

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Ministry
Emphasis in Mission

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

**TITLE: DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL MODEL OF CHURCH GROWTH
IN IGOLI-OGOJA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
NORTHERN CROSS RIVER MISSION STATION,
NIGERIA**

Researcher: Charles Jemiema Goodhead

Faculty advisor: Kelvin O. Onongha, PhD, DMin

Date completed: June 2016

This study was to develop and implement a biblical model of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church in Northern Cross River Mission Station. The church membership was decreasing and everyone seemed unconcerned about it. A closer look at the membership statistical record from 2012-2015 confirmed the membership decline.

The purpose of this study was to develop and implement an in-ministry program to enhance numerical growth in the church. This project utilized biblical components of church growth, church growth principles, spiritual disciplines, social and relational graces found in the early church.

Jonas Arrais concludes that in this 21st century the key understanding about church growth is its health. That when a church is healthy (spiritual growing church), it grows naturally, in all areas of life. Also, it promotes every member involvement in

mission through spiritual gift discovery. Similarly, Dudley alludes to this that, for a church to grow numerically the members must be groomed in spiritual growth.

The method used was the mixed method (qualitative and quantitative techniques). Its holistic way of analysing data through participants' interview and observation determined the rationale for selecting this method. Data was collected from focus group and questionnaire from participants who were selected through stratified random sampling. A set of structured (closed and open ended) questions were designed for both apparatus of survey. The data collected was analysed and the findings stated in the work.

The biblical model of church growth strategy was developed and implemented. Evaluation of the project indicated that members were revitalized for mission, through Bible study, prayer, interpersonal relationship initiatives and gift – based ministry.

This project was successful because the church's problem was discovered to be spiritual lethargy and renewal intervention was implemented which brought the church to spiritual vibrancy and growth. The researcher recommends that policy guidelines be provided to statutorily entrench this program as a regular feature of the church, since ultimately, church growth is the very essence of the church's existence.

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL MODEL OF CHURCH GROWTH
IN IGOLI-OGOJA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
NORTHERN CROSS RIVER MISSION STATION,
NIGERIA

A dissertation

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Charles Jemiema Goodhead

June 2016

This work is licensed under Creative Commons 4.0

Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike

You are free to:

- **Share** — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format
- **Adapt** — remix, transform, and build upon the material

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

- **Attribution** — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
- **Noncommercial** — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.
- **Share Alike** — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.
- **No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Notices:

You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation.

No warranties are given. The license may not give you all the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.


DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL MODEL OF CHURCH GROWTH
IN IGOLI-OGOJA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
NORTHERN CROSS RIVER MISSION STATION,
NIGERIA

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


by

Charles Jemiema Goodhead


APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:




Advisor: Kelvin Onongha, PhD, DMin



Programme Director, DMin
Kelvin Onongha, PhD, DMin



Reader: Emmanuel Takyi, PhD, DMin



Dean, Theological Seminary
Sampson Nwaomah, PhD

Extension site: Babcock University

Date: June 2017

Dedicated to my God, to my wife, Chidinma, and to my children, Joyce,
Happiness, Chief, Ala, God's power, and Victor

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	x
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Description of the Ministry Context	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Statement of the Purpose	6
Justification of the Study	7
Delimitation	8
Description of the Dissertation Process	8
Expectations from the Project.....	10
Definition of Terms.....	11
2. BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR CHURCH GROWTH.....	12
Components of Church Growth in the Old Testament	13
Prayer and Church Growth	13
Relationship with God	14
Boldness and Power.....	15
Miracles.....	15
Other Prayers	16
Activities of the Holy Spirit.....	17
Repentance	18
Obedience	18
Spiritual Gifts.....	19
The Word and Church Growth	19
Proclamation of the Word.....	20
The Power of the Word.....	21
The word: authoritative Source for church growth.....	22
God's People/ Christian Community Life	22
Fellowship.....	23
Relational Graces	23
Invitations and Visits	24
Discipleship.....	24
Mentorship	25
Evidence of Church Growth in the Bible.....	25
The Children of Israel (Acts 7:38).....	26
The Revived People of God.....	26

Jesus and His Disciples	27
Jesus and the twelve disciples constituted small group church.....	28
Jesus and the seventy disciples are evidence of a growing church.....	29
Jesus and the one hundred and twenty portray a fast-growing church.....	30
The Church in Jerusalem	31
A Study of the Early Church Model of Church Growth	31
The Early Church and Church Growth	32
Spiritual Disciplines and Training of the Early Church.....	33
Spiritual disciplines for church growth are prerequisite.....	34
Spirituality of the Early Church Tool for Church Growth.....	35
Church in Cornelius House Acts 10:1-10; 14:27	36
Paul and his Ministry	38
The church in Antioch (Act 11:19-27; 13:13-50).....	38
The church in Thessalonica.	39
The church in Corinth (18:1-6).....	40
The church in Ephesus.	41
Other churches.	42
Summary	44
3. LITERATURE REVIEW	46
General Overview on Church Growth	46
History of Church Growth in America	48
Different Views of Biblical Church Growth.....	48
The Contemporary Catholic Church.....	48
Mainline Protestants' View.....	49
Seventh-day Adventist Church View.....	49
Church Growth Principles.....	50
Church Growth a Spiritual Enterprise.....	50
Prayer a Real Principle for Church Growth.....	52
The Holy Spirit	54
Revival and Church Growth	55
Small Groups and Church Growth.....	56
Church Planting and Church Growth.....	58
Evangelism and Church Growth.....	59
Receptivity and Church Growth	62
Laity Involvement and Spiritual Gifts	64
Church Growth Depends on Leadership.....	66
Discipleship: Key to Phenomenal Church Growth.....	68
Growth Principles Inherent in Growing Churches.....	70
The principle of expectancy is crucial to church growth.....	71
The principles of spiritual gifts, pastoral leadership and delegation are essential to phenomenal church growth.	71
Pathology of Church Growth	72
Arrested Church Growth.....	72
Arrested Spiritual Development	73
Ethikitis	73

Koinonitis.....	73
Other Diseases	74
Hyper-cooperativism.....	74
Old age and people’s blindness.....	74
Quality Characteristics of Church Growth	74
Empowering Leadership	75
Gift-Based Ministry	75
Passionate Spirituality.....	76
Effective Structures.....	76
Inspiring Worship Service	76
Holistic Small Group	77
Need-Oriented Evangelism.....	78
Loving Relationships	78
Summary	79

