafor, these spirits cause a lot of problems, from barrenness in women to HIV/AIDS, accidents, wars, and disunity among people the world over, but especially in Nigeria.⁵⁰³ Such beliefs are strongly embedded in Nigerian minds, informing the massive response to calls for deliverance and exorcism by Pentecostal preachers.

8.4.2 Healing

Mark 16.17 is part of the command by Jesus to “Preach the kingdom and heal the sick”, given to simple men without medical knowledge in the Bible. Pentecostals engage in healing, considering it a central part of their services. Healing in the context of the church is linked to the following presumptions:

- i. If one is a servant of Christ, his promises are valid and one is bound to do the will of the Lord. This requires implicit faith.⁵⁰⁴
- ii. To believe in healing on a Christian spiritual plane is not merely to believe in the fact that one will soon be better, an attitude very similar to auto-suggestion, if not identified with it. It is believed that someone is capable of healing and that his presence, necessary to it, is real.⁵⁰⁵
- iii. A sick person does not necessarily have to declare his or her faith publicly in order to obtain healing. There have been numerous cases of healing where the

⁵⁰² Wagner, C. P. and Thompson, J., (eds.). 2003. ‘Dealing With the Demonic’. *Out of Africa*, California: Regal Books, p. 95.

⁵⁰³ Wagner, and Thompson, (eds.). 2003, pp. 80-91.

⁵⁰⁴ De Villiers, 1987, p.76.

⁵⁰⁵ De Villiers, 1987, p.79.

faith of the sick person was not needed. It is only through divine intervention that the soul of the sick individual is made receptive to faith.⁵⁰⁶

- iv. In other cases, however, a whole process develops, starting with the discovery of forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ, and ending in the liberation from bodily infirmities.

Jesus did not only bear our sins, he bore our sickness and diseases. He became the bearer of our sickness in exactly the same way as he became the bearer of our sins. Christ was scourged for our healing and nailed to the cross for our sins.⁵⁰⁷ “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law (sickness, pestilence, fever, cancer, ulcer, boils), as well as nameless sickness found in people’s life today and other infirmities recorded or not recorded in scriptures.”⁵⁰⁸

In the Pentecostal view, we are healed because we are under the covenant. Jesus conquered sin and disease for our sake. We cannot be cursed. Infirmities come as consequences of disobedience and because we allow ourselves to follow the devil’s wishes rather than the will of God. “We can lay claim boldly to this redemptive grace; not with uncertainty but with confidence of faith and prayer to get healed and remain healthy all the days of our lives.”⁵⁰⁹

Faith healing is a strong draw-card for Pentecostalism in Nigeria where illness is rife and where there are very few good medical facilities, so that people often turn to traditional medicine for their needs.

8.5 Salvation

Salvation happens by grace through Jesus, his death and resurrection. To fully appreciate the benefits of salvation in Christ Jesus, one needs to be aware of the utter helplessness and hopelessness of man. Man is himself incapable of solving the problem of sin or of changing his destiny of eternal damnation (Is. 59.8).⁵¹⁰

Although Christ’s atonement on the cross guarantees universal provision of salvation for all mankind, the salvation has to be achieved on a personal basis through faith in Christ Jesus. The sinner who seeks salvation must take the necessary step of exercising faith in the blood of Jesus. The insistence on salvation through Christ alone is one of the factors attracting people to Pentecostal churches.

⁵⁰⁶ De Villiers, 1987, p.79.

⁵⁰⁷ De Villiers, 1987, p.32.

⁵⁰⁸ De Villiers, 1987, p.32.

⁵⁰⁹ Response from DLBC pastor interviewed in Jimeta, 4th May 2010.

⁵¹⁰ Response from DLBC pastor interviewed in Jimeta, 4th May 2010.

8.6 Repentance

Repentance, as seen in Pentecostalism, is a complete turning away from all sin and its deceitful pleasures. This is required from every sinner before he can truly and effectively believe in Jesus with saving faith.

- i. It is a conscious turning away from evil, disobedience, sin or idolatry;
- ii. It is a turning from Satan towards God; and
- iii. It evokes change in one's mind and purpose in life.

Therefore, repentance does not exist in isolation of faith. Repentance must necessarily produce good works and faith. Otherwise it is not embedded in the real world. Repentance opens us up to receiving the grace of God, so that sinners receive justification and acceptance. Repentance activates a life of faith. The researcher adds here that there is no specifically Pentecostal outlook on repentance. However, the representation of how they see repentance, calls their belief in the power of the Holy Spirit in question.

8.7 Symbols

Symbols have for centuries been powerful vehicles of communication, in scripture and in the church. The rainbow was a sign of God's covenant with Noah, that God would not again destroy the world with water (Genesis 9.12-17). A sign of a fish drawn on the ground helped Christians to identify each other during persecution in the first century AD. A sail ship model, hung in the middle of a church sanctuary in Denmark, is a symbol of the church struggling in the middle of the world of sin and in need of salvation. The Jelling 'Baptismal Stones', near the church at Jelling, Jutland, also called Denmark's baptismal certificate, is a symbol of the Christianization of Denmark. Verner Bruhn writes,

Archeological finds in Jelling have revealed that a wooden church lay on the site dedicated to a heathen cult, and that this church was probably built by King Harold. Later it was enlarged, and later again replaced by a stone church. ...We know very little about how the transition to the new faith took place. The ancient gods were not replaced from day to day, and it is very likely that many religious practices and beliefs passed over into the new creed, suitably disguised. Heathen and Christian motifs appear side by side on runic stones of the time and in Viking graves, witnessing to the struggle between the old and the new.⁵¹¹

⁵¹¹ Bruhn, Verner. 1994. *A people and its Church, The Lutheran Church in Denmark.*, Esbjerg, Danmark: Rosendahl, p.8.

One expects that in Nigerian Christianity, and in particular in Pentecostalist churches with their many new converts, symbolism should confirm a total liberation from the old ways. However, the old artifacts, used in non-Christian religion, are still around and since it is believed that, on repentance, the curses and covenants do not automatically dissolve, there is a need for men of God who have the spiritual backing of Jesus to break the curses. Such men of God are said to abound among Pentecostal leaders and pastors. Early missionaries to Nigeria have condemned most traditional practices as pagan. The mainline churches later came to terms with most such practices and are now, incorporating some traditional dances into the church liturgy. But there was no room for local gods once their worshippers became Christians.

The researcher has noticed that, while the Orthodox churches and the older Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Methodist denominations are moderately tolerant of traditional symbols and symbolism, the Pentecostals respect more strictly the idea of the jealous God who will brook no rival.

Hence, Nigerian Pentecostals consider traditional artifacts as symbols of “paganism” and “fetishism” which must be destroyed. As a result converts to Pentecostal Christianity are not too sure of how much of their traditional culture they can bring along. It could be argued that, in Pentecostalism, it is leaders and pastors themselves who are sources of symbols and of objects of worship. Their pictures, coats, shirts, handkerchiefs, bedding and soap are all cherished by their followers as symbols over which they pray and as objects that possess healing powers (as seen in the case of Idahosa and his hotel room in Yola). Sarah, a mainline Christian who in the course of fieldwork was interviewed for the present dissertation, had refused to demonstrate devotion to a picture of T.B. Joshua in exchange for which she would be healed from a fracture.⁵¹²

Symbols are signs that represent a real entity and they require a response from whoever sees or approaches them. Thus, road markings represent real features that lie ahead and prepare the road user for a sharp bend, a hill or a bridge coming up.

The Christian church has hundreds of symbols that aid an understanding of the Christian faith and teaching. Symbols may differ from one denomination to another while other symbols are relevant to all Christians. For example, the cross that is at the center of an altar, symbolizing Christ’s atonement and man’s redemption. The cross is the dominant symbol of Christianity and the main symbol for the identification of worship facilities.

⁵¹² Sarah I. D. had a car accident in 1999 in which the other four passengers died. She survived and was visited by many people who believed she had a miraculous escape from death. She granted an interview recounting her experience with the various well wishers that prayed with her during their visits. Interviewed in Jimeta. September, 2009.

Church buildings are identified by the cross on their towers or over the main entrance. Pentecostal churches, however, do not display symbols such as the cross.

Today, in the confessional books of the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches, there is a variety of symbols, some of which form logos. In the case of the Pentecostals, many of their churches carry names which are clearly symbols. Certain aspects of their worship and objects that they display are symbols in themselves which will be discussed below. Crusades are a symbol of the power of the church. People attend crusades because they are tangible events helping them to reach out to the intangible, for example to seek miracles that will solve problems such as barrenness, unemployment others are financial difficulties, deliverance from ancestral curses, sickness, marital difficulties, etc.

8.7.1 Colours

Colours are important symbols in the church and “the liturgical colours are used symbolically in the pavements, on the altar, pulpit and lectern”.⁵¹³ The symbolical values of colours and the occasions on which they are commonly used in the mainline churches are as follows:

- i. Red stands for fire and blood and is used on Martyr’s day and Pentecost;
- ii. Purple represents penitence and is used during Advent and Lent;
- iii. Green stands for hope and peace and is used at Epiphany and the Trinity or common season of the church;
- iv. White stands for peace and is used on All Saints’ Day and at Christmas and New Year festivities; and
- v. Black symbolizes death and mourning and is used for Good Friday and during funerals.⁵¹⁴

Of the Pentecostal churches, most have their own colours. Sometimes these colours have meanings corresponding to those in mainline churches. Often however, Pentecostals add their own meanings. The colours of the RCCG are white, green and blue. Green signifies aliveness, growth and nourishment.⁵¹⁵ Blue is understood by the RCCG to represent the sky, heavenly focus, and the journey towards heaven; it is thus associated with the mysteriousness of the love of God for humankind. Often, however, it is applied to the royal priesthood of

⁵¹³ Gouker, L., 1964. *Dictionar of Church Terms and Symbols*,. C. R. Gibson Company Norwalk, Conn. p.19.

⁵¹⁴ Gouker, 1964, p.19

⁵¹⁵ Asonzeh, 2005, p.207.

Christians (1 Pet. 2:9). In the RCCG, it may also refer to the mysteriousness of God's covenant with Josiah which is regarded as the foundation of the church.⁵¹⁶

Many Pentecostal churches hoist flags of nations from around the world, especially the flags of the USA, Britain and South Africa, along with the Nigerian national flag. These, they explain, symbolize the nations in which they have established congregations. "There are more than eighty of such flags hoisted and flying full mast at the camp grounds [of the RCCG], giving an impression of a church with a global outreach."⁵¹⁷

8.7.2 Raising of Hands in Singing and Prayer

The raising of hands is a common phenomenon in Pentecostal praise singing and prayer. When asked what it means, a Pentecostal pastor replied: "It symbolizes surrender to God".⁵¹⁸ Therefore, hands are raised towards heaven throughout prayer sessions and also while dancing and singing. The clapping of hands simply helps in indicating the rhythm of songs and keeps the services lively.

8.7.3 Anointing

Pentecostals talk of receiving an anointing from the man of God. What is meant does not become entirely clear, but the explanation goes that a pastor or bishop is a holy person therefore; his handshake can transfer blessings on a church member.

8.7.4 Objects of Ritual

Pentecostals use in their churches many objects which, they believe, do assist in the ritual experiences of their members. The most important objects are discussed below.

8.7.4.1 The Bible

The Bible is by Pentecostalism considered as the inspired word of God and as the only source of knowledge about God available to mankind. It is the contact point between finite man and infinite God.⁵¹⁹ Its prime purpose is to give man the revelation of God. It has to be interpreted literally. In non-believers the Bible creates an awareness of sin which leads to repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, while it helps believers to live according to God's will.⁵²⁰ The Pentecostals accept the Bible as the final authority in all matters concerning

⁵¹⁶ Ukah, 2005, p.208.

⁵¹⁷ Ukah, 2005, p. 209

⁵¹⁸ Response during interview at Girei, 15th July 2009.

⁵¹⁹ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

⁵²⁰ Deeper Life Bible Church Convention Manual 2010.

Christians, their conduct, and their works. Pentecostals do not read the Bible critically. Pentecostals, Sarojini Nadar posits, are convinced that scripture can only be interpreted and understood through intervention of the Spirit.⁵²¹ Nadar is a South African. Her comments concern the South African situation but it also applies to Adamawa and the Nigerian situation in general.

