

## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Ministry  
Emphasis in Mission

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

**TITLE: A BIBLICAL MODEL OF EVANGELISM TO REACH THE IJEBUS  
IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA**

Researcher: Sunday Olubunmi Ogunsanya

Faculty Advisor: Felix Adelowo Adetunji, PhD

Date Completed: January 2017

At the departure of Jesus Christ from the earth, he mandated his followers to preach the gospel message to all nations, kindred and to all ethnic groups in which the Ijebus are not left out of this mandate (Matt.28:19 – 20). It has been observed that the gospel message of Seventh-day Adventist Church has not reached the people of Ijebu land, South-West Nigeria in totality, except for few towns and villages around the church institution (Babcock University). Even where the presence of the church had been established, only a few indigenes of Ijebus are members of Adventist Church. The need to reach out to the Ijebus has given birth to this research project where strategies are designed to ameliorate this challenge.

The purpose of this study was to develop and implement a biblically based model of evangelism to reach the Ijebu ethnic group with the Adventist message. In the process of investigating this challenge and developing various possible strategies to be implemented, a careful study of the scriptures on God's purpose to reach other

nations of the world was carried out. Then, various literature were consulted and reviewed on church planting and reaching unreached groups of people. Ilesha-west District has been carefully chosen to carry out this study where qualitative research method was used with focus groups and interview. At the end of the focus group discussion, the result was analyzed, and an intervention was designed to meet up this challenge. The intervention designed are; the establishment of an “Indigenous Church: Yoruba Speaking Church” and the second is “Members Involvement in Evangelism.”

At the end of the whole exercise, the intervention was evaluated, and it was confirmed successful with the establishment of another Yoruba Church which will serve as a base to send pioneers and missionary teams to the mission field. With the use of Yoruba speaking as members especially, Ijebu indigenes, a church was established in Isara - Remo with many indigenes as members, and the recent baptism records during this program confirms that most of them are the Ijebus. Lastly, members joyfully participated in the two programs which was revealed through their involvement, and the end results really encouraged them to continue.

The implementation of the intervention re-generates the awareness of involving the members in evangelism activities. The members and the church leaders appreciate their involvement in this intervention. This has informed them of their participation in witnessing will revive the church, increase soul-winning, and improve their spiritual life.

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

A BIBLICAL MODEL OF EVANGELISM TO REACH THE IJEBUS  
IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

A dissertation

presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Sunday Olubunmi Ogunsanya

January 2017



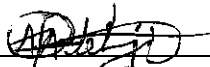
A BIBLICAL MODEL OF EVANGELISM TO REACH THE IJEBUS  
IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

A dissertation  
presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Ministry


by

Sunday Olubunmi Ogunsanya

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:



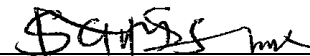
\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor: Felix Adelowo Adetunji, PhD



\_\_\_\_\_  
Programme Director, DMin  
Kelvin Onongha, PhD, DMin



\_\_\_\_\_  
Reader: Emmanuel Takyi, PhD, DMin



\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean, Theological Seminary  
Sampson Nwaomah, PhD

Extension Center: AUA Main Campus

Date: January 2017

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	viii
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Description of the Ministry Context .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Justification.....	4
Delimitations.....	5
Description of Methods and Dissertation Process .....	5
Expectations.....	6
Definition of Terms .....	6
2. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR REACHING UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS.....	7
God, the Creator of All Nations.....	7
The Divine Concept of Evangelism in the Old Testament .....	9
Evangelism in the Mosaic Writings .....	10
Evangelism in the Historical Writings .....	13
Evangelism in the Wisdom Literature.....	15
Evangelism in the Prophetic Writings.....	17
The Divine Concept of Evangelism in the New Testament .....	27
Ministry of Jesus .....	29
Disciples and Gospel Commission .....	33
Paul and Conversion of the Gentiles.....	36
Biblical Model for Church Planting .....	39
The Bible and Friendship Model of Evangelism .....	40
The Bible and Health Ministry Model of Evangelism.....	43
The Bible and Teaching Ministry Model of Evangelism....	46
The Bible and Preaching Ministry Model of Evangelism...48	
Summary.....	50
3. LITERATURE REVIEW ON CHURCH PLANTING FOR AN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP .....	51
Church Planting in Contemporary Literature .....	52
The Concept of “Church Planting” .....	52
Definition of Church Planting.....	53
Biblical Pattern of Church Planting in the Apostolic Era ...56	
Strategic Principles of Church Planting for Reaching People Group .....	58
Vision Casting and Church Planting.....	59

Group Leadership and Church Planting.....	63
Leadership Training in Church Planting.....	70
Culture and Church Planting.....	73
Reasons for Church Planting.....	75
Biblical Mandate.....	75
Efficient Evangelistic Method.....	76
Denominational Survival and Growth.....	77
Obstacles to Church Planting.....	78
Lack of Personnel as Leaders.....	79
Church Planting and Finance.....	81
Lack of Membership Involvement.....	83
Fear of Failure and Slow Results.....	84
Spirit of Prophecy Church Planting.....	85
Summary.....	87
4. PROJECT DESIGN.....	89
Ministry Context.....	89
Geographical Location of Ijebuland.....	89
Historical Background of Ijebuland.....	90
Political Structure of the Ijebu People Group.....	93
Religion.....	95
Socio-Cultural Setting of the Ijebus.....	97
Economy of Ijebus.....	99
The Advent of Christianity in Ijebuland.....	100
Development of Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Ijebuland.....	102
Research Design.....	106
Type of Research Methodology.....	107
Rational for Selection.....	108
Appropriateness of Study.....	109
Population and Sample or Participants.....	109
Criteria for Sampling, Procedures, and Selection.....	110
Instrumentation.....	113
Data Analysis.....	113
Data Collection Procedures.....	114
Presentation and Description of Findings.....	117
Analysis of Data.....	129
Designing of Intervention.....	132
Phase One: Establishment of Yoruba Indigenous Churches.....	133
Phase Two: Indigenous Members' Involvement in Evangelism.....	134
Limitation.....	135
5. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTION PROGRAM.....	137
Project Preparation.....	137
Biblical and Theological Foundation of the Research.....	137
Literature Review of this Study.....	137
Project Setting Place.....	138

Permission .....	139
Findings from Focus Groups and Interviews .....	139
Data Analysis .....	140
Program Implementation .....	143
Anticipated Result .....	143
The Role of the Conference .....	143
The Role of the District Pastors .....	144
Preliminary Preparation .....	144
Intervention Implementation .....	145
District Pastors as Informants and Program Coordinators .....	145
Phase One: Establishment of Indigenous Yoruba Church .....	146
Evaluation .....	147
Phase Two: Members' Involvement .....	148
Evaluation .....	156
Summary .....	160
6. CONCLUSION .....	162
Summary .....	162
Project Evaluation .....	164
Un-achieved Plans .....	167
Lessons Learned .....	168
Recommendations .....	169
APPENDICES .....	172
A. CORRESPONDENCE .....	173
B. OGUN STATE MAP AND SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH .....	175
C. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP .....	177
D. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE .....	178
E. SERMON TOPIC FOR THE OUTREACH .....	179
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	180
VITA .....	186

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Response from Indigenous SDA Members Focus Group.....	119
2. Response from Non - Indigenous SDA Members Focus Group.....	121
3. Response from Indigenous SDA Focus Group at Ogere Ijebu .....	123
4. Response from Personal Interview with a New Indigenous SDA Member from Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District .....	125
5. Response from Personal Interview with an Old Indigenous SDA Member from Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District .....	127
6. Response from Personal Interview with an Indigenous SDA Member That Left (Backslidden) Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District .....	128
7. Presentations and Schedule.....	155
8. Ratio of Church Members Relative to Ijebu Indigenous Members .....	177
9. Sermon Topics for the Outreach .....	179

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledged the following persons for their immeasurable contributions to this dissertation. I cannot but appreciate my darling wife, Titilayo Dorcas Ogunsanya, for her endurance and patience, through thick and thin, prayed for this success. I also appreciate my children, Oluwaseun, Oluwasegun, and Inioluwa for their understanding all along.

In a special way, I cannot but appreciate my project advisor, Prof. Felix Adelowo Adetunji for his valuable counsel and guidance from his professional disposition and academic experience over the years. I appreciate the contribution of Dr. Kelvin Onongha for his encouragement, especially at moments when it looks as if one should give up.

This dissertation work would not have been completed without mentioning the contribution of Pastor Abel O. Akinpelu who has been a human subject and volunteer in his district. May the favor of the Lord rest upon him!

Finally, I appreciate the church that sponsored me for this program, and most importantly, I give all glory, praise, and adoration to Almighty Father for the grace to be part of this cohort, and the wisdom to achieve this feat. Amen!

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Description of the Ministry Context**

As the mission statement of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church states: every member, organization, or institution is to “make disciples of all nations, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and to unite with his remnant Church, disciple them to serve Him as Lord, and preparing them for His soon return.”<sup>1</sup>The SDA mission statement is based on the gospel commission that Jesus gave to his disciples about two thousand years ago, when he said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Reflecting on the gospel commission and the role of pastors, Russell Burrill said, “the heart of every pastor and the passion of every church should be to see their church grow and become what God desires their church to be.”<sup>2</sup> It was this passion for gospel commission that prompted pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to leave their home countries and travel to various continents of the world. It was also

---

<sup>1</sup>Stefan General Conference, *Seventh - day Adventist Working Policy WAD* (Accra, Ghana: Advent Press, 2012), 25.

<sup>2</sup>Russell Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church* (California, Fallbrook: Hart Research Center, 2009), v.

the fulfillment of this Great Commission that propelled people like Elder David C. Babcock arrived Nigeria after planting SDA Churches in some West African countries like Sierra Leone on March 7, 1914, with his team. Among the team are R. Dolphin (Ghanaian) and Samuel Morgue (Sierra Leonean). Their missionary work began in Erunmu, a village in Egbeda Local Government area of the present Oyo State, Nigeria.<sup>3</sup>

In 1933, Pastor J.M.A. Adeoye took the Adventist message to Ijebu-Ode, becoming the second town where SDA message was received in Ogun State. As much as it was difficult to grow the first church at Abeokuta, so also it was in Ijebuland.<sup>4</sup>

Since 1933 when the SDA message came to Ijebuland, only a few Ijebu towns and a handful of Ijebu extractions have been reached. Records show that from 1933 when Pastor J.M.A. Adeoye brought the SDA message to Ijebuland until September 2013 which was almost 80 years, the church has planted 41 congregations. Of these 41 congregations, 20 churches are within Ilisan town.

Among these 20 churches in Ilisan towns, 15 are within Babcock University while only 5 churches are in Ilisan Township. The remaining 21 churches are in other towns and villages in Ijebuland.<sup>5</sup> Also, among 9 local government areas covered by Ijebu people group in Ogun State, the presence of Adventist Church is felt in 7 with one or two towns except for Ikenne where the presence of church institution is felt. This is an indication that the Adventist Church had not done much in spreading the

---

<sup>3</sup>David O. Babalola, *On Becoming a Conference: The Story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Yorubaland 1914-2002* (Ibadan, Nigeria: OSB Design, 2002).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>This information or data was retrieved from the secretariat department of Ogun Conference of Seventh – day Adventist Church, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The data was collated from third quarter report (July to September) of 2013 that was sent to the Union, (the Higher Organization). See appendix B for detailed explanation.

Adventist message to Ijebu communities. So far for 80 years that the Adventist church arrived Ijebu and their presence was established in 21 towns apart from 20 within Ilisan town and Babcock; it means that Adventist mission on average planted one church in three years. The membership of the SDA Church in Ijebuland was estimated at 5677 as against the Ijebu population of 1,316,935. It was evident that more evangelistic efforts need to be done among the Ijebus in order to reach them with the Adventist message.<sup>6</sup>

Considering the workforce of Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, only one Ijebu indigene was a worker out of 23. The remaining 95% of the workforce of Ogun Conference were from Ekiti State where Adventist Church was well established.<sup>7</sup> This evidence established that Adventist church was not having a strong hold in Ijebuland. Furthermore, the ratio of Ijebu SDA members of 242 to church membership of 5551 in Ijebuland is represented as 22:9 at 2013.<sup>8</sup> This indicated that the Ijebus had not been totally covered by Adventist Church going by the small fraction of indigenes in the workforce of the administration of Ogun Conference where they are located.

All mentioned above shows that there was a slow pace of the Adventist Church growth in Ijebuland which has been a burden in the heart of some members. It should be noted that Ijebu community is one of the Yoruba ethnic group known in Nigeria. Ijebuland covers almost half of Ogun State geographical location and by extension, part of Lagos State.

---

<sup>6</sup>This information was retrieved from the secretariat department of Ogun Conference of Seventh – day Adventist Church, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria in 2013. See Appendix B for further information

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. See Appendix C

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many stakeholders in the church in recent time have openly expressed dissatisfaction and are worried over the Seventh - day Adventist church growth in Ijebuland taking into consideration the early arrival of the church and the prevailing demographical advantages. The concern became more worrisome with the attendance of members from Ijebuland at Ogun Conference Meeting.

Records show that the church has planted about 40 congregations in 80 years of existence, which represent an average of one congregation in two years. It is against these backdrops that the researcher sought to investigate the impediments to the development of the SDA mission work especially among the Ijebu enclaves of Ogun state and to develop a biblical model for reaching them with the Adventist message.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of this dissertation was to develop a biblical model of evangelism to reach the Ijebu ethnic group with the Adventist message as an intervention. This intervention was implemented, and its success evaluated through member involvement.

### **Justification**

This research attempts to provide possible ways by which Ijebuland can be reached with the Adventist message. The intervention will serve as evangelism training tools for both the laity and clergy to be applied in other regions. Then it will be used in reaching other groups within Ogun Conference and should be considered for recommendation to higher organizations.

## **Delimitations**

Considering the wide coverage of Ijebuland and for effective implementation and evaluation of this project, Ilisan West District had been carefully selected for this research. Isara town has been chosen as a town to reach with the Adventist message where the strategy developed was implemented. Lastly, a space of a year was required to implement and evaluate the suggested evangelistic approach.

## **Description of Methods and Dissertation Process**

This study will adopt qualitative research method that includes focus group discussion and interview. Then the following steps are used to achieve the result that will not only investigate the impediments that may have stalled the process of effective mission in Ijebuland but also lead to the development of effective strategies for efficient ministry.

Chapter two of this study established the biblical and theological foundation for reaching the unreached group of people in connection with church planting and church growth which was used to develop a biblical model of evangelism that could be used to witness to the people of Ijebuland. The Spirit of Prophecy which is the writings of Ellen G. White and Bible are used for this development.

Chapter three of this dissertation reviews some contemporary literature to seek the opinion of some authors on church growth and church planting which would be a guide in designing a biblical strategy to evangelize to the group. The fourth chapter of this project is on project designing that involves developing an intervention for implementation. In addition, the demography of the Ijebus as an ethnic group is reviewed in order to know their socio-cultural life.

Chapter five is the implementation of the intervention designed; the establishment of a Yoruba Indigenous church and involvement of members in

evangelism to plant a church in a new town. The sixth chapter is the evaluation of the project interventions; the lesson learned and recommendations.

### **Expectations**

This dissertation sought to stimulate the members of SDA on the positive effect of their involvement in evangelism in order to reach the Ijebus with the Adventist message. The members' involvement in evangelism, especially the Ijebu indigenous is expected to establish another Yoruba SDA Church that will support the only existing one that had been for over twenty years with the mind of reaching the indigenous people of Ilisan Remo, one of the Ijebu towns.

Also, this research through members' involvement in evangelism will help in the establishment of SDA Church in Isara Remo, the sixth largest city in Ogun State with Local Government headquarters. The interventions of this research are expected to become evangelistic tools in reaching many unreached people especially in Ijebuland, Ogun State, and the entire Yorubaland.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Adventist:** This word stands for Seventh-day Adventist Church or sometimes referring to Seventh-day Adventist members.

**District:** The district is the church administrative division of a group of churches in a particular geographic location.

**Ijebuland/Ijebus:** Ijebuland or the Ijebus is a community of Yoruba sub-ethnic sect in Ogun State, Nigeria.

**Indigenes:** This term refers to Yoruba tribe of western Nigeria or the people living in Ijebu community of Ogun State.

**Ogun Conference:** This is the church administrative headquarters in Ogun State that is co-coordinating all the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ogun State.

CHAPTER 2  
BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR REACHING  
UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS

Mission is the reason for the existence of the church while evangelism is the vehicle for mission as in the heart of God. The purpose of mission is to evangelize to all people with the Good News of salvation. This chapter presents the biblical and theological foundations of God's plan to evangelize the unreached groups in line with Gospel Commission of Matthew 28:19 as a command. The chapter will also explore biblical model to be used in reaching the Ijebu group with the three angels' messages of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Mission.

**God, the Creator of All Nations**

God is the creator of mankind who formed the nations of the world. He created mankind in His own image, uniquely among all the other creatures of the earth. This very act of creating human beings unique may be interpreted as God's purpose for humans to have an intimate relationship with him: a relationship that will transform into having the knowledge of God and following His will or obeying Him. Evidently, all the nations of the world can rightly trace their source of origin from God the Creator.

Paul affirms this fact by saying: "From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times and set for them the exact places where they should live" (Acts 17:26). The purpose of God creating human and especially in his image is to establish relationship and fellowship which is

born out of His love for mankind. Apostle Paul explicitly stated this purpose “that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27). This may be concluded that God establishes a friendship with mankind; a biblical model that can be used in reaching the unreached. Before preaching to someone, a cordial relationship needs to be created to give the benefit of that person listening to the preacher.

Furthermore, for God to put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is an impression of God housing them for the loving relationship to continue forever. This principle is also needed as a model of reaching people groups whereby after preaching to them, there is need to have a place of worship all ready for them. The fall of Adam and Eve changed the plan of God which resulted in suffering and death of all creatures including humankind (Genesis 3).

Sin did not bring suffering and death alone, it caused separation between human being and their Creator, as found in the experience of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-13. Eating of forbidden fruit by Adam and Eve caused a separation between them and God. Prophet Isaiah confirms this separation saying, “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:1-2). Therefore, God seems to see the need to reconcile human being to Himself through friendship relationship.

It may be observed that the first evangelism which is the proto-evangelism took place in the Garden of Eden when sin separated human being from God. This can be confirmed when God was searching for them saying “Adam, Adam where are

you?” Gen.3:9. This searching was born out of love God had for them which also is applicable for the propagation of the gospel.

It is on this premise that Isaiah reveals the mind of God says, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18, 1John 3:8-10). It is the purpose of God to restore the lost relationship as it was in the Garden of Eden. This is the desire of God for the salvation of humanity and demanded the use of various agents as instruments of reconciliation such as consecrated fellow individual, a chosen nation, and the use of the church in this contemporary days (Genesis 3:15; 22:18; Galatian 3:15 – 16; Hebrew 11). What informed God’s salvation is that He does not want human beings to perish “but that all should come to repentance” (2Peter 3:9).

God shows concerned for the lost humanity. His plan of redemption is for everybody, all nations of the earth and every culture because all nations and every human being have their source of origin from Him as their Creator and Sustainer of the nations. God’s desire and plan is to save all of humanity on the condition that they must have faith in Him as their Creator who loves them.

### **The Divine Concept of Evangelism in the Old Testament**

The Old Testament reveals God’s constant and persistent love for the fallen human race in order to have deeper and closer relationship with them as established in the Garden of Eden. The mission of God is to redeem the fallen humankind back to His original plan by evangelizing humanity with various methods.

## **Evangelism in the Mosaic Writings**

God's inclusive mission of other nations in the plan of salvation across all the cultures of the earth is clearly revealed in the Old Testament. The writings of Moses attest to God's inclusive missionary agenda of reaching other nations with His salvation plan. Since it is established that all nations of the earth have their sources in God as their creator, God's global mission and cross-cultural mission are aimed at evangelizing all nations, including the ethnic groups and Gentiles with His redemption plan in order to restore humanity to his original plan.

**Moses and God's message.** There are instances of active witnessing in the writings of Moses where God instructs specific individuals or people and group or nation to accomplish a particular task. God called Moses to encounter Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods so that they may have the knowledge of the true God which may not be known to the Egyptian (Exodus 12:12). Moses was commissioned by God to present to Egypt the knowledge about the living God (Exodus 3:10-15; Deut.34:11). The message was presented to the Egyptian in a miraculous way.

A careful study of God relationship with the Israelite nation demonstrates the theology of reconciliation through Israel as an instrument because other nations had committed themselves to the worship of idols. Israel's appointment and the call were a missionary call to witness to other nations. Israel's relationship with the Egyptians made them know about the Mighty power of God which was different from their idols.

This may be the reason why some of the Egyptians followed them out of Egypt which may be considered as Israel reaching the unreached people groups. Israel was called to promote and present a unique monotheistic faith in God (Deut.6:4). The other nations were expected to learn from the Israelite about the true God and not

Israel learning from them. In Exodus 9:14-16, God called Israel as an instrument to declare His name to all the earth. The same relational principle applied by the Israelite in reaching the Egyptians by having a good relationship with them can be used by the church planters to witness to unreached people group.

**Israel a peculiar treasure for witnessing.** The call of Israel, as a holy nation and priesthood, has a theological and missiology meaning, which is a call for service and mission to evangelize other nations with the gospel of salvation from God. In the writings of Moses, God expects Israel's life to propagate evidence of God's rule to nations of the earth when he says;

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shall speak unto the children of Israel (Exodus 19:5 – 6).

This is a conditional promise to the Israelite from God that if they would obey Him and keep His covenant, Israel will be a “peculiar treasure” to Him which makes them be above “all people” as “a kingdom of priest and a holy nation.” The theology of God's inclusive and global mission is to save humanity through Israel as his agency because God declares that “all people” and “all the earth is mine.” So the church planters should be aware that they are peculiar treasures in the hand of God to witness the true message of God to unreached people. Their life should proclaim God's message to other people.

**Conversion of non-Israelites.** God's inclusiveness and global mission in outreach went out to other nations of the world and many who were non-Israelites were converted into the community of faith of God through witnessing. For instance, the record of mixed multitude of those which came out of Egypt with the Israelites is

an indication of conversion of other nations, the alien through Israel as chosen nation witnessing mission in Egypt (Exodus 12:38, Numbers 11:4).

The experience of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, proves that there was a conversion (Exodus 18). Jethro heard of how God led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the Red Sea while Moses also gave witnesses to the Lord's goodness to Israel; "And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them."

Then Jethro confesses saying; "Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods; for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them (Exodus 18:10, 11)." It was recorded that Jethro sacrificed unto the God of Israel in recognition and acknowledgment of God's greatness (Exodus 18:12).

Another example of God's interest in the salvation of the non-Israelite was that God allowed the foreigners to live among the Israelite and made provisions for them in the law given to Israel as a nation. They were to be equally treated as the local people (Israel) were treated. Leviticus 19:33-34 reads,

If a stranger sojourns with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shall love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.

Furthermore, God states it that both Israelites and foreigners were circumcised, offered sacrifice, and participated in the Passover and other festivals (Exodus 12:43; Lev 17:8; 22:18; Deut.16:11, 12). The laws of the Sabbath are applicable to both the Jews and foreigners (Exodus 20:10). It is observed that the foreigners in the midst of Israelites should not be mistreated as an order from God and

that the same penalties be applied to the Israelites and aliens living in their midst (Leviticus 24:16). The same law of generosity and provision for the poor during the harvest in Israel is applicable to the Gentiles living in their midst.

All these social laws given by God was an indication that God loves all humanity and wants to reconcile all the people to Himself and at the same time treat all equally. He only calls Israel as an agent of reconciliation in the plan of His inclusive mission. Balaam was a prophet of God who was not a Jew but was being directed by God suggests that He has other agents apart from Jews as a nation in his global mission of evangelizing the entire world. One of the joys of witnessing to unreached people groups is the conversion of people into the faith. The aim of planting churches is the conversion which will later transform into the establishment of the church.

### **Evangelism in the Historical Writings**

The record from historical writings suggests that there are some non-Jews that were converted through the ministration of the Israelites which was the fulfillment of God's plan of propagating the message of reconciliation of humanity to Himself. Of such is mentioned Rahab, the harlot who was converted with her father's household;

Joshua had said unto the men that had spied out the country. Go into the harlot's house, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her. And the young men that were spies went in and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred and left them without the camp. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. (Joshua 6:22, 23, 25).

Rahab, the harlot with her father's household, were converted through her encounter with the two spies from Israel. The New Testament writer in the book of Hebrew mentioned her among the heroines of faith (Hebrew 11:31). Ruth is another

example referring to the conversion of Gentiles which is the fulfillment of God's plan of evangelizing humanity especially the unreached people group of the earth. Ruth a Moabite, was a convert and a widow of a Jewish husband who identified herself as a stranger, "So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, 'Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?'" (Ruth 2:10).

The assimilation of Rahab and Ruth into the community of faith of Israel through their conversion according to the written law of God in treating foreigners made them have the opportunity to be great-grandmothers of King David, and ancestors of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5). The conversion of Rahab and Ruth took place as a result of relational evangelism which is still effective and operational now.

1 Kings 8:43-46 expresses Solomon's prayer that reveals that he understood the mission of Israel given by God to bring strangers (Gentiles) to the temple. Integration of non-Jews as converts from outside Israel into the community of Israel is an expression of God's plan of redemption for all people, tribes, and cultures existing in the world, an inclusive mission because God is the Creator of all. One of the best methods of evangelism is a relational model. The relational method of evangelism could be established when an individual relates to the group he/she is aiming to witness to. This was seen in the life of Ruth's mother-in-law.

**Conversion through healing ministry and relational method.** Naaman, the commander of the army of the King of Aram, was witnessed to through a young slave Israelite girl in Syria where he became acquainted with the knowledge of a true God of heaven (2 Kings 5: 15). The conversion of Naaman came through two evangelism methods.

The first is a relational model through the good relationship the girl had with her master. The second is the healing ministry method that occurred through bathing in river Jordan according to the advice given by the man of God.

Another example of relational evangelism in reaching out to Gentiles is the experience of Elisha and Ben-Hadad, king of Aram, a non-Israelite king who was aware of the God, the Creator that is different from their idols (2 King 8:7-15). Hiram, king of Tyre, heard about the Mighty power of God and acknowledged God of Solomon as Creator of heaven and earth: “because the Lord loves his people, he has made you their king ... Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth!” (2 Chron.2:11, 12).

The queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon became a reality because the mighty work of God had reached her in the form of witnessing she received in her far country (2 Chronicle 9:1-8; 1 Kings 10: 1-9). These narratives indicate that other nations have been evangelized with the marvelous works of God and Solomon’s wisdom given by God. The historical writing has many accounts of cross-cultural missionary ministry where many non-Jews were converted through relational and healing ministry method of evangelism. These methods cannot be underestimated. The same methods as biblical models could be used to reach the unreached tribes of the earth.

### **Evangelism in the Wisdom Literature**

David in his relationship with God understood the mission of God that Israel was to be a medium to the witness of God’s knowledge to other ethnic groups of the earth. David mentioned that God’s way and saving power might be made known to all (Psalms 67:1-2) so that “all people” which is inclusive and not only Israel, are to praise the Lord and stand in awe of Him (Psalm 33:8; 47:1; 67:3,5; 100:1; 117:1).

This can be done when Israel “declares Yahweh’s deeds and sing his protest” as God’s appointed instrument (Psalm 9:11; 18:49; 96:2-3; 105:1) through the missionary efforts of Israel to cause all the families of the earth or the Gentiles to worship God (Psalm 22:27; 66:4; 86:9) in order to make God’s knowledge known to all (Psalm 115:1-7). Psalm 96:2-9 calls believers to proclaim God’s salvation among the nations:

Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.  
Declare His glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all people.  
For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.  
Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth Psalms (96:2 – 9).

**Testimony ministry in song.** Most of the Bible texts in the wisdom literature are established on testimony ministry medium. They revealed God to other nations through witnessing of God’s Mighty power which is especially expressed in songs and praises.

There are some texts in Psalms that have missionary calls to proclaim God’s mission to nations of the earth: “Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts” (Ps.105:1-2). “I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame” (Ps.119:46). “Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’ The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy” (Ps.126:2-3). “They (Israelites) tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might, so that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendor of your kingdom” (Ps.145:11-12). “My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every

creature praise his holy name for ever and ever” (vs. 21). King David declares that they, the Israelites will praise God among the nations (Ps.57:9; 108:3), and the kingdoms of the earth should “sing to God” (Ps.68:32). Thus, as a result of their proclamation of God’s universal salvation, the whole earth will “be filled with his glory” (Ps.72:19).

Through the witnessing exercises of the Jews, Egyptians and Ethiopians will submit to the Lord (Ps.68:31); all kings will worship him, and all nations serve the Davidic King, the Messiah (Ps72:11), God will be “feared by the kings of the earth” (Ps.76:12), and will judge all the nations as His inheritance (Ps.82:8), and “all the nations . . . will come and worship” before the Lord (Ps.86:9). Foreigners then will be like the natives enjoying the benefits of citizenship (Ps.87:4–6), and “all people” will acknowledge God’s “mighty acts” (Ps.145:12). Through ministration in songs and praises, that includes witnessing through the arts of God and the miracles of the Lord’s doing in the conversion of people into God’s kingdom. Testimony through songs and praises can be considered as other biblical models in preaching the gospel and reaching people of various communities and tribes.

### **Evangelism in the Prophetic Writings**

Many of the Old Testament prophets predicted that the Gentiles, who are known as the nations of the earth, would be converted to the faith of the knowledge of the true God. Some of these Old Testament prophets were sent by God to witness about him to other nations, and pronounce warning and judgments against these nations, which suggests that God was purposely working for the salvation of these nations.

**Prophet Isaiah.** Prophet Isaiah from the start of his ministry had the vision of God’s inclusive agenda by seeing “the whole earth full of the glory of God” (Isa.6:3;

40:5). This glory of God covering the whole earth is the factor that is forcing evangelism to move forward the global mission of God.

Isaiah prophesied a time when Gentiles would seek God and be converted into the community of faith (Isaiah 11:10 – 16), and draw near together (Isa.45:20). Then God will gather other people who are non-Jews to Himself to worship him (Isa.56:8). Israel was to “go” as God commanded to witness to other nations with the plan of God to reconcile them to Himself since they are His creatures.

Bryant Hick notes that Isaiah 40-45 enumerated a threefold mission approach in the Old Testament:

First, Israel is expected to live according to the word of God and to be a beacon to guide other nations to Yahweh. Second, the act of God rescuing the Israelite from the exile through a marvelous way that the Gentiles will be overwhelmingly impressed by the magnificent, mighty and tender mercy of Yahweh would draw the Gentiles to the worship of Yahweh. Third, Israel is to declare to the Gentiles that Yahweh alone is God and that He alone is worthy of honor, worship, allegiance, and obedience.<sup>1</sup>

Prophet Isaiah reported that God, the Yahweh, gave the Israelite a task to “go” to the Babylonian to proclaim God’s redemption to them and explain to them how Yahweh had led them through the wilderness. It says;

Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing, declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not [when] he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out (Isaiah48:20-21).

This Bible text reflects the testimonies of God’s miraculous power in the past which can be used to minister to people during witnessing. Testimonies of the mighty power of God may be seen as one of the great evangelical instruments of reaching various ethnic groups.

---

<sup>1</sup> W. Bryant Hicks, “Old Testament Foundation for Mission,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 58.