4. A STRATEGY DESIGN FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN OGOJA SDA CHURCH..... 81

Presentation of the Ministry Context	81
History of Cross River State of Nigeria.....	82
Background.....	82
Landscape and Climate	82
Demography.....	83
Economy	83
Cultural Information	83
Religious Belief and Affiliations	84
Background of Ogoja Town.....	85
Geographical Setting.....	86
History of Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church	86
Description of the Church Before the Project.....	89
Problem Statement of the Project	90
Research Design for Church Growth.....	90
Type of Research	91
Rationale for Selection of the Research Method	91
Appropriateness to this Study	92
Population and Sample of Participants	92
Criteria for Sampling Procedures and Selection	92
Instrumentation	93
Focus group is crucial at this level of study.....	94
Administering questionnaire in this study is important.	95
Data Analysis.....	96
Data Collection Procedures.....	96
Presentation and Description of Findings	96
Analysis of Qualitative Data.....	97
Analysis of Demographic Information	97
Analysis of Respondents’ Responses.....	99
Summary	105
Designing of the Intervention	106
Obtaining permissions from the church board is appropriate	106

Identification and Training of Group Leaders is strategic to the success of this project.	107
Description of Intervention Strategy.....	107
Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop.....	112
Important Assumptions.....	113
Monitoring and Interim Evaluation	114
Limitations	115
Project Report	115
 5. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.....	 117
Project Preparation.....	117
Description of the Theological Foundation	119
Description of Literature Review.....	120
Description of the Project Venue	121
Permission.....	122
Description of Findings from Focus Group/ Questionnaire	123
Focus Group 1: Questions/ Interviewees’ Responses.....	123
Focus Group 2: Questions/ Interviewees’ Responses.....	124
Focus Group 3: Questions/ Interviewee’s Responses.....	125
Findings from Questionnaire	126
Data Analysis	128
Seminar/Workshop/Sermon Material Development.....	129
Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop	129
Additional Steps taken prior to Implementation.....	132
Project Implementation.....	132
Description of Intervention Activities	133
Identification and selection of leaders was conducted on November 5, 2015.....	133
Training of leaders was carried out on November 5, 2015....	133
Patterns of prayers.....	134
Training for Bible studies was held on November 22, 2015.	135
Seminars/workshop/sermons conducted.....	136
Some pastors in the mission station were invited as resource persons.....	137
Any other aspect of implementation.....	138
Evaluation	140
Project Report	142
Report to the Local Church.....	143
Report to the Conference	143
Closing Remarks.....	144
 6. EVALUATION.....	 145
Summary of Dissertation	145
Description of the Evaluation Methods Used	149
Description of Evaluation	149
General Attendance of Programs	149
Constant Intercessory Prayer	150
Bible Study.....	151
Love/Interpersonal Relationship/ Visitation.....	152

Gift-based Ministries/Spiritual Discovery	152
Lessons Learned.....	153
Conclusion	154
Recommendations.....	154
APPENDICES	156
A. CORRESPONDENCE.....	157
B. FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	160
C. QUESTIONNAIRE.....	161
D. FOCUS GROUP 1: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEES’ RESPONSES ...	163
E. FOCUS GROUP 2: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEES’ RESPONSES ...	165
F. FOCUS GROUP 3: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEE’S RESPONSES.....	167
G. SCHEDULE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	169
H. WORKSHOP HANDOUT	172
I. PROJECT REPORT: CROSS RIVER STATE.....	181
J. PROJECT REPORT: NORTHERN CROSS RIVER MISSION.....	183
BIBLIOGRAPHY	185
VITA.....	189

LIST OF TABLES

1. Membership Trend for Three Years	88
2. Population Segment Participation in Questionnaire	93
3. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	98
4. Evidence of Constant Prayer and Enthusiasm for Prayer Programs.....	99
5. Increase in Bible Study	100
6. Possibility of Increase in Bible Study.....	100
7. Genuine Repentance	100
8. Increased Awareness of God’s Love	101
9. Evidence of Remarkable Love for One Another	101
10. Positive Internal Experiences/ Family-like Connection	102
11. Evidence of Fellowship and Warmth in the Church.....	102
12. Increased Church Attendance	102
13. Commitment to Serve	103
14. Reality of Evangelism and Discipleship.....	103
15. Membership on the Increase through Baptism	103
16. Lay Involvement and Gift Based Ministries.....	104
17. Summary of Analysis of Respondents Results Table.....	105
18. Gifts and Possible Activities.....	130

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God be the glory, for the great things He has done. All the way the Lord has been leading in my life, family and ministry. The vision for this apex professional degree was muted by Him through Pastor Emmanuel Gaizer, President of Upper Volta Ghana Administrative Unit. I will remain grateful to him. It is a great feat that the Lord granted us this privilege to finish together as pioneer Doctors of Ministry of AUA. The Lord supplied the needed strength, health, wisdom and understanding to go through this study. In appreciation, I and my family will continue to serve Him.

My gratitude goes to the immediate past president of Rivers Conference, Pastor (Dr.) Dave M. Nyekwerre and the Executive Committee for granting me the privilege to undertake this doctoral study. I also thank Pastor (Dr.) B. E. O. Udoh and the Executive committee of the Eastern Nigeria Union Conference for their financial support. I appreciate my colleagues on the doctor of ministry program; we all actually constituted a good and pioneer Doctor of Ministry cohort of AUA. Similarly, I thank my Pastors and colleagues in Northern Cross River Mission Station who worked hard during the period I was in school. I am indebted to my advisors Dr. Kelvin O. Onongha and Professor M.O. Akpa.

I appreciate Professor Sampson Nwaomah, for piloting the affairs of AUA as Dean of the theological Seminary and especially for this pioneer Doctor of Ministry program. I praise God for the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program, Dr. Kelvin O. Onongha and Dr. Emmanuel H. Takyi for the proficient way they led this cohort to a successful end. Besides, they applied scholarly acumen and passion for God's

church to inculcate in us rare pastoral tenets for ministry. Indeed I appreciate Dr. Onongha's wealth of experience he shared with us in class.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study is an initiative to discover, develop and implement a model in-ministry program for biblical model of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church. Therefore, this chapter describes the ministry context of the church, statement of the problem, statement of the purpose and justification for the study. Others are delimitation, description of the dissertation process and expectations or goals to be achieved after the implementation of the dissertation and many others.