Nadar, quoting Fulkerson, argues that,

They do not use scholarly commentaries to prepare their sermons; when they use anything other than Scripture they are likely to use church literature. Their primary Biblical practices are ordered by prayer, fasting, much time spent reading the Bible, and trust in the Holy Spirit, whose anointing they understood to be essential to the success of their preaching.⁵²²

Sarojini speaks of the emergence of a specific neo-Pentecostal understanding of scripture which she terms the “four i’s” approach. The approach suggests that the Bible is inerrant, infallible, inspired and immediate. Thus, neo-Pentecostals’ defining relationship to the Bible is to be found in its focus on the immediate: the Bible and its message are directly and immediately, without need for critical interpretation, applied to life.⁵²³

During research I found Nadar’s view of neo-Pentecostalism as being focused on the immediacy of scripture, to be entirely valid for neo-Pentecostals in Adamawa. The substance of her argument is that, as scriptural texts are applied uncritically, they sometimes hurt those who they were meant to rescue or protect.

Pentecostals use certain sections of the Bible more than other. The researcher’s experience of Pentecostal worship shows convincingly that they prefer to preach from the Old Testament, especially from the prophetic books. When they use the New Testament, they have a preference for the Epistles such as Romans, I&II, Corinthians, Book of James, Johanne literature, Letters of Peter, Colossians, Ephesians and Philipians, Thessalonians and the Letters to Timothy and Titus. Acts and Revelations are favorites of the holiness movements. Those with a prosperity bent like to use the Five Books for Moses, Psalms, Nehemiah, Ezra, Esther, Ruth, Samuel, Kings Chronicles, Judges, Joshua, along with the Prophets and the Epistles in the New Testament. Throughout the entire research period, I have not heard the Pentecostals preach or teach from the Gospels.

⁵²¹ S. Nadar, Bloomquist, K. L., ed, 2009. “Who’s Afraid of Bible Believing Christians,” Lutherans Respond to Pentecostalism: Theology in the Life of the Church, Vol.4, p.68.

⁵²² S. Nadar, Bloomquist, ed, 2009, p.69.

⁵²³ S. Nadar, Bloomquist, ed, 2009, p.70.

8.7.4.2 Olive Oil

Olive oil is the standard oil used for anointment. It is holy oil and, for use during any ritual. It has to be blessed by the pastor or "papa". The pastor of the main Living Faith Church in Jimeta-Yola, Adamawa State, instructed all members, who wanted to rid their homes and families of suffering during the year 2005 to bring their oil on January 1 and 2 to the church to have it blessed, before returning it to the family compound. Thereafter the oil was believed to have the power to drive away disease and evil forces.

Olive oil is essential for the performance of healing miracles. It is preferred for ritual purposes because it was the oil used in ancient Israel and it was used by Christ for anointing people. A Pentecostal pastor in Yola argued that 'we use olive oil, because it does not stain'.⁵²⁴ Oyedepo on the other hand, ascribes important qualities to olive oil which he prefers to call 'Anointing Oil'. He describes its mystery as follows. "It is the Spirit of God, mysteriously packaged in a bottle. It is mysteriously designed to communicate the power of God, bodily. It is the powers of God in your hand, in the person of [sic] Holy Spirit."⁵²⁵ Such an extreme belief, equating olive oil with the Holy Spirit, seems far-fetched to say the least. The living Faith Church encourages its members to buy olive oil and drink it, apply it to the body, sprinkle it in offices, homes, shops, on new cars and on sick people, in order to sanctify objects and places and to benefit people, bringing them health and the good things of life, including material prosperity.

Oyedepo goes, in the view of this researcher, radically overboard, when he asserts that, "Any situation that is above (the capacity of) anointing oil is equally above the Holy Ghost, and so, what the anointing oil cannot do, also the Holy Ghost cannot gamble into [sic]."⁵²⁶

The Pentecostals classify anointing oil, candles, handkerchiefs, and, what they call, the Blood of Jesus, among the items that bring blessings and healing into their lives. They bring these items to special church services for the pastors to bless. Back home the blessed oil, candles, handkerchiefs and blood of Jesus are sprinkled, positioned and used to touch any (sick) person or object that needs cleansing before miracles can happen. The items can prevent that bad luck and illness should effect believers and their homes, and restore health to the sick. The items are in addition a promise of material prosperity waiting just around the corner.

⁵²⁴ Gelbe, interviewed in Yola. August 2009.

⁵²⁵ Oyedepo, D. O., 1995. *The Mystery of the Anointing Oil*, Ikeja-Lagos, Dominion Publishing House, p.9.

⁵²⁶ Oyedepo, D. O., 1992. *Anointing for Breakthrough*, Ikeja-Lagos, Dominion Publishing House, pp.211ff.

The attitude of Pentecostal worshippers to this kind of teaching is difficult to understand. They must be naive and gullible in the extreme to accept that oil, candles, handkerchiefs and the substance called the Blood of Jesus can perform healing miracles and bring material prosperity. The belief that these blessed items can substitute Christ and the Holy Spirit is, one could argue, far from Christian. One could imagine that, in the same vein, Pentecostals might select human beings, bless them, and send them out to perform miracles. However, it may be more profitable to sell special oil, candles, handkerchiefs and Blood of Jesus for the same purpose. The blessed items, one might say, function as Saints interceding on behalf of believers. A Lutheran pastor who got tempted by the promise of powers invested in blessed items found that, instead of olive oil, he was given vegetable oil for his healing purposes. The example shows that even among the mainline clergy obscure Pentecostal ideas can take hold. Testimonies like the following indicate the importance of certain objects of ritual for Pentecostal believers:

My sister was very sick to the point of death; we tried everything in our power to save her life through drugs but to no avail. During the last blood covenant service I decided to minister the blood on her. After few days, my sister who could neither eat nor walk, started adding weight, she could eat and go about her normal business.⁵²⁷

Another testimony:

I am here to return all the glory to God for his mercies upon my life since I started joining this church. My business was at the brink of collapse, nothing I did worked. During Sunday Service, the man of God Evangelist Dominic Uwemabasi called me out and gave me his handkerchief directing me to go to my shop dust my goods in the shop with it maintaining that my sales would increase. To the glory of God, on Monday, someone came and bought goods at my shop to the tune of sales I had not made for the past years.⁵²⁸

These are the type of testimonies Pentecostals relate during worship services to persuade people that God works in their lives. The pastor who blesses the ritual item is regarded highly by the congregation.

8.7.4.3 Pictures of Pentecostal Leaders

As mentioned earlier, the pictures of Pentecostal leaders are thought to possess great power. If an afflicted person prays while looking at a photo of, for example, T.B. Joshua, it is believed that he shall be healed. A picture of this church leader was brought to my house by a member of T. B. Joshua's church to encourage the recovery of my daughter who had suffered

⁵²⁷ Bassey, B. Testimony taken from a publication of Supreme Word (Evang) Mission, 96 Aka Etinan Rd., Uyo Akwa, Ibom State, Nigeria., May 2012.

⁵²⁸ Elder Uche, U. *Testimony taken from Supreme Word* (Evang) Mission Publication, 96 Aka Etinan Rd., Uyo Akwa, Ibom State, Nigeria., May 2012.

a fracture in an accident. Photos of leaders are by some Pentecostals venerated as if they were icons. They are perceived as aiding worship and increasing spirituality.

8.7.4.4 Names

In the African worldview names are intended to have meanings. They are carriers of divine intentions and metaphysical significance.⁵²⁹ The names that parents give their children indicate their hearts' desires.

The names of Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State are, in the eyes of their members, all of symbolical significance. Ayo, member of a Pentecostal group, said: "When we go to church we sing and praise the Lord until we become praise children for God".⁵³⁰ The name of her church is 'Praise Chapel for All Nations Church'. All who worship there sing praises to God for hours on end, living up to their name. The Living Faith Chapel is also known as the 'Winners' Chapel'. The name reflects the fact that, with God on their side, they feel they are winners. This confidence characterizes their general behaviour as well and the church may be attractive to entrepreneurs and ambitious or successful people in general. In the view of the RCCG, the "invocation of their name brings about miracles and divine intervention in human actions, since it is believed that it was divinely revealed to Josiah..."⁵³¹ The current leader of the church, Pastor Adeboye, declared, "The name of the church is complete and perfect; nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken away from it". The name RCCG, according to Ukah, "has accumulated layers of meanings: awe, reverence and emotional attachment. It is now a ritual symbol full of special meanings and significations."⁵³²

The Truth Foundation Ministries (TFM) is an indigenous Pentecostal movement in Adamawa State. It resulted from differences of opinion between the church council of the Lutheran congregation of Numan and young congregants who felt abandoned when the pastor told them: "I have nothing to do with this that you are doing, from now you are on your own." Rejected by the Lutheran church as heretics they founded their own ministry. Its name indicates their persuasion that, in fact, they had been seeking the truth and wanted to reform the church as Luther had done 500 years ago.

⁵²⁹ Asonzeh, 2005, p.207.

⁵³⁰ Discussion with a Pentecostal Christian. Ms. Ayo, at Jimeta, Adamawa State, 71-2007.

⁵³¹ Asonzeh, 2005, p.207.

⁵³² Ukah, 2005, p.207.

8.7.4.5 Logos

The visual ways in which various Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State indicate their identity are as varied as the churches themselves. The logo of a church announces its purpose to the public at large.⁵³³ It is the emblem of the church and appears on all official papers and properties of the church, thus playing a role in public relations. . In most cases the logo is an aesthetic design presenting, in strict shorthand, an elaborate theology that represents the meaning and aspiration of the church.⁵³⁴

Some logos are not just marks of identity, but are believed to possess spiritually protective powers. Ukah argues that “the RCCG logo is ubiquitous. It is a marker of identity, with strong religious signification: people attribute miraculous power to this logo for keeping thieves and robbers away, or protecting cars from automobile accidents. It repulses evil spirits such as witches and wizards from places and persons who carry [the logo] on their person; it also attracts blessings, miracles and prosperity. It is believed to establish ‘contacts’ with the sacred. In these ways, the logo and the materials on which it is printed, designed or carved, serve both spiritual and social purposes. It serves as an insurance against the unexpected [...] the presence of divine grace and spiritual security and protection.”⁵³⁵

The African worldview is intensely charismatic and alive, and so Africans interpreted the gospel in a very lively manner and may be made it really their own by visualizing the scenario as if taking place in their own time and in their own villages. Thus appropriating the full sense of the word and infused it with many elements, relevant to their own cultures.

Ukah also submits that in Nigeria, for example, the period of strongly growing religiosity was characterized by:

- (i) post-civil war deprivation and an increased spiritual quest for salvation and for solutions to social and personal problems,
- (ii) the expansion of education provided important infrastructure which facilitated the emergence of an educated elite eager to appropriate what is considered as “the goods of modernity”, and
- (iii) The economic crisis of the mid-1980s which resulted in the adoption of World Bank/IMF designed structural adjustments leading to the retrenchment of workers, unemployment of graduates, social disorganization and near economic meltdown.

⁵³³ Ukah, 2005, p.204.

⁵³⁴ Ukah, 2005, p.205.

⁵³⁵ Ukah, 2005, p.206.

In my view, these existential needs that informed the quest for modernity and the issue of economic meltdown are issues for the southern part of Nigeria which sees the urgency of the situation as fuel for the spiritual needs that encourage ready acceptance of religious answers, offered for social and material questions. In the North, and particularly Adamawa, although existentialism cannot be completely ruled out but the loyalty to the missionary tradition of separating modernity and materialism from issues of faith and salvation is very strong. The needs to address matters of evil spirits, witchcraft, diseases that defer medical solution are the real issues that provide continuity between the Adamawa people's mind frame and Pentecostal. They see Pentecostalism as addressing these issues.

Although the craving for modern life is true and universal among all people in difficult circumstances, in the particular case of Adamawa, I feel quite sure that their embrace of Pentecostalism is informed more by faith issues than quest for modernity.