Further study shows that the Hebrew word “go” used in Isaiah 48:20 is “*yatsa*” meaning “to go, break out, depart, proceed, go abroad, get away, to carry with the commandment.” Also the Greek word for “go” is “*poreuomai*” as it is found in Matthew 28:19 which have the same meaning or interpretation of the Hebrew word “*yatsa*.”<sup>2</sup> It is the same God who commanded in the Old Testament that sent Jesus in the New Testament who gave the same command at His departure. This connotes that from the Old Testament era God had intended to reach other nations with the message of salvation because God’s salvation mission is for all creation and not only the Israel as a nation.

God is definite that He wants other nations of the world to be reached with the light of His knowledge and to acknowledge Him as God. Israel was called by God to be the light to the Gentiles (Isa. 49:3, 4) and they were to proclaim His glory to nations (Isa. 55:5). To confirm this, God purposely mentioned in Isaiah 66:18-19 some nations as Gentiles that need to receive the light like Tarshish, Pul, Lud, Tubal, and Javan. He said “. . .it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. . . I will send those that escape of them unto the nations. . . . that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles” Isa. 66:18-19. In view of this, it may be concluded that God’s inclusive mission is for all and “all” includes all the ethnic groups of this world.

Some Old Testament writers have observed that Isaiah was appropriately called the “Messianic prophet” because he had a clear picture of God and the mission of Christ, and His purpose for His church. It was declared that Isaiah saw that Christ

---

<sup>2</sup>James Strong, “Go” “HB 3318 and GK4198,” *Strong’s Complete Word Study*, ed. Warren Baker (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2004), 1876.

was the suffering Messiah who is considered to be the Servant that would come as a “light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6) and His salvation message would eventually go “unto the end of the earth.”<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, it was noted that Christ as a Servant was called to be “a light of the Gentiles” (Isaiah 42:6) because through Him the Gentiles who were plunged into the deepest and thickest darkness would be illuminated. God calls all men to His salvation without a single exception and gives Christ to all to illuminate them so that all are expected to be converted.<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 42 declares that God raised another servant different from Israel but has a connection with Abraham covenant which is Jesus Christ, to redeem Israel and be the light to other nations of the earth. Isaiah 42:1-4 says,

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighted; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall be not broken, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he has set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

Also, Isaiah 42 states the ministry of Jesus and the mode of his ministration which is through humility, healing and deliverance methodology. The same styles of ministration are expected to be applied in this contemporary evangelism.

Isaiah 49:6 declares the function of the Servant, which is to restore Israel and evangelize the Gentiles by being light to them, “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the

---

<sup>3</sup>*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol.4*, (Washington D.C: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1977), 90-91.

<sup>4</sup>John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*(Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBook, 2009), 294, 295.

ends of the earth (Isa.49:6).” Additional text in Isaiah that supports the light of the world as God’s evangelistic concept to both the Israelite and the Gentiles is Isaiah 52:10 that says “The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” God, in chapter 52 saved the Israelite and redeemed them in the sight of the other nations (vs.10. “in the eyes of all the nations”) “without money” verse 3, so that other nations may “see the salvation of our God.” Redeeming Israel in the sight of other nations, Isaiah 55:4-5 reveals that God called them to proclaim His salvation to other nations for them to have the knowledge of God and worship Him.

God’s mission given to Israelites in the Old Testament was directed toward other nations who did not belong to the community of faith. Several Old Testament Bible texts show that God’s mission is a universal mission. God promised the foreigners who have joined themselves to the Lord by accepting the God of Israel that he would not reject them (Isa 56:3) but that their prayer and burnt offering would be accepted when they come to His house, the sanctuary and He declared that” his house will be the house of prayer for all people.” (Isa.56:7). Prophet Isaiah at the conclusion of his book revealed that God would send missionaries to the world in fulfillment of God’s global mission (Isa.66:19). The outcome of this global missionary will be that “all flesh shall come to worship before me, says the Lord (Isa.66:23).

Bryant Hick summarizes the discussion on Servant as the light of the world in Isaiah as “the highest and clearest level of missionary thought in Isaiah.” He says “the same basic understanding is presented when God takes note of the Servant’s work as the redeemer of Jacob and restorer of Israel.” He declares that such work is “too small a thing.” He will also make the Servant “a light to the nations” so that His salvation

“will reach to the end of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6), a verse known as the Great Commission in the Old Testament.”<sup>5</sup>

God’s given purpose for the Church or Christians is for them to be the light of the world through evangelism. Gerald Wright expatiates the more on the concept of light that it has important Missiological roots in the Old Testament by referring to Isaiah who envisioned a Servant of God who would be a light to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6).<sup>6</sup> As it has been discussed above, various methods of evangelism are expected to be used as found in the book of Isaiah and most especially the ministry of Jesus. Such evangelical methods are healing ministry, relational method, friendship, prayer, and testimonies of God’s Mighty power to save.

**Jeremiah with the unpopular message.** With the mindset of God’s inclusive mission, He prepared Jeremiah before he was formed or born, to be an instrument of evangelistic mission especially with an unpopular message to nations around him. For this reason, God sanctified Jeremiah, called and ordained him to be a prophet “unto the nations” and not unto Israel alone. Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” Jeremiah was a global mission agent in the hand of God to witness God’s salvation plan to other ethnic groups.

The fulfillment of Jeremiah to preach to the Gentiles was recorded in Jeremiah 16:19-21 when he foresaw the future that the Gentiles will come to God “from the ends of the earth, and shall say, surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit, ” and they would acknowledge God’s power and

---

<sup>5</sup>Hicks, 59.

<sup>6</sup>Gerald D. Wright, “The Purpose of Mission,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 20.

acknowledge Him as the Lord. Also the act of Jeremiah sending Seraiah to Babylon with a scroll which was to be read aloud signifies mission across the border. God's mission which was the prophetic message was preached in the foreign nations.

In the Old Testament account, it is evident that Jeremiah evangelized other nations of the earth with the knowledge of a true God. His message was considered to be hard and unpopular, and his evangelistic method has been through preaching and presentation of books to be read if he could not go. A lesson can be learned from Jeremiah where a method of sending literature to some un-entered areas before the arrival of the preachers to prepare the ground or for ground-breaking. The people preferred to listen to the message of fake pastors which was contrary to the one God sent through Jeremiah (Jer.7-27). Gospel message to some people group may seem to be an unwanted or unpopular message, which may be difficult to accept.

**Daniel.** Daniel was a contemporary of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel who were God prophets that witness to other nations about the true God and His redemption plan for humanity. Daniel and the three Hebrew boys were missionaries that proclaimed the knowledge of the true God to the nation of Babylon including their king and officers (Daniel 1- 3).

This was done through their lifestyle which is health ministry, and relational method. Their lifestyle and friendship relationship made king Nebuchadnezzar identify them and was converted with the awareness of a true God. Then he wrote a letter to all nations confessing the mightiness of God who humbled him, and he declared God as the King of heaven who reigns forever (Daniel 4).

Another evangelical tool used by Daniel and his colleagues was the testimonies of a living God with a mighty power to save, which is different from their own gods. This was established when God communicated to king Nebuchadnezzar

through dream which is proof that God is concerned about the other nations as His evidence of love to them all. Daniel did not stop his God-sent mission with king Nebuchadnezzar but continued with other kings of Babylon.

Daniel witnessed to King Belshazzar (Daniel 5), Darius the Mede and Medo-Persian officials (Daniel 6), and Cyrus (Daniel 6:28; 10:1; 2Chron. 36:22, 23' Ezra 1:1-4) who issued a decree to allow the Jews to return home from Babylonian captivity. Daniel missionary assignment from God was a cross-cultural mission to the Gentiles, and evidence of conversion was recorded.

**Jonah.** Nineveh is one of the oldest of the Assyrian cities which some believed that it was founded by Nimrod (Genesis10:11).<sup>7</sup> It was a city on the east bank of the Tigris River near the modern Mosul, which some scholars believed to be most likely founded by the Babylonians. It was rebuilt and fortified by Sennacherib as the Capital city of Assyria.<sup>8</sup>

The people of Nineveh were not Jews but were Assyrians as mentioned above and for God sending Prophet Jonah to preach to them by warning them of the impending destruction coming to the city of Nineveh means that in Old Testament God's plan of salvation was not meant for the Jews alone but to witness to other nations known as Gentiles. Nineveh was not a city in Israel. It was another Gentile nation and is evident that God is interested in all nations of the world.

According to the scriptures, it was revealed that the Assyrians were a thorn in the flesh of the Israelite, they were the greatest enemy of Israel and had become a threat to their lives (2Kings 15-28, 1Chron.5:6-26; 2Chron.28-33; Isa.7-8, 19-11).

---

<sup>7</sup>"Nineveh" *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Vol.4* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1955), 1000.

<sup>8</sup>George Arthur Buttrick, ed. "Jonah," *The Interpreter's Bible, Vol.6* (Abingdon Press, 1989), 876.

Also, God used the Assyrian as an instrument of punishment to the Israelite. For instance, God said, “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.” (Isa. 10:5-6).

God mandated Jonah to declare the warning message of the destruction of Nineveh the capital city of Israel’s bitter enemy, the Assyrians. He knew Assyrian as their greatest enemy, and for this reason, he refused to deliver the message of repentance to the Ninevites so that they could be destroyed. This reveals that God did not only deal with Israel as a chosen nation but also with other nations. Jonah’s reluctance to go may be seen as the attitude of the Israelites toward other nations by hoarding the glory and salvation of God from them. Also, it is an expression of Israelites unwillingness to evangelize other nations and preventing them not to be saved. The salvation of other nations as unreached people group is not paramount to them which is not the plan of God for mankind.

Bryant Hick’s reflection on the book of Jonah says “the book of Jonah is the most missionary book in the Bible” and that the book revealed the “stinging rebuke of Israel’s isolationist attitude.”<sup>9</sup> While Craig Ott and Stephen J. Strauss observed the book as “the great missionary book of the Old Testament” and that God’s relent to hold back destruction demonstrates that he is a God of compassion even to the cruelest of nations (3:10). It also demonstrates that God’s covenantal love extends to the Gentile world (4:2).<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Buttrick, 876.

<sup>10</sup>Craig Ott and Stephen J. Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 19.

Jonah used preaching method to reach the people of Nineveh. There are some ethnic groups, like Nineveh, that do not know that what they are doing is wrong or the gods they are worshipping are idols or false gods. Such people groups need to be preached to like what Jonah did. By preaching to them, they will have the knowledge of the true God and repent. Preaching ministry is sometimes needed to deliver God's message to people that have not been reached with the gospel.

**Habakkuk.** Like Jonah, Habakkuk was another prophet that predicts God's destruction of the Chaldeans through preaching model of evangelism. The Chaldeans were pagan nation considered as an unreached people group. It was God's concern to evangelize other nations in Old Testament. The Chaldean's response to God's warning message led to another statement from God that says "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" Habakkuk 2:14.

This is God's evangelistic mission, and the purpose is to make His knowledge known all over the earth. For the knowledge of God to be known globally, it must be preached to unreached people groups of the earth which include the Ijebu people group South-West Nigeria and this is the responsibility of the contemporary Christian church.

Witnessing which is known as evangelism will continue from generation to generation till Christ comes the second time. Propagation of the gospel is the duty of every sincere Christian just as God has entrusted witnessing to the Israelite as a nation in the Old Testament. In Old Testament, God may be considered as the first missionary through His interaction with Adam and Eve before and after sin. God uses humanity as missionaries to reach other nations of the earth with different culture and language to lead them to Himself so that all may be saved. Mission to and for the

people of the earth was the focus of God through Israel as a nation and the Prophets that witnessed to the Gentiles or other nations of the earth is whole drama recorded in Old Testament. Some of the biblical models discovered in the Old Testament concept of evangelism such as preaching, health ministry, friendship, relational, the use of literature and lifestyle may also be employed in the developing and designing intervention for this study.

### **The Divine Concept of Evangelism in the New Testament**

It is good to note that witnessing to the Gentiles or other nations of the world as the unreached seems not to start with New Testament but it is the continuation of what God has started in the Old Testament. For instance, there was a record of a mixed multitude that followed the Israelite from Egypt (Exodus 12:38; Numbers 11:4). Also, the record of Ruth proves that God could have been willing to reach other nations or Gentiles with the plan of salvation.

New Testament writers reveal some documents that may suggest that some Gentiles are being ministered to and also responded to the gospel faith of Jesus Christ during His life and after His death. The record of the Magi from the East that came to worship and present gifts to Jesus during his birth is evidence that God is not dealing with the Jews alone but also ministering to other nations. As God was setting apart the Israelites as a special nation for specific assignment of evangelizing other nations around them, God was also using some Gentiles in other nations who had already converted to God's salvation to reach out to other Gentiles apart from Israel.

God is a universal Being with universal salvation which is His universal mission for humanity because He desires that His knowledge and glory be made known universally. It may be concluded that God prepared Israel as a nation to attract

other nations to His knowledge and worship. God's evangelistic concept which is inclusive mission did not stop with the Old Testament. The fulfillment of some prophecies in Old Testament on the plan of God to evangelize the Gentiles especially the messianic servant prophecy of Jesus Christ in the book of Isaiah is established in New Testament and the redemption process in operation.

In New Testament, the knowledge of God and His worship begin with the announcement of the birth of Jesus by the Angels saying "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people (Luke 2:10). Then "a multitude of the host heaven joins declaring "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). Also, Christ's witnessing to the Jews and sometimes His encounters with the Gentiles is another manifestation that God's mission moves from the Jewish community to the Gentiles' nations. Craig Ott and Stephen J. Strauss explain further by saying;

The Old Testament has given us a clear vision of God's sovereignty over the nations, his desire to bless the nations and his ultimate inclusion of them in his kingdom. But the vision is primarily in the future. Whereas Israel as God's servant had failed to manifest the righteousness and glory of Lord before the nations, the true Servant, the promised Messiah, would come as a savior and as a light to the Gentiles. With him, the Abrahamic promise of blessing to all the families of the earth comes to fulfillment (Galatians 3:13-16). The manner by which the nations will be gathered unto the Lord is manifest in the New Testament.<sup>11</sup>

The New Testament opens the way for the Gentiles to have more opportunity to God's salvation which is God's plan of redemption and closes the door to the Israelite's refusal to reach other nations with the everlasting gospel in which the Ijebus are included. Everything about the New Testament seems to be global mission

---

<sup>11</sup>Ott and Strauss, 25.

evangelizing humanity with various method of witnessing. Some of these evangelism methods will be discussed below.

### **Ministry of Jesus**

The ministry of Jesus is the fulfillment of God's mission for all people or nations of the earth by witnessing salvation to humanity. For the scripture clearly states it that God's global mission was born out of love for humanity who are his creatures as found in John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

The fulfillment of this God's global mission necessitates the coming of Jesus to this earth to give internal life to all people as recorded in John 3:17; "for God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him." The Salvation of humankind is through Jesus Christ by reconciling humanity with their creator God. Jesus carried out this God-given task by preaching and teaching all people that have an encounter with him both Jews and Gentiles. The ministry of Jesus is well stated in Luke 4:18-19, where it said that He was anointed to preach good tidings to poor, to proclaim freedom for the captives, restoration of sight to the blind, and deliverance of humanity from sin. This assignment was carried out through preaching, teaching, deliverance, and healing methods.

The fulfillment of the prophecy of Prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 9:2; 42:1, 6 were recorded in Luke 2:30-32, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." These Bible texts revealed that God did not prepare salvation for the Israelite alone but for "all people." "All the people" in this verse is well defined in the next verse by referring to "the Gentiles." For this reason, that God appoints Israel

as means of evangelizing “the Gentiles” and Jesus comes to fulfill this as a result of Israelite’s failure.

A careful study of Luke 2:30-32 suggests that the “Salvation” referred to here is the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Simeon in the Temple took the baby Jesus in “his arm and blessed God, and said, Lord, let thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” (Luke 2:28-30). It is “prepared before the face of all people” signifies that this salvation will not be hidden, but to be manifested to all people because He is the light and cannot be hidden. It must shine for people to see.

So, Jesus, the salvation is a “light to lighten the Gentiles” that were in the darkness in the world. The salvation is prepared for the “Gentiles” as a light to lighten them from the darkness so that they may have the knowledge of Him the salvation and the light; then the knowledge of God and of the kingdom to come. The second people mentioned is “the Israel” and the salvation which is the light will be “the glory” for them. “The glory of thy people Israel” may be considered as honorable and blessing for Israel as a nation to have the salvation which is Jesus Christ to spring up from their nation who will now be the light which is the Savior that will lighten the whole world and bring salvation to humankind.

“Light” is considered to be the symbol of knowledge, instruction, and of true religion. The Messiah is often called the “light” and the “light of the world” (Isaiah 9:2; Matthew 6:16; John 1:4, 7. 9; John 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 46; Revelation 21:23). This is one of the numerous declarations which occur in Israel that the religion of the

Messiah would be extended to the heathen world, and they too would be brought to partake of its privileges through witnessing.<sup>12</sup>

Ellen White explains that Simeon used the spiritual discernment that made him live in the atmosphere of heaven to discover the Sun of Righteousness, the Messiah that will bring redemption to all mankind through preaching or witnessing. In her comment, she interprets this Bible text (Luke 2:29-32) saying, “His illumined mind received the light flowing from the Source of all light. He saw that Christ was to be the hope of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. The walls of tradition built up by Jewish prejudice did not exist in his mind. He realized that the Messiah was to bring redemption to all.”<sup>13</sup> It is made known that the spiritual treasures which God had given to Israel are meant as a gift for all, including the Gentiles. The glory of Israel should not be in keeping those treasures to itself; its glory should be in making all its life a “light to lighten the Gentiles” by reaching other nation with God’s redemption plan<sup>14</sup>

Matthew recognizes Jesus as a servant referred to in Isaiah 42:1-4 that will bring justice and hope to the Gentiles (Matthew 12:18-21). Also, Luke records that Jesus’ reading of Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue was to identifying Himself as fulfilling the Old Testament messianic hope (Luke 4:18-20). As it has been noted that Jesus’ earthly ministry repeatedly indicates that He has come first to the people of Israel, then the ministry to the Gentiles by propagating redemption to them is the secondary (Matthew 15:24; Mark 7:26-27). “Thus the Gospels clearly portray Jesus’s

---

<sup>12</sup>Albert Barnes, “Isaiah,” *Barnes on the Old Testament Vol.2* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977), 103.

<sup>13</sup>*The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, April 2, 1901).

<sup>14</sup>Buttrick, 60.

coming as the fulfillment of the Isaiahic anticipation of a mission to the nations.”<sup>15</sup>

Ellen White also alluded to this fact that the light of the gospel would first go to Israel before reaching to Gentiles. She says, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. To you, My disciples, I commit this message of mercy. It is to be given to both Jews and Gentiles--to Israel, first, and then to all nations, tongues, and peoples. All who believe are to be gathered into one church.”<sup>16</sup>

The incarnation of Jesus Christ is an indication that God has drawn close to all humans as an expression of His love for mankind because they are precious to Him. For this reason, Jesus was given as joy to the world (Luke 2:10-14; 25- 32), and He became the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world (Luke 3:3-6; John 1:29, 36). During Jesus’ earthly ministry, God’s mission moved across the Jewish boundary to the Gentiles which fulfill God’s inclusive mission.

The encounter of a Roman Centurion in Matthew 8: 5-13 is a standing example that can be considered. Jesus’ exclamation to this Centurion faith that “I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith” may be interpreted as Jesus was teaching his disciples and the Jews that Gentiles also have the same privilege to God by faith and the same opportunity to depend on God’s grace like the Israelite. In this Bible passage, Jesus was using teaching method to pass on the message to both the reached (Jews) and the unreached people (Gentiles).

Another instance of Jesus’ witnessing to the Gentiles in his earthly ministry is the case of a Canaanite woman from the region of Tyre and Sidon who begged Jesus to heal her daughter of demonic possession (Matthew 15:21-28). Jesus’ response to

---

<sup>15</sup>Ott and Strauss. 32.

<sup>16</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 27.

this woman “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel” may be seen as Jesus was about to teach His disciples and the Jews a lesson that the Gentiles have the same privilege to God as they do. Jesus applied healing and teaching ministry to proclaim the gospel to a different group of people.

Furthermore, it may be considered that Jesus wanted to use this opportunity to inform the Israelites that God’s mission is an inclusive one and that this mission must be cross-cultural to other nations through evangelism. Jesus’ ministry on earth was about witnessing to both Jews and Gentiles which may be interpreted as a global mission. His experience with the Gentiles was to prepare His disciple on God’s universal mission through preaching, teaching, and healing ministries to all the ethnic groups in the world with God’s salvation. The church is also saddled with such responsibility as the followers of Christ.

### **Disciples and Gospel Commission**

The calling chosen of the twelve disciples was to make them be “fishers of people” (Mark 1:17; Luke 5:10) which may be interpreted that the disciples must join him (Jesus) in his witnessing mission to people about the Kingdom of God. While sending them out two by two on a mission of preaching to Israel their own nation, Jesus instructed the disciples not to go to the Gentile (Matthew 10:6).

The disciples’ missionary activities were limited to the Jews in preparation for the comprehensive mission of witnessing “to all nations” as stated in the gospel commission (Matt.28:19-20, Mark16:15- 18; John 20:21 -23). The missionary mandate of gospel commission in Acts 1:8 describes the process by which the gospel commission was to be carried out. Gospel mission is expected to move to all nations starting from Jerusalem “to the uttermost part of the earth.”

All nations mentioned in this Bible text signify ethnic groups or people groups of the earth. Israel is included in the “all nations” (Matt. 28:19), suggesting that both Jews and Gentiles have the right to the kingdom of God. Jesus’ last command which is the Gospel Commission is the authority given to disciples to move the gospel mission across the border of the Jews to the Gentiles. This gospel mandate by Jesus encourages the disciples to go into the world to proclaim the gospel to all nation without restriction (Mark 16:15-16). The Pentecost experience suggests the fulfillment of the mandate whereby people from all over the nations were evangelized by the Apostles. Act 2:5-8 says;

And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven, Now when this noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

The Pentecost experience may mean to lay the foundation for the Apostles to go on a global mission as planned by God. At this Pentecost’s time, the Apostles may be seen to be matured spiritually to evangelize not only the Jews but other ethnic groups of the earth with the gospel mission. Also, the ability of various ethnic groups and tongues under the earth present at the Pentecost to hear their diverse languages spoken by the Apostles signifies that the message of Christ was preached to all people of the earth.

This is an indication that the gospel ought to be presented or preached to people in their own local language. Presentation of the gospel in local dialect is one of the best avenues or methods to accept the message quickly. Language is an important tool in reaching ethnic groups faster.

Apart from the Pentecost event, there are occasions where the apostles evangelize the Gentiles as evidence of fulfilling gospel commission which is the

global mission mandate. Phillip who went to Samaria to preach the gospel. Samaria was a Gentile nation, an unreached people group, like the Ijebus (Acts. 8:4-25).

Furthermore, the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch who is witnessed to by Phillip through the direction of the Holy Spirit is evidence that other unreached nations must be evangelized in order to have the taste of the gospel of salvation given by God (Acts 8: 26-40). The conversion of Cornelius is another record to support the Gentiles coming to light of the gospel through evangelism done by Peter as directed by the Holy Spirit.

Cornelius was a Centurion of the band from Italian who was not a Jew, but a Gentile, a man from other nation different from Israel (Acts10). The discussion in the book of Acts of Apostles chapter ten may suggest the expression of the worldview of the Jews that God's salvation is meant for the Jews alone because the Jews that were there were surprised that the Gentiles received Holy Ghost. All the events that took place above, the effect of prayer, dreaming, and preaching ministry can be observed

The experience of Philip with Eunuch of Ethiopian as an African man and Peter's visit to Cornelius an Italian may give the conviction that God expects the unreached people or people groups to be evangelized with the gospel of salvation in order to be saved. Furthermore, all the evidence mentioned above suggests that God had already reaching or witnessing to the Gentiles before having contact with the Jews. God wants the Jews to support Him as a privilege given to them, and the same privilege is given to the modern Christians and the church to be involved in evangelism as the sole duty of the church and Christians. This duty can be achieved with the use of various evangelism approaches to accomplish the goal.

## **Paul and Conversion of the Gentiles**

Scriptures show that after the conversion of Paul, he began with preaching ministry to evangelizing, starting with the Jews because they were the chosen nation by God and Jesus said that the gospel is preached first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles (Matthew 15:24; Mark 7:26-27). It is observed that the Jews did not respond to Paul's teaching, and then he "turned to Gentiles."

In addition, Paul and Barnabas preach in the temple of the Jews in Antioch, but the Jews reject the message by "going out of the Synagogue," and "they were filled with envy" because the gospel of salvation is presented to the Gentiles. Then Paul and Barnabas "turned to the Gentiles" who receive the message with joy as stated in Acts. 13:42-46 as quotes below;

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that this word might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

The Bible text above is evidence that God had already prepared the Gentiles for the gospel and that was their reasons for listening to the message. This is a lesson for the church planters that they need to know where God had already worked and supported the evangelism. Secondly, it is proof that there are some people groups that are expecting the gospel to be preached to by someone and that is where God is already working.

The confirmation and fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy are established and reaffirmed by Paul and Barnabas that Jesus Christ is the Servant that would be a "light

of the Gentiles, ” and through them, salvation was presented to the Gentiles as other nations (Isaiah 42:6). Further explanation is echoed in the book of Acts that says “For so hath the Lord commanded us saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the end of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region” (Acts 13:47-49).

Furthermore, Paul’s experience in Corinth is another evidence of gospel rejection by Jew because of Gentiles (Acts 18:1-17). In Corinth Paul first preached the gospel to the Jews in their synagogue following the instruction of Jesus Christ but they furiously rejected the message by “opposing” and “blaspheming.” Then Paul shook his clothes in protest to their rejection of the gospel and said “from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles” (Acts 18:6). Gailyn Van explains further by saying;

In Corinth, Paul went initially to the Jewish synagogue, where he sought to teach both Jews and Greeks about the gospel (Acts 18:5). When Jews rejected his message, he turned to the Gentiles even though some Jews, such as Crispus, were converted. The locality of preaching also changed from the Jewish synagogue to the house of Titus Justus. During this time of transition, it would have been easy for Paul to give up in despair. But God’s presence reassured him. God told him in a vision, “Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent; ...because I have many people in this city” (vv.9-10). As a result, Paul settled in this area for a year and a half (v.11), and a local fellowship of believers was established.”<sup>17</sup>

In Paul’s missionary journey, it is established that the Jews reject the gospel preach to them by Paul because the Gentiles were reached with the same gospel. Acts 28:23-28 confirms this which was the later part of Paul’s live experience at Rome. He witnessed to the chief of the Jews but they rejected his message, and Paul concludes,

---

<sup>17</sup>Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Biblical Foundation & Contemporary Strategies: Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 216-217.

“Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (v.28).

Ellen White also expounds on God ordaining Paul’s mission to the Gentiles by saying;

Paul's labors at Antioch, in association with Barnabas, strengthened him in his conviction that the Lord had called him to do a special work for the Gentile world. At the time of Paul's conversion, the Lord had declared that he was to be made a minister to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Acts 26:18. The angel that appeared to Ananias had said of Paul, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Acts 9:15. And Paul himself, later in his Christian experience, while praying in the temple at Jerusalem, had been visited by an angel from heaven, who bade him, "Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." Acts 22:21.<sup>18</sup>

It seems both the Old and New Testaments declared God’s plan of salvation to save humankind from the falling sin and reconciled them. The fulfillment of this vision of God’s saving grace is the election of Israel as a nation to be a servant to manifest the Abrahamic promise of blessing all families of the earth (Gal 3:13-16).

The failure to discharge this responsibility may suggest that God’s sending of another Servant, Jesus Christ, as the savior who would be “a light to the Gentiles.” The task did not end with Jesus Christ, but it continues with the sending of the apostles and disciples with new converts in Christ both Jews and Gentiles in the power of the Holy Spirit led to the birth of “the church.”

The church has become God’s agent of propagating the gospel, and it will continue till when the earth will come to an end. The church is expected to employ some of the evangelism models used by Paul and Barnabas, and other Apostles. Some of these models are visitation, preaching, teaching, relational and healing ministry.

---

<sup>18</sup>White, 159.1.

These models can still be useful by the contemporary church planters in reaching ethnic groups. Craig and Stephen further explain saying:

Our survey of God's plan for the nations in the Old and New Testaments has revealed more continuity than is often assumed. God's universal intention of bringing fallen humanity back into his fellowship and under his reign has unfolded through the particular calling of individuals and peoples. These people became God's mediators of blessing, which extends to all nations. Israel's specific mission was more centripetal, to live as God's kingdom people in the midst of nations and thus draw them to become worshippers of the Lord. God had revealed that he would in the farthest places and gather people from every nation to himself in Zion. Israel failed as the servant of the Lord, but the Messiah would come as a light to the nations and accomplish redemption. With the New Testament, this vision was inaugurated in an unexpected way. Not only was Jesus of Nazareth the promised Messiah who purchased salvation on the cross, but he began a movement of the Spirit that reversed the missionary direction, sending his people to the ends of the earth, calling people everywhere to repent, be reconciled to God through Christ, and enter the kingdom. This was to be a new people of his choosing who would be composed of persons from every nation. His people would become a spiritual temple as a dwelling place of the Spirit, manifesting his kingdom in word and deed. The church continued in continuity with Israel's calling as a true servant of the Lord and a light to the nations. Though faced with persecution and spiritual opposition, Christ will build his church until the gospel has been preached among every people. Then he will return victoriously to finally judge all evil and gather his people from all nations to worship him for all eternity in the new Jerusalem. The eschatological vision will be realized, and God will be glorified in all creation."<sup>19</sup>

The church as the body of Christ and the spiritual Israel needs to continue with the responsibility assign by God in the plan of reaching out to other nations or the unreached people groups of the world with the everlasting gospel of salvation.

### **Biblical Model for Church Planting**

The book of Acts seems to call the attention of the readers to identify the plan of salvation and remind them of the unfinished task which continues to the end of the earth. Also, it was noted that an exact methodology for mission was not given; rather a variety of methods may be used in gospel propagation for the establishment of the

---

<sup>19</sup>Ott and Strauss, 53-54.

new churches.<sup>20</sup> Based on the point mentioned above, this section will review the biblical basis for the models that will be explored for church planting in this project.

### **The Bible and Friendship Model of Evangelism**

Friendship evangelism is the way of establishing a relationship with somebody you want to reach with the gospel. The act of friendship seems, to begin with God when he was visiting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen.3:8-9). He was not mindful that they were His creatures, but He was visiting them to establish a relationship so that there could be communion and trust between them and Himself. God visited Adam and Eve to communicate and relate to them in a physical sense in order to establish friendship as it is in a father to son relationship.

The book of Exodus records another situation where God establishes a friendship with man for the purpose of His mission. This time around, God spoke to Moses in a friendly manner when he was giving instructions to deliver to Israel. It was recorded that “the Lord spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend...” (Exod.33:11). At this juncture, God was reconciling Israel to Himself and manifesting His greatness through Moses to Israel. For God to achieve this, He came down to the level of Moses as a human being and created a relationship between Him and Moses as a demonstration.

The Hebrew word for “friend” in this text (Exod.33:11) is “*rey'-ah or reya'*” meaning “*an associate,*” “*brother,*” “*companion*” “*fellow,*” “*friend,*” “*husband,*” “*lover or neighbor.*”<sup>21</sup> Taking any of these words, it means that God related with Moses like a brother or companion or lover or neighbor in order to win his heart to

---

<sup>20</sup>Ott and Strauss, 52.