Description of the Ministry Context

Church growth in the Seventh-day Adventist Church Igoli-Ogoja in Northern Cross River Mission Station is in crisis. For more than a decade church membership has been dwindling. The membership which grew up to 400 in the year 2005, reduced significantly to 171, by 2014. However, other denominations in Ogoja such as Christ Embassy, Winners Chapel, and the Roman Catholic Church have grown and planted other congregations. Their growth is visible numerically, and structurally, yet the Igoli-Ogoja Church is still a single congregation since its inception in 1976. She has been using the same old church auditorium built more than 20 years ago. The Adventist Church is not recognized and does not rank among the first twenty churches in the entire northern region of Cross River state.

Undoubtedly, some contextual factors such as long held traditions, permissive cultures, the early advent and dominance of Catholic Church and some other mainline denominations in the area may be largely responsible. To confirm this, after the

emancipation Act of 1833 the Negro population in West India became recruited as Black Apostles for African Missions. Consequently in 1840, a good number moved from West India to Ghana, Fernando Po and to Calabar. Therefore, from 1846-1878 there was the presence of Presbyterian Church in Calabar (then called Old Calabar) land of the Efik people and four other towns, made possible by the chiefs who needed Western education for their people. These towns namely Creek town, Second Calabar, Duke town and Henshaw town were European trade completion centers.¹ Other mission outfits such as Wesleyans from Gold Coast and the Anglicans to mention a few, came to Calabar and Ogoja also.² And there was rivalry for members, hence the establishment of schools. And this is validated by the historical fact that Anglicans, Wesleyan Methodist, United Presbyterian, Baptist and the Catholic Society African mission were the five missionary societies operating in Nigeria by period 1841-1891.³

Other contextual factors that tend to hinder church growth in Ogoja, like other areas of Cross River states are religio-cultural, and socio-economic, in nature. Others are language and polygamy. For instance, issues concerning food, dancing, music and uncontrolled clapping of hands during worship, is predominant in this area, but unacceptable to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For example, the Ogoja people, like their Efik neighbors, relish their special edikan-ikon and ekpankukwo dishes that contain sea foods such as shrimps and un-scaled fishes⁴ which the Adventists abhors

¹ John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, Second Revised Edition. (Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines, 2001), 114–116.

² G. O. M. Tasie, *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864-1918* (Tuta Sub Aegidepallas, Netherlands: Brill Academic, 1978), 220–221.

³ Enebieni Enebieni Eko, *African Evangelization: Problems and Prospect Ecclesiastical and Evangelistic Perspectives* (Abakpa Nike, Nigeria: Vickson, 2010), 202–203.

⁴ Ibid.

following biblical injunctions.

The Ogoja people like the Efiks, enjoy cultural dances (such as itembe cultural dance of the Efik, monikim obasinjom cultural dance) which go along with dancing and clapping. These cultural practices are brought into the worship of other local churches in the area but not encouraged by the Adventist Church. Polygamy is another culturally inhibiting problem, the church encounters in the process of evangelism.

Another socio-economic factor is that Saturday is popularly regarded as most the convenient day to carry on business and social activities such as marriages, weddings funeral and other festivals.

There are 17 language groups in Ogoja Local Government Area that are incomprehensible to each other. This multiplicity of languages is a barrier to preaching the gospel. This could however, be conquered by translating gospel literature into the diverse languages of the people. In order words, entering the villages or communities will require going with a local member of the community who will interpret the gospel message. These contextual factors have adversely affected the growth of SDA in the area.⁵

On the other hand, institutional (internal) factors such as ineptness on the part of church leadership could largely be responsible for the stunted situation. For example, concentration on members' care rather than developing a mission-oriented program for outreach and evangelism needs to be addressed. The church members have been enjoying programs such as choir festival day, Pathfinder fairs and celebrations, Youth congresses, Adventist women conventions, Adventist men's

⁵ Eko, *African Evangelization*, 70.

ministries conventions, NAAS congresses the list is endless. Some of these programs come from higher organizations like the General Conference, Division, Union, and even District to the local church. As a result, sometimes local church has little or no time for her programs. This concentration on internal programs perhaps is responsible for lack of zeal for evangelism. Putting our priority right requires that we go for the Great Commission, the very reason for our existence as a church.

Instead, the church is plunged into several bouts of struggle for supremacy, power tussle, and pride of opinion and without external programs such as evangelism, visitation and outreach, as a result, members tend to relax and remain spiritual weakling. There are no challenges on the faith that will drive them to Bible study, deep searching of the Scriptures and prayers. They have become babies of the scripture instead of the masters of the word.

Historically, there seemed to have been an unplanned strategic entry by the Seventh-day Adventist missionary pioneers in Cross River State. Study has shown that the Adventist pioneers started with sales of literature whereas other mainline churches such as the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican churches and others, as mentioned earlier, made their message people-oriented. Although literature model of evangelism worked in other places, it was not the best and seemed not to appeal to the Efik and Ogoja people.

It is evident that white missionaries were more relational with government and chiefs and the people such that they built primary and post primary schools as well as clinics and hospitals as instruments of evangelization. By 1921 these institutions were so prominent in Calabar and Ogoja (the two south and north targeted communities respectively) that Catholic Mission had 121 schools, 12,203 pupils and 216 teachers. Presbyterian (Scottish) Mission had 123 schools, 8005 pupils' and 318 teachers and

many others.⁶ This means that Adventist Church should emulate this strategy.

Church growth theory indicates that there is a close relationship between church growth and international passionate programs backed by growth principles for the church. Obviously, a quick adoption of church growth patterns and methodologies, with stronger emphasis on prayer for the Holy Spirit will enable the church to grow. It can be said that the Holy Spirit is the embryo of seed of life that started the church growing.⁷ The Holy Spirit helped the early church (Acts 1:8; 2; 1-4), He will certainly help the Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church. The researcher has 15 years ministerial experience and has witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit grant tremendous success in such hard areas as Ogoja, and so believes that a repeat will occur.

All it requires is doing what the early church did in Acts 2:42-47.