8.8 Summary

The present study has made the researcher realize that several perceptions in Pentecostal 'theology' are not very far removed from evangelical theology. A core thought in Pentecostalism is that Christ, and Christ alone, is the absolute center. Christ must be constantly experienced in the life of believers and Christ's presence is required in all facets of existence. This is conversely, at variance with their stress on the place of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is primarily related to the death of Jesus on the cross. Two types of baptism are taught in Pentecostal theology: spirit baptism and water baptism and the second should be done only by immersion. Pentecostals accept only adult baptism for which the minimum age is 14 years. Baptism by the Holy Spirit is reserved for the truly born again. Marriages are pre-arranged for members under the watchful eye of the church which strongly accentuates the need for chastity before marriage.

Pentecostals believe in demons. Another important part of their faith is a belief in healing and exorcism which are miracles that may affect Christians as well as non-Christians and which prove God's power. Faith healing attracts many Nigerians to the Pentecostal churches as disease is rife in the country. Repentance is seen as activating faith and is required of every sinner before his or her belief in Christ can be accepted as authentic.

Pentecostal leaders present themselves as objects of worship. Their pictures, clothing and bedding are cherished as symbols to pray over and are believed to possess healing powers. Crusades are symbols of the power of the church as a whole. They are tangible events where people reach out to the intangible, hoping for miracles that will solve their

problems. The greatest of Christian symbols, the cross, displayed in all mainline churches, is totally absent from Pentecostal churches, conventions and crusade grounds.

CHAPTER NINE

EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF PENTECOSTALIST INSTITUTIONS

9.0 Introduction

Chapter nine discusses the achievements of Pentecostals, as seen and understood by themselves and by mainline churches, as well as responses of the latter to questions posed by the researcher. Possibilities for meaningful cooperation between Pentecostals and mainline churches are explored. The involvement of Pentecostals in the politics, government, and economy of the state are analyzed.

Sources for this chapter include discussions with members, pastors, leaders and founders of Pentecostal churches and with bishops and leaders of mainline churches as well as with government officials and social scientists.

9.1 Relations between Pentecostals and with Mainline Churches

Pentecostal institutions maintain relationships among themselves, with other Christian denominations, and with society at large, especially with neighbourhoods where their churches are located. Such relationships are kept for the obvious purpose of gaining members and for reasons of mutual respect and benefit.

9.1.1 Relations between Pentecostals

Not all Pentecostal groups agree with each other. Their national leaders sometimes quarrel openly. Splits in Pentecostal churches are mostly caused by controversies or disagreements and there are instances where splits are accompanied by a lot of bitterness. One example is the Living Faith of Oyedepo.

At a particular moment in time Oyedepo directed that non-graduate pastors should be sacked. The head pastor of Abuja Diocese of Living Faith was affected by this exercise and was posted to Port Harcourt. He rejected the posting and thereafter broke away, establishing his own church next to the Winners Chapel at Durumi, Abuja.⁵³⁶

The Living Faith pastor in Yola, Adamawa, also broke away and started his own church in 2008. In this case no one wanted to say what caused the move, but many members of Living Faith followed the pastor when he established his own church which he called Spirit Life Ministries.

⁵³⁶ Abimboye, D. *Newswatch Magazine*, Ikeja-Lagos, 14th November, 2011, p.29.

Despite differences in style and teaching most Pentecostal churches, founded by indigenous pastors in Adamawa, seem to work together amicably although gossip and lots of rumours do the rounds. What Ellis and Ter Haar wrote in relation to Africa, is indeed perfectly applicable to Nigeria: “Many rumours, especially in Africa, amount to an elaborate conspiracy theory, a staple of politics in many parts of the world because it provides a form of explanation to whatever is thought to have taken place.”⁵³⁷ There is always a mysterious ‘they’, ‘he’ or ‘she’ that need to be talked about. This is the case in the church, also among the Pentecostals. The gossip may concern such questions as who has more power than the next person in church, or who has more money, or more followers. Some of this talk creates bad blood amongst Pentecostals and they are well aware of this danger. They have, however, found a way around those differences by focusing on a common goal which is the need to ‘succeed’ and ‘survive’. They know that they cannot achieve much if they allow their differences to rule them. Again, it is the Nigerian phenomenon [the determination to succeed and never to be called a failure] that encourages them to behave sensibly in the face of competition and differences of opinion. As Ukah points out: “Competition among them is rife and each thus makes efforts to carve out a niche that will [serve] through a well-defined or streamlined set of products. Specialisation enables these churches to cultivate and maintain their respective niches”.⁵³⁸

In addition to this, indigenous Adamawa Pentecostal groups are closely knit together by peer group affinity. Their founding leaders were almost all of the same age group. They started out together in youth fellowship groups and mentored or were mentored by the same Pentecostal leaders from the south of the country and from the United States of America. In addition, as Bishop Makanto puts it: “The LCCN could not contain us therefore; we had to leave to start our own ministries and churches” [see 6.2.4 above]. Pentecostals tolerate each other as comrades, despite differences, since they see themselves as having suffered together.

Each Pentecostal movement or church turned round to attack the mainline churches. They were like several little armies though poorly trained and ill-equipped, pounding on a big army that is well trained, equipped with sophisticated weapons commanded by seasoned generals. Thus, they managed to throw the mainline churches with their well-educated, experienced clergy and a solid heritage behind them, into some confusion.

⁵³⁷ Ellis, S. and Ter Haar, G. 2004. *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*, Johannesburg, Vits University Press, p. 35.

⁵³⁸ Ukah, 2007, p.15.

9.1.2 Pentecostals Relating to Mainline Churches (from a Pentecostal perspective)

The Pentecostal pastor Japhet Tonmoso, when asked about the relations between Pentecostals and the mainline churches, stated: “We relate cordially with all mainline churches and invite ministers and Christian brothers with a sound knowledge of God and the Bible from the mainline churches to come and minister or teach in our congregations and at our conventions.”⁵³⁹

All indigenous Pentecostal pastors in Adamawa State emphasize that their roots are in the mainline churches and that they gladly accept opportunities to teach in the mainline churches. Firstly, because this would mean they were recognized and accepted by the mainline churches and, secondly, because they would know they had been forgiven for leaving their former churches which, after all, as they stipulate, they did in answer to the call of God.⁵⁴⁰

Bishop Mayo refers to the mainline churches as “our mothers” and stated that Pentecostals pray that the mainline churches may sort out their problems according to the will of God because, should the mainline churches fail to do the will of God, “we will all suffer shame... I don’t want the mainline churches to think we shall dance for joy if they have problems.”⁵⁴¹

Many Pentecostalists in Adamawa State, especially the indigenous founders, are clearly still strongly attached to their former churches. Responses by interviewees when asked how they feel about mainline churches were along the following lines:

I feel OK for the mainline churches. I pray for the church for revival because the mainline have educated ministers but they do not let people know God personally in spirit and truth.⁵⁴²

Some Pentecostalists stated that they pray for the mainline churches, hoping for a reformation among them. In their view mainline churches should focus more on spiritual training and development and improve their practice of following up on the needs of their members.⁵⁴³

Their concerns were strongly linked to the Pentecostal view that mainline Christians are not ‘born again’ and are therefore not capable of serving God in spirit and truth.

In most cases the big Pentecostal churches in Adamawa State were formed as a result of long disputes between their founders and the leaders of mainline congregations, resulting

⁵³⁹ Tonmoso, interviewed in Jimeta, 17th July 2006.

⁵⁴⁰ Mayo, interviewed in Jimeta, 5th September 2007.

⁵⁴¹ Mayo, interviewed in Jimeta 5th September 2007.

⁵⁴² Reaction from Pentecostal members interviewed in Jimeta, July 2006.

⁵⁴³ Reaction from Pentecostal members interviewed in Jimeta, July 2006.

in the Pentecostals leaving to establish new churches. It is therefore not always easy for mainline churches to cultivate fellowship with them. Not only the founder-leaders of the first local Pentecostal churches, but also their earliest members were converts abandoning the mainline churches which led to a charge of “sheep stealing”.⁵⁴⁴ This accusation is long-standing and pervasive. And since the Adamawa community is both pastoral and riverine, “sheep stealing” is also termed “fishing in the boat”, both readily understood metaphors.

As mentioned, many Pentecostals believe that a Christian, to be true, must be ‘born again’, in other words, he must consciously decide against sin, confess fully to God, ask for pardon and renewal, and believe in God’s mercy. A return to sin shows a lack of change in his life. For example, homosexuality is thought to be forbidden biblically, and thus “...a man whose behaviour borders on effeminacy is not a Christian at all.”⁵⁴⁵

They perceive such sinners as nominal Christians who should not be considered as a ‘brother’ or ‘sister’. This is one reason, why Deeper Life Bible Church members see the mainline churches, where the ‘born again’ concept plays no role, as a mission field.⁵⁴⁶

Despite this stance, the Pentecostals have found it necessary to join the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the political vanguard of Christian churches, founded in 1976 by mainline Christians in Northern Nigeria in 1976. Not all Pentecostal churches have joined the association which has, of recent, assigned to itself the role of umbrella body for the regulation of Christian activities in Nigeria, instead of its original role of regulating government action as it affects Christians and society in general.⁵⁴⁷

As discussed earlier, the Pentecostals have their own association, the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN). This body consists of Pentecostal churches only. The CAN is thus the main arena of cooperation between the Pentecostals and mainline churches in Adamawa State.

9.1.3 Pentecostal Relations with Mainline Churches (from Mainline Churches’

Perspective)

Pentecostals in Adamawa State, describing their position with regard to mainline churches, stated: “We see ourselves as one: when there is a need and we have resources we support them and we attend their programmes”.⁵⁴⁸ Exactly what type of support they refer to

⁵⁴⁴ M.A.B. Gaiya. 2002. “The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria.” Occasional paper CASUC, p.12.

⁵⁴⁵ Gaiya, 2002. p.14.

⁵⁴⁶ Gaiya, 2002. p.15.

⁵⁴⁷ CAN was created by Christian elders in Northern Nigeria to address the Christian situation as regards its relations with a government assumed to be predominantly Muslim and repressive towards Christians.

⁵⁴⁸ Tonmoso, interviewed in Jimeta 17th July 2006.

is not made explicit but it does seem that, despite the mainliners' intolerance of the Pentecostal views on, for example, infant baptism, they harbour no bitterness toward their 'mother' churches. The late bishop Abba of the Catholic diocese of Yola said, "We try to accommodate them and, in the process, sometimes, they too want us to accommodate them."⁵⁴⁹ Nevertheless, there remains suspicion between the two. Bishop Abba maintained: "They do not do things straight forward. They play a kind of intrigue [and] when they get what they want, they go away from you. So you have to be very careful."⁵⁵⁰

Bishop Markus Ibrahim of the Anglican diocese of Yola says that he does not reject the Pentecostals. He insisted: "We know them. We accept them as Christians, their background and where they are coming from. We work together as a team but, at the same time, when they come, we have to watch their doctrinal approach".⁵⁵¹

It is precisely the doctrinal issues that bother most mainline churches. They blame the limitations of the training provided to Pentecostal pastors and consider them in need of guidance on ecclesiastical and theological matters. The Anglican bishop of Yola stated that he would be "...willing to help the Pentecostals but they are difficult to teach"⁵⁵² The fact that the Pentecostals claim they "know the truth", makes it hard for them to accept guidance.⁵⁵³ The bishop suggested: "They should open their own schools of theology or go and study in established theological schools. This is necessary because they need to know the roots of the word."⁵⁵⁴

Pentecostals on the other hand, insist that they know the Word of God and use it better than mainline churches. They are not ashamed to preach it anywhere, at any time, as evangelism is their priority. Thus, born again preachers can be found on Nigeria's buses, taxis, and even on domestic flights, urging passengers to repent from sin and to live holy lives.⁵⁵⁵ Pentecostals believe generally that everyone needs to be evangelized. The mainline churches and their 'nominal' Christians need to repent as well and choose to live holy lives. This confirms the notion that Pentecostals regard the mainline churches as mission fields.

Pentecostals in Adamawa generally are of the opinion that the church is one and that churches therefore must cooperate. This perception is however discredited by the Pentecostal condition of the need to be 'born again' and its insistence on baptism by the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁴⁹ Bishop Abba, Catholic bishop of Yola, interviewed in Jimeta 5th August 2006.

⁵⁵⁰ Abba, 5th August 2006.