<sup>21</sup> Strong, “Friend” HB 7453.

deliver the message given to him. This principle should be used in reaching the unreached people in evangelism. Also in the book of second Chronicles 20:7, God calls Abraham His friend. The Epistle of James confirms this statement saying “the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:23).

The Hebrew interpretation of the word “*friend*” use in the Bible texts above is “*Ahav or Ahab*” meaning “*affection for,*” “*love,*” “*like,*” or “*friend.*”<sup>22</sup> God uses love to establish friendship between Abraham and Himself which He was reaffirming and extending the same grace to Abraham’s descendants – the Israelite.

Just as God establishes friendship relationship between Himself and Abraham, the same friendship experience is found in Hiram, king of Tyre and David the father of Solomon. Hiram king of Tyre reminds Solomon of the “love relationship” between him and David; then king Solomon made use of this opportunity to express the goodness of God to him by giving him the grace to build the temple that his father David could not build (1Kings 5).

The friendship that comes out of love that makes a heathen king of Tyre, Hiram to know about God and His greatness in the life of the Jews and this makes him contribute to the building of the temple of the living God. This kind of friendship could be used in reaching unbelievers with the gospel.

The love relationship that Naomi extends to Ruth that makes her not willing to leave her until Ruth follows her to Bethlehem. As a result of this relationship which is the basis of friendship, evangelism makes Ruth a heathen woman from the land of Moab to become one of the four women named in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt.1:5).

---

<sup>22</sup>Strong, “Friend” HB 7453.

In her speech, she confesses that the expression of love by Boaz to her results in a relationship that made Ruth a heathen woman to unite with Boaz. Ruth says, “Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens” (Ruth 2:13).

This friendship relationship results in winning the heart of Ruth and Ruth a heathen woman had her root in the genealogy of the Israelite. This can be considered as friendship evangelism. It is a model that might be effective in reaching the unreached people groups anywhere in the world.

The same principle of friendship evangelism was used by Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry. Jesus during His days went to Jericho to preach the gospel and Zacchaeus, “a Chief among the publicans” was converted (Luke 19:2, 7). His intention may probably be to see Jesus and not to have anything to do with Jesus. But because of the love, Jesus extends unto him by look up unto him and calls him by his name “Zacchaeus” with an invitation extended to him saying “Make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.”

This friendship makes him give all including his life and accepts the salvation offered him by Jesus. The scripture says, “Zacchaeus stood, and said unto Lord; Behold, Lord the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” (v.8). At this confession that Jesus pronounces salvation to his life by saying, “This day is salvation come to this house for so much as he also is a son of Abraham” (v.9).

A woman at Jacob’s well is another expression of friendship evangelism. The woman was a Samaritan, people that the Jew considered unbelievers, enemies of the Jews, and to worsen it a harlot that had no husband (John 4:9, 16-18). Jesus

establishes a contact with her by asking water from a woman that Jews considered to be a sinner and had nothing to do with them (Samaritans) v.7. Then Jesus touches her life by telling her all the secrets of her life, and through this, she is converted and become an agent of reaching the Samaritan people with the gospel of salvation. A friendship evangelism that Jesus expresses converted the woman, and the whole city of Samaria.

In order for friendship evangelism to be effective, Ellen White suggests Christ's method of evangelism be used. In her explanation, she writes, "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."<sup>23</sup> Friendship evangelism cannot be overlooked because it is the foundation of any relationship and the basis of evangelism. It is the starting point of any evangelistic method.

### **The Bible and Health Ministry Model of Evangelism**

Health challenge such as sickness and diseases have been phenomenon that is afflicting humankind from the ages. Everybody is being challenged by it, young and old; rich and poor. The affected one struggles every day to seek a solution. In the cause of finding a solution to this health challenge, many have come closer to God, and this has been a medium of propagating the gospel to the unreached souls and unreached places.

Further explanation from Ellen White expresses the importance of health ministry in evangelism by saying;

---

<sup>23</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 143.

Medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God. As through it men and women are led to see the importance of right habits of living, the saving power of the truth will be made known. Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work. As the right hand of the third angel's message, God's methods of treating disease will open doors for the entrance of present truth. Health literature must be circulated in many lands. Our physicians in Europe and other countries should awake to the necessity of having health works prepared by men who are on the ground and who can meet the people where they are with the most essential instruction.<sup>24</sup>

Health ministry has been a wonderful and fast ministry in reaching out to people with the salvation message. Naaman as an example in the Old Testament, he was not a Jew but "a captain of the host of the King of Syria," and the scripture says that he was "a mighty man of valor" and through him the Lord delivers Israel into the hand of the Syrians (2Kings 5:1). Naaman got to know about the living God in Israel through a "little maid from Israel." Naaman and the king of Syrian explored the opportunity by writing to the king of Israel. The leprosy of Naaman made him and the leadership of Syria acknowledge that there is a God in Israel that supersedes other gods on earth.

The healing of Naaman's leprosy through prophet Elisha makes him confess that "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but Israel:" (v.15). Naaman saw the mighty power of God and promised not to worship other gods but the God of Israel. He says "Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of the earth for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord" (2king 5:17). This is a sign of conversion from idol worship to the worship of the living God through the healing which is health ministry.

---

<sup>24</sup>Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*. 7 vols. 59.

Both the Israelite maidservant and the prophet use health and healing to lead Naaman to the God of Israel. The healing ministry of Jesus Christ makes His gospel to spread wide like wildfire. From the records, multitude followed Jesus for healing and solution to their problems. It is said that “his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and he healed them” (Matt.5:24).

The book of Matthew chapter eight has a record of some healing miracles that Jesus performed that foster the salvation message. In this chapter, there is a record of the Leper and a Centurion with great faith in Capernaum that his servant was sick of palsy (Matthew8:1-13). Also the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law of fever that necessitates many bringing their sick ones for healing. It is pointed out that this healing ministry of Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah that says “he, Jesus took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses” (Matt.8:17).

The healing of Gadarene demoniac man paved the way for the salvation message to enter the city of Gadarene who rejected Jesus from coming into their city. The scripture reveals that this demoniac man wants to follow Jesus but Jesus commanded, “Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him” (Luk.8:26-39).

In the account of the healing of the paralytic man, the record shows that” the man arose and departed to his house, but when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, which had given such power unto men” (Matt.9:1-8). In Matthew 9:26, it is written that the fame of Jesus’s miracle of healing “went abroad into all that land.”

Healing ministry known as health ministry has been an effective instrument in evangelism and it cannot be toyed with. The Apostle John in his last counsel advises that “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

### **The Bible and Teaching Ministry Model of Evangelism**

Teaching is not only a profession, but it is part of life and is a way of learning to acquire knowledge. Every human being will continue to learn until one dies. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses advised him on administrative skills, and he encouraged Moses “to teach” the selected leaders among the Israelite “the ordinances and laws, and show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do” (Exod.18:20).

The Hebrew interpretation of the word “to teach” in this verse is “*Zahar*” meaning “*to shine,*” “*be bright,*” “*to enlighten,*” “*to teach,*” “*to warn,*” and “*admonish.*”<sup>25</sup> In gospel, evangelism, the word “*Zahar*” is every important because people must be “enlightened” or be “admonished” with the word of God that will lead to an understanding of the message.

When Moses was forbidden to enter Canaan, in his admonition to the Israelite, he reminds them of all he has taught them to be obedient to God’s instructions. He urges them, “Now, therefore, hearken, O Israel unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you, for to do in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you” (Duet.4:1). Though the Israelite had enough experience with

---

<sup>25</sup>Strong, “Teach” HB2094.

God's leadership, but they are still being taught all the time. The teaching used here in Hebrew word is different from *Zahar* used in Exodus 18:20.

The Hebrew word use for "teach" in Deut.4:1 is "*Lamad*" meaning "to learn," "to study," "to teach," "to train, instruct," and "to practice."<sup>26</sup> Teaching is one of the ways of communicating gospel messages to people. Ministering in the gospel is about communication which can be done through "*Lamad*" teaching or studying and "*Zahar*" which is "to enlighten or admonish" the word of God to people. Moses uses the two words in instructing the Israelite.

Jesus uses the teaching ministry model during his earthly ministry to propagate the gospel. The scripture says that "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogue, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt.4:23).

Scanning through the book of Matthew, it is observed that Jesus seems to present His gospel messages in teaching than preaching. For example, from Matthew chapter five to eight, he teaches the people many lessons such as the beatitudes, salt, and light of the world, the law, anger, sin begins in the heart, etc.

Paul urged the brethren in Colossians to teach every man in all wisdom (Col.1:28) and to let the word of Christ dwell richly in wisdom through teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col.3:16). In his advice, Paul counsels that a bishop or church leader should be "apt to teach" (1Tim.3:2).

Teaching or admonition is part of gospel communication, and Ellen White affirms this;

---

<sup>26</sup>Strong, "Teach" HB3925.

Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received. While the new converts should be taught to ask counsel from those more experienced in the work, they should also be taught not to put the minister in the place of God. The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God and to depend on him, not on the ministers. Let them learn to work as Christ worked. Let them join his army of workers and do faithful service for him.<sup>27</sup>

Teaching ministry model is an important tool in the proclamation of the gospel to the unreached people, and it will be used for a follow-up after an outreach.

### **The Bible and Preaching Ministry Model of Evangelism**

Preaching ministry is one of the vehicles used in spreading the gospel. It is similar to that of teaching ministry, and they accompany each other in evangelism. No evangelism will take place without these two methods. Studies show that when God was displeased with the wickedness of men on the earth, he found Noah to be a “just man and perfect in his generation,” and God commands him to warn the people about the impending destruction. It is recorded that Noah preaches to them (1Pet.3:20; 2Pet.2:5; and 1Pet.3:19).

Noah may be assumed to be the first preacher of the gospel of salvation. Another prophet that could be considered as a preacher of the gospel of salvation is Jonah whom the Lord sent to the people of Nineveh (Jon.1:2; 3:4). These two preachers were sent by God to the nations that are displeasing God, and they are sent to deliver a message of warning to them.

The New Testament is mainly about preaching the gospel of salvation to the dying world. Starting from Jesus, it is prophesied that the “spirit of the Lord has anointed him to preach the good tidings unto the meek; he has sent him to bind up the

---

<sup>27</sup>Ellen White, *Counsels for the Church*, 69.

broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound..." (Isa.61:1-3). The fulfillment of this prophecy as recorded in Gospel says, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt.4:23). The ministry of Jesus seems to be mainly preaching in most cases (Mat.4:17; Mat.9:35; Mat.11:1; Mark 3:14).

The Apostles use mostly the preaching model in spreading the good news of salvation. The scripture says Apostles scattered abroad and they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4). In addition, the Apostle preaching the gospel, Philip was mentioned to have preached to the Eunuch of Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-40) and Paul immediately after his conversion preaches in Damascus (Acts 9:20-22). The record shows that the Gentiles were pleading for Paul and Barnabas to preach to them the next Sabbath (Acts 13:42). In Paul's admonition to Timothy, he encouraged him to "preach the word" (2Tim.4:2).

Ellen White has this to say about the preaching model;

There is a great work to be done in our world. Men and women are to be converted, not by the gift of tongues nor by the working of miracles, but by preaching of Christ crucified. Why delay the effort to make the world better? Why wait for some wonderful things to be done, some costly apparatus to be provided? However humble your sphere, however lowly your work, if you labor in harmony with teachings of the savior, He will reveal Himself through you, and your influence will draw souls to him. He will honor the meek and lowly ones, who seek earnestly to do service for him. Into all that we do, whether our work is in the shop, on the farm, or in the office, we are to bring the endeavor to save souls.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup>Ellen G. White, *Ye shall Receive Power* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1995), 205.

## Summary

The purpose of God's mission is to save humankind from their sin, and God demonstrated this in the Garden of Eden by making coats of skin and clothed Adam and Eve; He later gives a promise of "the seed of the woman." The plan of salvation began with God and is expected to continue with Israel as a chosen nation to be the light to other nations known as Gentiles, but Israel failed in this responsibility (Isa.42:18-25). Then another servant was prophesied by Isaiah to be "a light of the Gentiles" (Isa.42; 60; 61), and it is referring to Jesus Christ, and the prophecy is fulfilled during his earthly ministry as observed in Luk.4:18-19. The plan of evangelizing the world with the gospel did not end with Jesus, but the church continues until "the gospel is preached to all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Mat.24:14).

This study had discovered some biblical models in the Old Testament and New Testament that may be useful for this project. These models were observed to be great weapons in reaching the Gentiles. Friendship and relational methods were used by the Israelite in Egypt and Daniel with his colleagues. Other methods are preaching, teaching, visitation, the use of local language, health, healing, and testimonies. These biblical models will be considered when reaching out to Ijebu kingdom with the Adventist message.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW ON CHURCH PLANTING FOR AN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP

In this contemporary world, the church needs a critical study of the evangelistic strategies to meet the various challenges facing the propagation of the gospel in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Much has been written about church planting especially among the unreached people group, though the principles guiding church planting are almost the same everywhere.

However, there is a need to review some of the principles with African mindset as noted by Sikhumbuzo; who says “it would be naive for mission theologians to assume that the one size fits all philosophy would be useful in mission thinking. Mission theology of necessity has to adapt to ever changing circumstances and environments.”<sup>1</sup>

This study reviews the writings of some scholars to identify first, church planting concept, the principles for church planting among the unreached people group, effect of leadership, vision, training, and culture on church planting. In addition, the reason for planting church will be discovered including some of the challenges planters do encounter during the course of planting. To explore facts on the above discussion, the researcher will make use of all available textbooks, journals,

---

<sup>1</sup> Sikhumbuzo Ndlovu, “Theological Principles for Reaching the Unreached,” in *Biblical Principles for Missiological Issues in Africa*, ed. Bruce L. Bauer and Wagner Kuhn (Michigan, Barrien Springs: Department of World Mission, Andrews University, 2015), 173.

magazines, seminar papers, newspapers, and internet facilities, written by both foreign and indigenous authors.

## **Church Planting in Contemporary Literature**

### **The Concept of “Church Planting”**

The term “Church Planting” is not found in the Bible. It is a Missiological term used for mission. Also, theologians in mission use it to describe the process of establishing a new church in a location. Some scholars argue that the phrase “Church Planting” though not found in the Bible is “a strange phrase” and it is used by Christians to describe the process found in the Bible to express the establishment of churches. Furthermore, in church planting, the church may be compared to a cell like in a living organism capable of growth and multiplication. Though the phrase “church planting” is not found in the Bible, the principle is operational and generally accepted and applied, and much has been written about it.

As some scholars explained, the term “church planting” is derived from “Planting” a church which was Paul’s perception of beginning a church in Corinth; where he said “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth” (1Cor.3:6). For example, Robert Vajko and Deji Ayegboyinin in their article highlighted that church planting is done by God’s servants, but the growth comes from God.”<sup>2</sup> Charles Williams added his voice in his book, *The New Testament*, by given a literally supportive translation to the Bible text (1Cor.3:6) saying, “I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but it was God who kept the plants growing.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>Robert J. Vajko and Deji I. Ayegboyin, “Some Imperatives for Exploits in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church Planting” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 9.

<sup>3</sup>Charles B. Williams, *The New Testament* (Chicago, IL: Moody), 365.

In addition, Ezekiel Ajani elaborates the concept of church planting by saying “the concepts of “planting” and “growing” are biological and apply primarily to plants. As living organisms, plants are expected to grow when nurtured. The church, which is a living “spiritual organism” made up of believers in Christ is expected to grow. It is not enough to plant a church; it must be viable (capable of surviving), healthy and growing.”<sup>4</sup>

The main point here is that in church planting, believers may abide by the concept that they are “spiritual organism” that need to be reproducing by giving birth to another by co-operating with God in establishing churches in fulfillment of the gospel commission. Organism gives birth to organisms by reproduction because it is about life generating life or reproducing itself. Vajko and Ayegboyin affirm that church is born to reproduce itself by giving life and that church not only reproduces by multiplying believers, but it reproduces by multiplying new churches.<sup>5</sup> It is obvious that a church that does not multiply its membership and reproduce another church of itself or kind will soon fizzle away.

### **Definition of Church Planting**

According to Aubrey Malphurs’ suggestion, there is need to define church planting in order to avoid misuse or “misunderstanding and miscommunication” of the term. This has informed this study to consult various authors for definition or explanation of church planting. Therefore, Malphurs defines church planting as “an exhausting but exciting venture of faith that involves the planned process of beginning

---

<sup>4</sup>Ezekiel Oladapo Ajani, “Church Planting and Growth: Resources, Challenges, and Prospects,” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 75.

<sup>5</sup>Vajko and Ayegboyin, 21.

and growing new local churches as based on Jesus' promise and in obedience to His Gospel commission."<sup>6</sup>

He expatiates his definition by referring to the "exhausting" part of the definition that church planting is not an easy task; it is hard work or task to achieve. Then he concludes that if they (planters or missionaries) work hard, the ministry will grow, but if they take it easy, the ministry "plateaus." This is a true statement because church planting requires many efforts before one could succeed. Planting a church is like cultivating a farm where much efforts and cares are required. Survival of a church depends on the efforts put in place by the church planters.

Ezekiel Ajani in his article supports the argument of Aubrey Malphurs that it is important to define the terminology "Church Planting" in order to bring out the basic meaning for clarification. He further explains that the individual interpretation of the term might lead to a misunderstanding of the term. To justify his point, he defines church planting as "a process of bringing men and women to faith in Christ and incorporating them into growing, reproducing Christian fellowships or groups."

Furthermore, he suggests that church planting is not really about physical structures; rather it is the believers in Christ who are constituted together as the body of Christ meeting together for worship. He concludes by pointing to the fact that the most productive method of doing Christian missions is "Church Planting."<sup>7</sup>

Also, Adeleke Segun's contribution to the ongoing definition says it is "a deliberate attempt by a local church to start a new church in an area as led by the Holy

---

<sup>6</sup>Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal*(Grand Rapids, Michigan:Baker Book House Company, 1998), 21.

<sup>7</sup>Ajani, 75.

Spirit.”<sup>8</sup>In another book by Segun “Church Planting Made Easy,” he explains further his definition by considering church planting as an integral part of Great Commission because the converts from evangelistic outreaches will not be left without a place of worship where they will be molded into the image of Christ.<sup>9</sup> The church or denomination that plants the church cannot just detach from the baby church because it has to care for it by nourishing it to maturity and expect the new church to give birth to another one.

Donald Mcgaravan views church planting as the task of bringing men and women into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and be established into a fellowship known as the community of believers in Christ.<sup>10</sup> David Garrison stresses church planting as the effort of the existing churches in planting new churches within a given people group or population segment.<sup>11</sup>

Church planting is about preaching and teaching people for conversion into the family of believers in Christ which shares the same view with the scholars’ point above. No church planting without evangelism and no church is planted without having a root that is connected to a mother church.

Gabriel Adeoye in an article defines church planting as “an active and deliberate step taken by a local church or missionary or evangelist to gather believers in Christ Jesus together in a given geographical location for fellowship and worship of

---

<sup>8</sup> Segun Adeleke, *Lift up Your Eyes: Dynamic Church Planting* (Warri, Nigeria: Globec Glorious Nigeria Enterprise, 2006), 2.

<sup>9</sup>Segun Adeleke, *Church Planting Made Easy* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Freedom Press, 2009), 10.

<sup>10</sup>Donald Mcgaravan, *The Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions* (Pasadena: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 13.

<sup>11</sup>David Garrison, *Church Planting Movement* (Virginia: International Mission Board, 1999), 73.

God in Christ Jesus under a spiritual leader who is a Pastor or an elder.”<sup>12</sup> He declares that God expects multiplication from every local church as He expects human beings to give birth to their young one as stated in Genesis 1:32 where God commanded man to replenish the earth. He considers the church to be a body of believers which is expected to reproduce itself in order to take a total control of the earth and expand the kingdom of God.<sup>13</sup>

So far, this research may consider the concept of church planting to be the establishment of a new church in another locality or location by a denomination by fulfilling the task of the gospel commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ. There are key elements in church planting that may be considered important; first is the mother church, then followed by evangelistic activities. Also, people or people-group to be reached in a particular location is important. Likewise the formation of the community of believer cannot be underestimated. All these key elements must take place before a church is planted which is in support of the argument of Gabriel Adeoye and other scholars as discussed above.

### **Biblical Pattern of Church Planting in the Apostolic Era**

During the Apostolic era, reaching out with the gospel and establishment of new churches were paramount to the Apostle in order to fulfill the gospel commission. Without a doubt, a great achievement in church planting was recorded during this era especially by Apostle Paul who was known as a prime church planter.

---

<sup>12</sup>Gabriel O. Adeoye, “An Evaluation of the Church Planting Activities of Baptist College of Theology, Lagos (1997 – 2010),” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 75.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

For this reason, there is need to examine Paul's pattern of church planting as stated in the book of Acts of the Apostles. The pattern is stated below:

1. He prayed, fasted, and was guided by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-2, 4; 16:6, 9).
2. He was sent out by another group of believers (Acts 13:3).
3. He joined with other believers (formed teams) to start churches (Acts 13:2; 15:36-16:3).
4. The team travels to a new area where Jesus was not known (Acts 13:4, Romans 15:20).
5. They proclaimed the word of God from the Old Testament and taught about Jesus, the Good News (Acts 13:5-ff; 14:21).
6. They perform miracles so that people would believe (Acts 13:9-12; 14:8-9).
7. People believed in Jesus (Acts 13:48).
8. The word of the Lord continues to spread (Acts 13:49).
9. They travel to a new place to plant more churches (Acts 14:1, 6, 20).
10. They return to strengthen and encourage the disciples in each place (Acts 14:22).
11. They appoint leaders in each church and commit them to the Lord (Acts 14:23).
12. They return to their original sending church to report on the work (Acts 14:26-28).<sup>14</sup>

All the points mentioned above seem vital and useful approaches to be considered for planting a church. If Paul could use them in his church planting ministry and was successful, then it can be applicable to this present time church planting.

Taken into consideration the book of Acts of the Apostles, Paul can be described as a church planter, and he could be regarded as the "Father of Church Planters or Planting" because the majority of his gospel work was in church planting

---

<sup>14</sup>Adeoye, 75.

and his life experience was more of planting churches. For this reason, in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, he says, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation."

The main duty of the Apostles during the Apostolic era was the proclamation of the gospel and establishment of churches. This was their main goal, and they worked tirelessly for it and died for the gospel. If the church leaders and church planters in this contemporary time should share this dream, then the work of salvation will move faster, and more churches will be planted.

### **Strategic Principles of Church Planting for Reaching People Group**

Considering the counsel of David Garrison on church planting that says "one might assume that a potent combination of extraordinary prayer and abundant evangelism would naturally result in spontaneously multiplying churches. Many missionaries and church planters have held this view, and so were surprised and disappointed when multiplying new churches did not follow."<sup>15</sup> David Garrison view is a true statement that is calling the attention to the need to review the existing strategic principles of church planting because it is not a new topic. Many have written so much about it, and some principles have been suggested.

Therefore, this study reviews some of the strategic principles of church planting in relation to reaching the people group with the gospel. This research will examine or consider the following principles; Vision, Leadership, Training of the leadership, and the effect of culture on church planting.

---

<sup>15</sup>Garrison, 38.

## Vision Casting and Church Planting

There are several foundational principles, applicable to church planting or establishment of a new church, that are very important. Key among them is having a vision. This study considers clear vision as the first step towards church planting because it is the foundation of the ultimate success of any achievement to be accomplished in church replication. A clear and achievable vision will communicate to the members where they are going and what to be achieved at a specific time.

Malphurs gives a further clarification to the importance of clear vision in the establishment of a new church by saying “Without a vision, the church will quickly plateau and simply begin to maintain itself. Maintenance will be followed by a downward spiral that will eventuate in its ultimate, untimely demise.”<sup>16</sup> A clear vision makes the church planters to be focused by knowing what the church supposed to do, what to be achieved within a period of time, and how to reach the people with the gospel. When a vision is properly cast and shared with members, the result is that people will not be surprised when the time of implementation comes but will begin to move in the direction of achieving the goal.

Peter Awoniyi in an article asserts that vision in church planting is a God-given task of evangelism and that it is not complete until local churches are established. He also affirms that planting a church is a task that must be done because it is in line or conformity with the great commission by Jesus in New Testament. This can be seen in the life history of the Apostles and Disciples of Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Malphurs, 119

<sup>17</sup>Peter Ropo Awoniyi, “Church Planting and Church Growth in a Muslim Concentrated Community: Obstacles and Ways Out,” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola, (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 142.

Sutter equally states his view on vision in church planting by saying that vision is the clarity of purpose by knowing what God wants one to do and developing the strategy for achieving it out. Then he explains that when the vision is shared among the people or the members, they move together to achieve it with a common goal and it will be “self-propelled and alive.”<sup>18</sup> Brendal Boyd agrees with Sutter’s opinion, and he explains further that “a leader’s vision is often the galvanizing force that unites and motivates a diverse group of people in one direction.”<sup>19</sup> Considering the opinion of the scholars mentioned above, having a vision is not enough, it is to be shared with the team that one is leading. The vision that is not shared cannot be carried out or be achieved.

Sharing of vision in church replication is through communication. The vision that is communicated is a vision shared. One may have a vision, but when it is not communicated and shared with people who will be one’s help mate to carry it out, the vision will not be accomplished. The vision that is not shared or that cannot be accomplished, then, it is not a vision. So it is important that vision should be shared. Daniel Sanchez buttresses the issue of vision sharing in his article “Strategies for Starting Churches” by referring to the Apostolic Era of church planting where the Apostles and disciples caught the vision of the need to plant churches.

He mentions that the vision was shared with the members and they caught the vision which resulted in a positive response that informed the members of the roles to play in the task which was done joyfully. In his counsel on vision sharing and catching the vision by the members, he says “the local church can become involved in

---

<sup>18</sup>Sutter K, *Keys To Church Planting Movements* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, 2008), 29.

<sup>19</sup> Brendal Boyl, “Six Leadership Lessons from Photography,” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol.9, No.2, (Fall 2015):83.

starting new churches by catching the vision for church planting. A church can catch this vision through Bible study and prayer.

When the church at Antioch persevered in the study of the Word and in prayer, it caught a vision of the will of God regarding its missionary role. The Holy Spirit said to them: ‘Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them’ (Acts 13:2).”<sup>20</sup>

Daniel R. Sanchez points out that lack of vision or a vision that is not communicated well in church planting leads to misconception and fear in the mind of the members or congregation. This misconception and fear as suggested bring about a lot of negative views or opinions resulting in various questions that prevent them taking up the task or be involved in the vision of planting churches. Consequently, he says the result will be that they will focus more on the negative effect than the goal to achieve. In his conclusion he says, “these (the negative questions or opinions mentioned earlier by the members) and other misconceptions (with fear), together with the pervasive lack of vision, deter Christians from committing themselves to the imperative, demanding, and exciting task of starting churches.”<sup>21</sup>

As vision is very important in church planting and to any organization that will strive to achieve, so also is a lack of vision is a setback to church planting and any organization, because it will have an adverse effect on church growth or organization that is aspiring to achieve and the end result is failure. Kurt W. Johnson

---

<sup>20</sup>Daniel R. Sanchez, “Strategies for Starting Churches,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, eds. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 472, 473.

<sup>21</sup>Daniel R. Sanchez, “Strategies for Starting Churches,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, eds. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson, 467.

supports the importance of vision in church growth when he says “vision is essential in developing leaders in a congregation.

Pastors and small-group leaders must see beyond a church member’s current spiritual condition and leadership’s abilities and be able to visualize what that person can become in Jesus Christ. He concludes that vision also helps the leader to set goals and objectives for the group he or she is leading which is applicable to church planting and growth.<sup>22</sup>

Jonathan Ojo buttresses the importance of vision in church planting by narrowing it down to God as the giver of vision and that it must be considered and carried out passionately. In his opinion, he says that when this God’s given vision is caught by the pastor or the church leaders, it will be reproduced in church planting team and the church as a body. Then this passion will be in them, and the task will be accomplished as God plans it.<sup>23</sup>

Taken into consideration all that have been discussed above on the effect of vision casting in church planting, it has been observed that the power of “Clear Vision” and not just vision cannot be underestimated and is one of the foundational principles of church planting and church growth. When clear vision is well communicated to the members of the church, church planting will not be stressful and difficult.

---

<sup>22</sup> Kurt W. Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Reality* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011), 114

<sup>23</sup> Jonathan O. Ojo, “Exploring Ephesians 4:7 – 16 as Paradigms for the Contemporary Church Planting and Growth,” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 223.

## **Group Leadership and Church Planting**

Leadership is an important aspect of human life, and it is expressed in daily activities of man. It is operational at home, school, government, society, community, organization and group of people. In other words, there is no organization without leadership and likewise no society without leadership. It is not only used in the political arena or public sectors but practically found and used by the religious organizations. Therefore, the role of leadership in church planting and church growth cannot be overlooked, and this study will explore the definition of leadership and relate it to the theology of leadership, then review the opinion of other scholars on leadership in relation to church planting.

**Leadership in contemporary literatures.** There is need to sample the opinion of some scholars on their perspective to leadership and the meaning of leadership. There are numerous definitions or views of leadership by various authors, but few will be considered. Manning and Curtis present the concept of leadership as “social influence” which involves “initiating and guiding” in which the result is “change.”

With this idea in mind, they later define leadership as “the ability to attract capable people, motivate them to put forth their best efforts, and solve problems that arise.”<sup>24</sup> Also, Gary Yukl defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the

---

<sup>24</sup> George Manning and Kent Curtis, *The Art of Leadership* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009), 1-2.

objective.”<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Peter Northouse considered leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”<sup>26</sup>

Hughes and his co-authors in the book “Selections from Leadership” share the same view with Peter Northouse that leadership is a process of influencing others to achieve the group goals.<sup>27</sup> Though Greenleaf supports the leadership definition by Northouse and Hughes, he further explains that the primary aim of the leader is to make sure that the group highest priority needs are met.<sup>28</sup>

In a Christian context, leadership can be perceived as the ability or process by which men and women called by God give direction and guidelines to the people of God or a body of believers to achieve the expected goal. In other words, leadership in Christendom is a gift from God endowed to some people to lead the people of God in the direction that God wants in order to achieve the goal of heaven.

Peter Wagner in his book, *Leading Your Church to Growth*, shares the same opinion that leadership is a gift from God to some certain people by saying “the gift of leadership is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God’s purpose for the future, and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God.”<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Gary Yukl. *Leadership in Organizations (6<sup>th</sup>.ed.)*, (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006), 8.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice (4<sup>th</sup>.ed.)*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007), 3.

<sup>27</sup> Hughes R.L, Ginnett R. C, and G.J. Curply, *Selections from Leadership: Enhancing the Lesson of Experience*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston, MA: McGraw\_Hill, 2001), 21.

<sup>28</sup> R. K. Greenleaf, *The Servant as Leader (Rev. ed.)*, (Westfield, IN:Greenleaf center for Servant Leadership,2008), 7.

<sup>29</sup>Peter C. Wagner, *Leading Your Church to Growth* (Metro Manila, Mandaluyong City: OMF Literature Inc, 1997), 88.

In summary, leadership can be considered as a loan of responsibilities given to some people considered as leaders to direct a group of people to achieve or accomplish the goal expected while accountability is required at the end of the exercise.

**Leadership in church planting.** It is a natural phenomenon that, where there is a group, there should be a leader. The rise or fall of any organization will depend on the quality and productivity of the leadership. Good leadership is important to the success of any organization, and this can be related to church planting and the growth of a church.