Interestingly, Mark Finley insightfully added that, the Holy Spirit power was strategic to the success of the early church growth and expansion. The Holy Spirit did not rest on carnal human beings but on "cleansed, consecrated soul temples."⁸

For the church to grow there is the need to shift from members' care to members' mobilization, and this means total laity involvement in mission known as Gift-based ministry. This may elicit a multiple approach necessary to both retain the members and to aggressively evangelize the area.

By way of suggestion, the church will engage in, passionate witnessing and evangelization (2:14-40), studying of the word, having fellowship, warmth and care,

⁶ Eko, *African Evangelization*, 217–218.

⁷ *The Seventh - day Adventist Hymnal (SDA Hymnal)* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1987), 270.

⁸ Mark A. Finley, *Receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit: 10 Days in the Upper Room* (Oshawa, Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2011), 7.

certainly the church will grow. God will perform wonders and miraculous signs (2:43), while members will engage in sacrificial humility (2:44, 45), loving unity (2:1, 46; 4:32), and joyful thanksgiving (2:47) to mention a few. This is confirmed by Steven Vitrano, who emphasized relational Bible study, strong Christian community approach, and to stimulate the much needed Christian commitment inspired by love.⁹

This strategy Implementation program will be evaluated through repentance, obedience, intercessory prayers, passionate witnessing and evangelism programs. Besides, the church is expected to experience deeper faith, sacrificial humility, increased membership, community services and church planting in Igoli-Ogoja community as well as a contextualized church.

Statement of the Problem

Personal observation as the field President where this church is located shows that the church is not growing. Worse still, everyone seemed satisfied with the situation. The church desperately needed an appropriate growth strategy that will utilize best researched methods and principles to spur her to growth. As the headquarters of the Mission Station, her growth is not only strategic to the development of the field, but imperative for motivating growth in other churches. If the Mission Station is to meet her five-year mandate to attain a conference status, it has to begin with this church.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study was to discover the problem plaguing the church and to develop, implement, and evaluate appropriate church growth strategies in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church, using proven growth principles.

⁹ Steven P. Vitrano, "Christian Commitment," *Ministry Magazine*, April 2008, 21.

Justification of the Study

This study is essential in view of the evangelistic mandate of Matthew 19:18-20 using the early church model. As a result, the church exerts refining and ennobling influence on Ogoja area as light and salt of the world (5:13, 14).

Consequently, it enables members to appreciate the three dimensions of restored life, which are relationship with God, self, and with others as a measuring instrument for maturity, in the light of Galatians 5:22-23 and Ephesians 4:11-13 marked by “lively, strong, vigorous principle, seated in the inmost center of the soul”¹⁰.

Among other benefits, this research is valid to transform the church into a lively, loving and caring place for member and nonmembers. This dissertation of necessity equips members for a good Christian lifestyle and ministry, which engenders improvement in evangelism, Church planting and other projects of the Church.

Accordingly, it inevitably facilitates church’s utilization of overlooked opportunities for church growth, such as Bible study and memorization, prayer, fellowship, Holy Spirit power and witnessing. These invariably result in membership retention, and assimilation of new converts.

Consistently, this dissertation is prerequisite to form the solid foundation and building block for growing other churches in the Mission Station, as it blends best research insights and biblical principles. At the same time, it is a specification, appropriate to address contextual as well as contemporary issues on culture, social, religion, thus, giving birth to a contextualized SDA Church in Igoli-Ogoja community

¹⁰ Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, n.d.), 14.

and beyond. Finally, it enables the church realize the glory and sovereignty of God, the exclusiveness of salvation through Christ which is the eternal purpose of church growth.

Delimitation

This Dissertation is delimited to Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church for the purposes of effectiveness. It could have been implemented in three other district headquarter churches of Ikom, Obudu, and Obubra but for the constraints of funds and distance between the churches. However, a huge success in Ogoja will guarantee success in other churches.

This study focuses on discovering the best church growth theories, factors, patterns and principles that will be relevant to Ogoja SDA Church. This dissertation does not attempt to explain all the factors of growth or decline. Rather, this project is concerned with developing growth strategies for peculiar area as Igoli-Ogoja.

Description of the Dissertation Process

Chapter 2 explored the theological foundation for developing church growth principles from the Old and New Testaments of the sacred scriptures. In addition, the writings of Ellen G. White was investigated to gain insights into the process of faith development and discipleship training focused on fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20).

Chapter 3 considered the review of appropriate church growth literatures. These comprised scholarly writings of both the SDAs and of other Christian authors on church growth to glean the necessary growth principle. Furthermore, there was an intentional study and identification of the barriers to church growth as to systematically avoid them in the area.

Accordingly, chapter 4 draws from the theological and theoretical research, to

accomplish the following:

1. A model strategy for church growth was developed in the church, for mass mobilization of members for missions to the Igoli-Ogoja community in Northern Cross River Mission Station.
2. Upon approval by the Conference, Igoli-Ogoja Church was thoroughly informed of the strategy program package.
3. Then research design to address the peculiar challenge of Igoli-Ogoja Church.
4. Selection and interview of focus group, development and administration of questionnaire.
5. Analysis of information and data to determine the pattern of intervention.
6. Design of an intervention program to turn the church's path of decline to growth.

Chapter 5 focuses on the project implementation conducted in six months period. "Job-in-training method," seminar, sermons, and workshop, were the tools for this project implementation.

Consequently, this chapter considered description of theological foundation, literature review, project venue, permissions, findings from focus groups and questionnaires. Additionally, it contains a recap of analysis of data, and description of seminar, workshop and sermon materials development.

Meanwhile, the result of this program package was monitored and supervised, prior, during, and after the implementation. Further, project implementation was portrayed in a lucid description of the chronicle order of events and the activities carried out to implement the program. Others are project reports to the local church and conference

Finally, chapter 6 handled evaluation of project which includes description of the results, lessons learned, conclusion and recommendations as well as giving it to the Mission Station for use. This Dissertation was anticipated to be completed on November 30, 2015.

Expectations from the Project

This dissertation is expected to cultivate godly love for one another, and valid interpersonal relationship among members. Similarly, the church is hoped to experience true biblical renewal which will enable members to practice transformed Christian life. At the same time, it is envisioned that this project will promote communal Christian community similar to that of the apostolic church and membership retention will naturally ensue. There is strong anticipation that Christian commitment will be heightened (as may be inspired by participation in Daniel and Revelation seminars). Besides, the level of witnessing and share your faith activities is believed to be greatly increased as well as genuine love for church growth.