⁵⁵¹ Ibrahim, M. A., Anglican bishop of Yola interviewed in Jimeta 10th July, 2006

⁵⁵² Ibrahim, 10th July 2006.

⁵⁵³ Ibrahim, 10th July 2006.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibrahim, 10th July 2006.

⁵⁵⁵ Gaiya, M.A.B. 2000. "The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria." Occasional paper. Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen, Danmark.

9.1.4 Relating with Civil Society

Pentecostals have in the past rejected any hint of identification with the political class, refusing, for example, to attend state festivities and open official ceremonies with prayers. In 2007, at its national rally in Yola, Adamawa, the ruling party requested several Pentecostal pastors to say the opening prayer. The request was turned down. Instead a mainline bishop, Bishop Edward R. Ishaya of the Lutheran church, was approached and travelled over 500 kilometres to say the prayers at the rally.

Under the previous government in Adamawa State (May 1999 to May 2007 under Governor Boni Haruna), the clergy of Pentecostal churches was perceived as patronizing the regime and often visited the Governor's residence. The national rally of the ruling party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), in Yola 2007 was, it seemed, not on the Pentecostals' or 'born again' list. But soon after the formation of the new government, under Governor Murtala Hamman Nyako, a Muslim, the clamouring for political office, and hence power and influence, took off and saw Pentecostal pastors and leaders frequenting government house again. This is a complete shift from the stance of the mainline churches as well as of those 'born again' churches that previously shunned government houses and would turn down government appointments, as Van Dijk rightly points out:

If someone from the born again groups were appointed, even involuntarily, to one of the many political organizations (for men, women, youth or whatever), that person was perceived forthwith as an outcast: as someone who had defiled the treasure of being born again for the sake of access to political power.⁵⁵⁶

Thus, apparently, the Pentecostal position in this regard has changed. This would seem to be due to the fact that certain benefits could be derived from relations with officialdom, and for the very same reason Pentecostal preaching shifted from the holiness message to the prosperity message.

What seems to compound the situation of the church in Nigeria is the barefaced disregard for professional ethics demonstrated by civil servants in the country. One would expect that the civil service of Nigeria, 75% of which are Christians, would apply the principles of its Christian background to service delivery. Many were educated in church schools. However, as pointed out by Arowolo: "Many office holders (both civil and political) in Nigeria do not have clear conceptions of the ethical demands of their positions, and even when they have such these are brazenly disregarded."⁵⁵⁷ His remarks are justified and may be attributed to the demands made on civil servants who are bread winners for their families,

⁵⁵⁶ Van Dijk, Rijk A. "Christian Fundamentalism in sub-Saharan Africa," *The Case of Pentecostalism*, Occasional Paper, Centre for African Studies University of Copenhagen, Denmark 2000.p.17.

⁵⁵⁷ Arowolo, Dare. "Academic Leadership:" *The Online Journal*, Volume 8 Issue 3 Summer 2010, p.2.

relatives and the communities they hail from. They have to make ends meet and, therefore, they sometimes dip their hands into public coffers. Other, perhaps more decent government employees tell lies or make promises they cannot keep.

In order to avoid embarrassing situations that might involve the church and its clergy, mainline churches have discouraged their pastors from having anything to do with politics. Christians in general were not to become politicians because politics was seen as associated with lies and fraud and would corrupt the Christian mind. The saying, 'Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely', was frequently proclaimed from the pulpits. The conditions of service of the LCCN clearly spells out that any pastor, wishing to go into partisan politics, is free to do so but must drop the vestments and can only be readmitted after careful scrutiny of his activities while in the political arena.

However, in the last two decades, in the mainline as well as the Pentecostal churches, the separation between church and state duties has been undermined, some say because of the personal interests of some church leaders.⁵⁵⁸ This has led to a Pentecostal and, increasingly, a mainliners' involvement in politics. As a result, the criticism, leveled by both the mainline and Pentecostal Christians against government corruption and government's failure to deliver, is weakened by the involvement of churches themselves with those in the political arena.

Today, Pentecostals in Adamawa show great interest in matters of civil authority and for obvious reasons. They encourage members to contest for elective positions and to support parties that have Christian candidates only. At the same time, leaders embrace offers from government to serve in public office in Adamawa state, even though the governor himself is not a Christian and after they have openly opposed his candidature on the ground that he is a Muslim.

The researcher observed that many Pentecostal pastors present themselves as seers, privately visiting one government office after the other, to say prayers for governors or other prominent political officials, after first having publicly resisted their coming to power. The researcher met a Pentecostal bishop who boasted, one month after president Obama had been inaugurated, that he could speak with the president whenever he wanted because he had Obama's direct phone number. When asked to share it with the researcher, the bishop turned away. Such claims, aim to create an air of importance and suggest power.

In Nigerian thought, the prayers of a true man of God are perceived as very powerful, more so if that man of God has made accurate predictions in the past. This leads political

⁵⁵⁸ A social scientist in an interview at Jos, Plateau state, January 2006.

office holders to patronize Pentecostal leaders. Such associations have their benefits for the Pentecostals as it accords them prominence, power and respect. The economic benefits may also be considerable.

Several Pentecostal leaders are thought to have used such associations to escape paying duties on imported goods such as motor vehicles, building materials and other equipment, brought into the country in the name of their churches. Thus, some Pentecostal leaders and their churches have become extremely wealthy and powerful.

The association of Pentecostals with the political class would seem to have been mainly for personal economic benefits and for the status of their ministries. It has also helped to ease land acquisition processes. Most Pentecostal churches acquire huge chunks of land for their camp grounds and for developmental purposes, such as programmes for building schools. Socially, the churches benefit as well when their leaders have easy access to the seat of power so that they can encourage possible political appointments of church members.

9.1.5 Relations with the Business Community

Many Pentecostals are in close contact with the business community. Pentecostal leaders associate with bankers and bank executives, marketing agents, manufacturers, importers and exporters. Some leaders are businessmen themselves and run their churches as enterprises.

Due to the support that Pentecostals give to business, business in return supports Pentecostal programmes with large sums of money. Some banks open special loan facilities for churches (many bank executives are Pentecostals). Pentecostal convention and crusade grounds are for big and small enterprises good places to do brisk business. Many businesses take advantage of such gatherings to sell their products. The organizers of crusades and conventions charge fees for stalls and shops in the grounds. In that way considerable sums can be raised for the church. In addition to paying rent for spaces and shops, businesses have to register and contribute a fee to be allowed into the grounds. This arrangement is now copied by mainline churches and it generates impressive amounts of money, for example for the Lutheran church during its annual conventions in February of every year.

The relations of Pentecostal churches with the business community are mutually beneficial. Those Pentecostals who preach the prosperity gospel believe that not only the members, but also the church itself must be economically strong to be able to carry out its

activities, especially evangelism. The general growth of the church is seen as depending on the economic strength of the church.

The close association of the Pentecostal churches with the business community helps some of the clergy to maintain a flamboyant life style. A Nigerian Pentecostal leader, Benson Idahosa, admitted that “faith had brought him so many clothes he did not know he had them [and] a car even Nigeria’s President Babangida could not match.”⁵⁵⁹

The Pentecostal belief in material blessings as a sign of God’s favour has somehow driven many followers to become aggressive businessmen and women. The church encourages them in their endeavours and members are aware that they are an important source of financial support for the church. The church exhorts them to engage in legally gainful business ventures: “For the church to be financially strong, the members must be economically strong.”⁵⁶⁰

The researcher has observed that the drive for a wealthy membership has led many Pentecostals in Adamawa State to split from their Pentecostal groups and to establish their own church, which often comes down to creating an empire of their own with its own economic resources. If they succeed, they and their church will attain positions of power. Thus, the House of Refuge in Jimeta resulted from a split.

A good example of a Pentecostal church that has managed to get the support of the business community and that is reaping the fruits of this relationship is the RCCG. Ukah states that, while the RCCG is a “spiritual community, a movement of a people with spiritual ideas, goals and direction”, it represents at the same time a religio-economic ideology. It is deeply involved in the production, distribution and consumption of an array of goods and services. The prosperity orientation, embraced by the leadership of Adebayo and incorporated into RCCG doctrines, is characterized by the blurring of boundaries between religious and economic activities.⁵⁶¹ RCCG is the fastest growing Pentecostal church in Adamawa state today, with prayer houses springing up all around Yola and the big towns of Adamawa. They plant churches every few hundred metres from each other. This is a business strategy I believe they have adopted to represent themselves and at the same time spread their religio-economic ideology which appeals to people in Adamawa as in other parts of Nigeria.

Not only has the church in its preaching of the prosperity gospel adopted the language and the styles of the commercial world, but it is concretely involved in the direct buying and selling of goods and services. It has even recruited the professional expertise of economists

⁵⁵⁹ Gaiya, 2002, p. 9.

⁵⁶⁰ Gelbe, interviewed in Yola, 6th September 2011.

⁵⁶¹ Asonzeh, 2005, p.247.

and corporate marketers to organize, package and sell its programmes to the public.⁵⁶² Corporate organizations now lend their weight, their technical know-how, their financial influence, and organizational skills to the church.

Nigerian breweries, bottling companies, Unilever and scores of the new generation banks in and around Lagos, patronize the church because it accords them the opportunity to sell their products at convention grounds. Ukah observes that,

A significant strength of the RCCG is its ability to harness the resources of the business community in the country. Every important event or programme in the church has partners drawn from the business community. These partners raise the needed funds and other material for the hosting and staging of the events. These partners are invited to prestigious places for business luncheons where strategies are devised and funds raised towards the successful staging of specific programmes. The occasions serve as opportunities to thank the partners for their generous support as well as encourage them to 'sow again' by making promissory notes towards (future) projects.⁵⁶³

Three main groups of people and agencies are involved in different activities of the RCCG. Firstly, the Redeemers Club, which is an organisation that runs Redeemers Café with executive toilets and baths (facilities for the wealthy to use in the city), Cherith Restaurant, a supermarket, and various missionary recording studios. Secondly, corporate organizations liaise with the church authorities and, for a fee, secure retail outlets for their products and services. Examples are Nestle Foods Nigeria, NBC, Procter and Gamble, 7up Nigeria, Sona Breweries, Unilever, Express Bank, and Global Bank. The third group consists of private individuals and petty traders who secure a permit and stall where to sell their wares, from cheap books to olive oil and local musical instruments.⁵⁶⁴

These business interests, according to Ukah, are a permanent feature of all RCCG mega events and provide the material and financial resources for the organization of the programmes.⁵⁶⁵

The leadership of a Pentecostal church such as the RCCG also supports multinational business interests. In the late 1990s the public in Nigeria was led to believe that products from Procter and Gamble, especially their toilet soaps, were products of an occult society. The public was warned to avoid these products or risk becoming initiated into occultism. Sales of the products suffered greatly. The country manager of Procter and Gamble in Nigeria, Roland Ebelt, approached the RCCG to assist his company to dissociate the company's president from Satanism. Adeboye, the leader of the RCCG, announced to his

⁵⁶² Asonzeh, 2005, p.247.

⁵⁶³ Asonzeh, 2005, p.249.

⁵⁶⁴ Ukah, 2005. p.250.

⁵⁶⁵ Ukah, 2005. p.250.

audience: “I am convinced beyond all doubt now that it is just competition of one type or the other that just wanted to run down the company through falsehood. So I want to tell you that anything that is their product you can buy and you can use.”⁵⁶⁶

9.2 Summary

Not all Pentecostals are in full agreement with one another. In this chapter we have seen that the PFN is the umbrella body for most Pentecostal movements in Nigeria and that most indigenous Pentecostal churches in Adamawa work amicable together despite their differences in style and teaching.

Pentecostals in Adamawa state are willing to cooperate with mainline churches and ministers through pulpit exchange. Some Pentecostals refer to mainline churches as “our mothers” and pray for them. Most indigenous Pentecostal leaders in Adamawa are still strongly attached to their former mainline churches, pray for them and hope for a reformation among the mainliners.

A Pentecostal concern remains that mainline Christians are not ‘born again’ and thus are not able to serve God in spirit and truth. Until the mainline churches embrace the concept of ‘born again’, the Pentecostals will see them as mission fields. Despite this position, many Pentecostal churches have joined the CAN as a necessity.