A good leader will cast a dream which is known as vision and develop a strategy to carry out the vision and influences the followers to accomplish the dream. The same is applicable to church planting and growth. In church planting, there is a need to have a good leader that will lead the team on planting a church, and at the same time, a good leader is also needed to nurture the established church as a pastor.

The position of leadership in church planting cannot be ignored because it is one of the determinant factors that must be put into consideration. This is the reason why Malphurs says “a church will never rise above its leadership. If the leadership of the church isn’t committed to church planting, the membership will not be committed. If the leadership doesn’t pray for daughter churches, the membership will not pray for daughter churches. The leadership must set the example for the congregation.”<sup>30</sup> Malphurs further explains that involvement of members or congregation in church

---

<sup>30</sup> Malphurs,388.

planting activities is one of the best ways to give birth to a daughter church by praying for it and selling the idea to them.<sup>31</sup>

This can be achieved by a visionary leader who knows the best way to communicate the dream to the congregation and encourage them to accept the dream and influence them to carry it out. Peter Wagner posits that if churches are going to “maximize their growth potential, they need pastors who are strong leaders.”<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, he points out the effect of leadership on church development when he says “if your church is not growing and you wonder why take a close look at the roles of the pastor.”<sup>33</sup> Leadership in church planting is very important and is a major factor that contributes to the growth and spreading of the church.

Blackaby and Blackaby support the opinion of Malphurs on the leadership involvement of the congregation by saying that spiritual leadership is about focusing on people. Blackaby says “leadership is fundamentally a people business! It is not merely about budgets or visions or strategies. It is about people. Spiritual leaders never lose sight of this fact.”<sup>34</sup>

Peter Wagner is said to have considered leadership as one of the major factors or keys to church growth which is applicable to church planting as stated by Thom S. Ranier in his article. He further quoted Peter Wagner’s statement to support his point saying, “Vital sign number one of a healthy church is a pastor who is a possibility thinker and whose dynamic leadership has been used to catalyze the entire church into

---

<sup>31</sup>Malphurs, 388.

<sup>32</sup>Wagner, 73.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Moving People on to God’s Agenda: Spiritual Leadership* (Nashville, Tennessee & H Publishing Group, 2011), 39.

action for growth.”<sup>35</sup> To further explain his point on the effect of leadership on church planting, Thom Rainer refers to the few empirical studies conducted by Kick C. Hadaway in connection with leadership and church growth. It was pointed out that Hadaway in his empirical studies, however, discovered that a visionary leader with a clear vision would resuscitate a declining church because such a leader will share the vision with the church along with needs of the members. This will create a sense of excitement in members that will result in encouragement to the church that will bring about willingness to work.<sup>36</sup>

Wagner examines the role of leadership in the development of a church and considers leaders as equippers “who actively set goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtain goal ownership from the people, and see that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals.”<sup>37</sup> In defending his view, Wagner refers to the research project conducted by Jackson W. Carroll, and Robert L. Wilson reviews the importance of the role of the pastor in leadership and declares that pastor as a leader and enabler is “the one who provides strong leadership, makes things happen, and is somewhat of an entrepreneur.”<sup>38</sup> In other words, pastor as a leader and enabler makes things happen according to the vision received.

Del Dunavant’s counsels the pastors and the leaders of newly established churches. He calls the attention of whosoever wants to be a leader to expect

---

<sup>35</sup>Thom S. Ranier, “Strategies for Church Growth,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, 495.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 495.

<sup>37</sup>Wagner, 79.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 80.

opposition and prepare for it. In his writings, he said, “whenever there is a change, there is opposition; whenever there is an opportunity for greater ministry, there will always be opposition.”<sup>39</sup>

He supports his point with Paul’s experience in 1 Corinthians 16:8-9 that says, “But I will always be on at Ephesus until Pentecost because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.” He explains further that people resist change naturally and criticize those who are bringing about change. Then he advises that a good leader should expect and prepares for opposition. Among other points mentioned is the issue of followers not having confidence in their leader.

He says, “Nothing kills confidence in followers faster than when a leader is asked about a problem, and he or she have no answers because he or she had not personally researched it.”<sup>40</sup> Lastly, he encourages leaders to gain credibility when demonstrating care for the followers and to be competent in accomplishing his or her goals for the followers to trust his or her leadership. Commitment is the last point mentioned to enable a leader to effect change and to handle conflict that comes as a result of change.<sup>41</sup> Jonathan Ojo supports the word of encouragement mentioned by Del Dunavant by saying “Leading involves trust, respect, confidence and commitment.”<sup>42</sup>

In summary, all the writers consulted agree that true leadership will enjoy people he or she is leading and make them better after following him or her because

---

<sup>39</sup> Del Dunavant, *From Membership to Discipleship: A Practical Guide to Equipping Members for Ministry*, (Lincoln, NE: AdventSource, 2006), 42.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 48.

<sup>42</sup>Ojo, “Exploring Ephesians 4:7 – 16 as Paradigms for the Contemporary Church Planting and Growth, 227.

spiritual leadership is about influencing people and in church planting, it is to “influence Christians to evangelize the non-Christians.”<sup>43</sup>

Leadership is about movement in a given direction. This means that a good leader should be able to mobilize people to accomplish the goal set before them. To achieve this, Jonathan Ojo states, “As churches grow, so must leaders grow in their ability to influence and use their skills to communicate. Also that the pastoral leadership should involve everybody as all are talented and gifted; all members are to be disciples in the effort of the church to replicate herself.”<sup>44</sup>

Tim Stevens and Tony Morgan assert that it is much easier to lead without a team, but leading a team is hard; requires a soft and more participative leadership styles.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, leadership plays a prominent role in church planting because existing churches need good leaders with a focus to move them into the establishment of another branch. A new branch also needs a good leader with a purpose to coordinate them to grow into a full fledged church to achieve the purpose of establishment, by the mother church.

Likewise, evangelism team for church planting will need a leader to coordinate and lead them into an area to be evangelized and the establishment of a new branch or church. So leadership cannot be detached from church growth and church planting. When a church grows, the leadership will be recognized, and when a new branch is established, it is a sign of a growth and the leadership will be praised. Every aspect of church growth and planting is centered on leadership. Bill Thompson

---

<sup>43</sup>Wagner, 80.

<sup>44</sup>Ojo,227.

<sup>45</sup> Tim Stevens and Tony Morgan, *Simply Strategic Growth: Attracting a Crowd to Your Church*, (Colorado, Loveland: Group, 2005), 139.

suggestion can be used to crown it all by saying “if competent Christian leaders constantly seek to put Christ’s mission ahead of their own glory and to put the good of the group before their own desires, then their followers will be inspired to accept their influence.”<sup>46</sup>

### **Leadership Training in Church Planting**

The desire of many pastors and church leaders is to see their church progressing through membership growth and replication of their church by starting new churches. This can be achieved by having skillful leaders, and one can be skillful in one’s discipline by training. Every organization employs skillful personnel to handle the affairs of the company and regularly training is needed to improve their performance.

The same principle of training the personnel is applicable in God’s business. When a church is growing, it is an indication that the leadership is developing the skills of their workforce through training. Stevens and Morgan contribute to this discussion by affirming that, “Leaders of growing churches are constantly faced with the challenge of improving their ministry skills, expanding their leadership capacity, and taking significant steps toward spiritual maturity.”<sup>47</sup>

In church planting, training or equipping is one of the key elements for achievement. The leaders of the already existing churches need orientation on church growth which will translate to the establishment of new churches. At the same time, the leaders of the evangelism team need education on the skill to coordinate the team

---

<sup>46</sup> Bill Thompson, “Servant, Leader, or Both? A Fresh Look at Mark 10:35-45,” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol.9, No.2,(Fall 2015):55.

<sup>47</sup>Tim Stevens and Tony Morgan, *Simply Strategic Growth: Attracting a Crowd to Your Church*, (Colorado, Loveland: Group, 2005), 190.

and the appropriate steps to take in achieving the set goal. When a church is established, it is evident that leadership must be in place because it is believed that no society can exist without leadership and that it is unreal that a person exists outside of a structured community.<sup>48</sup>

Burrill states that when the leadership of the church is empowered by training, the empowered leaders will equip the members by engaging them in the ministry.<sup>49</sup> Larry Yeagley suggests that church leaders need effective leadership skills and that a seminary class experience is a starting point. Also, he considers effective leadership to be a continually seeking to learn from experiences and becoming more proficient in the work.<sup>50</sup>

With this mindset, it is appropriate that the leaders of the newly established churches be given the needed training on church administrative skills and other areas of the church leadership to nurture the church for growth. Del Dunavant advises that it is proper for the volunteers who are the evangelism team to receive training, resources needed and support from the senders for good result.

He observes that the level of training given to volunteers will determine their confidence in the ministry. Then he affirms that the low output in ministry may be as a result of “a lack of training, resources, and ongoing support.”<sup>51</sup> On the effect of lack of training for evangelism team, Sarah Asaftei points out that “Without purposeful

---

<sup>48</sup> C. Michael Kirwen, ed, *African Cultural Knowledge: Themes and Embedded Beliefs* (Kenya, Nairobi: Mias Book, 2011), 82.

<sup>49</sup> Russell Burril, *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus* (California, Fallbrook: Hart Research Center, 2009), 59-60.

<sup>50</sup> Larry Yeagley. “The Way of a Christian Leader.” *Ministry*, May 2015, 25 -26.

<sup>51</sup> Dunavant, 92-93.

training and nurture, even the most dedicated and zealous new disciple will likely fail in sharing the story of Jesus' love."<sup>52</sup>

Sutter's contribution to the subject of discussion is that training should be aimed at multiplying leaders for the growth of the church. He supports his view with Paul's counsel to Timothy in II Timothy 2: 1-2, which says "You, therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit the same to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."<sup>53</sup> Training of church leaders is building the future of the church and making the leaders be professional, especially the indigenous leaders of the local churches.

On the issue of training, Ellen White counsels;

The cause of God needs efficient men. Education and training are rightly regarded as an essential preparation for business life, and how much more essential is thorough preparation for the work of presenting the last message of mercy to the world. This training cannot be gained by merely listening to preaching. In our schools, our youth are to bear burdens for God. They are to receive a thorough training under experienced teachers. They should make the best possible use of their time in study, and put into practice the knowledge acquired. Hard study and hard work are required to make a successful minister or a successful worker in any branch of God's cause. Nothing less than constant cultivation will develop the value of the gifts that God has bestowed for wise improvement.<sup>54</sup>

In conclusion, training and equipping leaders under the guidance of the Holy Spirit seems to be one of the factors to successful church growth which will foster the development of church members towards the establishment of another new branch.

---

<sup>52</sup> Sarah K. Asaftei. "Belonging Before Believing: Reaching Out to the Emerging Culture." *Ministry*, January 2007, 25.

<sup>53</sup> Sutter, 85-86.

<sup>54</sup> Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 70.3.

Equipping the leaders is equipping the membership and equipping the members is tantamount to building the capacity of the church for better future of the ministry.

### **Culture and Church Planting**

Culture is one of the determinant factors to be considered in the planting of a church in a new community or people group. There is no community without a culture because it is the way of life and it forms the worldview of the people.

Culture can be considered as the behavior and the beliefs of a particular social, ethnic, or age group. It can also be viewed in another way as the inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action. Ebbie Smith defines culture as the shared and integrated patterns of behavior exhibited by a particular group.<sup>55</sup>

Naturally, everybody belongs to one specific culture that shapes his or her lifestyle, worldview, thinking and behavior of the person. Since there are many cultures on the earth and they vary from place to place, church planters should take cognizance of this fact and treat each culture accordingly. Wagner mentions that one of the mistakes made by missionaries in establishing churches in other cultures is to “superimpose a system of church government” on the people or impose their own culture on the people which has an adverse effect on them and, in turn, the growth of the church.<sup>56</sup>

Ebbie Smith argues in support of Peter Wagner’s opinion. He says that missionaries should be aware of the culture of the people they want to serve while their own culture put at the back of their mind and this awareness leads to learning the

---

<sup>55</sup>Ebbie Smith, “Culture: The Miliue of Missions,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, 261.

<sup>56</sup>Wagner, 90.

cultural symbols of the hosting culture. He counsels that cultural adaptation is very important in church planting especially when entering a new community with the gospel.<sup>57</sup>

Malphurs shares the same view with other writers. He makes it known that church planters should be aware that every church has a culture while the community where the church exists has another culture. Malphurs warns the church leaders to be aware of not placing the culture above the biblical truth because they want to satisfy the people, and also to be careful not to make church tradition to be biblical truth.<sup>58</sup> Ed Stetzer advises the church planters to prepare for the cultural shock that may be irritating when setting up a new church in a community because of the way the people think, talk, behave, and their reaction to life that may seem foreign to the church planters, especially a newcomer missionary.<sup>59</sup>

Communities differ from one another likewise the culture of each community differs from one another. Different communities need a different method of evangelism that will be effective to attract the people to the gospel. This can take place when culture is given a considerable recognition putting all the advice above in the rightful perspective. Understanding the community for evangelism seems to help make better decisions about the appropriate evangelism strategy to be adopted resulting in huge success and furtherance of the gospel.

---

<sup>57</sup>Smith, 266.

<sup>58</sup>Malphurs, 166 – 183

<sup>59</sup> Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches: Planting a Church that's Biblically Sound and Reaching People in Culture* (Tennessee, Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 101.

## **Reasons for Church Planting**

When the purpose or reason of carrying out a task or an assignment is not well spelled out, the task may not be properly achieved as expected by the team because the value attached to it may not be understood. The same is applicable to church planting because if the reason or purpose of planting church is not well understood, the expected result may not be achieved. Therefore, this section of this research will like to investigate the reasons for church planting in the contemporary literature for proper understanding and education.

### **Biblical Mandate**

First, it is the biblical mandate given by the Lord Jesus in accordance with the great commission as found in Matthew 28: 18 – 20. Jesus commissioned his disciples to go and teach the whole nations which include all tribes, tongues, a people group of the earth. Also in Matthew 24: 14, Jesus declares that the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, meaning that the gospel needs to be spread to all the tribes, communities, kindred, and nations of the world. This can only be achieved through teaching, preaching, and planting of churches in different communities.

Peter Roennfeldt states that mission is the reason for planting churches <sup>60</sup> because people must be reached with the gospel in order to fulfill mission. Ellen White also supports the mission of planting churches as Christ mandate to his disciples when she says “place after the place is to be visited; church after church is to

---

<sup>60</sup>Peter Roennfeldt, “Cultivating Church Planting in Your Territory.” Ministry (December 2013): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2013/12>.

be raised up.”<sup>61</sup> Mark Bresee suggests that planting of churches effectively advances the kingdom of God.<sup>62</sup>

### **Efficient Evangelistic Method**

Church planting seems to be considered as the most effective evangelism method that can be used in reaching the unreached people group. Church planting employs various styles of evangelism to bring the gospel to the doorstep of people. Only one method of evangelism does not fit in, every talent, spiritual gift, Bible study, and seminar will be involved in the process of planting churches.

Peter Wagner supports this view by saying that the most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is church planting.<sup>63</sup> He further explains saying, “Nature has taught us that it is far easier to have babies than to raise the dead! In raising the spiritually dead, church growth studies have shown that new churches win backsliders more easily than do old churches”<sup>64</sup> which seems to be true.

To buttress his point, he uses Americans as an example that they often want to be involved in new things which are general and natural phenomena. The same is applicable to church system where people who move to a new environment may not like to join an older church but, rather, a new one.<sup>65</sup> Peter Roennfeldt’s contribution is that church planting is the most effective approach based on the research conducted

---

<sup>61</sup> Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1948), 7:20.

<sup>62</sup> Mark Bresee, “Plant a Church and Reap a Harvest.” *Ministry* (May 1996): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1996/05>.

<sup>63</sup> C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1990), p. 11

<sup>64</sup> Ron Gladden, “Church Planting: Key to Growth.” *Ministry*, (October 1988): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1988/10>

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

because by his observation he discovered that “new churches always reach new people.”<sup>66</sup> Church planting is the motor that is sustaining church growth.

### **Denominational Survival and Growth**

A church that is growing will like to reproduce itself by multiplication which is known as church planting. This means that there is a connection between church planting and church growth because the strength of any denomination will depend on the rate in which churches are planted.

If a denomination is maintaining the number of churches established without adding to it, it means that such denomination is stagnant and will soon plateau. Church planting is used to maintain the survival and the growth of any denomination. Kidder and Serns expressed their view when they say, “Church planting provides clarity and focus in mission. The potential to reach the harvest is the best reason to plant a new church, both for the mother church and the daughter church.”<sup>67</sup>

Lyle Schaller’s reflection on the effect of church planting on denominational survival and growth says, “Every denomination reporting an increase in the total number of congregations reports an increase in members. Every denomination reporting a decrease in congregation reports a decrease in members.”<sup>68</sup> Schaller observes that there is a correlation between church planting and church growth which has a positive effect on the survival and the growth of any denomination. Then he

---

<sup>66</sup>Roennfeldt.

<sup>67</sup>Joseph S. Kidder and Dustin Serns, “The Forgotten Movement: Church Planting Trends and Lessons (Part 2 of 2).” *Ministry* (December 2014): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2014/December>

<sup>68</sup>Lyle E. Schaller, *Growing Plans* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 165.

writes, “The first priority in any denominational strategy should be on organizing new congregations.”<sup>69</sup>

Olson declares that new churches tend to grow by attracting younger people, providing synergy, and raising a new generation of lay leaders<sup>70</sup> which tend to help in maintaining the survival and growth of any denomination. He stresses the need for church planting to be used to maintain denominational growth and prevent membership declension.<sup>71</sup>

Schaller writes to summarize this discussion saying, “Without exception, the growing denominations have been those that stress church planting ... Church planting continues to be the most useful and productive component of any denominational church growth strategy.”<sup>72</sup> The growth of any denomination depends on the rate at which the denomination is planting churches. Church planting is the bedrock and the foundation of any denomination survival and growth.

### **Obstacles to Church Planting**

There is no task without a challenge and success does pass through some difficulties; the same is with church planting. Monte Sahlin considers church growth as the life of the local church while a healthy and vital congregation is expected to reproduce itself because the church is viewed as a global organism.<sup>73</sup> So “creating a

---

<sup>69</sup>Schaller, *Growing Plans*.

<sup>70</sup>David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 155.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid, 156.

<sup>72</sup>Lyle E. Schaller, 165.

<sup>73</sup>Monte Sahlin, “What Makes Churches Grow? What Recent Adventist Research Reveals,” *Ministry* (November 2004): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2004/11>.

dynamic and appropriate witness to all nations, people groups, and communities is basic to the life of the church.”<sup>74</sup>

Therefore, to fulfill the task of planting churches, there is a need to review some of the challenges that militate against church planting. To support this opinion, Kidder and Serns observed that those who commit themselves to church planting meet some significant obstacles, but their dependence on God will bring solutions. They conclude that church planting is a challenging enterprise that needs adequate supporting system either from mother church or conference which is the headquarters in order to get realistic expectations.<sup>75</sup> Some of the challenges are discussed as follows.

### **Lack of Personnel as Leaders**

Personnel as Leader matters a lot in the life of any organization because the power to man and direct the team members lies in the hand of leadership. Leadership is an important factor in the planting of churches because the power to convince and direct in the rightful decision is on their shoulders.

Like the research on church planting conducted by Kidder and Serns in some Seventh-day Adventist Churches in North America, it was observed that leadership plays a prominent role in the planting of churches and church growth. From their findings, it is mentioned that a small McKinney Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church wanted to establish an English-speaking Adventist Congregation in their city as a result of explosive population growth in the city.

---

<sup>74</sup>Monte Sahlin, “What Makes Churches Grow? What Recent Adventist Research Reveals.” *Ministry* (November 2004): accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2004/11>.

<sup>75</sup>Kidder and Serns.

It was discovered that they got a temporary facility as a place of worship but no English-speaking personnel ready to lead the church to be planted though they had the membership ready to form the church. The issue of leadership had to be settled before the church could begin despite the fact that there were willing members to begin a church.<sup>76</sup> Bresee's observation shows that many pastors and church leaders are unaware of the potential growth opportunities newly planted churches provided, and as a result, they may not be interested in church planting but they can be acquainted and informed through recent books, articles, and seminars.<sup>77</sup>

Joseph Kidder explains that the church leadership must promote church growth which goes hand in hand with church planting. First, he mentions that church leadership should see themselves as spiritual leaders that will focus on instilling the vision for evangelism and ministry by informing the members that lost souls matter to God likewise to us as Christians. Secondly, it is the role of church leaders to train, equip and motivate the laity for ministry and evangelism. Thirdly, effective church leaders should engage in critical and creative thinking which will prevent leaders not to merely be the reflectors of other people's plans, ideas, programs, and visions. Fourthly, the role of leaders is to develop a variety of methods and strategies to reach people group. Therefore, it is the role of the leaders to inform the members that evangelism is a way of life because it can take place anytime, anywhere, and by anybody under any circumstances.<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup>Kidder and Serns.

<sup>77</sup>Bresee.

<sup>78</sup>Joseph Kidder, "Reflections on the Future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America: The Long View of Church Growth (Part 2 of 2)." *Ministry* (February 2011); accessed 15 August 2016, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2011/02>.

Considering leadership challenge in church planting, Roennfeldt stresses the role of church leaders in church planting by providing an environment of affirmation, being an encouragers and movement thinkers. In his observation, he reminded the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist leadership that Adventism began as a church planting movement and this is to be instilled into the members in order to continue the mission entrusted to them.<sup>79</sup>

### **Church Planting and Finance**

“Money is the gospel wheel for evangelism” as an adage says. Evangelism involves some spending especially when it involves church planting because it is capital intensive. It is capital intensive because it involves the hiring of workers, training of pastors and lay leaders or workers as leadership development, purchase of resources or materials, place of worship, and the cost of transportation. These may definitely affect the finance or budget of a local church or the conference. Planting of churches may be seen as an investment that a living church needs to be involved. The dividend may not be an immediate result or reward but late in the future.

The effect on the budget has made some church leaders and conference leadership to eschew establishment of new churches as a result of some financial sacrifices and sometimes, the experience of financial difficulties being encountered. Bresee confirms the effect of church planting on a budget by saying, “the reason church planting is not popular among us is the stress it adds to conference budgets.”<sup>80</sup> Kidder and Serns observe finance as one of the obstacles of church planting by

---

<sup>79</sup>Roennfeldt.

<sup>80</sup>Bresee.

saying, “Most conferences do not have extra funds to hire more pastors to plant churches.”<sup>81</sup>

Another reason under finance is the fear of losing some major financial contributors to the new churches, or these major financiers may divert their resources for the survival of the new churches which may affect the budget of the mother churches. Kidder and Serns observe this view by saying that, “Mother churches often concerned with losing the financial resources of their active members who leave.”<sup>82</sup> Considering the effect of church planting on either budget or finance of the church, Gladden counsels that though church evangelism is the most –effective evangelism, it should be made to be the priority, and the necessary funds will be made available if it is promoted every well because the members will willingly give without hesitation. His last counsel is, “Let us not make the mistake of perceiving new churches as a “cost.” Rather, they are our wisest investment in the future.”<sup>83</sup>

Kidder and Serns share the same opinion with Gladden by saying that planting should not “make a dent in the finance of the mother church,” rather it would increase the finance and membership. They advise the mother church and the conference to allocate some fund that will not be less than five percent of their budget for evangelism especially church planting. Roennfeldt adds his opinion saying that should be trained to be involved in church planting which will reduce the cost of staffing and they will also use their resources for the planting rather than church shouldering the whole responsibilities.<sup>84</sup> No doubt, church planting is capital

---

<sup>81</sup>Kidder and Serns.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>83</sup>Gladden

<sup>84</sup>Roennfeldt.

intensive, but it will be harvested in the future if it is managed well. It is future profit oriented.

### **Lack of Membership Involvement**

Church planting should be a breeding ground for members to develop their talents and spiritual gifts for the growth of the church and their personal spiritual growth. Planting of churches should be an avenue for members to be involved in evangelism activities. It has been discovered that most mother churches and conferences leave the task of planting churches in the hand pastors and the pay workers to be handled and the members only give a little support when they are allowed.

Gladden reacts to the practice or decision when he writes, “I believe that pastors are not the only persons able to start and staff a new church. With proper supervision and support Humanities (Taskforce) workers and even laypersons could be successful. The assumption that only full-time pastors can be effective in local leadership and soul winning stifles the growth of the church.”<sup>85</sup>

Kidder and Serns express their view by saying, “Church planting is a breeding ground for leadership development in both the plant and the mother church.” They point out that by involving the members in establishing of new churches activities will make members to develop their skill, talents and spiritual gifts.<sup>86</sup> Membership involvement in church planting seems to encourage membership retention, reclaim the backsliders, revive the inactive members in the church, and help the members to practice their faith and instill it in others. If a church is not having people of the same

---

<sup>85</sup>Gladden.

<sup>86</sup>Kidder and Serns

mind that share the same dream of planting churches, it will be difficult to move into the business of church planting. Church planting may be difficult if members are not involved as a team to support the ministers.

### **Fear of Failure and Slow Results**

Anthony Wagensmith, in his studies, discovers that 80 percent of new churches die within the first five years of establishment in spite of the willingness and efforts invested by the members and the planters.<sup>87</sup> This may be true or not, and it may be creating fear in the mind of planters and the willing hearts as a team. It seems to be obvious that without a doubt, every church planter will certainly entertain some fears; it may be the fear of failure or disappointment. This may affect many who are sincere to withdraw first or not willing to go into this venture of planting churches. Wagensmith professes solution by saying that church planting leaders should be the people with strong vision casters and should be able to develop strategies based on the gospel and various approaches to reach the lost souls.<sup>88</sup>

Loss of membership is another factor that is causing fear in church planting because it is definite some members have to move from the mother to form the nucleus members of the newly establish church. Gladden reveals that studies have shown that mother churches quickly return to their normal membership after sometimes. He agrees that God always replaces what is given for his service meaning the released membership will be replaced after a few time.<sup>89</sup> This seems to be true

---

<sup>87</sup>Anthony Wagensmith, "Is God Calling You to Plant a Church?" Ministry (August2013):accessed15August2016,<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2013/08>.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>89</sup>Gladden.

when compared with past experience because the mother churches do grow back their membership.

The slow result is considered to be one of the reasons leaders are scared to embark on planting on the establishment of new churches. Members often judge the success of church planting by the number of baptisms, and their expectation is that the new church should stand on her own and expect fast growth immediately within a short time. Bresee expresses his opinion saying, “a problem here is the measuring stick.” He points out that baptismal number should not be the only measurement to evaluate the success, but there are some like, the community, culture, and others. Then he counsels that church planting may not always give immediate tangible results such as fastest baptismal rates, the return of funds, but that the benefits that make it profitable in God’s kingdom and the joy of reaching others.<sup>90</sup>

### **Spirit of Prophecy Church Planting**

The following are the counsels from Ellen G. White as inspiration from God on the planting of churches to be carried out by the church in response to reaching the unreached people group according to the great commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. “Upon all who believe, God has placed the burden of raising up churches.”<sup>91</sup>
2. “New churches must be established, new congregations organized. At this time there should be representatives in every city and in the remote parts of the earth.”<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup>Bresee.

<sup>91</sup>Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry*(Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1948), 315.

<sup>92</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:24.

3. "In all countries and cities the gospel is to be proclaimed... Churches are to be organized and plans laid for work to be done by the members of the newly organized churches."<sup>93</sup>
4. "Place after place is to be visited, church after church is to be raised up."<sup>94</sup>
5. "The need for a meeting-house where there is a newly formed company of believers has been presented before me in a panoramic view... The establishment of churches, the erection of meeting-houses and school buildings, was extended from city to city, and the tithes were increasing to carry forward the work. Plants were made not only in one place, but in many places, and the Lord was working to increase His forces."<sup>95</sup>
6. "Let not the work of establishing memorials for God in many places be made difficult and burdensome because the necessary means is withheld."<sup>96</sup>
7. "The people who bear His sign are to establish churches and institutions as memorials to Him."<sup>97</sup>
8. "God's workers are to plant the standards of truth in every place to which they can gain access... Memorials for Him are to be raised in America and in foreign countries."<sup>98</sup>
9. "Many of the members of our large churches are doing nothing comparatively. They might accomplish a good work if, instead of crowding together, they would scatter into places that have not yet been entered by the truth. Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish. They are transplanted by the gardener, which they may have room to grow and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches. Many of the members are dying spiritually for want of this very work. They are becoming sickly and inefficient."<sup>99</sup>
10. "This gospel missionary work is to keep reaching out and annexing new territory, enlarging the cultivated portions of the vineyards. The circle is to extend until it belts the world." "From town to town, from city to city, from country to country,

---

<sup>93</sup>White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 19.

<sup>94</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:20.

<sup>95</sup>White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 435.

<sup>96</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9:132 - 133.

<sup>97</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:107.

<sup>98</sup>White, *Selected Messages*(Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 1:112.

<sup>99</sup>White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 8: 244.

the warning message is to be proclaimed, not with outward display, but in the power of the Spirit, by men of faith”<sup>100</sup> (Evangelism, 19).

### **Summary**

Since church planting is not a new topic or concept in the academic world, this study has consulted some resources written by various authors to discover and design a model that seems useful to reach Ijebu people group with the Seventh-day Adventist Church message. With the interaction made so far with other scholars on this topic, this paper has learned that planting a church and its gradual growth does not happen by chance; it requires the engagement of some resources. The research work observes that there is a need to have a clear knowledge of what church planting is all about by considering various definitions to seek where the concept originates.

Church planting is seen as a process of beginning and growing a church. It can also be viewed as an active and deliberate task of bringing men and women into a saving relationship with Christ and gather them for fellowship and worship. In the cause of researching, it was discovered that church planter should be zealous about the vision of planting a new church and the vision is communicated to the members. Leadership is another key principle to be considered in church replication. A leader with a clear vision will challenge a member to reproduce oneself, and a new church needs to set up a leadership that will coordinate the affairs of the church to ensure growth.

Also, this project observes that training of church leadership is very important because by training the leaders, the leaders, in turn, will equip the members for evangelism and multiplication of the church. Culture is another factor that is important in church replication because understanding the people’s culture will help

---

<sup>100</sup>White, *Evangelism*, 19.

to design a strategy for reaching them with the gospel. Also, there is need to have a local church that is ready to serve as the mother church to the new congregation. The mother church is to fund, support by sending leaders and some members to play an active role there as a follow-up to grow the church.

This study will utilize some of the principles of church planting discussed in this chapter and some of the models mentioned in chapter two to develop a possible template that will form the intervention in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### PROJECT DESIGN

The focus of this chapter is to analyze the ministry context of this research and to develop a strategy that will help in reaching the people group of Ijebuland with Seventh-day Adventist Church message. This chapter will provide the necessary data about the specific area where this project will be conducted. Following the ministry context, this analysis section reviews the methodology employed in collecting the data, analyzing, and designing an intervention used for strategy development.

#### **Ministry Context**

##### **Geographical Location of Ijebuland**

Ijebu kingdom is located in two states in Nigeria, with the larger part of Ogun state and a smaller portion in Lagos State. Ogun and Lagos States are part of the thirty – six states in Nigeria. Nigeria is one of the West African countries in the continent of Africa. This research will limit its work to the portion of Ijebu people located in Ogun State where the project will be conducted.