Moreover, the prospect for membership involvement in ministry according to members' Spiritual giftedness will be keen. With Gift-based Ministry, certainly its overarching benefits which include clear-cut job description for all members, specialization, and excellent performance in areas of giftedness will be the result. Hence intentional and goal-oriented, lively and spirit filled worship will be realized. Besides, love and unity will be restored in the church as a result of cooperative and complementary ministry. Conversely, competition, rivalry, friction and mediocrity will be reduced in the church.

Likewise, the probability that this study will provide learning and maturing experience for members and facilitators is strong. In that sense, the target of this research is to attend the membership of 400 in two and half years

This dissertation will become a model practical strategy for all other SDA Churches to revive and prepare members for mission and church multiplication. In addition, this research will enhance the reader's knowledge about church growth; its temporal and eternal benefits.

Definition of Terms

Church growth means all that is involved in bringing men and women who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus into fellowship with Him and into responsible church membership.¹¹

Revival means primarily, purifying and vitalizing the existing church through the power of the Holy Spirit which hinges on prayer and feeding on the word.¹²

The foregoing therefore is the working definition that will guide the thought flow and method of research. Hence, in this context church growth focuses on numerical growth which may be derived from revival of the church.

¹¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Be Healthy* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1979), 14.

¹² Donald A. McGavran and C. Peter Wagner, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 133–134.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR CHURCH GROWTH

This chapter explores the biblical theological foundation for church growth in the Old and New Testaments of the sacred scriptures. Additionally, it considers components (or qualities or factors that promote) church growth in the Bible which include prayer, God's Word, activities of the Holy Spirit and God's peoples' community life. Another foundation for church growth to be discovered in this chapter is the evidences of church growth in the scriptures, which focuses at Jesus and His disciples, the church in Jerusalem also Paul and his ministry. Again the study of the early church as a biblical model of church growth will be conducted.

There is the belief that God began the work of missions in the Garden of Eden, when He went looking for Adam and Eve after the fall (Gen 3:8-9). This means that out of God's sympathy and love, He went searching for Adam and Eve. In the study of missions, Ashford observes that the theology of missions relate to the missionary nature of God. *Missio Dei* was used exclusively to describe the doctrine of Trinity specifically as the sending of the Son by the Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son.¹³ Therefore this section identifies God's spiritual characteristics as seen in missions in the Old and New Testaments beginning with His nature of love (1 John 4:8), Holiness (Exodus 28:36; 2 Chron 31:18; Ps 29:2;

¹³ Bruce Riley Ashford, ed., *Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), 18–19.

Heb12:14), righteousness (Deut 9:4,5), and relationship (Deut 6:25; Ps 15:2; 25:5; 2 Pet 2:5, 21; 3:13; 1John 3:7; Rev 19:11). It may be cogent to recognize that God is the source, and basis of the missions and church growth appears to revolve around God.

Components of Church Growth in the Old Testament

It appears that components of church growth are connected to or derived from God. Also it appears to include such human activities that glorify God, which God uses to bring about church growth or enlargement of His kingdom. A brief discussion about these components will make it clearer.

Prayer and Church Growth

The importance of prayer in the enlargement of God's kingdom or church growth cannot be overemphasized. It started in biblical history from the time of Seth son of Adam (Gen 4:26). Evidence of prayer in the scripture includes Abraham's prayer for Sodom (Gen 18:23), Jacob at Peniel (Gen 32:24). Others are the prayers of King Solomon at the dedication of the Temple which interceded for strangers that should come to know more about God (1Kings 8:41-43). In addition, Daniel's prayer of intercession was pardon and restoration of God's people (Dan 9:3, 13, 17, 21).

Definition of pray and prayer will give better understanding of the section of the paper. The word pray, from Strong's Dictionary of the Bible definition; pray (Hebrew, *paw-lal'*) means to intervene, interpose, pray or a. (*Piel* to meditate, judge, b. (*hithpael*) to intercede, to pray. From the Strong's definition: it is a primary root; to judge (officially or mentally); by extension to intercede, pray or to entreat or make supplication. Prayer from Strong's definition prayer (Hebrew, *tephillah*) means intercession, supplication; by implication a hymn: prayer.¹⁴ Constant prayer brings

¹⁴ James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Dictionary of Hebrew and*

man into relationship with God.

Relationship with God

With reference to the *piel* part of the definition of prayer in the preceding paragraph, which means meditate and judge, interesting connotation emerges. The English word ‘meditate’ means to contemplate, to think, ponder, consider, and to reflect among others. While the word ‘judge’ means arbitrator, evaluator and reviewer and others. When humans’ reflectively judge God, it brings people closer to God. For instance, when God is evaluated as perfect in love (1John 4:8), perfect in all His works (Deut 32:4), in all His gifts (Jam 1:17) to mention a few.

And by man drawing closer to God, a relationship is being created. This may be confirmed from the model prayer Jesus taught the disciples (Matt 6:9-13). The relational pronouns ‘our father’ implies ‘very dear family relationship.’ It shows the extent man can trust and depend on God. Abraham had confidence, obeyed and depended upon God and it earned him friendship with God. (James 2:23). Besides, Jacob’s tarry night and subsequent wrestle with the Angel at the brook of Jabbok changed his person and his name (Gen 32:22-29). Furthermore, Ellen G. White says that prayer lifts people up to God¹⁵

From the above discourse, it may be deduced that the spiritual exercise of prayer is more than a petition. It extends to establishing a divine-human family relationship. And this affiliation is the essence of mission, church growth and the enlargement of God’s kingdom. In that sense therefore, one may infer that prayer is authentic instrument for growing God’s church. The researcher believes that constant

Greek Words (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.), 126.

¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1940), 93.

prayer in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church will engender membership retention and church growth.

Boldness and Power

There are the biblical evidences of the extent prayers inspired boldness and power in the mind of powerless disciples to preach in the name of Jesus. Clear instances include prayer of the early church before Pentecost (Acts 1:14), The Sanhedrin's threat could not stop the disciples (4:18-21), rather evangelistic boldness was seen (4:31).