Pentecostals in Adamawa insist that all Christians see themselves as one. Mainline churches also see the need to work with Pentecostals and are willing to assist them. The main issue at stake, though, is the doctrinal approach of the Pentecostals.

Pentecostals have changed their stance of refusing to have anything to do with government and politicians whom they used to consider as outcasts who defiled the treasure of being ‘born again’ for the sake of access to power.

There has been a clear shift from the preaching of holiness to prosperity messages. The separation of church and state duties has been undermined as Pentecostals in Adamawa state have become involved with civil authority for the benefit of Pentecostal leaders and their churches. Business community and Pentecostals maintain a symbiotic relationship. The Pentecostal drive for a wealthy membership has encouraged a tendency to split churches, with members establishing new churches for the sake of getting access to positions of wealth and power. Business interests have thus become a permanent feature in Pentecostal mega

⁵⁶⁶ Ukah, 2005. p. 251.

events More recently they have become an important part of crusades and conventions organized by mainline churches as well.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

10.0 Introduction

Most scholars reviewed in this thesis discussed Pentecostalism in its global form. A few touched on Africa, West Africa and Nigeria in general. No one has written about Pentecostals in Adamawa state. Both Pentecostal and mainline churches in Adamawa have very little documentation about themselves. This research work is an attempt at documenting the history of Pentecostals in Adamawa state and to establish why Pentecostalism developed extremely fast in Adamawa state Nigeria over the last twenty-five years. Pentecostalism has contributed to the growth of Christianity in Nigeria and Adamawa state particularly. Pentecostalism has given Christianity a boost and vibrancy in Adamawa state. This is evident in the growth in numerical strength of Christian population in Adamawa state, increase in churches, Christian schools and Christian involvement in the political governance of Adamawa state. The state's posture of tolerance with regard to Pentecostalism explains the growth of Pentecostalism. Certain discoveries and observations were made in the course of this research.

10.1 Pentecostalism in Adamawa State between Tradition and Modernity

The research paid particular attention to modern aspects of Pentecostalism such as the focus on self-accomplishment, positive approach to life and the Pentecostal movements being run as a business. An attempt to address the pre-modern or African aspects of Pentecostalism which manifested in the yearning for the attainment of spiritual powers was also made. It was discovered that the mixture of the modern and the pre-modern in Pentecostalism explains why the movement has become such a powerful force in Nigeria and particularly Adamawa state. The issue of self-accomplishment and positive approach to life absorbed by neo-Pentecostals has been underscored by Ojo and Marshall as discussed under 10.2 below on page 263 that, the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria can actually be linked to the modernizing tendencies and Pentecostalist pragmatic approach to social and religious issues affecting the lives of millions of Nigerians. This research observed that there has been a spontaneous response by Pentecostals to the Nigerian situation and also agrees with Ojo's submission below that:

... the emphasis on prosperity and success was not introduced to Nigeria by American televangelists, and neither are they "a foreign element" in African Christianity as Paul

Gifford had suggested [in his *Prosperity: A New and Foreign Element in African Christianity*, but rather that]. The emphasis was developed as a response to the deteriorating socio-economic changes of the 1980s [in Nigeria]. The entire teachings on healing are really a sharply focused reflection of the socio-economic situation of the Nigerian society ... Therefore, as agents of social disclosure; Charismatic movements really developed prophetic apparatuses to cope with the realities of their contemporary situations.⁵⁶⁷

Allan Anderson described Pentecostal worship as “An African” style of worship and Liturgy and a holistic Christianity that offers tangible help in the world as well as in the next. This he says forms a distinctively African contextualization of Christianity. This research agrees with Anderson because such contextualization has to a certain degree helped to close the yawning gap between the grassroots and the elitist Christian worshipper in Nigeria. Also, the African aspect in Pentecostal worship could be found in the music and prayers which is a common phenomenon exhibited by the *Bori* (trance) cult in Africa. The difference between the African *Bori* cult and Pentecostals is that while both get into a trance during worship, the *Bori* cultists, after getting out of the trance and have become calm; could relate the message they have received but the Pentecostals do not relate what they see during the trance.

Anderson is right to a certain degree about the African, holistic and the tangible help that are found in worship style and liturgy of Pentecostals. Both the classical and newer Pentecostals in Adamawa keep all night vigils for prayers with the expectation of visions and prophecy during those vigils. These all night vigils have become very popular among Pentecostals; who believe that existential questions about life would be addressed through them. They believe that supernatural empowerment will be granted to them during the night of worship and prayer. Pentecostals actually believe that they will receive definite messages and answers to their prayers during such vigils.

This form of spirituality has been encouraged by the classical Pentecostals from the onset when they were first introduced into Adamawa. It became popular because their basic traditional African cosmology had been least affected by the Christian message; hence they continue to grapple with power in its various manifestations. Their emphases on healing, success, prosperity and deliverance are all rooted in the appropriation of power in its traditional and modern forms.⁵⁶⁸ The claims of miracles happening during night vigils are very strong although there are no proven evidences of such happening.

⁵⁶⁷ Ojo, “Consonance and Dissonance in the Doctrinal Emphasis of Prosperity among Nigerian Pentecostals,” in *African Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies* Vol. 1, No. 1, February, 2013, p.21.

⁵⁶⁸ Ojo, 2008, p.12.

Adamawa state Pentecostals are in some aspects the same as other Pentecostals in the other parts of Nigeria; especially when it comes to worship styles. Pentecostals in Adamawa sing songs in the Igbo, Yoruba, Idoma Hausa and many other Nigerian languages. Such use of the popular dialects in worship unifies the Pentecostals greatly and is considered the reason for the vibrancy of worship that is so much celebrated by Pentecostals. However, from time to time, songs are sung in the local dialects of Adamawa. Another factor that brings the Adamawa Pentecostals close to those in the rest of Nigeria is the oracles which are sought after from one part of the country to the other by Pentecostals. T. B. Joshua's Tabernacle which is known as Synagogue Church for all Nations (SCOAN) is one such popular place for answers and miracles people patronize in Nigeria, therefore, many Pentecostals and mainline Christians and some non-Christians alike pay frequent visits to his Tabernacle.

Adamawa Pentecostals and some mainline churches have highly contextualized their worship. An aspect of such contextualization could be seen in the local Catholic Church's presentation of the Gospel during Catholic High Masses in Adamawa and neighboring Taraba State. The mass servants will lead the representatives of the local community or congregation, who would be dressed in their traditional war apparels with the men carrying swords, spears, bow and arrows while the drummers and flutters play and the ladies sing and dance as they lead the procession for the presentation of the gospel in the sanctuary. What this means is that the gospel must be presented as in a battle situation. The battle cry must be heard as a reminder of how the gospel first came to the African and as the gospel is presented or planted among the faithful, the congregation turns to receive and own it with a shout of joy. This is African. The good news must always be announced and received with urgency and excitement as against the backdrop of the traditional Latin chanting, accompanied by soft organ music.⁵⁶⁹

For the Adamawa Christian, the gospel must be an embodiment of all that the scene described above depicts and more. Therefore, both the Pentecostal and mainline Christians nurture the desire for that tangible help that would see them through this troubled world. The Pentecostals go further; they desire power, victory, strength and protection. All these resonate throughout their worship services.

Thompson's description of the classical African belief in the existence of a spiritual world that is infested among other things, with "marine spirits" "witchcraft spirits" and "blood-thirsty spirits"⁵⁷⁰ also informs the Pentecostal passion for prayers that demands the covering of their cars, the roads, homes and bodies with the blood of Jesus. Jenkins explains

⁵⁶⁹ Empirical knowledge of the researcher.

⁵⁷⁰ Thompson J., Wagner, C. P., eds. *Out of Africa*, Regal Books, California, 2004, pp78-80.

the shift of the centre of gravity of the Christian Church over the past century from North to the South.⁵⁷¹ This could be based on the concurrence of pre-modern world with qualities that appealed to the African mind-set or worldview. What is perplexing is that even the literate in Adamawa believe so strongly in spirits and witchcraft. Before the arrival of the Neo-Pentecostals in early 1970s, belief in witchcraft was on the decrease but Pentecostalism brought it back in full swing, thus the assertion by Comaroff that, in Nigeria today, witchcraft discourses no longer merely belong to the genre of the country-side or folk religion, but ...has proven to be highly hospitable and accommodating to it, in consequence making it popular in both the country-side and the townships.⁵⁷² In actual sense the Adamawa communities today express more fear in evil spirits and witchcraft than they did thirty years back. This in a way encouraged the growth of Pentecostalism which claims to provide solutions to their panic.

Ogbu Kalu, the leading African theologian and scholar, makes a similar assertion, that Pentecostalism is seen as African and is Africa's contribution to Christianity.⁵⁷³ Gifford also reinforces this position that Pentecostal Christianity evokes a powerful response from people with an 'enchanted' worldview and is answering needs left entirely un-addressed by mainline Christianity.⁵⁷⁴ For this reason countless thousands are leaving the mainline churches to join new Pentecostal churches believing Pentecostalism speaks better to existential, leadership and power needs of the people. This thesis has confirmed the views expressed by Gifford and Kalu because Adamawa Christianity and Pentecostalism in particular lean heavily towards the African worldview. Correspondingly, this explains why some mainline Christians do not see any difference between them and Pentecostals.

The current dreadful anxiety within Adamawa Christian communities over evil spirits and witches cannot disappear until the cultural matrix and cosmology that cast these shadows of panic over them are removed. The challenge that remains is how the whole notion of the dread of evil spirits and witchcraft was transferred whole sale from the traditional African cosmology into all strands of Christian typologies: Orthodox Christianity, Evangelical Christianity, Classical, Charismatic and Neo-Pentecostalism.⁵⁷⁵ People who never knew or

⁵⁷¹ Jenkins, Philip, *The next Christendom, the Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002, p.2.

⁵⁷² Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. 1991. *Of Revelation and Revolution, Christianity Colonialism, And Consciousness in South Africa*, Vol.1, 2 the University of Chicago Press, London, p. xxvi.

⁵⁷³ Kalu, 2006, p.5.

⁵⁷⁴ Gifford, P. *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1998, p.329.

⁵⁷⁵ Danfulani, U. H. D., Pentecostalism and Children at the Centre of Witchcraft Accusations: Violation of Child and the Quest for Spiritual Health in Nigeria: *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* Vol.1, No.1, February 2013, pp.106-107.

have never heard of secret societies and occultic mediums today talk of it freely and believe in their existence and potency. Pentecostalism on the other hand pledges solutions to the phenomenon in Adamawa in particular and Nigeria in general. This has to a great extent encouraged people to turn to them for assistance.

10.2 Rise and Growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa State

The synopsis by Ojo⁵⁷⁶ that modern day Pentecostalism was introduced to Nigeria in the 1970s by students in the sparse tertiary institutions, universities and secondary schools is true in relation to the southern parts of Nigeria. However, by the time Pentecostalism reached Adamawa, the state had no tertiary institutions to serve as its breeding ground. One way or another, the students who attended universities at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Maiduguri and others who were influenced by Pentecostal teaching, in turn brought such teaching and enthusiasm to Adamawa state and influenced secondary school students with them. This enthusiasm was boosted with the establishment of the University of Technology Yola in 1981 which served as the nucleus for the rise and growth of Pentecostalism in Adamawa state.

The students and graduates of those universities tried to infuse into their churches the type of Christianity absorbed from the universities by insisting that their churches should adopt the styles of worship and Christian teachings they brought back from the universities but they met with resistance from the churches. These new Pentecostals turned to secondary schools and used the FCS prayer meetings at the schools for the induction of young pupils into Pentecostalism. This paid off because the young and in-experienced school children, who innocently listened and followed the new teachings, eventually became students at the universities and since there were no alternative worship services at the universities, they simply joined the Pentecostalized chapels and prayer meetings on the campuses and became full Pentecostals at the end.

After graduation from the universities, the young Pentecostalized graduates, most of whom could not find jobs with the Adamawa state government (the main employer in the state) started their own ministries which over time became Pentecostal congregations, thus, encouraging the explosion of Pentecostal churches in Adamawa state.