Ijebuland shares a boundary with Ibadan, Oyo State in the north, while the eastern region of Ijebu is bounded by Ondo State. On the west side is Egba kingdom, and the southern region is opened to the sea via the coastlines of three cities in Lagos State, namely Epe, Ejinrin, and Ikorodu.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Ayinde, Abimbola, “Ife Origin Influence in the History of Ijebu People of SouthWestern Nigeria” African Research Review:An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia, Serial No. 22, October, 5 (2011): accessed 27 May 2016, file:///C:/Users/ogclp1/Downloads/72290-157742-1-PB.pdf.

## **Historical Background of Ijebuland**

The Yoruba people are one of the three prominent tribes recognized in Nigeria. The other two tribes are Ibo people and the Hausa. Yoruba ethnic groups are living in South – Western part of Nigeria to the coast. The Ijebus are one of the ethnics groups of Yoruba people living in the South - Central part of Yorubaland.<sup>2</sup> Also, Ayodele notes that the Ijebus are a branch of Yoruba race in Nigeria and some located in the Republic of Benin.<sup>3</sup>

All the literature consulted on Ijebus history confirm that Ijebu history seems to depend on oral traditions as sources of information till the nineteenth century. Ayandele supports this fact saying that the Ijebus did not know the exact date their ancestors came to the current place inhabited because the oral tradition information were not dated.<sup>4</sup>

The first Yoruba major migration waves that first entered Nigeria went to Ile-Ife under the leadership of Iwase several centuries during the reign of Esumare of Ife Erinrin. The next group was the Sudanese immigrants known as the Ijebus led by Olu-Iwa who came from Wadai in the North –West of the Sudan.<sup>5</sup> Alao and Oguntomisin confirm the tradition history by explaining that the ancestral father, Olu-Iwa settled first at Ile-Ife and he gave his daughter called Gborowo as wife to Oduduwa, the Progenitor of all crowned heads in Yorubaland, and they give birth to Ogborogan with

---

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>E.A. Ayandele, *The Ijebu of YORUBALAND 1859 – 1950: Politics, Economics & Society* (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Plc. 1992), 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ayandele, 1.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

the title Ajagun (Warrior). Ogborogan was later called Awujale when he got to Ijebuland from Ile-Ife.<sup>6</sup>

Evidence had shown that the Ijebus migrated into Nigeria from Sudan. The mention of Sudanese tribal mark is the first evidence pointed out. It was agreed that the three vertical tribal marks on both cheeks in Sudanese is also duplicated in Ijebus as the national mark of identity with Ijebus.

The second point was the language spoken in South Sudan, and Ethiopia has been discovered to be very similar to Ijebu dialect. The third evidence is the names of people that are common in Ijebu and the South of Sudan. It was also observed that the kind of flute used during the coronation ceremony of the Awujale is still being used in Ethiopia and South Sudan.

Furthermore, it was proved that the ancestors of the Ijebus who occupied Ijebu-Ode and its environs came into Nigeria traced to the ancient Kingdom of Owodiaye of Ethiopia. The Kingdom of Owodaiye was said to share the boundary with Nubia in the North; the Eastern with Tigre and the Kingdom of Axum while the South-Eastern with Punt. It was discovered that the Ijebus share some common features with all the groups of people that shared a boundary with the Kingdom of Owodaiye such as the three vertical tribal marks with ancient Axumites and the Tigrians, Agemo cult, and Erikiran.<sup>7</sup>

It was spelled out that there were three migration waves that brought about the Ijebu Kingdom. The first was the migration made by Olu-iwa to lead the Ijebu with his relative, Ajebu, Olode, and Arisu from Ile-Ife to Iwade where they settled. But it

---

<sup>6</sup>F.O. Alao and G.O. Oguntomisin, "The Peopling of Ijebuland" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, ed. G.O. Oguntomisin (Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Publisher, 2002), 3.

<sup>7</sup>Moses Botu Okubote, *The History of the Ijebu* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Sam-Adex Printers, 2013), 65.

was mentioned that Ajebo traveled further to settle in a new place while Olode stayed with Olu-iwa to assist him in his administration. The settlements made by Ajebo and Olode brought about the name for Ijebo-Ode which may be considered as the headquarters for the Ijebus.<sup>8</sup>

The second wave of migration was led by Arisu who was known as the Obaji. They settled at Ijasi Quarter of Ijebu-ode another town near Ijebu-ode where some have been existing before they got there. Arisu carved a section of it for himself and ruled over them as a king. The first and second settlements made Ijebu kingdom to begin to expand and become fully populated.<sup>9</sup>

The third group that settled at Ijebu-ode was led by Ogborogan who was also known as the Obanta or Awujale. He was the son of Gborowo who was betrothed to Oduduwa as a wife by Olu-Iwa.<sup>10</sup> Oral tradition claimed that after the death of Oduduwa, his sixteen sons set out for settlement for themselves. Ogborogan who was the son of Gborowo the daughter of Olu-Iwa was advised by Ifa oracle to locate his maternal grandfather settlement who was Olu-Iwa. The search for his maternal grandfather took him through Imesi-Ekiti with his entourage to Isa and Igbo where Olu-Igbo resisted him to pass through his kingdom. It was said that the resistance by Olu-Igbo led to fighting and Ogborogan defeated Olu-Igbo by beheading him and took his pregnant wife and the chiefs on his further journey to Ijebu-Ode as advised by Ifa oracle. Oral tradition says that when Apebi sited Ogborogan at Ijebu-Ode, he exclaimed, "A great King is outside" (Oba wa nita) and from that time Ogborogan

---

<sup>8</sup>Alao and Oguntomisin, 3.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Okubote, 65.

was called “Obanta.” Ogborogan was installed as a king, and he was given a title call “Awujale of Ijebuland.”<sup>11</sup>

The movement of people out of Ijebu-Ode to settle in other nearby places gave birth to other neighboring towns and villages that formed Ijebuland. Moses Okubote confirms this saying, “Many people moved out of Ijebu-Ode to found settlements on the land. The names given to these new settlements are what we hear today. The earliest among these settlements are Okun, Imusin, and Remo.”<sup>12</sup> Alao and Oguntomisin support Moses Okubote statement mentioning that the Aka’s son and Olu-Igbo chiefs were sent out of Ijebu-Ode to settle at Ijebu-Igbo and Aka bears Akarigbo meaning “Aka, the son of Olu-Igbo.”<sup>13</sup>

### **Political Structure of the Ijebu People Group**

Ijebu kingdom is divided into five major sub-group which are; Ijebu-Ode, Ijebu-Ife, Ijebu-Igbo, Ijebu-Imusin, and Ijebu-Remo. Each of this sub-group has a king who governs the affair of his territory, and each has a title. Awujale of Ijebu-Ode is considered to be the paramount king over the other kings and Ijebu-Ode seems to be known as the capital city of Ijebuland.<sup>14</sup>

Aroyewun explains that the ancient administrative set-up that ruled the Ijebus were political groups which were democratic in principle because there were no political parties like the contemporary democracy. This administrative pattern of government was the same in all the Ijebuland under the sovereignty of the Awujale.

---

<sup>11</sup>Alao and Oguntomisin, 5.

<sup>12</sup>Okubote, 12.

<sup>13</sup>Alao and Oguntomisin, 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 11

The administrative pattern was also known as societies or clubs, and they are the Pampa, the Osugbo, the Ilamuren, the Odi, the Parakoyi, and the Ancient town Council.

Contemporary historians express that most of the customary form of administration mentioned above seems to be eradicated by modernization and civilization. During the colonial and post-independence era, local government and the local councils were established. As a result of this, Ijebu has nine local government and sixty-two traditional rulers who are under the leadership of Awujale of Ijebu-Ode.<sup>15</sup>

It is pointed out that the pre-colonial political structure of the Ijebus makes it easy for the people to achieve a democratic system of government. It is discovered that colonial era mode of government introduced by British to modify the pre-colonial governing system brought chaos and crisis to Ijebu community, starting with investing extra-traditional power to Awujale by making him sole native authority and this arrangement made the Osugbo less effective who was the highest native judicial power in Ijebuland.

The introduction of this contemporary form of government involved Awujale in politics which were not in the interest of people because Ijebu towns were made to pay dues as contributions to the running cost of the central office in Ijebu-Ode, payment of taxes and others. The colonial era brought disunity opposition to the communities of Ijebus as mentioned by the historians.<sup>16</sup> Adeniji explains that in the

---

<sup>15</sup>Gbenga Aroyewun, "The Early Beneficiaries of Christianity in Ijebuland," *Obanta Newsday*, (19 March 2011), 38.

<sup>16</sup>A.O. Adeniji, "A Survey of Political Developments in Ijebuland From the Colonial Period to 1983" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, 5. (Other historians that supported this opinion are, Alao and Oguntomisin, Moses Botu Okubote, Gbenga Aroyewun, and others).

1950s, the Ijebus were involved in partisan politics which caused more division and rivalry in Ijebuland. The emerge of politics resulted in various parties in which some prominent Ijebus were the leaders of Nigeria as a nation like Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief T.O.S. Benson, and others.<sup>17</sup> The introduction of British and partisan politics had an effect on the customary form of administration practiced by the African Tradition which was the former practice of Ijebu people.

In spite of the introduction of British and the partisan politics to govern the Ijebus which has given the open opportunities for the missionaries to come with their gospel, it has been observed that Seventh-day Adventist Church is still struggling to reach this people group with her message.

### **Religion**

Basically, Ijebu people group recognizes three religions, and they are; Islam, Christianity and Traditional religion. Predominantly, Islam is the religion of the Ijebu people, while Christianity took a little percentage. As it has been observed that Islamic have a large followership, they found it difficult to detach with Traditional worship. In most cases, they practiced the two together, that is, either Islam with Traditional or Christianity with Traditional.<sup>18</sup>

Ijebu people group practiced African Traditional belief before the advent of the colonial era. Ijebus share the same belief in the existence of Oludumare who is the Almighty God like other Yoruba tribes. Oludumare (Almighty God) is believed to be the creator of heaven and earth, and share the belief that Oludumare is a great and powerful God that could not be approached directly by human beings. This kind of

---

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Okubote, 12.

belief is only practiced in Ijebuland but all over the Yoruba tribe and even in Africa and such belief is called Africa Traditional Belief. Among the divinities worshiped as mentioned by oral tradition are; Obatala (Creator god), Esu (Devil), Ogun (god of Iron), Osun (Deity in River Osun), Agemo, Oluweri and Olomitutu (Mami water).<sup>19</sup>

These deities were associated with festivals which were being celebrated annually at a speculated month and week across Ijebuland. These festivals were used for celebration to make people happy and sometimes used for occasions for moral sanctions against social and traditional authorities.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, during the pre-colonial era, the Ijebu did not see religion as the worship of the God alone, religion to Ijebus was used to prescribe moral action, the right and individual obligation in society, the ruler obligations to society, forms the constitution and law of the community, and believed to protect their community. Religion is found in the live and daily activities of Ijebu people like the way they behave, speak, dress, eat, and even what they eat.<sup>21</sup>

The advent of colonial master introduces Christianity and Islamic into Ijebuland that have a little impact on their religion. Since the religion of Africans is seen to be their lives and way of life, it was very difficult to eradicate the traditional religion that resulted to dual allegiance and syncretism. Akintan a scholar in oral tradition of Ijebu says;

As Christianity brought a change in the communal life of the people, the performance of some festivals and sacrifices have stopped. In spite of the change pointed out above, Ijebu religious practices still survive. Many Christians still engage in traditional practices along with Christianity. Christians who take traditional chieftaincy titles observe the traditional practices associated with such titles. In fact, as objects of worship changed,

---

<sup>19</sup>A.O. Adeniji, 5.

<sup>20</sup>Alao and Oguntomisin, 88.

<sup>21</sup>Ayandele, 4.

images broken and charms thrown away, the adherents of traditional religion still find it difficult to discard with indigenous beliefs and cultic practices totally. Thus in spite of modifications, traditional festivals are still being celebrated.<sup>22</sup>

The African Traditional Religion of Ijebus is still in operation, and most of them that accepted either Christianity or Islamic religion seem to have some affiliation with their traditional religion which they profess to have dropped.

### **Socio-Cultural Setting of the Ijebus**

It has been revealed that Ijebu culture is indigenous and all speak the same dialect along with the common Yoruba language spoken by other tribes in Yorubaland.<sup>23</sup> Ijebu as a community or society has its set rules and customs in which some seems similar to other tribes of Yoruba.

**Family.** During the pre-colonial time, the family was considered to be the primary institution that made the means of livelihood of the members of the house. Therefore, family constitute to the socio-economic of the society and to be a member of a community, one must identify with a family and the common form of family practiced was the extended family system called Agbo - ile. The man was the head of the family, and he had authority over his household. The social system of Yoruba was operated by the Ijebu in which every town and village consisted of various lineages called *Idile*, and the *Idile* was made up of males and females that had common descent and relationship to each other.

The leader of the lineage was headed by a male line of the ancestor who was called *Olori ebi*. He looked after the welfare of the family, preserved harmony among

---

<sup>22</sup>O.A. Akintan, "Traditional Festivals and Western Influence in Ijebuland" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, 81.

<sup>23</sup>Robert S. Smith, *Kingdoms of the Yorubas: Studies in African History* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1969), 76.

the members, taking care all matters brought before him for right judgment, and ensured the continuity of the family.<sup>24</sup> Though civilization seems to have had a little negative effect on this family system mentioned above, it is still in operation in this modern time in the Ijebuland. In Ijebuland every citizen of Ijebu must have a family, family compound in the town or village of origin and know the leader of his or her lineage, *Olori ebi*.

**Courtship and marriage.** Customary marriage was practiced during the pre-colonial era that involved the parent arranging wife for their son and marriage was an appropriate occasion in Ijebu tradition and divorce was an unwelcome practice. Marriage was believed to be a life-long relationship until death separates the couple.<sup>25</sup> Just like other tribes of Yoruba race, polygamy was widely practiced where a man had many wives that resulted to many children to be able to have more hands or people to work for him in his vocation like farming.<sup>26</sup>

Marriage among the same lineage was frowned upon, and payment of bride price was compulsory, and emphasis was placed on chastity or virginity.<sup>27</sup> There was no room for fornication or adultery because there was a serious punishment attached to such.<sup>28</sup>

The colonial period introduced white-garment wedding and European culture where a man would choose the woman he likes and brought her home for marriage.

---

<sup>24</sup>Wale Salami, "A Historical Survey of the Pre-colonial Socio-Cultural Life of the Ijebu" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, 67-68.

<sup>25</sup>Okubote, 120 - 123.

<sup>26</sup>Wale Salami, "A Historical Survey of the Pre-Colonial Socio-Cultural life of the Ijebu" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, 68.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Okubote, 131.

Most of the practiced in the pre-colonial time had been eradicated by the introduction of civilization from the white men.<sup>29</sup>

**Death.** The Ijebus shared the same belief with other Yoruba societies on the issue of death as a rite of passage. When an adult person dies, the Ijebus believed that such it should be celebrated elaborately and if the person belongs a particular cult, there would be some spiritual rituals that would be performed to be used to appeal to the spirit of the dead person so that the dead could rest in peace.<sup>30</sup>

### **Economy of Ijebus**

Ijebu people were well known for their major economic activities in Yorubaland and Nigeria for agriculture and commerce. They were into farming, trading, and served as middlemen with other tribes of Yoruba group before the colonial era.<sup>31</sup> It was observed that the Ijebus were the first to invent money with the use of cowry shells in Yorubaland called “*Owo Eyo*” which was generally accepted in Yoruba kingdom until the Europeans introduced the coins made with the silver material.<sup>32</sup> During the pre-colonial time, the Ijebus had both internal and external trading system. The internal was the trade they made within the sub-groups of Ijebus, that is, internal, trading with themselves. The external trading was the trade made with other Yoruba tribes, and it was done outside the boundary of the Ijebu kingdom. It was mentioned that during this period the Ijebu kept the strangers who were from

---

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Salami, 69.

<sup>31</sup>Aroyewun, 38.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

other Yoruba tribes from their towns and trade were made outside the town to prevent war.<sup>33</sup>

The business acumen of the Ijebus made them be known throughout Nigeria, and this has made them be among the first that had contact with the Europeans in Nigeria through the slave trade, importation of European cloth and other goods. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Ijebus was said to have been recognized in the world business that made them be wealthy and civilized which had a positive effect on their social life like socialization and merriment whereby they could spend all their resources on a celebration like burial, wedding, and child naming especially on the weekend.<sup>34</sup>

Their early contact with the Europeans enlightened the Ijebus, paving the way for them to be politically inclined and play a prominent and potential role in the flagship of Nigeria's economic and socio-political advancement. Most prominent Yoruba leaders in Nigeria politic are from Ijebus like Obafemi Awolowo, Tai Solarin, Adeola Odutola, Abraham Adesanya, just to mention few.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Advent of Christianity in Ijebuland**

It was noted that the Ijebus vehemently opposed Christianity as a religion because it was their custom to be hostile to others both Yoruba groups and the Europeans. The British military attacked the Ijebus forces the ways for the westerners to influence them.<sup>36</sup> Ademuyiwa further explains, "When the Ijebu opened their

---

<sup>33</sup>Smith, 80.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ade Ademuyiwa, "Christianity in Ijebu Area of the Yoruba, 1892 – 1990" in *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*, 89.

routes to the missionaries and Western civilization, Christianity developed more rapidly among them than in other areas of Yorubaland.”<sup>37</sup>

Christianity got to Ijebuland through Ijebu-Ode on December 25, 1854, by Rev. David Hinderer who came from Ibadan through an invitation from Awujale Fidipote, the incumbent royal leader. Rev. David Hinderer came with Dr. Irvin to propagate the gospel at Ijebu-Ode, but it was not successful as a result of the war that broke between the Ibadan and the Ijaye people. From 1854 to 1889, it was noted that several efforts were made by many missionaries including some of the missionaries that were indigenes but they were not successful as a result of the hostility of the Ijebus.<sup>38</sup>

Some of the factors that brought hostility to the gospel as stated by Ademuyiwa was the experience of the first indigenous converts when he says “the rapid spread of Christianity in Ijebuland did not go unchallenged by the followers of traditional religion and Muslims. The early converts and missionaries were persecuted. Many of them experienced hardship involving arrest, torture, mockery, beating and confiscation of property.”<sup>39</sup>

In 1896, only six towns in Ijebuland had received Christianity as a religion, and they were; Ijebo-Ode, Ijebu-Igbo, Isonyin, Esure, Odosimadegun, and Mobalufon. From these towns that the gospel moved to another portions of the Ijebu communy.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Okubote,191 - 192.

<sup>39</sup>Ademuyiwa,89.

<sup>40</sup>Okubote,199.

Christianity was said to bring about the formal education and enlightenment to the Ijebus which had a negative effect on their traditional religion and brought conflict in the home as result of the introduction of monogamy, and some social settings were being affected like the age-groups were being weakened; some cultures were lost.<sup>41</sup>

As observed by Akintan that in spite of many changes brought about by Christianity, among the positive aspects was the abolishment of the use of human for ritual and negatively by changing some cultures that prevented immorality. In spite of the emergence of Christianity, Ijebu traditional religion still survived. Akintan concludes saying, “Many Christians still engage in traditional practices along with Christianity.” Dual allegiance was observed to be practiced by most Ijebus where. They mix Christianity with traditional religion or Islamic with traditional religion because it is difficult for most Ijebus to discard with the Ijebu religious practices, indigenous beliefs and cultic practices along with the traditional festivals, and social celebrations.<sup>42</sup>

### **Development of Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Ijebuland**

The Global Mission Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is “to find ways, under God guidance, to plant and disciple new groups of believers in un-entered areas and people groups around the world.”<sup>43</sup> Each member of the SDA Church is expected to proclaim the Everlasting Gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

---

<sup>41</sup> Ademuyiwa, 96 – 97.

<sup>42</sup> Akintan, 81.

<sup>43</sup> Global Mission Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist, (Operating Manual, February, 2011), 6: accessed 27 May 2014, <http://www.AdventistMission.org>.

It was this passion for gospel commission that prompted the first pioneers of Seventh-day Adventist to leave their home countries and traveled to various continents of the world and it was still the same gospel commission passion that propelled Elder David C. Babcock to come to Nigeria after planting SDA Churches in several countries in West Africa like Sierra Leone.<sup>44</sup>

Just like other gospel denominations strived to penetrate and establish their presence in Nigeria with their peculiar messages, so also, Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church came to Nigeria precisely March 7, 1914 under the leadership of Elder D. C. Babcock and his missionary team, namely; R. Dolphin (Ghanaian) and S. Morgue (Sierra Leonean) from Freetown in Sierra Leon to the coast of Lagos, the then State Capital of Nigeria. In their effort as missionary team to spread the gospel throughout Nigeria, they moved into the interior part of Yorubaland and finally settled at a village called Erunmu, in Egbeda Local Government area of Oyo State. From Erunmu the seed of SDA message was planted, germinated and spread to another part of Nigeria in which the Ijebus are not exceptional.<sup>45</sup>

Seventh-day Adventist Church message got to Ogun State, one of the states in Nigeria in 1926, at Abeokuta the State Capital through Elder S.O. Oyelese who was a literature evangelist.<sup>46</sup> The expectation was that from Abeokuta the SDA message would spread to another part of the state including Ijebu people group. But this was a difficult task for the team to achieve and just a little success could be recorded, and SDA message could not move beyond Abeokuta to other places in Ogun State.

---

<sup>44</sup>David O. Babalola, *On Becoming A Conference: The Story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Yorubaland 1914-2002* (Ibadan, Nigeria: OSB Design Limited, 2002), 16.

<sup>45</sup> Babalola, 18 – 71.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid. 222.

Later in 1933, Pastor J.M.A. Adeoye an Adventist minister who was an indigene of Abeokuta brought Adventist Message to Ijebu-Ode, the capital city of the Ijebus. This was the second city entered with SDA message in Ogun State. The record shows that in spite of efforts by Pastor Adeoye to plant SDA Church in Ijebu-ode, it was proved abortive and the church could not survive. Just as it was difficult for the Adventist message to move out of Abeokuta to the other part of the state, so also it was difficult at Ijebu-ode.<sup>47</sup>

The first SDA convert in Ijebu kingdom was late Pa Johnson Adekoya Efuntade a native of Ijebu Omuo.<sup>48</sup> Efuntade was Christian with a Christian mother and a Muslim father. His quest to know the true church made him had a dream a strange, gentle man that visited him with a truth message and on the next day around 11:00am Pastor J.M.A Adeoye came to his office at 57, Fidipote Street, Ita Alapo, Ijebu-Ode with the Adventist message which was the confirmation of the dream he had. After series of Bible studies and the Sabbath truth, he was converted. Later two families joined him, and they are; John Oba-Nla- Aro, and Okulaja families.<sup>49</sup>

Oral tradition reveals that Pastor Adeoye organized an evening school where he was teaching about forty children and that some of the parents of these students were attending Sabbath School. It was noted that in 1934, Oba Gbelegbuwa II, the Awujale of Ijebuland and Chief Adebowale promised to give Seventh-day Adventist Church a piece of land for the church building and school. In the midst of this negotiation, Pastor Adeoye was suddenly transferred without any replacement that

---

<sup>47</sup>Babalola, 223.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Johnson Adekola Efuntade, "My Memories as the Pioneer of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode," *A Meeting*, IJEBU-Ode, 13 June 1989,1-2. Typewritten.

brought about the death of Seventh-day Adventist Church both in Ijebu-Ode and Ijebuland. The new converts were left without a pastor, and they all left except Pa J.A Efuntade.<sup>50</sup> Babalola reaffirms the transfer of Pastor Adeoye without any follow-up for a long time that resulted in the collapse of the SDA Church and the mission school in Ijebu-Ode which had a negative impact on the growth of Adventism in Ijebu kingdom.<sup>51</sup>

Late in 1959, Elder D. C. Babcock established Seventh - day Adventist Church presence in Ijebuland in another town called Ilisan-Remo through educational institution medium, which was called Adventist College of Africa (ACWA, but now called Babcock University). However, the birth of Adventist College of West Africa brought back the hope of Seventh-day Adventist Mission to Ijebu – Ode in 1968 that was lost for a period of thirty – four years due to Pastor Adeoye’s transfer without replacement through the students of this college and their teachers who embarked on the missionary journey to Ijebu – Ode and suburb towns like Sagamu, Iperu, Ikenne and some others.<sup>52</sup>

This research work will be limited to Ilisan – West District comprising of some part of Ilisan, Iperu, Ode, Ogere, Akaka, and Ijebu – Ode District having the following towns; Ijebu – Ode, Epe, Omu – Ijebu, Ijebu – Igbo, Ijebu – Ife, Iwopin, Ago –Iwoye and Irewon. Since Ijebus have the culture and traditions of other Yoruba tribes, there is no need of reviewing the socio – cultural settings of these two districts mentioned where the project will be conducted. Generally speaking, Ogun State, one

---

<sup>50</sup>Olu Efuntade, Church Leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Omu-Ijebu, interviewed by Olajide Jacob Olatunde, Nigeria, 22 February 2011.

<sup>51</sup>Babalola, 223.

<sup>52</sup>Olu Efuntade.

of the Western States of Nigeria, has been proved to be difficult in the reception of Adventist Message or Mission. The records have proved that the church growth and church planting results have been so poor compare to some states in Nigeria. This calls for consideration because Ogun as a State in Nigeria has a lot of ethnic groups to be reached with the Adventist message in fulfillment of the great commission.

The project designed a method to reach the various people groups in Ogun State with the Adventist message and to plant churches there. If since 1926 that Adventism Message got to Ogun till this contemporary date only a few towns and cities had been reached, this is not an encouraging report that could be presented at all.

### **Research Design**

The research design is the main part of the research work. Matthew Lee suggests that research design involves chosen of a method that will be used to answer one's research question and that the main features of research design comprise of research methodology; participant/sample collection; data collection procedures and instruments for data collection.<sup>53</sup>

The purpose of this study is to design the probably possible methods that can be used to evangelize the Ijebu people group with the Adventist message in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6 – 12. Therefore, this research design will consider the following guidelines stated below as steps to follow.

---

<sup>53</sup>Matthew Lee and Matthew Lee, "The Difference Between Research Design & Research Method," *eHow*, accessed July 21, 2016, [http://www.ehow.com/facts\\_7329595\\_difference-research-design-research-method.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_7329595_difference-research-design-research-method.html).

## **Type of Research Methodology**

Carol Roberts classifies all research methodology into “two broad generic categories” namely Quantitative and Qualitative. He considers Mixed Method as the hybrid approach that is obtained from the use of the methods (quantitative and qualitative).<sup>54</sup> Berg and Lune share the same opinion with Roberts by saying that these approaches are qualitative, quantitative and the mixed method which is the combination of the two methods mentioned earlier.<sup>55</sup>

Quantitative method is called “Logical positivism” by Roberts, in which data collection are based on numerical and surveys’ result, tests, and experiments. The qualitative approach is called “Phenomenology”. It is based on the philosophical orientation and it focuses on people’s experience from their perspective through broad and general questions about the topic under investigation.<sup>56</sup> Merriam gives a further explanation that quantitative research method gives the researcher opportunity to count and measure things, and to determine the extent and distribution of the subject matter. Qualitative method, on the other hand, helps the researcher to understand the opinion of the people on the topic or their worldview on the subject matter along with their experience.”<sup>57</sup>

This research work will employ qualitative research method with the use of focus group and interview because the research work is dealing with the people’s

---

<sup>54</sup>Carol M. Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation* (USA: California, Corwin A SAGE Company, 2010), 142 - 143.

<sup>55</sup>Bruce L. Berg and Howard Lune, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Person Education, Inc., 2012), 3.

<sup>56</sup>Roberts, 143.

<sup>57</sup>Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Inc., 1998), 6.

view or opinion on the research topic. The qualitative method will help the researcher to understand why the Ijebus have not been reached with the Adventist message.

### **Rational for Selection**

Steinar Kvale explains that qualitative research allows the researcher to “understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena from the inside in a number of different ways: by analyzing experiences of individuals or groups; by analyzing interactions and communications in the making; and by analyzing documents.”<sup>58</sup>

Qualitative method is selected as a means of getting necessary information from people because it focuses on people’s experience. A qualitative method was used to confirm the existence of the research problem. Since qualitative method focuses on people’s experience and their idea about the subject matters through focus group discussion and interview, the researcher is offered the opportunity to have a comprehensive and complete understanding of the research topic and the enablement to handle it well. The qualitative method gives room for interaction with the people to seek their opinion. Qualitative research method using focus group and interview give the opportunity for the researcher to meet some indigenes who have been in Seventh-day Adventist Church for sometimes to get in-depth reasons for the Ijebus have not been reached with the Adventist message or their rejection of Adventist message in order to achieve the objective result.

Through discussion, some possible solution may be suggested which will of great advantage for the researcher. This method makes the researcher know the people’s feeling about the issue that is discussing through their reactions. Using focus

---

<sup>58</sup>Steinar Kvale, *Doing Interviews* (London: Sage Publication, 2008), x.

group discussion and interview will help to validate the result. The qualitative method gives the opportunity for people to be involved in the research which may be helpful during the implementation.

### **Appropriateness of Study**

The use of qualitative method will assist the researcher to confirm the existence of the research problem. Also, the method helps the researcher to get direct information about the reasons for rejection of Adventist message by the Ijebus. It allows the respondents to express their view and suggest possible solutions that may be of help to research work. The qualitative method gives room for people's involvement through participation and interaction which will help the researcher to know their feeling about the research subject and also to seek their opinion.

### **Population and Sample or Participants**

The population is considered to be the group of interest to the researcher or that the researcher would like the result of his or her study to be extrapolated.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, this research is conducted among the members in Ilisan West District of Seventh-day Adventist Church and Ijebu – Ode District, since these are the areas where the church has the concentration of Ijebus who are Adventist.

Sampling may be considered as the process of selecting a number of individuals for the study that will represent the larger group selected for this research.<sup>60</sup> Since this study will focus on focus group as instrument and interview, purposive sampling is used to select those who will form each focus group within the population to meet the criteria for selection. The selection was made by the church

---

<sup>59</sup>Roberts, 150.

<sup>60</sup>Roberts, 150.

pastor who is equally serving as the district pastor. The researcher had depended on him as the informant for this project after a series of discussion and training to enable him to be informed of the assignment given to him.

### **Criteria for Sampling, Procedures, and Selection**

The population of this study consisted of two districts out five districts in Ijebuland. The reason for the selection of these two districts is that one of the districts Ilisan West is densely populated with Ijebus who are Adventists that will be of help in getting the necessary information needed for this project. The second district, Ijebu – Ode has less Ijebus Adventists, and at the same time a whole church Irewon, mainly populated with Ijebus was converted to Seventh-day Adventist Church along with the church pastor on August 13, 2011, but most of the Ijebus there had gone out of the church. The reasons for their leaving the church need to be established which may be of help to this study.

Four focus groups are designed for this study with a minimum of eight people in each group, and they include; first, the Adventist Ijebu indigenes that are above twenty years in the church (Nativity and experience). Second is the Adventist non-indigene that has been in Ilisan or Ijebuland for the past five years or more (Experience). The third group is the Adventist indigene that new converts in the church (Newness). The last group is Adventist Ijebu indigenes comprising both new and old from Ogere Church, an Adventist Church outside Ilisan town but a town within Ilisan – West district (Result Comparison).

This is to note it that the third group, the newly converted indigenous Adventist could not be met because it was difficult for them to be gathered. The reason for this was that some complained of time, while some feel ashamed to meet

the president of the Conference based on their former belief of respecting the minister of God with high rank.