When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they rather marveled because they have been with Jesus (4:13). The more the disciples were threatened the more they prayed and the more boldly they preached the word. When King Herod attempted to destroy the church Angel of the Lord intervened and his plans were crushed (12:1-15). Prayers can enable Igoli-Ogoja Church members to have the boldness and power to preach the gospel and the church will grow.

Miracles

From the ancient times, diverse miracles, healings, deliverances, exorcisms and other manifestations of supernatural power has been a wheel for spreading of God's word and fame as the Almighty God. Most significant is the prayer of Daniel and his friends (Dan 2:16, 17) which was attended by the miracle of narration and interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream by Daniel (2:31-45). This wonder made the king to believe, confess and worship the God of Daniel (2:46, 47). Similarly, the miracle of deliverance of the three Hebrew men from the fiery furnace (3:23-25), compelled the king to bless their God, and to issue the decree that all people; nation and languages should not speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (3:28, 29).

Other miracles that publicized God comprise healings such as Abimelech by the prayer of Abraham (Gen 20:17), Naaman by washing in River Jordan in obedience to Elisha (2king 5: 1-14) and King Jeroboam's dried hand by the prayer of the man of God from Judah at Bethel (1King 13:1-7). There are many miraculous healings in the New Testament they comprise: cleansing of the leper (Matt 8:1-4); healing of centurion's servant (8:5-13); Peter's mother-in-law (8:14); driving of the two demoniac into swine and curing of the paralytic (8:28-33; 9:1-8) respectively.

There are deliverances such as Lot and his two daughters from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:7-15); the blindness and feeding of the Syrian soldiers who came to arrest Elisha because he discloses their military strategies to the king of Israel (2Kings 6:8-23). In the New Testament the resurrection of the young girl and the healing of the woman with issue of blood and is very outstanding (Matt 9:18-25) to mention a few.

Other miracles include the beginning miracle of Jesus—turning water into wine that made the disciples to believe in Him (John 2:11). Many believed in Jesus' name when they saw the wonders He performed at the Passover (2:23). Furthermore, the resurrection of Jesus made the disciples to believe in the Scriptures and in his words (2:22). The early church witnessed the marvel of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:2, 41); raising the dead (9:40-42; 20:7-12); visions (10:1, 9, 47) and miracles (28:3-10). Also there are those of healings (3:6-12; 9:32-42) and angelic visitation (28:26-40).

Other Prayers

There are other prayers that relate to the enlargement of God's kingdom and church growth. They include Solomon's prayer at Gibeon and at the dedication of the temple (1King 3:6; 8:22). In addition, the prayer of Daniel for the captives (Dan 9:4), Habakkuk's prayer in his book (Hab 3:1), and Elijah's prayer at Mount Camel (1King

18:36, 37). Others are the Lord's Prayer and His prayer at the cross (Matt 9:6; Luke 18:13). It was also commanded by the Lord (1Chron16:11; Matt 7:7; 26:41; Luke18:1), besides, the prayer of Jabez the honorable man from Judah (1 Chron 4:10) and many others.

Activities of the Holy Spirit

The activities of the Holy Spirit are evident from the Old Testament addressed as the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, the son of Kenaz to deliver Israel from the king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:10). Similarly, the Spirit of the Lord descended upon Gideon and he prepared Israel, blew trumpet to war against the Midianites (Judges 6:34). Other activities of the Holy Spirit include His descent on Jephthah (Judges 11:29), in the camp of Dan (Judges 13:25), on Sampson (Judges 14:6; 14:19). Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity active in church growth is crucial for the understanding of church growth theology.

The Person of the Holy Spirit is fundamental to church growth. As said earlier the Holy Spirit teaches (John 14:26), testifies (John 15:26), and guides (John 16:13). He performs actions that demonstrate a divine personality. He convicts (16:8), He regenerates and gives us new life (Titus 3:5), Intercedes on behalf of the believer (Rom 8:26). By implication all these activities of the Holy Spirit are crucial in the work of church growth.

Filling with the Holy Spirit is an index to church growth. Paul asked the Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit instead of wine (Eph 5:18). Its implication to church growth is that those filled with the Spirit will manifest the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness and faith to mention a few (Gal 5:22). When Ogoja Church members are filled with the Holy Spirit, preaching of the gospel like Peter and Paul, will be a natural outcome and the church will grow.

Repentance

The theme of the message of John the Baptist was repentance and baptism unto the remission of sin (Matt 3:8, 11, 13; 9:13; Mark 1:4; 2:17; Luke 3:3,8). Apostle Paul referred to John's message (Acts 19:4) and preached similarly to both Jews and Greeks, "repentance towards God, and faith towards our lord Jesus Christ.

When people heard the sermon of Peter, they were pricked in their heart and requested Peter and the apostles what they must do to be saved. Peter replied them; "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:37-39). This implies that genuine repentance in Ogoja Church will usher in a new era of church without bitterness.

Obedience

Obedience which comes from the Holy Spirit is vital for church growth. Church growth experts declare, "that the most important thing to multiply churches is to obey our Lord Jesus Christ in childlike faith and love."

By following the seven basic commands of Christ; 1) Repent, believe, and receive the Holy Spirit (conversion) (Mark 1:15; John3:16; 20:22); 2) Be baptized and live a new life of transformation (Matthew 28:18-20); 3) Love God, neighbor, fellow disciples, and the needy in a practical way and to forgive enemies (Matthew 22:36-40; John 13:34-35; Luke 10:25-37; Matthew5:43-48); 3) Break bread (Communion), Matthew 26:26-28; John 4:24. Others are 5) Prayer –private and family devotions, intercession and spiritual warfare (John 16:2); 6) Give— Stewardship of time, treasure, and talent, (Luke 6:38); 7) Make Disciples –witness for Christ, shepherd,

apply the word, train leaders, send missionaries (Matthew 28:18-20).¹⁶ The researcher believes that godly obedience will help Ogoja Church.

Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual Gifts of the Holy Spirit facilitate church growth. When Christians discover and use their spiritual gifts the church grows naturally. And these gifts include; Apostle, prophecy, miracles, healing, tongues and interpretation of tongues. Others are knowledge, evangelism, pastor-teacher, helps, faith, exhortation, mercy among others. And this reduces mediocrity, and struggle for power and encourages cooperative, compensational ministry and specialization. With these, the church will experience exponential growth. Without doubt, gift-based ministries will regenerate Igoli-Ogoja Church for missions.