The mainline churches also encouraged the growth of the newer Pentecostal churches by their apathetic attitudes towards them and their teachings. The LCCN in particular did nothing to understand the situation. They became dispirited about the phenomenon after the

⁵⁷⁶ Ojo, M. A., August 8:2012, pp.1-5.

elders at Numan church dissociated themselves with the youth group that joined the Maranatha and eventually became TFM. Aboi has this to say about the attitude of some mainline Evangelicals on the influence of Pentecostalism. He maintained,

... there are some within the evangelical tradition who display a careless none-critical tolerance and accommodation of the Pentecostal phenomena, they “copy and paste” without questioning. They are “blind builders” because they build without measurement or real knowledge of what they are doing. The product of this lackadaisical attitude is confusion in doctrine and identity.⁵⁷⁷

It can be said without gainsaying that many mainline pastors and priests have actually been Pentecostalized before joining the ministry of the churches they serve. This also adds to the relaxed attitude of the mainline churches towards the influence of Pentecostalism.

The real catalyst for the spread of especially Newer Pentecostal Christianity in Adamawa was rather the National Youth Service Corps scheme. Throughout their service years, corps members influenced students in secondary and tertiary institutions with their Pentecostal ideas. From that point on, Adamawa was best served by indigenous Pentecostalist preachers who started off as reformists within local Lutheran congregations in Adamawa State. This is so because by the time neo-Pentecostalism was being introduced into Adamawa, the Anglican Church was almost non-existent as their members left Adamawa because of the civil war. The few non-Igbo Anglicans that stayed behind in Adamawa joined the LCCN for Christian fellowship between 1966 and 1972 (during the same period the local LCCN congregation in Yola was made custodian of Anglican interests in Yola).

The Catholic Church was better off than the Anglican. Although their membership also depleted during the civil war, they however, had a good representation of indigenous people within their membership, therefore, the church thrived on for the whole period of the civil war. But, by the time their members returned from Igbo-land in mid-1970 after the war, many of them had embraced Pentecostalism and upon their return, they became Pentecostal evangelists, thus, encouraging the Catholic Charismatic arm of Pentecostalism in Adamawa. The EYN did not suffer much at the initial introduction of neo-Pentecostalism because the church was rural based. Neo-Pentecostalism on the other hand was and still is fundamentally an urban church movement.

A decade by decade development of Pentecostalism has been discussed in chapter five.⁵⁷⁸ It was observed that by 1944, the first Pentecostal group that was introduced to Adamawa was the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), through the efforts of indigenous

⁵⁷⁷ Aboi, E. J., A Categorization of Varried Responses of Mainline Churches to Pentecostal Influence, *African Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies* Vol, 1, No. 1 February, 2013, 57-68.

⁵⁷⁸ See above under 5.3; 5.3.1; 5.3.2 and 5.4, pp.124 -140.

Christian fishermen and traders. For the next eighteen years, CAC was the only Pentecostal movement in Adamawa. CAC a classical Pentecostal Church became an alternative to the Lutheran and Catholic Missions that were very strict over matters of polygamy, excessive consumption of alcohol and public participation by Christians in African traditional festivals.

The belief by the CAC in exorcism, appealed to the native Adamawa people among whom they started work. CAC's acceptance of polygamists was one important reason for their appeal to the people.

In 1960, the Assemblies of God (AG) became the second Pentecostal Church to come to Adamawa through the efforts of Igbo traders and artisans. By 1964 12 indigenous Christians of the Lutheran Church broke away and later joined the AG group that was being formed in Nassarawo quarters, Jimeta. AG took roots because of a power tussle and the desire of the first convert to become the first pastor in Njoboliyo village. The perpetuation of a caste system among the local Batta people was also another factor for the establishment of the AG in Adamawa..

Thus, from 1960 to 1974 there were only two Pentecostal Churches organized in Adamawa, both of which existed without much expansion from their first points of contact in the state. This is important because they were considered by Lutherans as having broken away from the church proper. It is also important to note that some of the LCCN youth in Numan who introduced Neo-Pentecostalism in Adamawa were to a certain level influenced by the youth of the CAC and AG who were their schoolmates and friends.

Therefore, the thirty years of classical Pentecostalism only prepared the grounds for Neo-Pentecostalism to cash upon as the CAC and AG youths essentially influenced the unsuspecting Lutheran and Catholic youths to start seeing things from Pentecostal angles.

10.3 Beliefs and Practices

We found that, without doubt, Pentecostalism has found a firm foothold as a Christian movement in Adamawa state. We found after all that Pentecostalism in Adamawa is not much different from elsewhere in Nigeria and Africa when it comes to beliefs, practices, type of people who become members because of their networking. Adamawa Pentecostals in quintessence imitate other Pentecostals in Nigeria and network with popular Pentecostalist preachers all over the world. We also found that Pentecostalism is a religion of the up and mobile. Their membership is basically young and mostly between the ages of 18-45, well-educated with diplomas and university degrees.

The typologies of Pentecostal movements found in Adamawa at the various levels are:

- i. Classical Pentecostals: They are the Faith and Healing groups.
- ii. Neo-Pentecostal Movements: They are Faith, Deliverance, Prosperity and Modernist groups, and
- iii. Charismatic Pentecostals: Mainly Reformists and Bible distributing groups within mainline congregations.

What appears to be puzzling about some Pentecostals in Adamawa is their desire to be seen and accepted as part and parcel of the mainline churches. Despite such friendly posture, we still find people who migrate to Pentecostalism or start their own churches.

The initial posture of the Pentecostals was that of hostility and condemnation of the mainline teachings and practices but in recent years, the Pentecostals have changed tremendously and are willing to exchange pulpits with the mainline clergy. They actually address the mainline churches as our mother churches and sometimes they come to mainline churches to worship, according to them to experience the home church. This puzzle was unravelled by a Pentecostal pastor who was willing to open up on the matter. The pastor stated that:

The “Orthodox” (the mainline churches are called Orthodox by Pentecostals in Adamawa) have started to understand and believe in Holy Ghost baptism and also the orthodox now accept that prophecy is still prevalent in the church today. The Pentecostals therefore, maintain a friendly posture towards the Orthodox to draw them closer so that together we can evangelize the world. As Pentecostals, we also believe that the Orthodox is now beginning to assent the blessings bestowed on Christians because of Christ’s resurrection. And, we also see now that the Orthodox are getting more enlightened through reading Christian literature and are gaining in knowledge about the power of the Holy Spirit which hitherto had been denied by mainline Christians.⁵⁷⁹

Another Pentecostal pastor observed that, “Our roots are from the mainline churches therefore, we feel we are connected and believe we are the same. We cannot deny that we came from the mainline background.”⁵⁸⁰ According to my informants these are the reasons why Pentecostals are becoming friendly towards the mainline. However, not all mainline Christians understand that there has ever been any difference between them and the Pentecostals. Therefore, the general attitude among some mainline Christians is that all churches are the same. Christians should think of what unite them and not what divide them.

In essence, the mainline are complacent and happy to imitate Pentecostals whose teachings about prosperity has permeated the mainline churches and their practices in

⁵⁷⁹ Kilka, in a discussion over why Pentecostals feel they are the same as the mainline Christians, discussion in Yola, Adamawa state, 19th January 2014.

⁵⁸⁰ Tonmoso, interviewed in Jimeta, Adamawa State on 31st January 2014.

worship are understood as right by some mainline clergy. This explains why the mainline churches use Pentecostalist language and adopt Pentecostal liturgy in Adamawa. The Pentecostals in Adamawa must have sensed that the mainline are becoming tolerant of them therefore; they push for closer ties with the mainline eager to extend their influence on them.

One mainline Christian, name withheld, in response to the question as to why Pentecostals see themselves as being the same as mainline Christians stated that, “the mainline are afraid of Pentecostals invading them, therefore, they do not want anything to do with the Pentecostals. You (mainline) should just accept the gestures from the Pentecostals and stop being afraid of them.”⁵⁸¹ He avoided the question. However, what the respondent was trying to say is, ‘We are the same. There is no big deal.’

There is value in these discussions. The fact that Pentecostals still feel they are the same as the mainline means, there is hope for an honest dialogue between them and the mainline in Adamawa in the future. The mainline therefore, should not be afraid or snub the Pentecostals as one of them had acquiesced.

The lack of proper theological training for some mainline clergy has in no small way caused the anxiety and sometimes the caginess by some mainline Christians. This has also encouraged the clergy of the Pentecostal churches to be less interested in the study of theology. The membership and pastors of Pentecostal churches though highly elitist, would rather take leadership and resource management courses instead of formal theological training to prepare them as churchmen.

Notwithstanding, Pentecostalism will continue to have great potential for growth as long as Nigeria is plagued with ethnic conflicts, pervasive bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption and sectorial imbalances which tend to distort economic growth patterns and which encourage young people to find succour of a spiritual nature.

The African connection surfaced in the responses that were received from the questionnaires from page 100. In analysing the data, it has been observed that the three most Christianized ethnic groups that were influenced by Pentecostalism held a very strong belief in African Traditional Religion, especially beliefs in totems and spirits. Also, it was discovered as stated under sub-section 9.1.5, page 253 that an international company had asked a Pentecostal church to help it get rid of the stigma it had in the eyes of the Nigerian public of being associated with the occult. This is an extraordinary indication of the power of the Pentecostal churches within a context where an “enchanted” worldview prevails.⁵⁸²

⁵⁸¹ Response by a mainline Christian in a discussion over why Pentecostals feel they are the same as the mainline Christians, discussion in Yola, Adamawa state, 19th January 2014.

⁵⁸² Gifford, P.,1998, p.328.

Meyer is validated when she talked about the Ewe people in Ghana as the same situation is also found in Adamawa. In Adamawa many people believe that certain goods especially jewellery for women, new or used cars and in some cases even gifts received require a 'man of God' or a trusted mainline pastor to remedy or neutralize dangers associated with such goods, namely through prayer. Members of Pentecostal as well as mainline churches in Adamawa are "... often called upon to say a brief, silent prayer over purchased commodity before entering their homes."⁵⁸³ They ought to ask God to 'sanctify' the thing bought, thereby neutralizing any diabolic spirit present in it. Only in this way could they prevent destructive powers in the objects from harming their owners.⁵⁸⁴ Such propaganda was so rife that many people in the urban centres of Nigeria believed it. Therefore, some companies were forced to advertise in some church or Christian magazines on the premise that members might not demonize their products.

10.4 Pentecostals in Adamawa Society

The research discovered that some of the first leaders of indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Adamawa were products of the new universities and schools that had been influenced by Pentecostal teachers from the southern universities. It was revealed through this research on page 143 above that the first leaders had hoped to reform the churches in Adamawa because they themselves believed that they have been transformed. Therefore, they saw themselves as transforming agents who would take the message of the gospel to the ends of the world. It was further revealed in this research that the mainline churches somehow were not prepared for the changes taking place in the socio-economic sphere and in the education system of Nigeria at the time. The literacy level in the country went up sharply and abruptly, while theological education among mainline Christians was not sufficiently developed for them to cope with the social changes. This made it easy for Pentecostals who were relatively better educated to make inroads in Nigeria in general and Adamawa state in particular.

The study found out that Adamawa state has an estimated population of 3.1 million people with many ethnic groups. Of these, Bwatiye, Marghi and Mbula Christian youths became Pentecostals in greater numbers than any other ethnic groups. The trend in Mbula land is peculiar as they have more branches in smaller numbers. This might require a separate

⁵⁸³ Meyer, B. 1998, "Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana" in *Development and Change* Vol.29, Institute of Social Change, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, pp.752.

⁵⁸⁴ Meyer, B.1998. pp.752.

research. The Bwatiye and Mbula people were the first ethnic groups to embrace Classical Pentecostalism in Adamawa state.

The researcher observed that the relationship between church and state in Nigeria was determined by what and how Christians think of themselves in the face of social, economic and political trends in the country. The Pentecostal churches have responded to the socio-economic disintegration of Nigeria in ways that are of practical, psychological, and spiritual help to their congregations. The mainline on the other hand responded by publicly condemning corruption in government and the society. In this context the faithful and the clergy stood encouraged to go into politics and stand for elective offices but this did not produce the positive results envisaged as the standards of governance continued on the downward spiral in addition corruption increased unabated.