Another qualitative method used for this study is an interview where three individuals were interviewed. The first individual interviewed was new convert that her husband and all members got converted to Adventist Church, while the second person was a member that got converted for sixteen years (experience). The last individual was a member that left the church or backslider (reason for leaving the church). All these interviews were done at Irewon church.

The rationale for the selection of the first group who are Adventist Ijebu indigenes who are above twenty years in the church is that they would be able to inform this study the first-hand information about this research topic and establish the fact that the research problem is still existing based on their experience as Ijebu members in the church. Then from their experience as indigenes, they have a better understanding to be able to explain the reason for the Ijebus rejecting the Adventist message as insiders, using insiders' perspective to view the cause and they may likely come up with suggested solutions. The second focus group consists of the Adventist Members who are not Ijebus but have stayed for over five years in Ijebuland. This group will be helpful to provide information on this research topic based on their observation through their interaction and experience. Their opinions on Ijebus will be viewed from outsider's perceptions and their experience with the Ijebus will give reasons for not accepting the Adventist message. Also, their opinion will be compared with that of the indigenous Adventist members in order to have a fair judgment on the research topic.

The third group is the newly converted Ijebus who are Adventist for at least five years. Their views are needed to know their feelings about the Adventist as a new

faith compares with where the faith where they are coming from. The reason for their staying needs to be established, and possible suggestions that may be used to reach out to Ijebus will be required from them based on their experience as indigenes. The last set of the group was not gathered together in the first three groups. The interview was conducted on individual bases, and at the time of interview, only one person was succeeded to be interviewed because others were difficult to be reached. The purpose of selecting this group is to establish the reason for leaving the church which will be compared with other groups' observations in order to have a better judgment which will be of help to this research work in designing an intervention to resolve this challenge.

The interview done at Irewon church in Ijebu – ode district was carried out to establish the reason why Ijebus are leaving the Adventist faith. In order to get the needed result the wife of the founder of a church that later became a Seventh-day Adventist was interviewed to explain why many of their members who are Ijebus left the new faith introduce to them.

The procedure followed in selecting these groups was done through the church pastor who served as an informant and his associate pastor in the district who is one of the converts of Irewon Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu – ode. Both of them went through training on the task to be carried out by the researcher in order to achieve the purpose of this study. Both of them selected the group members based on the criteria with the help of some members and church leaders in Ilisan Church No.1 and Irewon church in Ijebu – ode. Then the selected members were consulted on the purpose of their selection individually in connection with this research work. The informants gathered them together to educate them on the reason for their selection and a suggested date with time was agreed upon.

## **Instrumentation**

This section of the research describes all the instruments and mechanisms used to collect data such as interview, questionnaires, and so on.<sup>61</sup> Since this study is basically on qualitative research with the use of focus groups, thirteen structured questions were developed as a guideline for discussion.

The participants were allowed to answer freely, and opportunity was given to either ask questions that may be of help to this study or give any suggestion that may offer a solution to this research work. They were allowed to discuss the structured questions since the structured questions were just leading questions to get necessary information needed to design intervention for the research.

The questions were written in English language but were presented to the participants in both English and Yoruba language. They were allowed to answer in any language they preferred to respond. Also, their reaction and feelings were noted which will be of help to the research work.

During the discussion and interview, there was a recording secretary who takes note of all the answers and responses of the participants. Alongside, the use of electronic recorder was used to tape their responses and compare it with the secretary's copy.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis is about analyzing information collected from research method and interprets the information to bring out expected result that may be used to address the research problem accordingly.

---

<sup>61</sup>Roberts. 150

## **Data Collection Procedures**

This section of the research describes the detail steps taken to conduct the study and the order of occurrence.<sup>62</sup> The whole procedures began with an official letter written to Ogun Conference Administrative committee on October 5, 2015, and it was voted on October 12, 2015, with Executive Secretary of the Conference's reply on October 13, 2015.

The district pastor for Ilisan District was informed by the researcher his intention to use his district for this research work on November 3, 2015. Likewise, on January 5, 2016, the same information went to Ijebu – Ode District Pastor on the intention to use his field for this research work. Both of them consented to allow the researcher to use their field since the Conference administration is aware and agreed to it through her executive committee and their Districts were informed respectively. On May 13, 2016, the informants were informed of the criteria to follow in selecting the focus groups and those to be interviewed as stated above in the selection criteria.

Then on May 20, 2016, the informants started scanning for the members that will form a team of a group as a focus group with the help of some church elders and members who will be able to inform them on those who qualified according to criteria of each group. Then the informants started contacting individuals to inform them of their group assignments. Before June 4, 2016, all the members of each group had been contacted where date and time for meeting each group was spelled out, and they all agreed to keep to the date and time. Then they were being reminded through a phone call and meeting them individually.

---

<sup>62</sup>Roberts. 150

Furthermore, on May 30, 2016, the second training was conducted for the informants on May 30, 2016, on the task to be carried out with each group and their responsibility as a team to support the researcher. It was at this training that one of them was picked as recording secretary to take their response and reaction and other carrying out electronic recording. They were also trained on how to administer the structured questions to the group or conduct the interview.

The meeting with the first focus group (Indigenous Adventist for over twenty years) was held in the church as arranged by informants on June 4, 2016, where the researcher moderated the meeting informing them with the purpose of this meeting which lasted for three and half hours. The membership of this group was mainly from Ilisan No.1 Church because that is the only place that could meet up the requirement expected and seven out eight participants attended. The second group comprising of non-indigenes Adventists for over five in Ijebuland was met immediately after the meeting with the first group on the same day, June 4, 2016, at 6:00pm in the evening which lasted for two hours. The membership of group spread across Ilisan District and four out of eight attended the meeting. Others tender their apology for unable to make it as a result of some unexpected travel while others could not attend because of the late closing of evening service in their church or emergency meeting. These were the excuses given after interrogating them.

On June 7, 2016, an interview that lasted for three hours was conducted at Irewon Church with the wife of the founder of the church that was converted Seventh-day Adventist Church, an Adventist member for over fifteen years that is in the church since the conversion of the church to Adventist, and a member of this Irewon church that was converted into the church and later left the church. These were not the only people invited in each category of this people, but those that showed up were

ones interviewed. The interview was conducted in Yoruba language, and they responded in the Yoruba language because it gives the opportunity to express themselves during the interview. Also, the interview was done when they were together which gives them the confidence to be free since they know themselves. Putting them together gives the opportunity for the remaining two to encourage the backslider by sharing their experience with him.

The last group met on June 11, 2016, at Ogere Church outside Ilisan but in Ilisan West District and the membership of this group were the new converts who were Ijebus with some church leaders because it was just established two years ago. The group was interviewed by the informants whom they know very well, and they flow freely with them. The reason for the researcher not following them was that since the researcher is the president of their conference, they rather addressed the questions in such a way that their requests will be their answer instead of going directly to appropriate answers that will be helpful to this study. The structure questions were presented in the Yoruba language since that is the language most of them understood.

Data collection lasted for a week, and their answers to structured questions and interview were noted in writing, video, and audio recording and notes were compared during the final drafting so that there will not be any omission. From the observation and their feelings, the discussion was highly appreciated by the respondents of each group, and they all express the same opinion that such discussion forum is needed at least once a year to evaluate the state and performance of the church and the district within the conference and to know their view and request.

## **Presentation and Description of Findings**

This section includes a detailed analysis of the particular method selected to gather data. The data will be displayed with the use of coding system or process which will be converted into themes or categories for analysis.<sup>63</sup> The responses from the focus groups and interviews which is the qualitative method selected become the findings of this study. Then, the analyses of the findings form the basis of the intervention that will be developed in this research work.

**Focus group discussion findings.** In view of the fact that this research work deals with the problem of Ijebu community of Ogun State not being reached Adventism message that resulted in the slow rate of Seventh-day Adventist Church planting in this community, this study had employed qualitative approach as the research methodology with use of focus group and personal interview to gathered the necessary data needed. The findings are hereby narrated in the tables below.

Table 1 is an analysis of the opinion of focus group discussion who are indigenous Ijebu Seventh-day Adventist members that had been in the church for about twenty to forty – eight (20 - 48) years. Their experience as indigenes who are members of the church for a long period suggests that Ijebus as a larger community in Ogun State had been evangelized with the Adventist message and that church planting rate is very poor compared with other denominations.

The group spelled out some reasons or factors that may be responsible for the Ijebus not accepting the Adventist message and slow rate of church planting such as poor place of worship, language barrier, insufficient pastors, members' bad lifestyle, and insufficient care and welfare. Ijebu culture and tradition coupled with Saturday

---

<sup>63</sup>Roberts. 159.

social celebration are other factors contributing to slow growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland. The following are their suggestions that may facilitate the growth of the Adventist church in Ijebuland; the use of pioneers for groundbreaking, the involvement of members in evangelism, un-entered are to be part of Conference budget.

*Table 1. Response from Indigenous SDA Members Focus Group*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	Between 20 – 48 years. They are all baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. What do you know about Seventh-day Adventist Church?	Bible based church, the observant of the seventh day as Sabbath day, and the remnant church.
3. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?	Ijebus not yet been reached with the Adventist message in spite of various efforts used.
4. What may be responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence of Orthodox Churches that preceded SDA Church</li> <li>• Lack of care and welfare</li> <li>• Poor place of worship (Church building)</li> <li>• Insufficient church pastors</li> <li>• Language (the use of English language to lead church services)</li> </ul>
5. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?	Very poor
6. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?	Pastoral ministry is effective and efficient, but insufficient ministers affect the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland.
7. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?	The ministry of the laity is not effective when it comes to church planting in Ijebuland in the area lifestyle and lack of witnessing culture.
8. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	The culture and tradition of Ijebus affected Adventism message especially the sabbath keeping because Saturday is used for merriment or social gathering.
9. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?	It has been successful but follow-up, and retention is the challenge.
10. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor church building</li> <li>• Insufficient care, visitation, and welfare as a result insufficient ministers and some members' bad lifestyle.</li> <li>• Saturday social celebration or merriment.</li> </ul>
11. What is still keeping some Ijebu members in the church?	Faith in Jesus and the unique doctrine of the church.
12. Why do people leave the church after baptism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members lifestyle</li> <li>• Saturday ceremony</li> <li>• Insufficient care and welfare couple with insufficient ministers to lead.</li> </ul>
13. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference to engage more pioneers in church planting with better paid.</li> <li>• Conference to include un – entered areas in the budget yearly which should include church building and posting of pastors there.</li> <li>• Members are to be encouraged to be involved in evangelism.</li> <li>• The conference to establish more educational and medical institutions in Ogun State as a mean evangelism.</li> </ul>

Table 2 consists of the opinion of the non-indigenous members of Seventh-day Adventist members that have been in Ijebuland for about eight (8) to twenty – nine years. Their view or opinion will be compared with that of indigenous members for proper judgment.

Considering the table above, their point of view on this topic under discussion reveals that the Ijebus have not be reached with the Adventist message that will result in church planting and growth. The factors responsible for this were pointed out as poor location of church couple with poor church building, social events on Saturday that affects Sabbath keeping, insufficient ministers, members' negative behavior, poor membership involvement in personal ministry and evangelism, insufficient care and welfare and language barrier which has to do with the use of English language for worship or church services. Another factor mentioned is the culture and tradition of Ijebu people which Seventh-day Adventist doctrine or beliefs do not accommodate like dual allegiance (Christianity with idol worship), and church doctrine is considered to be too hard to follow.

*Table 2. Response from Non - Indigenous SDA Members Focus Group*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	Between 8 – 29 years. All are baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. What do you know about Seventh-day Adventist Church?	They are the expectant of the second coming of Jesus. The observance of the seventh day as Sabbath day and it is the universal church.
3. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?	Ijebus not yet been reached with the Adventist message.
4. What may be responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social events on Saturday that affects Sabbath keeping</li> <li>• Poor Church location (Church building)</li> <li>• Lack of members' involvement in Personal Ministry/ Evangelism</li> <li>• Members' negative behavior</li> <li>• Insufficient church pastors</li> <li>• Language (the use of foreign language)</li> </ul>
5. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?	Very low
6. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?	Pastors are doing well, but multiple portfolios or fields covered affect efficiency. Few ministers affect the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland.
7. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?	Members' involvement in Evangelism is poor. Members' lifestyle is affected evangelism by not interacting well with Ijebus.
8. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	The Ijebu culture and tradition affected Adventism message especially the sabbath keeping (Merriment, selling and buying on Sabbath), idol worship, and dual allegiance. Also, Ijebu flamboyant life negates temperance teaching of SDA Church .
9. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?	It has been successful but follow-up. Adventist message be preached or presented in the local language or Yoruba.
10. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor church building</li> <li>• Insufficient care, visitation, and welfare as a result insufficient ministers and some members' bad lifestyle.</li> <li>• Saturday social celebration or merriment.</li> <li>• Language barrier</li> </ul>
11. What is still keeping some Ijebu members in the church?	Faith in Jesus and the doctrine of the church.
12. Why do people leave the church after baptism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members lifestyle</li> <li>• Saturday ceremony</li> <li>• Insufficient care and welfare</li> <li>• Insufficient ministers to lead.</li> <li>• Language barrier</li> <li>• Church doctrine too hard for them</li> </ul>

Table 3 shows the opinion of Ijebu indigenous members from Ogere, another Town different from Ilisan and their opinion is needed to be compared with the former focus group from Ilisan in order to have a judgment on this study. The members of this focus group have been in the church from two to forty – six years. Based on their experience, it was unanimously agreed that Ijebu people group had not been reached with the Adventist message in spite of various evangelistic efforts employed by ministers and laities. The group enumerated the factors militating the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland as evangelism method which needs to be reviewed, insufficient pastors, member not involving in evangelism, no fund for evangelism, Conference evangelism support is poor, members' lifestyle, language barrier, social engagement on Saturday, and Ijebu culture and tradition is not complying with church doctrine like festivals that include idol worship.

The group came up with some suggestions like Conference be involved in local evangelism, the church should be media, members be encouraged to be involved in evangelism and that local dialect or language be encouraged.

*Table 3. Response from Indigenous SDA Focus Group at Ogere Ijebu*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	Between 2 – 46 years. All are baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. What do you know about Seventh-day Adventist Church?	Bible based church with unique doctrine. Sabbath Keeper. Caring for people's needs
3. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?	Ijebus not yet been reached with the Adventist message.
4. What may be responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evangelism method needs review</li> <li>• Members not witnessing</li> <li>• No enough pastors</li> <li>• No enough evangelism</li> <li>• Conference support on evangelism is not enough</li> <li>• Insufficient finance for evangelism</li> <li>• Language (the use of foreign language)</li> </ul>
5. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?	Very poor
6. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?	Ministers are effective and efficiency in their role. At the same time, insufficient ministers affect the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland.
7. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?	Lay members are not doing enough in evangelism.
8. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	The doctrine of the church contradicts Ijebu Traditional festivals that include idol worship, social celebration on Saturday and religion dual allegiance.
9. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?	Very poor.
10. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Pastoral and laity care</li> <li>• Church belief or doctrine is hard for them to abide with.</li> <li>• Saturday social celebration or merriment.</li> </ul>
11. What is still keeping some Ijebu members in the church?	Undiluted Bible-based truth.
12. Why do people leave the church after baptism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members lifestyle</li> <li>• Saturday ceremony</li> <li>• Insufficient care</li> <li>• Insufficient ministers to care for them.</li> </ul>
13. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference to spend more on evangelism and be involved.</li> <li>• Media evangelism is needed</li> <li>• Members are to be encouraged to be involved in evangelism.</li> <li>• The use of local language or dialect is to be encouraged during worship.</li> </ul>

The researcher and his team members interviewed the wife of the pastor that handed over his church to the members to Seventh-day Adventist Church. She is a baptized member of Seventh-day Adventist Church for the past five years. The purpose of this interview is to compare her observation and opinion with the views of the focus groups opinions.

From her observation and experience, she noted that Ijebu people group had not been reached with the Adventist message. She identified the reasons for not evangelizing Ijebus with Adventist truth to the followings; insufficient pastors to lead, members' bad behavior, Adventist doctrines too hard to cope with, Adventist prayer styles too cold for them, language barrier by using English language for all programs, and Saturday social ceremonies which have an effect on Sabbath worship. She pointed that the culture and tradition of Ijebu people also affect the planting of Adventist church Ijebus. From her perception, she advised the church to be more engaged on media for publicity and also the church to have more ministers to pastor the new churches which will enhance the church planting system of the church, as seen in Table 4.

*Table 4. Response from Personal Interview with a New Indigenous SDA Member from Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	5 years.; Baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?	Ijebus not yet being reached with the Adventist message.
3. What may be responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient pastor</li> <li>• Social events on Saturday that affects Sabbath keeping</li> <li>• Prayer style is considered cold</li> <li>• Members' negative behavior</li> <li>• Language barrier (the use of foreign language)</li> </ul>
4. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?	Not encouraging
5. When your church was handed over to SDA Church , how many people were handed over?	About Twenty (20) Members
6. Were they all Ijebus?	Yes
7. How many of them now are still in the Church presently?	About Nine (9) members.
8. How many Yorubas are presently worshipping in Irewon SDA Church ?	About Thirteen (13) Members.
9. How many of this thirteen (13) are Ijebus?	About Eight (8) People.
10. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?	The pastoral ministry had been effective among the Ijebus; At the same time, insufficient ministers affect the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland.
11. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?	Very effective except some members' lifestyle affected evangelism by not interacting well with Ijebus.
12. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	Ijebu culture and tradition affected Adventism message in the area of Sabbath keeping.
13. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?	The evangelistic effort in Ijebuland is successful but not attracting non-Adventist.
14. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient ministers to lead</li> <li>• SDA teaching is too hard for them</li> <li>• Members' bad lifestyle.</li> <li>• Saturday social celebration or merriment.</li> <li>• Language barrier (Use of English language for service).</li> <li>• Prayer styles too cold for them</li> </ul>
15. What is still keeping you as Ijebu in the church?	Faith in Jesus and God.
16. Why do people leave the church after baptism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members lifestyle</li> <li>• Saturday ceremony</li> <li>• Insufficient ministers to lead</li> <li>• The use of foreign language</li> </ul>
17. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church to do more on Media Publicity like TV/Radio Advertisement</li> <li>• More pastors are needed</li> </ul>

Another interview was conducted by an old member of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Irewon Church, Ijebu – ode District who has been in the church for the past sixteen years. The purpose of this interview is to examine the result of this interview to be the same with focus groups opinions and the interview result. Just like others observed, she confirmed that Seventh-day Adventist Church had not done much in Ijebuland. She identified the cause to be poor church buildings, insufficient pastors, Saturday ceremony, members' attitude, language barrier, Adventist doctrine too hard for Ijebus to comply with, and Ijebu culture and tradition do not accept the Adventist teaching. Her view is the same with other results from focus groups and interview conducted. This is seen in Table 5.

*Table 5. Response from Personal Interview with an Old Indigenous SDA Member from Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	Over sixteen (16) years. All are baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?	Ijebus not yet been reached with the Adventist message.
3. What may be responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Church building</li> <li>• Lack of pastoral visit</li> <li>• Church doctrine is hard for them to accept</li> <li>• Member's attitude to church services (poor attendance).</li> </ul>
4. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?	Very poor
5. How many Yorubas are presently worshipping in Irewon SDA Church ?	About Thirteen (13) Members.
6. How many of this thirteen (13) are Ijebus?	About Eight (8) People.
7. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?	Pastoral Ministry is effective, just that more pastors are needed for the growth of Adventism in Ijebuland.
8. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?	Very effective with the need of ministers to support.
9. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	The doctrine of the church contradicts Ijebu Traditional festivals that include idol worship, social celebration on Saturday and religion dual allegiance.
10. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?	Very good except the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of English language</li> <li>• Song sang in foreign language</li> <li>• Ineffective home fellowship</li> <li>• Poor place of worship</li> <li>• Ijebu culture and tradition</li> <li>• Lack of Pastoral and laity care</li> <li>• Church belief or doctrine is hard for them to abide with.</li> <li>• Saturday social celebration or merriment.</li> </ul>
11. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	Faith in Christ.
12. What is still keeping some Ijebu members in the church?	
13. Why do people leave the church after baptism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor church Building</li> <li>• Church doctrine too hard for them</li> <li>• Saturday ceremony</li> <li>• Insufficient care</li> <li>• Insufficient ministers to care for them.</li> </ul>
14. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?	The church needs to intensify more on the evangelistic efforts, especially rural area.

This interview is conducted to establish some reasons for Ijebu members leaving the church. The person interviewed had left Seventh-day Adventist Church for about two years, and he had been a member of this church for over five years before he left. He identified Seventh-day Adventist to be a church that has the truth, that is, abides with the word of God.

He noted the reasons he left the church to be vision confirmed on him, and the prayer style of the church that is too cold which cannot solve his life challenges. In his opinion and observation, he declares that the teaching and the practice of Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot condone the culture and traditional practice of Ijebu people such as fetishes and dual allegiance in which he is in it presently as Ijebu man. Lastly, he advised the church invest more publicity especially the media, as seen in Table 6.

*Table 6. Response from Personal Interview with an Indigenous SDA Member That Left (Backslidden) Irewon Church, Ijebu-Ode District*

Discussion Question	Answer
1. How long have you been in the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?	About 5 years. All are baptized members of Seventh-day Adventist Church
2. What do you know about Seventh-day Adventist Church?	SDA Church is a true Church
3. Why did you leave the Church?	Because of a vision seen by him. SDA Church prayer is too cold.
4. Have you noticed any changes since you leave the SDA Church ?	Still hoping and believing God for a change
5. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?	People don't like truth presented by SDA Church
6. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?	SDA beliefs do not condone Ijebu dual allegiance to worship (God and fetishes).
7. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?	The church should invest more on Publicity.

## **Analysis of Data**

Analyzing the data collated by this study from focus groups opinions and their observations coupled with the opinions or views of the individuals interviewed. The following are discovered to be the major occurring points mentioned by all groups and the interviews that may be considered as the factors militating against evangelizing and planting churches in Ijebuland.

**Place of worship.** Both the focus groups and individuals interviewed mentioned that the Ijebus value the place of worship by building befitting and well-decorated Cathedrals that can be the pride of the worshippers. Smith confirms this when narrating the historical background of Ijebus by saying that their early contact with the White men (Europeans) in the middle of the nineteenth century made them be wealthy and civilized which had a positive effect on their social life.<sup>64</sup>

Also that the church location is in some places are in hidden place. The observation of the focus groups along with the individuals interviewed indicated that the evangelistic system of Seventh-day Adventist Church is to evangelize and establish a church without a place of worship in most times. In the end, a school or sitting room or a shop will be used for worship which an Ijebu will see as an unbecoming place of worship.

**Insufficient pastors to lead.** The effect and the role of church pastors are spelled out to be important in church planting especially in Ijebu community. Ordinary Ijebu people worship idols and like to consult the priests for advice or to share their challenges. Where such a person to join the Adventist faith they would surely go back to the former life, without spiritual guidance from pastors. It is

---

<sup>64</sup>Smith, 80.

revealed that most new churches established in Ijebuland by Seventh-day Adventist do not have church pastor to guide and pastor the new church which resulted in membership loss and closure of churches.

**Language barrier.** The result of the discussion groups and interviews conducted show that language stands as a barrier to the planting of Adventist Church in Ijebuland. It is observed Adventist is populated in Ijebuland with easterners that are fluent in Yoruba language and the Adventist Church with some Yoruba congregation prefers to speak in English without interpretation to Yoruba. As a result of this most services are being conducted in English in which most Ijebus do not understand except the educated ones, and this made the Ijebus form an opinion or notion that Seventh-day Adventist Church is an easterners church rather than a universal church. It is noted that most villages or towns in Ijebuland are populated with old and young people who do not understand English because the elite among them could have gone to Lagos or big cities around their town. Therefore, the language barrier has been considered as one of the factors that may be affecting the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland.

**Saturday social celebration.** The interview and discussion discovered social celebration on Saturday prevent the Ijebus to join Adventist Church because it will prevent them from attending functions or ceremonies on the Sabbath day which is one of the major doctrines of the church. Socialization and merriment have formed the social life of Ijebu people in which it has become a normal tradition in Ijebuland, and it is one of the marks of identification of an Ijebu person. Smith refers to this while writing the history of Ijebus by saying that what inform the social life of Ijebus is socialization in terms weekly celebration or merriment whereby all the income gathered in a week or months or year will be used for celebrations or merriments in a

weekend. It is part of life to an Ijebu person which is believed must be done.<sup>65</sup> For any Ijebu to be an Adventist, this area of life must be examined very well because it will affect his or her relationship with the family, relations, friends and community. Saturday social events may be considered as one of the factors preventing Seventh-day Adventist Church reaching Ijebu people group.

**Ijebu culture and traditions.** The culture and tradition of Ijebu people believe strongly in idol worship and fetish along with consultation with the priest of African Traditional Religion (ATR) as observed the respondents the focus groups and interview conducted. This culture and tradition of Ijebus have made many Ijebus practice dual allegiance which the practice and the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist will not tolerate.

**Church doctrine too hard.** Findings from discussion and interviews show that the doctrine and the practice of Seventh-day Adventist Church do not condone some of the practice and social beliefs of Ijebu people like polygamy, fetish, a traditional festival that has to do with idol worship, dual allegiance, and others. These practices pose to them that Adventist doctrine is too hard because they know that the church will not allow such practices.

**Poor Membership involvement in evangelism.** Among the findings from the discussion, the report is the poor involvement of members in personal ministry or evangelism and members' participation in outreach is very poor. It is the combination of the effort of clergy and laity that will make the church planting effective. At any outreach, the members of the background crowd that will encourage the non-Adventist to attend. At the same time, the members' personal evangelism will bring

---

<sup>65</sup>Smith, 80.

more souls into the church and encourage them to stay. Therefore, poor members' involvement in personal evangelism and public outreach may have a negative effect on reach Ijebus with the Adventist message.

**Members' bad lifestyle.** It was also discovered from the discussion of the focus groups and interviews that some members' lifestyle is affected the propagation of the Adventist gospel in Ijebuland. It was mentioned that some members are fighting with their neighbors or with the new members, not friendly with people around them, and their attitudes towards the church program discouraged new souls, negatively impacting the spread of the Adventist message.

**Prayer style too cold.** Prayer style is another factor pointed out by the individuals interviewed as a reason preventing the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland. The Ijebus come into the SDA Church with the mindset the prayer style will be the same whereas, the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist Church does not agree with their known way of prayer. This may definitely affect membership retention of some Ijebus in Adventist Church.

### **Designing of Intervention**

Based on the findings from focus groups alongside with the interviewed conducted and the data analysis of these findings, the researcher will develop an intervention that may be appropriate to bring a necessary solution to the problem of the Ijebus not been reached with the Adventist message which will result in having more Adventist church in this community.

The purpose of designing this intervention is to find possible ways of reaching Ijebus with the Adventist message in order to establish more Adventist churches in Ijebuland by putting into consideration their culture and tradition. Also, to consider

various opportunities that may be used to involve members in evangelism activities to foster planting of Adventist Church in Ijebu community.

The following are the intervention designed that may be employed based on the findings to be used in this study to address the identifying challenges from data analysis.

### **Phase One: Establishment of Yoruba Indigenous Churches**

Based on the findings and data analysis results, this research sees the need to have more indigenous churches in Ijebuland by creating more Yoruba churches starting from Ilisan Town and Ilisan-West District. It is obvious that the only Yoruba indigenous church both in Ijebuland and the entire Ogun State as a conference is Ilisan No.1 Church which had been existing since 1966 (over 47 years).<sup>66</sup>

This could be seen as one of the factors contributing to the slow rate of church growth in Ijebuland because the indigenes could not find an indigenous SDA Church could identify with. Therefore, the more of the SDA Yoruba indigenous churches, the more it will change the orientation of the Ijebu people about Adventist Church as an Easterners' church or a foreign church.

Secondly, it will break the language barrier that stands as one of the factors affecting the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland. Also, these Yoruba indigenous churches will serve as home base to send Yoruba or Ijebu indigenous missionary teams to plant churches in the nearby Ijebu towns and villages. Lastly, these indigenous churches will produce quality indigenous leaders to head and man the new

---

<sup>66</sup>This information was retrieved from the secretariat department of Ogun Conference of Seventh – day Adventist Church, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria in 2013.

indigenous churches established instead of non-indigenes that are leading that could not communicate in the people's language.

### **Phase Two: Indigenous Members' Involvement in Evangelism**

The second intervention this study developed is the involvement of indigenous members and Yoruba members in evangelism especially in reaching the Ijebus both in Ilisan town and the suburb towns and villages. The goal of this indigenous members' involvement in evangelism is to inform the members the need them to take part in the gospel responsibility given to all believers by the Lord Jesus Christ which is the gospel commission according to Matthew 28:19 – 20.

Secondly, by encouraging the members to be involved in evangelism, their spiritual lives will be transformed which will help them to have a good relationship with the Ijebus. It is observed from the findings that lack of membership involvement is one of the factors identified to be militating against Adventist Church in planting more churches in Ijebuland.

Therefore, this study shares the same opinion with Gladden's view that says, "The assumption that only full-time pastors can be effective in local leadership and soul winning stifles the growth of the church."<sup>67</sup> Kidder and Serns express their view by saying, "Church planting is a breeding ground for leadership development in both the plant and the mother church." They point out that by involving the members in establishing of new churches activities will make members to develop their skill, talents and spiritual gifts."<sup>68</sup> By involving the Yorubas and indigenes that are Adventist in evangelism, it will be a motivating factor that will be of help to Ijebus to

---

<sup>67</sup>Gladden

<sup>68</sup>Kidder and Serns

decide to join the church and the notion of Ijebus seeing the Adventist church as a foreign church will be erased from their thought. It will also eradicate the issue of a language barrier which is one of the factors affecting the growth of Adventist church among Ijebu people.

### **Limitation**

The following could have been part of an intervention designed based on the data analysis and the findings from focus groups and interviews conducted. These are long time projects that this study cannot implement within the allocated time frame because some are beyond the capacity or scope of this research. Some will be recommended to Conference and local field to be carried out because of the time frame and the financial involvement.

1. Building of A befitting church in each district.
2. A befitting place of worship at the newly entered place.
3. The use of pioneers to pastor newly entered the place.
4. Church program in the form of social celebration.<sup>69</sup>

### **Summary**

Reviewing the history of Ijebu people of Ogun State of Nigeria reveals the fact that Ijebus people group occupied the larger portion of Ogun State where prominent notable personnel that have served this nation of Nigeria are from. Also, they are important people group that are well known and recognized in Nigeria and another part of the world because of their business orientation.

---

<sup>69</sup>The full explanation of these five points will be discussed in chapter six under the recommendation

Reaching them with the Adventist message is like reaching the whole Ogun State and another part of Nigeria like Lagos. The result from data analysis proves that Ijebu people group have not yet been reached with the Adventist message which resulted in low rate of planting of an Adventist church in this people group. Factors responsible for this low rate of church planting of Adventism in Ijebuland are identified as poor church building or poor location of church building; language barrier; members' bad attitude; insufficient ministers to lead or care for the church; poor membership involvement in evangelism; social celebration; doctrinal issue; and some others as mentioned above.