The Word and Church Growth

The power of God's word in accomplishing salvation cannot be expressed. Hence the real meaning of church growth is conveying the living Word to a lost world so that God's church may grow. The Hebrews writer testifies eloquently to the power of the Word: "For the Word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword" (Heb 4:12).

The Word, "Bible" (from Greek *biblion*, commonly translated "book" or roll." The papyrus plant that grew along the Nile was called *Byblos* from which scrolls for writing were made) or the Scriptures (that is, English translation of the Greek *graphe* which literally means "writing." Whether used as noun *graphe* or verb *grapho* always refers to the Scriptures). The Scriptures as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16 is "God-breathed,"

¹⁶ George Patterson and Richard Scoggins, *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle of Church Reproduction* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2002), 21–22.

divine origin, and revelation, completely authoritative and without error in all that it teaches.¹⁷

Proclamation of the Word

Proclamation of the Word is strategic for church growth. Moses reminded the Israelites of God's unity and oneness (Deut.4:35). Before entering Canaan, Moses gave Israel their great confession of faith, the ancient Shema (Deut.6:4), these emphasize the unique, unmatched deity of Jehovah (Erickson). These words of Shema are followed with strict admonition in Deut.6:35. It demands total commitment and devotion to God alone. Isaiah's declaration makes it absolute: I am first and last no other God beside me (Isa.44:6).

The proclamation of God's word to the people of Nineveh brought repentance and the prevention of God's anger on them (Jonah 3:1-10). That great city of 120 inhabitants heard the message of Jonah and repented and believed God. The king laid aside his robe, proclaimed a fast from the greatest to the least and published it through a decree in the whole city (Jonah3:1-10). Another striking example is the confession and worship of the God of Daniel by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon after the narration and the interpretation the king's dream (Daniel 2:46, 47).

Reading of God's law during King Josiah's revival brought repentance and true restoration (2Kings 22:1-20; 2Chron 35:1-19). The Ezra and Nehemiah revivals turned many hearts to God (Ezra 9:9; Neh 8:8). It is the power of God unto salvation (Rom 1:16), the source of faith development (Rom10:17), to mention a few.

His Word Aflame is a permanent factor for church growth. An important theology of mission is the missionary nature of the Bible. John Terry sees the Bible as

¹⁷ Thomas S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1993), 87.

the record of the missionary activity of God and its special revelation forms the biblical basis of missions. This missionary motif could be the key to its unity and wholeness.¹⁸ Through the word of God Noah built the Ark (Gen 6:7-16), Abraham left his kindred and country to places God led him (Gen 12:1-8).

The divine nature of the Bible is clearly evident in the Scriptures itself. The divine origin of the Bible for nearly four thousand times is clearly demonstrated in the Scriptures with "God said" or "the Lord said" (Lev 4:1; Isa 1:10; Jer 1:11). Similarly, Paul and other New Testament writers affirms its divine origin (1Cor 14:37; 2Pet 1:16-21). It is also a unique revelation from God and of God in the disclosure of Himself in history, and nature. Besides, it is God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16) written by persons superintended by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21). As a result, the written word (Heb 4:12) reveals accurately and without error our understanding of Jesus the incarnate Word (John 1:1, 14). Furthermore, the essence of church growth is the communication of the living Word to a lost world so that God's church may grow.¹⁹

The Power of the Word

The fact that the Bible is God-given and God-inspired, it is capable of accomplishing God's purpose of salvation as stated earlier. The writer of Hebrews testifies eloquently, the power of the Word: For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. (Heb 4:12). Through its proclamation, God saves those who believe (1 Cor 1:2). The church growth declares a Savior who is known through the written Word. In other word, the Written Word itself is powerful,

¹⁸ John Mark Terry, *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, ed. Ebbie C Smith and Justice Anderson (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 10.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 87–88.

piercing the hearts that may be added to His church and to His kingdom.²⁰

The word: authoritative Source for church growth. Although, Church growth as a discipline applies history, sociology and other behavioral sciences as tools through biblical hermeneutics to determine why churches grow or decline, the Bible remains its authoritative source. For example, when Martin Luther nailed the Ninety-Five Theses on the door at Wittenberg in 1517, stating the abuses of the Catholic Church he emphasized sola scriptura, the authority of the Scriptures. Neither church, nor councils could speak above the authority of God's Word.²¹

God's People/ Christian Community Life

In the Old Testament, God's people lived godly community life in such a way that it attracted non-Israelites. From Noah's time, godly men continued to build altar (man's outward expression of faith in, and worship of God, different from that of other nations), thereby making God known to other nations. Abraham erected altar at different places wherever the patriarch stayed (Gen 12:7-8; 13:18), Jacob did similarly (Gen 33:20; 35:7), Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David and other ancient believers built altars for sacrifice or in commemoration of great events. The Israelites lived in community governed by unique laws of heaven that made Israel special and superior to other nations (Gen 12:8).

The early church in Jerusalem made great impart in their neighboring communities through family-connected life that was characterized by love, warmth cooperation and care to mention a few. Their communal life projected the image, beauty, oneness of God that attracted unbelievers and by which the Lord added to the

²⁰ Terry, *Missiology*, 89.

²¹ Ibid.

church daily those that should be saved (Acts2:47).

Fellowship

Fellowship (Greek: *Koinonia*) is "an abstract term from *koinonos* and *koinono*, denotes "participation," "fellowship" especially with a close bond." This was one of the preoccupations of the early church (Acts 2:42), it is similarly seen in Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church (1Cor 1:9), practiced by the Macedonia Church and Paul encouraged the Corinthians to take a cue (2Cor 8:4). In addition, among others, the Philippians were encouraged in fellowship (Phil 1:5; 2:1; 3:10).

Relational Graces

God's relational graces granted to the Israelites are clearly evident in the life of Joseph in Potiphar's house, such that he could appoint him overseer of all his estate (Gen 39:4-6). Similarly in the prison, Joseph related so well to his fellow inmates, interpreted their dreams (the Chief Butler and Baker), that he could be remembered to interpret Pharaoh's dream which eventually elevated him to the throne in Egypt (Gen 41:39-45). Others include Abraham's entertainment of Angels that resulted in the salvation of Lot and his two daughters (Gen 18:7-15, 23-32).