Among the reasons given by most people for joining Pentecostal movements is their familiarity with several aspects of Pentecostal worship that are found in indigenous religions as well. Examples are the Pentecostal claim of deliverance from forces of evil and malevolent spirits, the transformative experience of the Holy Spirit, inspired leadership, material prosperity and the art of expressive praise singing.

Christians in the south have a comfortable majority in number. Therefore, they can afford to relax and look for money in the name of the gospel. However, Christians in Northern Nigeria and especially Adamawa have it tough because of the competing forces of the Muslim and Traditional African Religion. Thus, the Christians of Adamawa whether mainline or Pentecostals are very cautious about prosperity messages.

It was further observed that Pentecostals prefer certain terms and titles above others. Outreach is one of their great assets. They train their members to reach out to non-Pentecostals in order to convert them. Their outreach programmes are particularly aggressive in schools and in cities. The youths from other denominations, staying in the vicinity of Pentecostal churches, are particularly targeted at potential converts. Pentecostalism gained access into mainline churches through:

- i. participation in evangelical organizations like Scripture Union and FCS,
- ii. crusades, camps and retreats,
- iii. literature and broadcasts on radio and television,
- iv. Pentecostal organizations like Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, and
- v. Young men who were influenced by Pentecostalism entered into pastoral

ministry of their denominations, and gradually offered new religious experiences to their members.⁵⁸⁵

An interesting discovery is the way in which some Pentecostals take upon themselves sole responsibility for marriage arrangements. What traditionally was the responsibility of parents is today done by these churches who arrange marriages between their members, most of the times without any recourse to the parents of the intending couple.

This form of marriage arrangement had once been practiced by the evangelical churches in some parts of Nigeria. For example, the Baptists and the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) formerly Evangelical Churches of West Africa. It was done with the full participation of the parents, without the consent of the couple, until everything is arranged and agreed upon by the parents and the church. The couple was left out until when it was time to make announcement for their wedding in the church, they will be notified by their parents. With time, the practice was stopped.

However, in Adamawa the practice was first introduced by the Pentecostals. Until the mid-1970s, Adamawa Christians were basically made up of Lutherans and Catholics. Such marriage arrangements were completely strange to the two denominations as marriages were arranged between the couples, parents and the local church. Therefore, the Pentecostal arrangement did not go down well with parents of couples but most times the couple would have been led to become rebellious against their parents, who are considered not ‘born again’ and thus, must not in principle be obeyed.

Pentecostals also claim that financial support for their activities comes from members’ offerings, but, the study discovered that Pentecostals have many ways of raising money for their projects and for self-sustenance. Activities such as “seed-sowing” and “first-fruits” are a means of support for their clergy.

The researcher noticed that Pentecostals use the administrative methods of business companies in the administration of their churches. They also employ members with special management skills to run their affairs. Externally, they maintain partnership with some Pentecostal ‘mega-church’ preachers from the USA and Europe, and make extensive use of both the print and electronic media to propagate themselves and their messages. This has made them popular with Nigerians who are fervent television viewers and radio listeners. Pentecostals also encourage the participation of women and youth in their activities along with taking training as a necessary part of their ministry now that they are becoming institutionalized.

⁵⁸⁵ Ojo, 2008, pp.15-16.

A significant discovery was made in regard to Pentecostal relations with civil society. The Pentecostals have changed their earlier stance of refusing to have anything to do with governments and politicians. They used to consider them as outcasts who have defiled the treasure of being born again for the sake of access to power and wealth. However, since Pentecostal messages have shifted from preaching holiness to promising prosperity, the separation of church and state has been undermined and many Pentecostals in Adamawa state are involved with matters of civil authority, often for the benefit of their leaders. Socially, such relations benefit the churches as well, because their leaders get close to the seats of power and can encourage influential political appointments of members.

Politicians and religious leaders have always been connected to a certain degree. In the traditional African power structure, the priest and the chief worked hand in hand. Such symbiotic relationships are still being enjoyed by politicians and the clergy. Ellis and Ter Haar observed that:

The tendency for politicians to seek spiritual power and for spiritual leaders to develop substantial material power, shows distinctive patterns in continuity with systems and ideas rooted deep in Africa's history.⁵⁸⁶

This is true not just in Africa but the world over. An example is the complexity of Pentecostals' engagement with democracy in Peru, South America. Miller, Sargent and Flory submitted that, Alberto Fujimori was elected president of Peru and had received wide spread support from Pentecostals and other evangelicals. That support continued for the Pentecostals who themselves were elected into parliament through the support of Fujimori.⁵⁸⁷ Miller maintained:

But, most of the Pentecostals elected to national office and many of the mega-church pastors focused their political involvement on gaining resources for their constituencies and seemed to believe that Pentecostal voters owed them their votes based on shared religious loyalties.⁵⁸⁸

This is most certainly true about Pentecostal clergy and the mainline Pentecostalized clergy in Nigeria and particularly Adamawa. The clergy assist politicians and the politicians reciprocate by greasing the palms of the clergy with gifts in forms of money, cars and assets. The findings of this research also corresponds to those of Ellis and Ter Haar below:

This is clearly the case with neo-Pentecostal movements, whose central concern is the presence of evil in the society. Although they have existed in Africa for much of the

⁵⁸⁶ Ellis and Ter Haar, 2004, p.99.

⁵⁸⁷ Miller, D. E., Sargeant, K. H. and Flory, R. (eds) 2013. *Spirit and Power, The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, Oxford University Press, New York, p.121.

⁵⁸⁸ Miller (et al), 2013, p.121.

last century, their recent extraordinary increase is certainly connected to the opening up of political space through the democratization movement.⁵⁸⁹

The concern over the presence of evil in society has given way to political and economic concerns thus; leading many members of the political class to patronize religious leaders and vice versa. The political leaders of Adamawa and the religious leadership have opened up to each other and give support to each other for obvious reasons. This reciprocal relationship is also being maintained between the business community and the religious leadership. The clearest evidence is the close association of the Pentecostal churches with the political and business communities which helps to maintain the flamboyant life style of the Pentecostal clergy.

Consequently, the drive to get close to political leaders and the desire to build up a large body of wealthy members has led to numerous splits among Pentecostals; leading to the establishment of individual churches. The founding of a new church is the first step on the road to creating one's own empire with strong economic resources, placing the founder and his church in a position of power to be patronized by politicians and success seekers. During the research it became palpable that Pentecostal leaders prefer not to publicize their overseas' contacts and support, in order to preserve their local sources of income within their congregations.

The study established that Pentecostalism is flourishing and has come to stay in Adamawa state. The general socio- economic situation and the quest for survival are among the essential factors contributing to the propagation of Pentecostalism.

However, the researcher discovered also that the youth of Numan did not relent in their criticism of the mainline churches. They persisted until they had developed their independent movement into a church. Furthermore, while the Christian churches in Adamawa should find common ground for intensified evangelism, it should at the same time find ways of controlling certain forms of extreme behaviour for which the motives are not really clear. The search for power, wealth and popularity can destroy the church's witness by leading people astray.

In marriage for example, some Pentecostals perceive their wives as business partners. This has led to marriages breaking up. They marry and divorce their wives at will with the simple allegation of not being equally yoked but in actual fact the reason could be that they have discovered or have convinced themselves that they are mismatched as business partners

⁵⁸⁹ Ellis and Ter Haar, 2004, p.100.

with their spouses. This is enough reason for divorce among Pentecostals. Also, polygamy was perceptibly acceptable among some Pentecostals when their members demand for it.

10.5 Personal Views of the Author

There are a number of challenges that Pentecostals need to overcome. A few are listed below. The most pressing among these is the issue of prosperity Gospel which is affecting true Christian spirituality (the Pentecostals lay claims to possessing it). This has led to the high scale of commercialization of the gospel and the free gifts of the Spirit, for example, the sales of handkerchiefs, olive oil, holy water and other items for designated breakthroughs and culminating in the privatization of churches and ministries into family business enterprises by a number of founders as well as their handling of authority and finances.

The moral stance of Pentecostalist leaders which has led to a high rate of divorce and immorality in the church, occasionally involving pastors and members of their congregations every now and then seems insuperable. To be more specific, the profiles of some of the leaders of some Pentecostal churches do not inspire faith in their brand of Christian witness. Their relative lack of interest in serious theological training despite the high level of education of their leaders in the secular fields is not helpful for the witness of the gospel as well as their stress on experience. This is a problem, especially in worship, which has become entertainment rather than giving worth to the Divine. It could be put succinctly that in most cases the Pentecostal worshipper enjoys the worship experience more than the worshipped.

In Adamawa the Pentecostal strategies and reasons for evangelism and how and where they draw their members remains a challenge and is regarded with suspicion by the mainline churches. The mere claim that they have the right message and therefore, can evangelize among existing churches and Christians hardly makes the church to grow. The Church will benefit more if they joined hands with the mainline churches to reach the unreached together.

I would like to present the following suggestions for both the Pentecostal and the mainline churches to consider.

- i. The mainline churches could think about establishing a desk in their various national offices for the study of Pentecostalism.
- ii. The mainline churches could establish chaplaincies at schools, colleges and universities to assist students with parochial Christian education and to meet their denominational spiritual needs.

- iii. The Pentecostals could take the study, particularly of Systematic Theology and the History of Christianity seriously. They could also venture into hermeneutics and commit to the study and understanding of scripture. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) need to assist in moderating Pentecostal teachings and practice as they strive to develop a Pentecostal theology that is hermeneutically sound and Biblical.
- iv. The Pentecostals could define themselves more theologically; that will help in no small way for them to be better understood.

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3.	Bishop M.A. Ibrahim	10/7/06	Bishop/Anglican	Yola
4.	Dan Babayi	15/7/06	Lawyer/Founder	Yola
5.	Japheth Tonmwaso	17/7/06	Pastor/Lecturer	Numan
6.	Leonard Nzadon	21/7/06	Lawyer	Yola
7.	Rev. Fillibus Gwama	2/8/06	Pastor/President EYN	Mubi
8.	Bishop Abba C.	5/8/06	Bishop/Catholic Church	Jimeta
9.	Maxwell M. Barde	4/6/07, 4/7/07	Pastor	Jimeta
10.	Bishop Peter Makanto	6/7/07	Bishop/Founder/Engineer	Jimeta
11.	Dr. Dogara Gwamna	12/7/07	Lecturer	Jos
12.	Bishop Jinga L. Mayo	5/9/07	Bishop/Businessman	Jimeta
13.	Denis Ibrahim Gereng	6/9/07	Founder/Lecturer	Jimeta
14.	Christopher Busari	6/9/07	Pastor/Agric Officer	Jimeta
15.	Esther Gelbe	15/10/08	Pastor/Teacher	Jimeta
16.	Miriam B. Kilka	6/9/11	Pastor/Accountant	Ganye
17.	Innocent Solomon	2013	Pastor/Founder	Jalingo
18.	Nathaniel Komolafe	24/10/10	Administrator/Elder	Ado-Ekiti
19.	Ufo Uzodike	2005	Lecturer	Pietermaritzburg
20.	Basey Moses	2013	Administrator/Nurse	Calabar
21.	Emmanuel Akewate	2006	Agric Officer	Girei
22.	Yakubu Bulama	2006	Agric Officer	Namtari
23.	Amson A. Hamman	2006	Pastor	Jos
24.	Alako Emmanuel	2006	Social Scientist	Jos
25.	Danu Wonosikou	2012	Bishop/Lecturer	Numan
26.	George Moses	2012	Founder	Numan
27.	Eze Chika	2010	Rev. Sister/Lecturer	Pietermaritzburg
28.	Zacharia Samjumi	2009	Priest	Yola
29.	Demien B. Datti	2009	Lecturer/Administrator	Yola

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31.	Joel A. Woblai	2005	Pastor	Kofare
32.	Themam Muradu	2009	Pastor	Farang
33.	Bulus Ndera	2009	Pastor	Njoboliyo
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APPENDICES: I-IIB

APPENDIX: I

INFORMED CONSENT

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Bair LEONARD NZADON state here that I have been fully informed of the reason for the interview to be conducted and the use to be made of the tapes and transcript of this interview by the Rev. Edward R. Ishaya PHD student (hereafter known as "The Project") of the School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- I acknowledge that the material of the interview is to have the following status:

Accessible without restriction

Conditional release

Time dependant release (G 5yrs; G 10yrs; G 15yrs)

- I acknowledge that the interview material will be catalogued and stored at the Adamawa State University/LCCN Archives Yola.
- I acknowledge that should The Project use the interview material for Publication, under the condition of the status I have stipulated, that I am not entitled to any financial gain from the proceeds of publication.
- I acknowledge that should The Project wish to use the interview material For any other reason than that of cataloguing, release and publication that The Project is to secure my permission to do so.
- Other release stipulations concerning the "conditional release" status:

- _____
- _____
- _____

- My contact details are:

Address: Messrs L.D. NZADON & Co
LEGAL PRACTITIONERS, NO 12 MUBI
ROAD, JIMETA, YOLA, ADAMAWA
STATE.