Therefore, this chapter tried to design some intervention based on the factors discovered from data analysis which may be considered as a solution to this challenge of planting Adventist Church in Ijebuland. This intervention is known as "members' involvement in evangelism" will be developed and implemented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The previous chapter deals with project setting and designing where focus group discussions and interviews were conducted on the reasons why Ijebu people group are not being reached with the Adventist message which could have resulted to planting more of the Adventist church in Ijebuland. An intervention program to address some of the challenges was designed based on the findings from discussions. The purpose of this chapter is to narrate the implementation process.

#### **Project Preparation**

##### **Biblical and Theological Foundation of the Research**

It is the responsibility of every sincere Christian and the Church as a body of Christ to propagate the gospel entrusted into their hand by the Lord Jesus. This major assignment given by the Lord Jesus Christ is known as the Great Commission which has to do with preaching of the gospel to the uttermost part of the world, to all nations, tribes, tongues, kindred and people groups or ethnicities of the world in which the Ijebus are not left out (Matthew 28: 19 – 20; Acts. 1:8).

##### **Literature Review of this Study**

Church planting is one of the ways of achieving the great commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ. Church planting as reveals from literature review is a Missiological phrase used to explain the establishment of churches and the concept is derived from 1Corinthians 3:6. Church planting is considered as a living organism that

is capable of reproducing itself. Ezekiel Ajani elaborates the concept of church planting by saying “the concepts of “planting” and “growing” are biological and apply primarily to plants. As a living organism, plants are expected to grow when nurtured. The church, which is a living “spiritual organism” made up of believers in Christ is expected to grow. It is not enough to plant a church; it must be viable (capable of surviving), healthy and growing.”<sup>1</sup>

Leadership and members’ involvement are the key elements needed to be employed in fulfilling the task or dream of planting churches in Ijebuland as discovered by this study. Since they are vital elements needed in actualizing the vision of establishment of churches, this study will consider these elements when implementing the designed intervention.

### **Project Setting Place**

The project implementation is designed to be carried out at Ilisan West district and Ijebu – Ode district. Isara – Remo under Ilisan West is considered as the first operational ground because of proximity to Ilisan West where the indigenous Adventist members are populated and could be used for indigenous members’ involvement. Ososa Ijebu is the second Ijebu town under Ijebu – ode district that is considered to be used as the testing ground to evaluate the effectiveness of the designed intervention.

---

<sup>1</sup>Ezekiel Oladapo Ajani, “Church Planting and Growth: Resources, Challenges, and Prospects,” in *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012), 75.

## **Permission**

In the process of developing a biblical model of evangelism in reaching the Ijebu people group of Nigeria with the Adventist message, this study proposes the following programs; establishment of a more indigenous church in Ilisan Remo, the involvement of members in evangelism by establishing a church in Isara Remo. This will be achieved by educating and orientating the member through preaching and personal discussion with some members.

To achieve this goal, the researcher sought permission first from the administration of Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church by writing to the Executive Committee to carry this research work within her territory at Ijebuland. This permission was granted by Administrative Committee of Ogun Conference by allowing the researcher to conduct this study. Secondly, the research took permission from Ilisan West District and Ilisan No.1 Church through the district pastor but this was done verbally, and he informed the District and local church where permission was approved. Also, the researcher informed the district pastor of Ijebu Ode District his intention to use his territory for this project work, and it was granted.

## **Findings from Focus Groups and Interviews**

This study employs qualitative research methodology that involves focus groups and personal interviews. Four focus groups were planned to be used, but three focus groups were successful at last which comprises of the first focus group, the Ijebu indigenous Adventist members in Ilisan Remo, a second focus group, is Non-Ijebu indigenous Adventist members, and the third focus group is Ijebu indigenous Adventist members in Ogere Remo. Then three personal interviews were conducted that involved a new Ijebu indigenous Adventist member, the second is the old Ijebu

indigenous Adventist member, and the last is an Ijebu indigenous Adventist member that had left the church.

Their view on the topic under discussion confirms that the Ijebus have not been reached with the Adventist message that may result in the planting of more Adventist churches in Ijebuland. Factors responsible for this were enumerated as poor location of church couple with poor church building, social events on Saturday that affects Sabbath keeping, insufficient ministers, and members' negative behavior, poor membership involvement in personal ministry and evangelism, insufficient care and welfare, and language barrier which has to do with the use of English language for worship or church services.

Other factors mentioned are the culture and tradition of Ijebus which Seventh-day Adventist doctrine or beliefs do not accommodate like dual allegiance (Christianity with idol worship), and church doctrine is considered to be too hard to follow. Poor publicity like media or invitation of non-members to some of the church program is considered to be other factor militating against the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collated from the discussions from the focus groups and personal interviews are analyzed as follows;

**Place of worship.** Data gathered from discussions pointed out that the Ijebus value a befitting place of worship or Cathedrals that is well decorated and can be the pride of as a place of worship. The discussions observed that most of the Adventist church building or a place of worship does not meet up to the standard expected by the Ijebus which may be a factor that affects the growth of the Adventist church. It was pointed that some of the Adventist churches are located in a hidden place or a

school or sitting room or a shop which an Ijebu will see as unbecoming for a place of worship.

**Insufficient ministers to lead.** Data collated from discussions reveal that most new churches established in Ijebuland by Seventh-day Adventist do not have church pastor to guide and pastor the new churches which resulted to membership loss and closure of churches. Whereas most of the Ijebus like to consult and rely on priests for advice as traditional worshippers and the same mentality is brought into Christianity where the role of church pastor is considered very important, but this is not found in the Adventist church which may be a setback to Adventist system of evangelism in Ijebuland.

**Language barrier.** Findings' result shows that language stands as a barrier in reaching the Ijebus with the Adventist message because SDA Church in Ijebuland is populated by Easterners and foreigners who could not speak Yoruba language fluently. So to evangelize the Ijebus with the Adventist message seems difficult because most of the Adventist members could not witness to Ijebus in the language they understand.

**Saturday social celebration.** Based on the discussion from the Focus groups and interviews conducted, it was discovered that social celebration on Saturday prevents the Ijebus to join Adventist Church. Socialization and merriment have formed the social life of Ijebu people in which it has become a normal tradition in Ijebuland, and it is one of the marks of identification of an Ijebu person.

Saturday in Ijebuland has being slated for social function or ceremony which they see as compulsory to attend and affects one of the major doctrines of the church, the Sabbath Keeping. For any Ijebu to be an Adventist, this area of life must be addressed very well because it will affect his or her relationship with the family,

relations, friends and community. Saturday social events may be considered as one of the factors preventing Seventh-day Adventist Church reaching Ijebu people group.

**Ijebu culture and traditions.** The culture and tradition seem to be a vital element to an African Community and a way of life. The same is applicable to Ijebu people who hold strongly to their culture and traditions which have to do with idol worship and fetishism as observed by the respondents from the focus groups and interview conducted. This culture and tradition of Ijebus have made many of them practice dual allegiance which the practice and the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist will not tolerate.

**Church doctrine too hard.** Findings from discussion reveal that the doctrine and the practice of Seventh-day Adventist Church do not condone some of the practice and social beliefs of Ijebu people like polygamy, fetish, a traditional festival that has to do with idol worship, dual allegiance, and others. These practices pose to them that Adventist doctrine is too hard because they know that the church will not allow such practices.

**Poor members involvement in evangelism.** Report from the findings identifies that Adventist members' involvement in evangelism and personal ministries is not encouraging at all. It has been observed that members' involvement in evangelism is paramount to the success of any outreach. For the Adventist church to reach the Ijebus, members' involvement in evangelism and contribution are needed.

**Members' bad lifestyle.** It was also discovered from the discussion of the focus groups and interviews that some members' lifestyle is affecting the propagation of the Adventist gospel in Ijebuland. It was mentioned that some Adventist members' relationship with their neighbors are not cordial and their attitudes towards the church program discouraged new souls, negatively impacting the spread of the message.

**Prayer style too cold.** Prayer style is another factor pointed out by the individuals interviewed as one of the reasons preventing the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland. The Ijebus come into the SDA Church with the expectation that the prayer style will be the same whereas, the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist Church does not agree with their known way of prayer. This may definitely affect membership retention of some Ijebus in Adventist Church.

### **Program Implementation**

Many factors have been identified as the barriers to preaching the Adventist message to the Ijebu people, as seen in the focus group discussions and interviews. As a result, this research has come up with an intervention that has two phases, that is, the establishment of more homogenous churches and members' involvement in evangelism which will be used to address some of the points mentioned that are affecting the growth of the Adventist church.

### **Anticipated Result**

Though the aim of this study is to develop a biblical model of evangelism for reaching Ijebu people group South- West Nigeria with the Adventist message, the evaluation and anticipated result of the intervention designed will not be based on the number of baptism but on the response of the Adventist members to the program setting that is, their response to evangelism and secondly, the response of Ijebus to the Adventist message and program presented to them.

### **The Role of the Conference**

Since the study will be carried out in Ogun Conference territory, permission will be given by the conference to allow the researcher to conduct the research. Also, the conference will allow the researcher to make use of some churches, and her

members for the purpose of this research and some conference pastors will be used as a human subject to support the research. Lastly, financial assistance will be given in support of this project.

### **The Role of the District Pastors**

District pastors are the first to catch the vision of the project, and they plan with the researcher on the implementation of the project. Since the district pastors know their members very well and their territory where the project will be implemented, their assistance is highly needed to assist the researcher in the success of the research work. In this project, the district pastors are the real actors that implement the plan as designed in the intervention. The pastors are to convince the church board into accepting and supporting the program by incorporating the proposed activities into the church calendar of activities. Then they are the best hand to encourage the members' participation in the program.

### **Preliminary Preparation**

**Permission from conference.** The whole procedures of this study began with an official letter written to Ogun Conference Administrative committee on October 5, 2015, for the permission to conduct this project work within her territory and it was voted on October 12, 2015, with Executive Secretary of the Conference's reply on October 13, 2015.

**Permission from district pastors.** The district pastor for Ilisan West District was informed by the researcher his intention to use his district for this research work on November 3, 2015, and that it should be included in the district 2016 calendar activities and it was approved. Likewise, on January 5, 2016, the same information went to Ijebu-Ode District Pastor with the intention to use his field for this research

work. He consented to allow the researcher to use his field since the Conference administration is aware and approved it through her executive committee.

### **Intervention Implementation**

The intervention designed to be implemented on members' involvement in evangelism which has two phases. The first is the establishment of Yoruba church and the second is involving members in evangelism to penetrate a new town in Ijebuland which is not far from Ilisan Remo while Ilisan West district will serve as a base for sending missionary team and willing members to this un-entered area or town.

Members' involvement in evangelism may be considered as one of the biblical principles established by God and Jesus Christ by sending their people or disciples to witness to the heathen nations. For instance, God sent Moses and the children of Israel to witness about him to the country of Egypt and to declare his name to all the earth (Exodus 9:14 – 16; 19: 5 – 6).

Israel as a nation chosen by God is expected to witness about God to other nations of the world and also to be a light to the gentiles around them in order to declare the glory of God and to God's praises to other nations (Isa.42:6; 48:20 – 21; 49:3 – 4; 55:5; Psalm 33:8; 47:1; 115:1 – 7). God involved Israelites as his household in evangelizing to other nations of the world. Also, Jesus during his earthly ministry involved his disciples in evangelism by sending out the twelve first, and later the seventy (Luke 10:1 – 17). Lastly, Jesus commanded the believers to be involved in evangelizing the world which is the great commission (Matthew 28:19 – 20).

### **District Pastors as Informants and Program Coordinators**

The first step taken is to appoint the district pastors of the two districts (Ilisan-West and Ijebu-ode) as informants and program coordinators to implement the plan of

the researchers, and this made them be part of the team members for this research work. Training was given to them on the role they will play in this study, and they owned the project as part of their 2016 calendar of activities both for the districts and the local churches concerned.

### **Phase One: Establishment of Indigenous Yoruba Church**

The establishment of another Yoruba Church in Ilisan Town began with the following steps mentioned below.

#### **Step one: Sensitization of the personal ministry team and church leaders.**

This process of establishing a homogenous church for the purpose of involving the members in evangelism to reach the Ijebu people group was unveiled to members of the personal ministry of Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA) Ilisan No.1 and some church leaders. The idea was warmly accepted as a workable plan.

Thereafter, the personal ministry team of the church went on a survey for the location of a possible church within the heart of Ilisan town. Afterward, Ago-Ilara area of Ilisan town was chosen because it was the heart of the town where the Ijebus were densely populated. Secondly, some indigenous and non-indigenous SDA Church members live in a cluster around the Ago-Ilara area. The members around Ago-Ilara area were encouraged to meet together weekly for home fellowship.

**Step two: church board decision.** On 12<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the personal ministry team reported the activities regarding the possibility of beginning a new congregation to the Church Board. After much deliberation, the board gave approval for the establishment of a new church, and to inform the church at large for as many that would love to join the church. The board thereafter approved the set of new officers for the new church and mandated the use of Yoruba language during worship and

other church meetings, since it's a prototype of its mother church (Ilishan No.1 church), in order to fulfill the mission of its establishment.

**Step three: conference involvement.** The local church board notified the Conference of the establishment of the new church and called for its inauguration. On July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Conference inaugurated Ago-Ilara church in the home of an indigenous (Ijebu) member of the church, and the officers were delegated, with the instruction that the Yoruba language should be used during worship and other church meetings.

**Step four: outcomes and achievements.** After the inauguration, the new indigenous church (Ago-Ilara) conducted some programs to achieve the mission purpose of its establishment. For instance, the church organized a Community Service of cleaning and fumigating the environments of their immediate surroundings on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. Also, there began to appear membership explosion which necessitated their exit from the small space, to a much larger facility within that same community.

### **Evaluation**

In spite of the achievement recorded above, it has been observed that in the selection of church leaders, an indigenous member (Ijebu) could have been appointed as the leader, who could have ministered effectively than a non-indigene. It was discovered that there had been more of the non-indigenous (non-Ijebus) dialect minister at the new congregation.

Efforts need to be put in place to allow Ijebu indigenes to minister frequently since a larger portion of the membership are Ijebus and for the benefit of the Ijebus around the church, premises to hear the message in their own dialect. During the special programs like community guest day, the invited guest speaker who will minister is expected to be an Ijebu indigenous member in good standing.

## **Phase Two: Members' Involvement**

The following were the steps taken to involve the members in participating in Isara outreach.

**Step one: sensitization of members.** The idea of involving members in reaching the Ijebus in Isara-Remo began with the discussion at the district council meeting of Ilisan West Seventh-day Adventist Church held on July 3, 2016, at Town Planning SDA Church . It was agreed at the meeting that the district would sponsor the program and suggested that Ilishan No 1 SDA Church as the 'mother church' to care for the spiritual growth of the proposed indigenous church since the Ilisan No 1 SDA Church fits appropriate as an indigenous organized church. The decisions taken by the district council about Isara-Remo evangelism were passed to all the members of their various congregations and subsequent meetings.

**Step two: committee setup.** An eleven-man steering committee was organized which met on a monthly basis and eventually distributed the responsibility of organizing the program into eleven other sub-committees. These sub-committees include the following:

1. Platform Committee, with 6 members
2. Music Committee, with 8 members
3. Prayer Band Committee, with 11 members
4. Transportation Committee, with 6 members
5. Maintenance/Technical Committee, with 8 members
6. Health Committee, with 7 members
7. Visitation Committee, with 11 members
8. Secretariat Committee, with 8 members
9. Decoration Committee, with 6 members
10. Welfare and Gratitude Committee, with 8 members, and

11. Bible Teacher Committee, with 13 members.

The above-named sub-committees' members were duly informed of their responsibilities while they were directed to come up with a working budget. The reports of the various sub-committees were submitted for consideration at the district council sessions.

**Step three: courtesy visits.** The SDA Church , Ilisan West district council, set up a courtesy visit committee of four prominent members.<sup>2</sup> The four-man delegation included respected indigenes of the Ijebus who are members of the SDA Church and the district pastor. On Tuesday, July 5, 2016, the members of the delegation paid a courtesy visit to Isara-Remo Oba council and Divisional Police officer. They were joined in the visitation by the two evangelists on ground, who have been working since June 2016.

The first point of call for members of the delegation was to the Divisional Police Officer, Mr. Michael, whose interaction with the delegation turned out to be his first official assignment since resuming office. He specifically brought before the delegation religious issues from the background of his Catholic faith, in contrast to the Adventist faith, especially on the Sabbath doctrine. The DPO warmly welcomed the delegation and promised to give the church full support in all the activities in Isara-Remo town.

The second visit on the same day was to the Oba in the council of Isara town, which represents the traditional authority of the community. They met the Otun Oba of Ishara (the second-in-command to the king) and the Oluwo of Ishara (the chief traditional priest), where they confessed to knowing the Seventh-day Adventist

---

<sup>2</sup> These include Elder Oluseyi Oduyoye, Mrs. Adedayo Adebawo, Mrs. Christianah Akinlabi and the district pastor, Oluseun Akinpelu.

missionary work in other places aside their community. During the discussion which was in the local Ijebu dialect, the oba in council was impressed with the notable individuals of the delegation who are Ijebus and at the same time Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

At the end of the discussion, the Otun-Oba of Ishara, Alhaji Basiru was impressed by the outcomes of the visit and announced his decision to release one of his young adult son, 21 years old Abraham Bashiru to the Seventh-day Adventist church. He also promised to give the best support to the church when they are ready to begin their missionary work in their land.

**Step four: courtesy visits report and response.** However, the courtesy visit delegation reported the visits to the district board and expressed the enthusiasm from the Divisional Police Headquarters and the Isara-Remo Oba in Council towards welcoming the Adventist mission into Isara-Remo. The observations from the report giving by the delegation show that the members of the committee were surprised with the warm reception received from those visited. The board also appreciated the report and saw it as God's favor granted His work from among the leaders of authorities in Isara-Remo. This report gave a boost to the motivation level of encouraging members to be involved in reaching the Ijebus.

**Step five: missionary team.** Mrs. C. Akinlabi, an Ijebu indigene of Ilisan-Remo, who is a regular member of Ilisan No 1 SDA Church volunteered to be part of the regular worshippers and to encourage the people of the community every Sabbath. She made her vehicle available every Sabbath to convey worshippers to church services in Isara-Remo. Also, Deacon Sunday Adelami, a native member of Town Planning SDA Church also volunteered to worship regularly at Isara-Remo. He alternates the use of his car with that of Mrs. Akinlabi as a vehicle to convey other

willing worshippers from Ilisan No 1SDA Church to Isara-Remo every Sabbath. These members who volunteered metamorphosed into the missionary team that supported the efforts of the pioneers.

They were involved in door-to-door witnessing every Sabbath morning, where they invited the people in the neighborhood of the church for service. While some do respond by attending Sabbath School, some do release their children to attend the church service, where a special children class was formed for them. The family of Deacon Abayomi Familusi also played a part in the upkeep of the church since they reside in Isara-Remo by supporting in the ministering to the community. Through these efforts, few people began to attend the service and to form the nucleus of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Isara-Remo.

**Step six: combined service and inauguration.** To effectively involve all the members of the church in evangelistic activities, a combined worship service for seven sister churches within the district was organized on Sabbath September 3, 2016. The day served as a day to inaugurate the youth Sabbath School branch as a company.

The Ilisan West District congregated at Isara town for a Sabbath combined worship service held at the Motor Park arena of the town. About 500 members including adults and children; women, men and youth ministries attended the public worship service.

The program was also the official inauguration of the Isara SDA Sabbath School branch as a company. The Conference President (Pastor S. O. Ogunsanya) and the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Director (Pastor Samuel Bewaji) attended to inaugurate the company. Deacon Sunday Adelami was officially announced as the leader of the company church. At the end of the exercise, the new congregation was inaugurated with twenty-two persons, of which 16 persons were Ijebus.

At the end of the service, the Adventist Youth Ministry went on a rally with the Youth Band team playing and singing around the town. Members were equipped with tracts and booklets which were shared with the members of the public. One-on-one Bible discussions also ensued with interested members of the public who were attracted to Youth ministry band team displays and members that were distributing tracts and sharing the gospel of the Lord Jesus. The rally and the distribution of literature, as well as the interaction that followed the event, elicited questions and interest about what the church represented and its mission. This brought about the signing up of some individuals for private Bible study sessions. Among the end result of the efforts included one Pa Taiwo Ogunlowo who began to attend church service the following Wednesday, September 7, 2016.

Interrogations with members that attended the program proved that members were delighted that they were part of the program and that their efforts are already yielding a fruitful result, with some conversion of Ijebu and the establishment of a new church in a new environment. This has provided encouragement and built up the drive of members to be involved in evangelism. For example, a couple was motivated to donate the sum of N150, 000 (about US\$500) towards the execution of the missionary work in Isara-Remo.

**Step seven: women ministries welfare efforts.** The Adventist Women Ministry at Ilisan West district began the welfare efforts by organizing one-on-one and door-to-door visitations to members of the Isara-Remo community. Also, the women ministry visited the government General Hospital in Isara and presented gifts items of toiletries, while they offered prayers for the patients and the management staffs.

Subsequently, women ministries at the conference level supported the effort of the Ilisan district women ministries for four Sabbaths in order to visit the Isara-Remo church. They also went on rallies around the town in order to create awareness towards the forthcoming outreach, where prayers were offered, and gifts were presented. Some of the gifts provided during the periods of visitation include foodstuff such as bags of rice, toiletries, clothes and slippers. The days of visitation by the women ministries were as follows; October 1, 2016, October 15, 2016, October 29, 2016, and November 12, 2016.

**Step eight: visitation committee visits.** The visitation committee set up for this outreach project scheduled a visitation to Isara-Remo on their own innovation as a result of the progress report received from missionary team and Adventist Women Ministries. The whole month of October 2016 was scheduled for the visitation to Isara-Remo by the visitation committee members in preparation towards the public outreach to be conducted. The positive response received from Isara-Remo evangelistic outreach encouraged various committees set up to be involved and put their best for the success of this project.

**Step nine: adventist youth rally and community service.** The district youth ministry once again visited Isara-Remo to further boost the support needed in preparation towards the forthcoming public outreach. On October 29, 2016, the district Adventist Youth Ministry mobilized themselves to worship with Isara-Remo church, and after the service, they went on band rally around the town and shared tracts to create awareness for the forthcoming outreach on the second day.

The passion of being involved in evangelism at Isara-Remo yielded expected result thereby encouraging the Adventist Youth Ministry to come the second day which is the starting day of the outreach, and they went on community service

program on October 30, 2016. The community service was conducted at the general marketplace which involved clearing and sweeping of the marketplace with singing, tracts sharing and interacting with the people around with the intention of creating awareness.

**Step ten: public speaking.** The public campaign began on October 30, 2016, in the evening after the youth rally and community service in the morning and afternoon. The leaders of various churches within Ilisan-West District mobilized their members to support the public outreach by attending the program every evening. The outreach was organized to last for two weeks and over two hundred children, men, and women attended the outreach every night.

The district also arranged for some Babcock University school buses to convey the willing members from Ilisan town to Isara-Remo outreach. At the same time, some members that owned private cars also provided their cars to pick some members from Ilisan town to Isara-Remo public outreach. Ilisan-West district council raised all the funds used for the outreach from initial planning to execution of the outreach. Members willingly contributed financially to execute budgets for the outreach and joyfully the members were involved in the evangelism. Conference supported the outreach with N200,000 to identify with the outreach. The members reiterated their readiness to support such program as this and appealed that this outreach should not be the end of such exercise.

The messages for the public campaign lasted for 14 evenings from October 30 to November 14, 2016, where Ilisan West district pastor, Pastor Oluseun A. Akinpelu were the speakers, informant and the coordinator of this intervention. The theme of the message was “Victory at Last.” The daily messages were titled as below:

*Table 7. Presentations and Schedule*

Date	Topic
Sun, October 30, 2016	The Word of Victory
Mon, October 31, 2016	Moment of Victory
Tues, November 1, 2016	Victory over the Satan
Wed, November 2, 2016	Greatest Name in Victory
Thurs, November 3, 2016	Your Pathway to Victory
Fri, November 4, 2016	The Power of Victory
Sab, November 5, 2016	Walking in Victory
Sun, November 6, 2016	The Mark of Victory
Mon, November 7, 2016	The Garment of Victory
Tues, November 8, 2016	Victorious Christian Living
Wed, November 9, 2016	Victory over Death
Thurs, November 10, 2016	Coming in Victory
Fri, November 11, 2016	The Church of Victory
Sab, November 12, 2016	Victory at Last

Other activities during the outreach include:

1. Free Medical Checks were conducted by medical personnel while health lectures were given each night.
2. The prayer team, headed by Elder Michael Ibitoye organized every night prayer sessions which provided reliefs to the multitude attending the program.
3. The Music Team, headed by Bode Bamisile led in the inspirational music and hymns every night as well.

**Step eleven: place of worship.** Since the Sabbath worship and the weekly services had begun before the public campaign was conducted, Ilisan West district rented a shop that later could not contain them and at the same time not befitting for a place of worship. Then the decision to purchase a land property for the church building was proposed by the district and requested the conference to support them.

The district set up a search committee to look for a land for the church building. A landed property worth of N1.8Million was found, and the district made a request to the conference to support the project with one million nairas while the members within the district promised to raise another a million naira and build the

church building. At last, the conference assisted in acquiring the landed property with the sum of one million after seeing their zeal and courage for the gospel. All these decisions came up out of the passion for evangelism that was developed for this outreach. The success experienced during this Isara-Remo outreach brought a great courage and enthusiasm towards evangelism by many members of Ilisan West district

### **Evaluation**

**Baptismal report.** Assessment of the outcome of the outreach shown that at the end of the outreach at Isara-Remo on Saturday, November 12, 2016, seventeen (17) persons got baptized along with five (5) profession of faith making the total of twenty-two persons. Surprisingly, twenty-one (21) out of twenty-two (22) persons that got baptized were Ijebu indigenes of which fifteen (15) are from Isara-Remo, and the remaining six (6) are from Ilisan-Remo. These baptismal result couples with a positive response from Isara-Remo people really motivate the members from Ilisan West district to engage in personal evangelism and encourage the members to give their moral support and financial contribution.

Again, on December 3, 2016, the district planned another combined service as follow up activity at SDA Church , No.1, Ilisan-Remo where another nine (9) persons were baptized. Incidentally, all the nine (9) persons were indigenes of Ijebu. The nine persons came as a surprise in which the district planned for only two people from Isara-Remo to be baptized, but at the point of baptism, other seven people from other churches within the district came for baptism. Analysis of the baptism reveals that two souls from Isara-Remo, three from Ode-Remo, two from Akaka-Remo, two from Ilisan, making a total of nine persons. The guest speaker at the combined service is Pastor H.B. Smith.

Another credible report from the outreach conducted at Isara-Remo was the report of a brother, Olumide Ogunsherewho was among the two souls that got baptized on December 3, 2016, came from Isara-Remo. He is the son of Pastor Ogunshere who owns a private church in Isara-Remo, and he was at SDA Ilisan No.1, Church during the baptism of his son and he agreed to join the church very soon. He is native of Isara-Remo, and he is ready to support the church in securing landed property. After securing the landed property, he is presently hosting the district pastor to start the church building on the land secured. He is also calling the district pastor for Bible study with him and his members. There is likelihood the pastor may join the church soonest because it could be seen in him that he was interested in the church. The fruit from the efforts contributed by the members especially the Ijebu indigenes is really encouraging with enormous evidence to proof beyond reasonable doubt.

**Members' financial contribution.** The report of the outreach encourages the members to take a further step in supporting the establishment of Isara-Remo church. For example, a member donated the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand naira (N150,000) to pay the salary of the pioneers. Also, some members gave some financial contribution by way of donation to support the purchase of the land for the church.

**Donation of two plots of land.** Another testimony that comes out from the effort of Isara-Remo campaign, especially the involvement of Ijebu indigenes is the donation of two plots landed property in the town of Ishara to the SDA Church by a Muslim- Mr. Babajide Oyekangun. He is a native of Isara-Remo town and had his early education in Ilisan where he came in contact with some Adventist members in Ilisan-Remo.

It was at the youth rally and the tract sharing at the preparatory stage of the outreach that he met some members at Isara town and also some indigenes he knew which motivated him to promise the gift of two plots of land for the church because he said he was proud of the church in spite of the fact that he is a Muslim. During the outreach and the combined services conducted at Isara town, he confessed that he allowed his wife and children to attend the program without any of the Adventist members knowing.

The members of SDA Church thought he was not sincere with his promise of donating landed property to the church. The church responded to his call of donation persistently calling and disturbing the district pastor, some church leaders, and some Ijebu indigenes he knows. He stopped disturbing the church until a legal agreement was done between him and the church. There is hope that his wife and the children may likely join the church after some time if proper follow-up is done.

**Purchase of landed property for Isara-Remo church.** Before the outreach began, some Isara-Remo indigenes have started worshipping through the effort of the pioneer's missionary team and the visit to the council of Oba and Police offices. The church set up a committee comprising of some Ijebu members and other Yoruba members to search for landed property in Isara-Remo since there was hope that a church may likely spring up.

The committee started searching for the land or building property to purchase for the use of worship and the chief that gave his son along with some chiefs and the pastor from who owned his personal church supported the committee in the search for property to purchase. But a landed property was secured after several properties have been seen with ingenuity. The conference supported the efforts of members and Ilisan

West district by given a million naira while the district and members decided to balance it up to buy the landed property.

**Members' excitement to enter another town.** While the Isara-Remo outreach was going on, some members from Ilisan West district were excited with the members' contribution towards the outreach which has yielded a positive result, and they decided to form a team to enter another town near Ogere called Ajura.

The district pastor was informed, and they started visiting the town out of their own innovation while that of Isara-Remo was going on. They were ready to shoulder the cost, just for the district to give them approval and the district pastor with some members especially the Ijebus visited the king and his chiefs to make their purpose known to them.

They were welcomed by the king and the chiefs just like that of Isara-Remo. Every Saturday afternoon, this volunteer members visit Ajura town for prayers and Bible study. With their effort in that town, it is hoped that this town may likely be the next town to be taken after Isara-Remo town.

This excitement was caused by members' involvement in evangelism that was exercised in Isara outreach, and the positive response or result really encouraged them which prompt these members to go further to secure another town. The excitement was also observed in other members too, and their willingness to continue in evangelism is seen reflecting on the members' life by encouraging the district pastor to continue utilizing them for the purpose of evangelism.

**Observation.** In spite of all the success recorded above on the intervention and evaluation, the followings were observed that could have been considered during the implementation of the intervention which could have added values to this study.

***Place of worship.*** After some souls have been gathered in Isara-Remo, a non-member had to release a section of his shop for worship. This is not befitting at all. After the outreach, the same place is still in use for worship and such can further discourage the newly baptized members from regular church attendance. This was as a result of late planning by the district, at the same time finance also contributed to this and late release of fund by the conference added to it. This study will suggest that any new place secured for gospel should be befitting for a place of worship and given utmost priority among others.

***Ijebu as the church leader.*** From the evaluation of the intervention implemented, it has been observed that an Ijebu member in good standing, especially among those Ijebus that visited the Oba's at council, could have been made as the leader of the new congregation at Isara-Remo instead of appointing another leader among other Yoruba ethnic group. If the leader had been an Ijebu member, he could understand them well, speak their local dialect they understand and use the right tenses to persuade and prevent the new converts from backsliding

***Follow-up program.*** After the implementation of the intervention, it was observed that a follow-up program could have been designed to retain the new converts in the church. Getting converts is not enough, maintaining them is very important, and there is need to develop a program to this effect.