Tel (H): _____

Tel (W): 624 001

Cel No.: 080 361 38691

Code: _____

I here-by agree to the above stipulations of this release agreement in conjunction with The Project interviewer, Bishop Edward ISHAYA.

Date: 14th July, 2006

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 14th July 2006

Signature: [Signature]
Interviewee
Interviewer

IN

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, ESTHER CIELBE state here that I have been fully informed of the reason for the interview to be conducted and the use to be made of the tapes and transcript of this interview by the Rev. Edward R. Ishaya PHD student (hereafter known as "The Project") of the School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- I acknowledge that the material of the interview is to have the following status:

Accessible without restriction ✓

Conditional release

Time dependant release (G 5yrs; G 10yrs; G 15yrs)

- I acknowledge that the interview material will be catalogued and stored at the Adamawa State University/LCCN Archives Yola.
- I acknowledge that should The Project use the interview material for Publication, under the condition of the status I have stipulated, that I am not entitled to any financial gain from the proceeds of publication.
- I acknowledge that should The Project wish to use the interview material For any other reason than that of cataloguing, release and publication that The Project is to secure my permission to do so.
- Other release stipulations concerning the "conditional release" status:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- My contact details are:
Address: Q 4 GENERAL Tel (H): _____
MURTALA MOHD COLLE- Tel (W): _____
CIE YOLA Cel No.: +234802525320
ADAMAWA STATE
Code: _____

I here-by agree to the above stipulations of this release agreement in conjunction with The Project interviewer, _____

Date: 15/10/2008

Signature: [Signature]

Interviewee

Date: 15/10/2008

Signature: [Signature]

Interviewer

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Prof. Daniel N. Babayi state here that I have been fully informed of the reason for the interview to be conducted and the use to be made of the tapes and transcript of this interview by the Rev. Edward R. Ishaya PHD student (hereafter known as "The Project") of the School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- I acknowledge that the material of the interview is to have the following status:
 - G Accessible without restriction ✓
 - Conditional release
 - G Time dependant release (G 5yrs; G 10yrs; G 15yrs)
- I acknowledge that the interview material will be catalogued and stored at the Adamawa State University/LCCN Archives Yola.
- I acknowledge that should The Project use the interview material for Publication, under the condition of the status I have stipulated, that I am not entitled to any financial gain from the proceeds of publication.
- I acknowledge that should The Project wish to use the interview material For any other reason than that of cataloguing, release and publication that The Project is to secure my permission to do so.
- Other release stipulations concerning the "conditional release" status:
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- My contact details are:

Address: Trinity Theological Tel (H): 08059214357
Seminary, Yola, Adamawa Tel (W): _____
State, Nigeria Cel No.: _____

Code: _____

I here-by agree to the above stipulations of this release agreement in conjunction with The Project interviewer, _____

Date: 15/7/2006

Signature: _____
Interviewee

Date: 15/7/2006

Signature: _____
Interviewer

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, REV. LIVINUS OBI state here that I have been fully informed of the reason for the interview to be conducted and the use to be made of the tapes and transcript of this interview by the Rev. Edward R. Ishaya PHD student (hereafter known as "The Project") of the School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- I acknowledge that the material of the interview is to have the following status:

Accessible without restriction

Conditional release

Time dependant release (G 5yrs; G 10yrs; G 15yrs)

- I acknowledge that the interview material will be catalogued and stored at the Adamawa State University/LCCN Archives Yola.
- I acknowledge that should The Project use the interview material for Publication, under the condition of the status I have stipulated, that I am not entitled to any financial gain from the proceeds of publication.
- I acknowledge that should The Project wish to use the interview material For any other reason than that of cataloguing, release and publication that The Project is to secure my permission to do so.
- Other release stipulations concerning the "conditional release" status:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

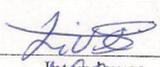
- My contact details are:

Address: REV LIVINUS OBI
REDEEMED PEOPLE'S
MISSION. BOX 244
SIMETA YOLA
Code: _____

Tel (H): 0803628743
Tel (W): _____
Cel No.: _____

I here-by agree to the above stipulations of this release agreement in conjunction with The Project interviewer, _____

Date: 5/8/2006

Signature: 

Date: 5/8/2006

Signature: 

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Bishop Peter Makanto state here that I have been fully informed of the reason for the interview to be conducted and the use to be made of the tapes and transcript of this interview by the Rev. Edward R. Ishaya PHD student (hereafter known as "The Project") of the School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

- I acknowledge that the material of the interview is to have the following status:

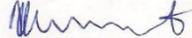
- Accessible without restriction
- Conditional release
- Time dependant release (G 5yrs; G 10yrs; G 15yrs)

- I acknowledge that the interview material will be catalogued and stored at the Adamawa State University/LCCN Archives Yola.
- I acknowledge that should The Project use the interview material for Publication, under the condition of the status I have stipulated, that I am not entitled to any financial gain from the proceeds of publication.
- I acknowledge that should The Project wish to use the interview material For any other reason than that of cataloguing, release and publication that The Project is to secure my permission to do so.
- Other release stipulations concerning the "conditional release" status:

- The Release is strictly for the purpose of the project
- _____
- _____

- My contact details are:
Address: Bishop Peter Makanto Tel (H): _____
upper Room Cathedral, Box 1123 Tel (W): _____
Yola - Adamawa State Cel No.: 080-51641927
Nigeria
Code: _____

I here-by agree to the above stipulations of this release agreement in conjunction with The Project interviewer, _____

Date: _____ Signature: 
Interviewee
Date: _____ Signature: _____
Interviewer

Appendix II A

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO CHURCH LEADERS, THEOLOGIANS AND PASTORS.

This questionnaire is prepared in order to assist in a research towards a PhD Degree programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Religion and Theology in the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, Pietermaritzburg, KZN, South Africa. I shall appreciate your honest contribution and responses to the questions below.

Note: All information provided shall be treated with confidentiality.

Q1. Please provide personal information about yourself including age and sex and church affiliation. (a) Name (Optional) and Age.....

(b) Sex..... (c) Church Affiliation

and Position

Q2. What is the official stand of your Church on the Pentecostal Churches?.....

Q3. What do you personally think about Pentecostalism?

Q4. Have you lost some of your members to Pentecostal Churches?

Q5. What age group do you lose to the Pentecostals?

Q6. Please state qualifications and professions of those leaving your Church for Pentecostal Churches

Q7. What reasons do those who left proffer for leaving your Churches?

Q8. What in your view are the reasons that made them (Pentecostals) to leave your Church?.....

Q9. What do you hear the Pentecostals saying about your Churches?.....

Q10. For how long have you had Pentecostal Churches in your church area?.....

Q11. What efforts have you made to get members back when they leave your church for Pentecostal dominations?.....

Q12. What in your view are the challenges the Pentecostals pose to your church?.....

Q13. What is your view about the mainline or traditional churches imitating Pentecostal modes of worship and language?.....

Q14. What in your view are the factors that have made Pentecostal churches successful?....

Q15a. Do you think the Pentecostals have something the mainline or traditional churches do not have?.....

b. What is it that they have or do not have?.....

Q16. Are the Pentecostals succeeding where the mainline or traditional churches have failed?

Q17. Does your church believe and preach the Eschatology? If yes to what extent?.....

Q18. Does the Nigerian phenomenon have any bearing on the success of Pentecostalism? (The Nigerian Phenomenon is the survival spirit)?.....

Q19. Do you involve women and youth in the leadership structure of your church? If yes

- to what extent? If no, why not?.....
- Q20. Why in your understanding are the Pentecostal churches so strong in their preaching about the end of times and about Christ being alive and teaching them today?.....
- Q21. Does God talk to you directly in your church today? If yes, how? if no, why not?.....
- Q22. do you think the members of your church receive enough theological teaching to understand what is happening today among the Pentecostals?.....
- Q23. Are the marginally successful (economically) in your church comfortable with their situation?.....
- Q24. The Pentecostals believe that the mainline or traditional churches do not preach the word of God well and even when they do, they do not live by what they preach. Please react to this statement.....
- Q25. The Church means different things to different people. What is your understanding of the word church?.....
- Q26. What should be the relationship of the church and the secular world?.....
- Q27. The traditional churches have seemingly come to terms with the world; do you think the church should accept its status as it is now in the world?
- Q28. The Holy Spirit has an important role in the Life of the church. Does your church use the gifts of the Holy Spirit effectively?.....
- Q29. Please make a statement on the ecclesiology of your church?.....
- Q30. Do you think God can be present in suffering?.....
- Q31. What actually do you think the Pentecostals have missed?. Are you willing to help them, and how?.....
- Q32. Please give any other information that you feel can assist towards indentifying the challenges posed by Pentecostals to the mainline or traditional churches. Feel free to use extra paper if you so wish.....

APPENDIX II B

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO PENTECOSTAL MEMBERS

This questionnaire is being administered as part of research towards a PhD Degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) School of Religion and Theology of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, Pietermaritzburg, KZN, South Africa. Your assistance in filling it out honestly will be highly appreciated.

Note: All information gathered through this questionnaire will be treated with great confidentiality and used strictly for the purpose of this research only.

Please Provide:

Name (Optional).....Age.....Sex.....

Profession.....Qualification.....

Q. 1. What is the average age of the members of your church?

Q. 2 What is your reason for joining this church?

Q. 3. How long have you been a member of this church?

Q. 4 What did you do to become a member of the church?.....

Q. 5a. Why did you leave your former church?

Q. 5b. What do you think of your former church?

Q. 6. What have you found in this church that you could not find in your former church?.....

Q. 7. What is it about the theology of this church that is important to your life?.....

Q. 8. How soon do you think Christ is coming back?.....

Q. 10. Do you feel you have actually been redeemed now?.....

Q. 11 How does this redemption up-lift your life?.....

Q. 12. How has your Christian faith improved your status as a citizen?.....

Q. 13. How do you feel about your condition in the society where you live?.....

Q. 14. What blessings have you received as a child of God?.....

Q. 15. What, to the best of your knowledge, is your understanding of the purpose of the Church?.....

Q. 16. What is the place of the Holy Spirit in the Church? What does it do for the church?...

Q. 17. What do you think should be the role of the Pastor or Ministers of the Gospel and the lay members of the church? Should there be a difference between them?.....

Q. 18. What should be the relationship between the church and the world?.....

- Q. 19. There is the general belief that the established or traditional churches have come to terms with the world. What do you feel should be the place of the church in the world?....
- Q. 20. What position do you hold in your church?.....
- Q. 21. Which portions of the Bible does your church mostly use for sermons?.....
- Q. 22. There is great expectancy for the 2nd coming of Christ and the end of the world. What does your church teach? What do you believe will happen?.....
- Q. 23. Do you wish to become a leader in your church?.....
- Q. 24. Would you agree to undergo an extensive and exhaustive theological training. Before you become a leader or minister in your church?.....
- Q. 25. Is there any power struggle in your church?.....
- Q. 26. What do you think of the elders of your church?.....
- Q. 27. Are your Pastors well taken care of?
- Q. 28. Has your personal economic condition improved since you joined this church?.....
- Q. 29 Do you think it is alright for a Christian to suffer? Why?.....
- Q. 30 Must God answer all prayers to our satisfaction?.....
- Q. 31 Do you fast? Why?
- Q. 32. How successful have you been in your business since you have become a child of God?.....
- Q. 33. When is the right time for the child of God to die?.....
- Q. 34. When disaster occurs where do you think God is?.....