## **Summary**

This chapter deals with the implementation process of the intervention designed. The intervention is about involving the members in evangelism which may probably solve some of the challenges discovered from data analysis based on the findings from focus groups and interviews. The evaluation of the designed intervention reveals that members responded joyfully to the evangelism plans that

were conducted, especially the Ijebu indigenes that played a prominent role which yielded encouraging results.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The previous chapter is about project implementation where intervention designed was carried out and evaluated. This chapter of the study will conduct a second evaluation of the project; bring out various suggestions on the lessons to be learned, then conclusion and recommendation will follow.

#### **Summary**

The Global Mission Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is “to find ways, under God guidance, to plant and disciple new groups of believers in unreached areas and people groups around the world.”<sup>1</sup> And that every member of SDA Church , the church institutions, and services are to use the most effective ways of fulfilling this Global Mission by proclaiming the Everlasting Gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people<sup>2</sup> in accordance with gospel commission given by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 28: 19-20.

This study has established from research conducted that Ijebu people group of Ogun State in Nigeria has not been reached with the Adventist message taking into consideration the Global Mission Philosophy of SDA and the Gospel Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ. Obviously, following the records of September 2013, it shows that since 1933 when Pastor J.M.A. Adeoye brought Adventist message to Ijebuland

---

<sup>1</sup><http://www.AdventistMission.org>. (Operating Manual, February, 2011), 6

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.,

in Ijebu-ode town, Seventh-day Adventist Church had succeeded in planting 41 congregations in Ijebuland. Out of these 41 worship centers, 20 centers are from Ilisan town. Even out of 20 centers from Ilisan town, 15 centers are within Babcock University while 5 centers are in Ilisan town. The remaining 21 congregations are in other towns and villages in Ijebuland.<sup>3</sup> In addition, SDA mission could only plant only one Yoruba indigenious in the entire Ijebuland and whole Ogun state since 1966 till the time when this research was conducted.<sup>4</sup>

To successfully evangelize Ijebuland with Adventist Mission like other denominations have been a great challenge. Therefore this study has taken the time to investigate factors militating against the growth and the planting of Adventist Mission in Ijebuland, a sub-tribe of Yoruba people group by reviewing the methods of evangelism used for the church planting, taking into consideration the people's socio-cultural life.

In order to offer possible solutions, this study established the biblical foundation for reaching people group which will result to church planting, and Ijebus can also be considered as a people group that needs to be reached with the Adventist gospel. Various literature on church planting were consulted in order to discover various methods used for reaching the un-reached and possible suggestions that may be helpful which are applicable to this study.

The research carried out project setting by using qualitative research method to design the project where focus group discussion and interviews were conducted. After analyzing the data collated, an intervention was developed based on the findings

---

<sup>3</sup>This information or data is retrieved from the secretariat department of Ogun Conference of Seventh – day Adventist Church, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The data was collated from third quarter report (July to September) of 2013 that was sent to the Union, (the Higher Organization).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

from data analysis. The intervention designed was developed into “members’ involvement in evangelism” which has a biblical base as found in the following Bible texts, Exodus 9:14 – 16; 19: 5 – 6; Isa.42:6; 48:20 – 21; 49:3 – 4; 55:5; Psalm 33:8; 47:1; 115:1 – 7; Luke 10:1 – 17; Matthew 28:19 – 20.

The intervention has two phases, first is the establishment of indigenous (Yoruba) Church within Ilisan Town which serves as the base to send missionaries out to other neighboring towns and villages. The second phase is members’ involvement in evangelism especially the Ijebu indigenes, which is expected to result into church planting. The result was examined to be positive where the impact of Ijebu members along with the other Yoruba members yielded positive response in ministering to Ijebu people of Ilisan-Remo and Isara-Remo towns, and it was evaluated.

### **Project Evaluation**

The findings from Focus groups and interviews were analyzed which form the background of the intervention that was designed. Members’ involvement in Evangelism is the intervention designed, and it comes up in two phases which are the establishment of the indigenous Yoruba church and members’ involvement in ministering to unreached Ijebu people and Ijebu towns and villages.

#### **Evaluation of phase one: establishment of homogenous Yoruba church.**

Establishment of Ago-Ilara church made it easier to penetrate Ilisan-Remo community than before by organizing community service within church neighborhoods by cleaning and fumigating the environment on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

It was also observed that there was a membership explosion which necessitated their exit from the small-sized room to a much larger rented facility within that same community. It has been seen that the existence of this Yoruba

indigenous church had served as an open door for more Ijebus within Ilisan town to be more acquainted with Seventh-day Adventist Church and her services. The church serves as an opportunity for Ilisan people to join the SDA Church rather than going through a long distance to Ilisan No.1 church, which seems too far for the people of the town.

The establishment of this Ago-Ilara church which was the second Yoruba church in Ilisan has created awareness to the members in the two Yoruba churches the importance of ministering to non-Adventist in Ilisan town by been involved in personal and cooperate evangelism. This awareness of members' involvement in evangelism has prepared the members in the two Yoruba churches to be ready to support the second phase of this intervention.

Sampling the opinion of some Yoruba members after the establishment of this indigenous church and its positive result, some members had agitated for the establishment of another church again in Ilisan Town which may likely be the third Yoruba Church in the town. They have started planning with the district pastor on the modality to follow in achieving this dream. In spite of all these success reports mentioned above, a place of worship is another challenge militating against the growth of this church among others yet to be established.

The church should focus more attention on this area because it may affect the members' zeal or passion towards evangelizing the people of Ijebus. Also, the church should be localized by encouraging more participation of the Ijebu indigenous members in special programs. Conducting the service using their dialect would encourage the invited indigenes and those around the church premises to identify with the church.

**Evaluation of phase two: members' involvement.** The baptismal report couple with the response from the council of Oba and Police Officers really encouraged the members to be involved in evangelism which gave birth to members volunteering their personal vehicle to convey people to the outreach and follow up. This evangelism enthusiasm has made some members to give some financial supports towards the outreach, payment of pioneer workers, and for the purchase of landed property for the place of worship.

Evaluation conducted proves that the chief of Isara-Remo town got interested in the church where one of them allowed his son to join the church and other chiefs supported the members in searching for the landed property. This has really given a great courage to the members that it is good to be involved in personal evangelism. Information gathered reveals that one of the indigenes of Isara-Remo, a Muslim donated two plots of land for a church project and he allowed his family to attend the outreach without the awareness of the pastor and the members until he made it known.

In addition to this information, it was gathered that a pastor's son from other denomination was baptized and his father who is the pastor was with him at Ilisan No.1 church for baptism. The pastor requested the church for Bible study with his members. He supported the church committee on landed property to search for the land for a place of worship.

It was gathered that members feelings to this outreach conducted at Isara-Remo encouraged them to be involved in personal and cooperate evangelism in which they voluntarily participated both in the outreach and the outreach follow-up. They are willing to further into another town with the zeal burning in them. It was revealed that some members went to another town called Ajura-Remo out of their own

willingness while that of Isara-Remo was still going on. This is evident that members of Ilisan No.1 Church have caught the vision of being involved in evangelism as it improves one's' spiritual life, and helped the church to grow.

### **Un-achieved Plans**

Obviously, it was the plan of this study to implement the intervention designed in another district in Ijebuland apart from Ilisan West district if it was successful. Therefore, Ijebu-Ode district had been chosen at the early plan of this project with the hope that Ososa town would be targeted with the same designed intervention and formula.

The whole process began with Ijebu-Ode district approving this project as part of their plan of activities for the year 2016. And in the first week of July 2016, Ijebu-Ode district sent some pioneer workers to Ososa Town. Unfortunately, the workers were not Yorubas which had posed a failure to the project.

Later some pastors within the district had to join them in order to reach the Ijebu people of Ososa with the Adventist message. Other factors that worked against the achievement of this goal was that the district could not get the volunteered Ijebu members or Yoruba members to visit the council of Oba and other important areas. It was the easterners that supported the district pastor and other pastors within the district. The Yoruba involvement was not like that of Ilisan West where there are more than hundred Yorubas as members in the district.

The third factor that militates against the teaching of Ososa Town with the Adventist message was a place of worship. The district searched for a place of worship or land to purchase for more than three months since the pioneer workers and the pastors were visiting and studying with the people. It was after October that a small shop was secured for a worship place. At this time, it was little efforts that could

be done since all concentration was on Isara-Remo couple with the fact that the time was not on the side of this study to implement all that had been done in Isara-Remo. By the time all steps would be implemented, the report of this study could have been submitted and defended.

Notwithstanding, this project will not give up on Ososa outreach. It will be recommended to the district and conference to continue on it while this study will still be monitoring its progress. Also, the Yoruba Church established, Ago-Ilara in Ilisan West and Isara-Remo project will still be a continuous project that will be evaluated further. Though this study will be submitted for defense; this will not stop the development and evaluation of this intervention designed. It is an on-going project that is designed to be used in other places to reach people groups.

### **Lessons Learned**

This study had offered the researcher some lessons which have been of encouragement. Some of these lessons are mentioned below.

The researcher began the study with the presupposition that some of the causes of not reaching Ijebu people group with the Adventist message may be as a result of not beaten of the drum in the church. Surprisingly to the researcher, beating of the drum was not mentioned at all as one of the factors militating against Adventist message in Ijebuland. This has thought the researcher that presupposition in research work is very wrong and it may offer the researcher wrong result. It is better to follow due process of finding out the cause of the challenge or problem.

The focus group discussion and interview had enlightened the researcher that once or twice a year the leadership of the conference needs to come down to the local field like the district or local church to dialogue with members or the church leaders to hear their views and feelings. During the discussions, the members expressed their

excitement by seeing their church leader, especially the president of the conference coming down to their level to discuss the challenges of their local environment with a certain group of the church. They were so happy, and they made an appeal that this kind of gesture should continue. It was a great lesson for the researcher to learn and it was shared with other officers of the conference.

The findings from the focus groups discussion and interview conducted reveal that members are not participating in personal and corporate evangelism. Rather, this study seems to prove this to be wrong based on the intervention conducted. Members may be involved in evangelism when the vision is shown to them by the church leader and are convinced, persuaded, and guided on the way to achieve this goal.

This study had thought the researcher that actualizing a dream or vision is all about a good leader who could be able to persuade and convince the followers to achieve the goal of the vision dream. Members need leaders who will be able to see a vision and actualize it by convincing and motivate them to run with the vision. Lastly, this study had encouraged the researcher to develop more interest in church planting which seems to be the area of his specialization.

### **Recommendations**

**A befitting church in each district.** This study will recommend to Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist the need to build a befitting and modern church building in each district where events and other major activities will be conducted. This church may be seen as their Jerusalem, and it will be their pride when there is a special event as the custom and tradition of Ijebus. This can be achieved when there is a plan to build one of such church in a year with understanding and collaborative efforts between Conference and the local district.

**A befitting place of worship at the newly entered place.** Secondly, it will be recommended to the conference that there should be a plan of purchasing land and provision for a church building on or before any outreach is conducted in a newly entered place. This will prevent the use of small shops or classroom of school for worship or use un-befitting place for worship.

**The use of pioneers to pastor the newly entered place.** Also, this study observed that insufficient ministers affected the growth of Adventist Church in Ijebuland base on the findings and data analysis. This research will like to suggest to the administration of Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church to employ more pioneers or evangelists in order to reduce the budget on workers' salary, and evangelism work will be done effectively with the ministers to care for the newly converted souls.

**Church program in the form of social celebration.** Findings from data collation and analysis show that social celebration, especially on Saturday, is one of the major factors affecting the progression of Adventist Church in Ijebuland because it is one of the Ijebu traditions or customs that affects the Sabbath doctrine. Therefore, this research is recommending some of the church programs to have the form of social celebration without contradicting or profaning the Sabbath teaching.

For example, community guest day program can be conducted with entertainment of music and food after the closing service with the use of pot - log or snacks and drinks along with some gifts to guests. Other programs like monthly birthday program, child dedication, and cultural Sabbath can be conducted in form of social celebration on Sabbath day with food or snacks without profaning the Sabbath. This study wants to experiment community guest day in a social celebration on Sabbath, but the church did not accept it because of the laid down programs for the

year and the financial involvement which will affect the church and individual budget. At the same time, the planning for it will take some time that this study may not accommodate because the church leaders must be informed, the members will be educated, and the committee will be set up to study first before implementation.

It is well to note that not all the findings from discussion groups and interviews with the analysis from data collated can be addressed as in this intervention designed. Some have to be for future development because of time frame.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
CORRESPONDENCE

A-1 - LETTER TO THE CONFERENCE FOR RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Pastor S. O. Ogunsanya  
Seventh-day Adventist Church  
Ogun Conference  
Abeokuta

5<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

Through: The Secretary

To: The Executive Committee  
Ogun Conference  
Abeokuta  
Ogun State

Dear Sir,

Calvary greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Pastor Sunday O. Ogunsanya, a Pastor of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria, Ogun Conference and a student of Doctor of Ministry (DMin) in Adventist University of African, Kenya (Babcock Extension) is writing my research work on the topic: "Reaching the Ijebu People Group in Nigeria with Adventism: A Biblical Model of Evangelism."

I hereby request for the permission of the Administration of Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church to enable me carry out my research or dissertation work in your field among the Ijebus which is in our territory.

The Ijebu people group is one of the people groups in Ogun State, Nigeria and my dissertation field work will include conducting some interview among the church members, interview some groups (focus group) and to implement some strategies develop as models for evangelism within your territory.

Thank you in anticipation that my request will be favorably granted.

Yours faithfully,



Pastor S.O. Ogunsanya

**A-2 LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CONFERENCE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**



SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCH IN NIGERIA

**Ogun Conference**



Office of the Executive Secretary

85, Sokoru Road,  
Oke - Ijeun,  
P.O. Box 1454,  
Sapara, Abeokuta,  
Ogun State, Nigeria.  
Email: ogunconference.adventist@yahoo.com

13<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

Pastor Ogunsanya, S. O  
President,  
Ogun Conference of SDA,  
Abeokuta,  
Ogun State.

Dear Sir,

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH WORK IN SDA CHURCHES IN IJEBU-LAND**

I am directed by the Administrative committee of Ogun Conference of Seventh-day Adventist that at the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2015, your request for permission to carry out research work in Seventh-day Adventist Churches in Ijebu-Land has been approved.

Have a wonderful time in churches in Ijebu-land

Sincerely,

R. O. Atoki  
Executive Secretary  
Ogun Conference of SDA

XC: Ijebu-Ode District of SDA  
Ogun Conference Officers

## APPENDIX B

### OGUN STATE MAP AND SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

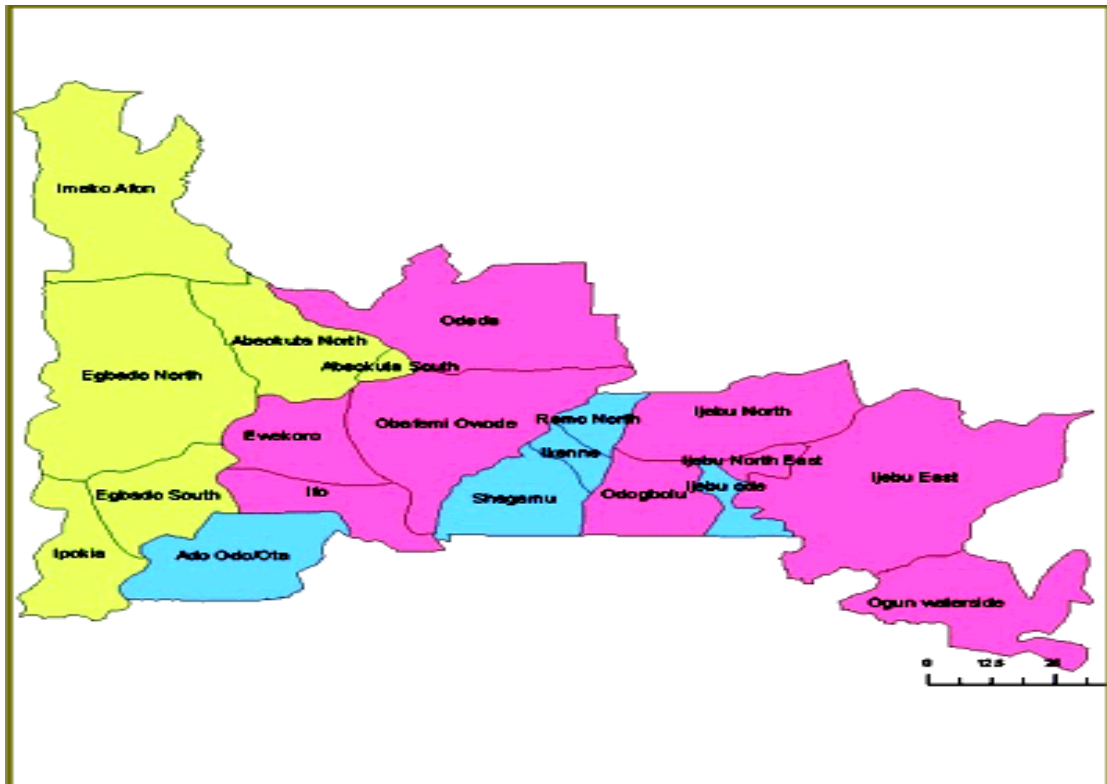


Figure 1. Local government areas and population of Ogun State

The state contains the following twenty Local Government Areas:  
NoLGAHeadquartersPopulation(2006Census)

1. Abeokuta NorthAke 201,329
2. Abeokuta SouthAkomoje 250,278
3. Ado-Odo/Ota-Ota 526,565
4. EwekoroItoiri 55,156
5. IfoIfo 524,837
6. Ijebu EastOgbere 110,196
7. Ijebu NorthIjebu-Igbo 284,336
8. Ijebu North EastAtan-Ijebu 67,634
9. Ijebu OdeIjebu-ode 222,653

10. IkenneIkenne 118,735
1. Imeko AfonImeko 82,217
2. IpokiaIpokia 150,426
3. Obafemi Owode Owode 228,851
4. OdogboluOdogbolu 127,123
5. OdedaOdeda 109,449
6. Ogun WatersideAbigi 72,935
7. Remo NorthIsara 59,911
8. SagamuSagamu 253,412
9. Yewa NorthAyetero 181,826
10. Yewa SouthIlaro 168,850

**TOTAL 3,751,140**

**IJEBU POPULATION AND SABBATH SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP OF ENTERED TOWNS AND CITIES IN IJEBULAND**

**NoLGAPopulation (2016) Entered Towns Membership**

1. Ijebu East 110,196 Ijebu-ife 14
2. Ijebu North 284,336 Ijebu-igbo 15
3. Ijebu North East 67,634-----
4. Ijebu Ode 222,653 Irewon Rd 95 Oke Owa 19
5. Ikenne 118,735 Ikenne 79 Ilisan (20 Churches) 4780 Iperu 47 Ogere 11 Irolu 24 Ilara 24 Ijesa-ijebu 8 Akaka 12 Ayepe 29
6. Odogbolu 127,123 Odogbolu 22 Ikorodu Rd 159 Omu Ijebu 20
7. Ogun Waterside 72,935----
8. Remo North 59,911 Ode 17
9. Sagamu 253,412 Makun 115 Sabo 114 Ayegbami 61 Ayetero 12 Total 1,316,935 567

7

## APPENDIX C

### CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

*Table 8. Ratio of Church Members Relative to Ijebu Indigenous Members*

Districts in Ijebuland	Number of Churches in the District	Church Membership as at 2013	Number of Ijebu Indigenes	Ratio of Ijebu Indigenes to Membership
Babcock District	15	4078	8	1:509
Ijebu-Ode	8	473	46	1:10
Ilisan-North	6	279	33	1:8
Ilisan-West	6	286	147	1:2
Sagamu	10	435	12	1:36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>5551</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>1:23</b>

## APPENDIX D

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### Adventist University of Africa

Topic: A BIBLICAL MODEL OF EVANGELISM TO REACH THE IJEBUSIN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

#### Focus Group Questions

The following questions are meant for focus group discussion on the above topic. It is in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree. Please let it be known that your response and contribution to this discussion of the questions below are vital to the success of this research and where confidentiality will be required; it will be maintained.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Pastor Sunday. O. Ogunsanya

(Researcher)

#### Questions

1. For how long have you been the church? Are you a (all) baptized member (s) of Seventh-day Adventist?
2. What do you know about Seventh-day Adventist Church?
3. From your point of view, to what extent has Ijebus being reached with the Adventist message?
4. What may be responsible?
5. How will you rate Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of Church Planting?
6. How effective and efficient are the Seventh-day Adventist pastoral ministry among the Ijebu people group?
7. How do you assess the ministry of the laity in propagating Adventist Message and church planting in Ijebuland?
8. How do you view Seventh-day Adventist message or doctrine in relation to Ijebu tradition or culture?
9. How will you assess the results of the evangelistic efforts conducted in Ijebu land?
10. Why do some people refuse to be baptized into the church and become a full member?
11. What is still keeping some Ijebu members in the church?
12. Why do people leave the church after baptism?
13. What general comment or observation or advice do you have for the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ijebu people group?

## APPENDIX E

### SERMON TOPIC FOR THE OUTREACH

*Table 9. Sermon Topics for the Outreach*

Date	Topic
Sun, October 30, 2016	The Word of Victory
Mon, October 31, 2016	Moment of Victory
Tues, November 1, 2016	Victory over the Satan
Wed, November 2, 2016	Greatest Name in Victory
Thurs, November 3, 2016	Your Pathway to Victory
Fri, November 4, 2016	The Power of Victory
Sab, November 5, 2016	Walking in Victory
Sun, November 6, 2016	The Mark of Victory
Mon, November 7, 2016	The Garment of Victory
Tues, November 8, 2016	Victorious Christian Living
Wed, November 9, 2016	Victory over Death
Thurs, November 10, 2016	Coming in Victory
Fri, November 11, 2016	The Church of Victory
Sab, November 12, 2016	Victory at Last

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adeoye, Gabriel O. "An Evaluation of the Church Planting Activities of Baptist College of Theology, Lagos (1997 – 2010)." In *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*, ed. Emiola Nihinlola, Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012.
- Ajani, Ezekiel Oladapo. "Church Planting and Growth: Resources, Challenges, and Prospects." In *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*. Ed. Emiola Nihinlola. Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012.
- Akintan, O.A. "Traditional Festivals and Western Influence in Ijebuland." In *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*. Ed. G.O. Oguntomisin. Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Publisher, 2002.
- Alao, F.O. and G.O. Oguntomisin. "The Peopling of Ijebuland." In *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*. Ed. G.O. Oguntomisin. Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Publisher, 2002.
- Aroyewun, Gbenga. "The Early Beneficiaries of Christianity in Ijebuland," *Obanta Newsday*, (19 March 2011), 38.
- Awoniyi, Peter Ropo. "Church Planting and Church Growth in a Muslim Concentrated Community: Obstacles and Ways Out." In *Practical Theology: A Journal of baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*. Ed. Emiola Nihinlola. Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012.
- Ayandele, E.A. *The Ijebu of YORUBALAND 1859 – 1950: Politics, Economics & Society*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Plc. 1992.
- Ayinde, Abimbola. "Ife Origin Influence in the History of Ijebu People of SouthWesternNigeria." *African Research Review: An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, Serial No. 22, October, 5 (2011): accessed 27 May 2016, file:///C:/Users/ogclp1/Downloads/72290-157742-1-PB.pdf.
- Babalola, David O. *On Becoming a Conference: The Story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Yorubaland 1914-2002*. Ibadan, Nigeria: OSB Design, 2002.
- Barnes, Albert. "Isaiah." *Barnes on the Old Testament 2 Vol*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977.

- Berg, Bruce L. and Howard Lune. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddles River, NJ: Person Education, Inc., 2012.
- Blackaby, Henry and Richard Blackaby. *Moving People on to God's Agenda: Spiritual Leadership*. Nashville, Tennessee & H Publishing Group, 2011.
- Boyl, Brendal. "Six Leadership Lessons from Photography." *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol.9, No.2 (Fall 2015):83.
- Bresee, Mark. "Plant a Church and Reap a Harvest." *Ministry* (May 1996): accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1996/05>.
- Burril, Russell. *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus*. California, Fallbrook: Hart Research Center, 2009.
- Buttrick, George Arthur, ed. "Jonah." *The Interpreter's Bible*. 6 Vol. Abingdon Press, 1989.
- Calvin, John. *Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Isaiah*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 2009.
- Charles B. Williams, *The New Testament*. Chicago, IL: Moody.
- Dunavant, Del. *From Membership to Discipleship: A Practical Guide to Equipping Members for Ministry*. Lincoln, NE: AdventSource, 2006.
- Efuntade, Johnson Adekola. "My Memories as the Pioneer of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Ijebu-Ode." *A Meeting*. IJEBU-Ode, 13 June 1989,1-2. Typewritten.
- Efuntade, Olu. Church Leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Omu-Ijebu. Interviewed by Olajide Jacob Olatunde, Nigeria, 22 February 2011.
- Garrison, David. *Church Planting Movement*. Virginia: International Mission Board, 1999.
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. *Working Policy of West - Central Africa Division*, 2012 - 2013 ed. Accra, Ghana: Advent Press.
- Gladden, Ron. "Church Planting: Key to Growth." *Ministry*, (October 1988). Accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1988/10>.
- Global Mission Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventists (Operating Manual, February, 2011), 6. Accessed 27 May 2014. <http://www.AdventistMission.org>.
- Greenleaf, R. K. *The Servant as Leader*. Rev. ed. Westfield, IN: Greenleaf center for Servant Leadership, 2008.
- Hicks, Bryant W. "Old Testament Foundation for Mission." In *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Ed. John. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2013/12>.

- Hughes R. L, Ginnett R. C, and G. J. Curply. *Selections from Leadership: Enhancing the Lesson of Experience*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2001.
- Johnson, Kurt W. *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Reality*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011.
- Kidder, Joseph S., and Dustin Serns. "The Forgotten Movement: Church Planting Trends and Lessons (Part 2 of 2)." *Ministry* (December 2014). Accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2014/December>.
- Kidder, Joseph. "Reflections on the Future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America: The Long View of Church Growth (Part 2 of 2)." *Ministry* (February 2011): Accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/>.
- Kirwen, Michael. C. ed. *African Cultural Knowledge: Themes and Embedded Beliefs* Kenya, Nairobi: Mias Book, 2011.
- Kvale, Steinar. *Doing Interviews*. London: Sage Publication, 2008.
- Lee, Matthew, and Matthew Lee. "The Difference Between Research Design & Research Method." *eHow*. Accessed July 21, 2016. [http://www.ehow.com/facts\\_7329595\\_difference-research-design-research-method.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_7329595_difference-research-design-research-method.html).
- Malphurs, Aubrey. *Planting Growing Churches for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 1998.
- Manning, George, and Kent Curtis. *The Art of Leadership*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009.
- Mcgaravan, Donald. *The Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions*. Pasadena: Wipf & Stock, 2005.
- Merriam, Sharan B. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Inc., 1998.
- Ndlovu, Sikhumbuzo. "Theological Principles for Reaching the Unreached." In *Biblical Principles for Missiological Issues in Africa*. Ed. Bruce L. Bauer and Wagner Kuhn. Michigan, Barrien Springs: Department of World Mission, Andrews University, 2015.
- Nichol, Francis, ed. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*. Washington D.C: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1977, 4:90-91.
- Northouse, Peter. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007.
- Ojo, Jonathan O. "Exploring Ephesians 4:7 – 16 as Paradigms for the Contemporary Church Planting and Growth." In *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*. Ed. Emiola Nihinlola. Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012.

- Okubote, Moses Botu. *The History of the Ijebu*. Ibadan, Nigeria: Sam-Adex Printers, 2013.
- Olson, David T. *The American Church in Crisis*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008.
- Ott, Craig, and Stephen J. Strauss. *Encountering Theology of Mission*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Ranier, Thom S. "Strategies for Church Growth." In *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Rheenen, Gailyn Van. *Biblical Foundation & Contemporary Strategies: Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.
- Roberts, Carol M. *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation*. USA: California, Corwin ASAGE Company, 2010.
- Roennfeldt, Peter. "Cultivating Church Planting in Your Territory." *Ministry* (December 2013). Accessed 15 August 2016.
- Sahlin, Monte. "What Makes Churches Grow? What Recent Adventist Research Reveals." *Ministry* (November 2004). Accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2004/11>.
- Salami, Wale. "A Historical Survey of the Pre-colonial Socio-Cultural Life of the Ijebu." In *Studies in Ijebu History and Culture*. Ed. G.O. Oguntomisin. Ibadan, Nigeria: John Archers Publisher, 2002.
- Sanchez, Daniel R. "Strategies for Starting Churches." In *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Sarah K. "Belonging Before Believing: Reaching Out to the Emerging Culture." *Ministry*, January 2007, 25.
- Schaller, Lyle E. *Growing Plans*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983.
- Smith, Ebbie. "Culture: The Miliue of Missions." In *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Smith, Ebbie, and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Smith, Robert S. *Kingdoms of the Yorubas: Studies in African History*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1969.

- Stetzer, Ed. *Planting Missional Churches: Planting a Church that's Biblically Sound and Reaching People in Culture*. Tennessee, Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006.
- Stevens, Tim, and Tony Morgan. *Simply Strategic Growth: Attracting a Crowd to Your Church*. Colorado, Loveland: Group, 2005.
- Strong, James. "Go." In Isaiah 48:20 "HB 3318 and GK4198." *Strong's Complete WordStudy*. Ed. Warren Baker. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2004.
- Sutter, K. *Keys To Church Planting Movements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, 2008.
- The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, April 2, 1901.
- Thompson, Bill. "Servant, Leader, or Both? A Fresh Look at Mark 10:35-45." *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol.9, No.2,(Fall 2015):55.
- Vajko, Robert J., and Deji I. Ayegboyin. "Some Imperatives for Exploits in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church Planting." In *Practical Theology: A Journal of Baptist College of Theology Lagos, Contemporary Church Planting and Growth*. Ed. Emiola Nihinlola. Nigeria, Lagos: Baptist College of Theology, 2012.
- Wagenersmith, Anthony. "Is God Calling You to Plant a Church?" Ministry (August 2013). Accessed 15 August 2016. <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/Archive/>
- Wagner, Peter C. *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990.
- Wagner, Peter C. *Leading Your Church to Growth*. Metro Manila, Mandaluyong City: OMF Literature Inc, 1997.
- White, Ellen G. *Counsels for the Church*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Evangelism*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Gospel Workers*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Gospel Workers*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Selected Messages*. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Testimonies for the Church*. 9 vols. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911.

- White, Ellen G. *The Ministry of Healing*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ye shall Receive Power*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1995.
- Wright, Gerald D. "The Purpose of Mission." In *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie Smith, and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Yeagley, Larry. "The Way of a Christian Leader." *Ministry*, May 2015, 25 -26.
- Yukl, Gary. *Leadership in Organizations*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

## VITA

### PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION:

Name: Ogunsanya, Sunday Olubunmi

Date of Birth: April 14, 1968

Place of Birth: Ilisan Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria

Marital Status: Married

Number of Children: Oluwaseun, Oluwasegun, and Ini-oluwa

Date of Employment: April 1, 1994

Date of Ordination: April 4, 2000

### EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION:

2008 M.A. Pastoral (Andrews University)

1994 B.A. Theology (Adventist Seminary of West Africa)

1986 Secondary School Certificate

1980 Primary School Certificate

### WORKING EXPERIENCE

1994 – 2001 Local Church Pastor

2001 District Pastor

2002 – 2008 Sabbath School/ Personal Ministries/ Children Ministries Director

2008 – 2012 Conference Executive Secretary

2012 – Till Date Conference President