Naaman's slave girl and Naaman who acknowledged Israel's God as the God of all the Earth (2Kings 5:3-), Nehemiah in the court of Artaxerxes who had the honor to be the kings friend and counselor (Neh 2:1-9). Hosea's marriage is a special case of God's love for His wayward people that borders on relational evangelism beyond comprehension (Hosea1:1-11).

Others are the woman at the well (John 4:7-24). Jesus' relationship with the disciples which extended to His audience was uniquely manifested in the care and feeding of the five and four thousand men (Luke 9:12-17; Mark 8:1-9). Also noticeable was Jesus' relationship with Lazarus, Mary and Martha of Bethany (John

11:1, 2) which was awesome. Paul, Lydia, Paul and the family of Priscilla and Aquila were also reached through relational grace (Acts 18:1-4).

Invitations and Visits

In the Old Testament, King Solomon was visited by the Queen of Sheba who came to prove the name of God and the Wisdom of Solomon (I king 10:1-4). As a result of the wise and understanding heart God gave him according to his request, in addition to his riches and honor, King Solomon became the wonder of the world. The Queen saw beyond her expectations, and was satisfied, believed and blessed the name of God (10:6-10). In the New Testament, the graces God granted Jesus and the church includes the invitations of Simeon Peter to Andrew (John 1:35-42), Andrew to Nathaniel (John1:45-49), Jesus' to Zacchaeus (Luke 19:5).

Discipleship

The English word “disciple” is translated from the Greek word, “*Mathetes*” which means a student who attaches himself to a teacher for the purpose of acquiring practical and theoretical knowledge. In New Testament, “it is used to indicate total attachment to someone in discipleship.”²² The word "disciple" occurs 250 times in the New Testament. Jesus’ description of disciple in five biblical texts of the New Testament explains the total surrender and devotion required, that makes a disciple instrument for church growth.

They include: that a disciple will endure accusations like the Master (Matt 10:24-25); forsake all things including family relations and be prepared give his best to the gospel commission even when it demands suffering (Luke 14:26-27, 33). Other

²² Russell Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus* (Fallbrook, CA: Heart Research Centre, 1999), 10–11.

understanding of a disciple is that he will continue in Jesus' word to know the truth (John 8:31-32); the disciple must be loving as Jesus loves people (John 13:34). Finally the disciple must bear much fruit to glorify the Father (John 15:8). Ellen G. White makes it clear that the profession of religion qualifies people to belong to a church but people's character and conduct show whether they are in connection with Christ.²³

Mentorship

Mentoring in the Old Testament is clearly evident in the prophetic ministries of Eli and Samuel (1Sam 3:1-10), Elijah and Elisha (2Kings 2:2) then Elisha and trainee prophets in the school of prophets (2Kings 6:1-7). In the New Testament, it is manifest in Jesus' ministry and the twelve (Matt 5:1; 10:1-5), Paul and Timothy (1Tim 1:2), to mention a few.

Evidence of Church Growth in the Bible

Although it is not quite explicit the existence of church or its growth in the Old Testament, the gathering or assemble of God's children alludes to that. In the New Testament, there are abundant evidences of church growth.

It may be said that God started His church in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve (Gen 2:1-3). This assertion could be justified with an operational definition of church as: "when two or three are gathered in God's name" (Matt 18:20). In that sense Adam and Eve could be described as a church. Ellen G. White's insight adds more emphasis: "the Sabbath and the family was alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together."²⁴

Doctor Luke, the Gospel writer, gives a clarification. In Acts 7:38 he describes

²³ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1954), 676.

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1954), 135.

the congregation of God's people in the wilderness as church. Furthermore, the Greek word for church (Greek: *Ekklesia* means 'the called out'). Revelation 18:4 says: "Come out of her my people." Abraham was called out (Gen 12:1-3). *Ekklesia* has been used in New Testament as "gathering" "congregation", "assembly" of God's people. It is also variously described as one, believers assembled for worship in a specific place (1 Cor 11:18, 14:19, 28), two Believers living in a certain locality (1Cor 16:1, Gal 1:2 1Thess 2:14), 3), three a group of believers in a home of an individual (1Cor 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phil.2) and four a congregation in a given geographical area (Acts. 9:31). Other uses of *Ekklesia* comprise the whole body of believers throughout the world (Matt. 16:18; 1Cor. 10:32; 12:28; cf Eph. 4:11-16) and whole Faithful creation in heaven and on earth (Eph. 1:20-22; cf Phil. 2:9-11).

The Children of Israel (Acts 7:38)

The total number of souls, children of Jacob that accompanied him to Egypt was sixty-six (Gen 32:46). Adding Joseph's household gives a grand total of seventy souls; children of Jacob that went to Egypt (32:27). After four hundred years in Egypt, Jacob or Israel's family membership increased to six hundred and fifty thousand men excluding women and children. This is an indication of biological numerical growth which can be consolidated in Ogoja Church through Bible study and prayer.

The Revived People of God

In Joshua's revival, he assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem and rehearsed Israel's history from Terah the father of Abraham and urged them to choose whom to serve (Joshua 24:1-15). And the people vowed to serve god of their father who brought them out of Egypt (24:16, 17).

The restoration of King Josiah witnessed destruction of all images and idols and the workers of familiar spirits and wizards. The feast of Passover was reinstated

in Jerusalem (2Kings 23:1-24). All these were acceptable to God and the piety of his followers but God's anger was hot for the sins of past generations (23:25-26).

Nehemiah and Ezra's revival comforted the people as they read and taught the Law of Moses and observed the festival of booths tabernacle (Neh 8:1-10:28-29). To this Ellen G. White's insight indicates that the people expressed gratitude, experienced rejoicing, benevolence and trust in God's love and care.²⁵ In later years when the law of God was read to returned exiles in Jerusalem, the people wept because of their transgression and covenanted to obey Him (10:28-39). These are evidences of revival and church growth which can stimulate growth in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church. This could be possible when an intentional revival is conducted such as this program implementation.

There is abundant evidence that the mission progress of the Old Testament was continued in the New Testament.²⁶ This explains the uniqueness of the Scriptures as coming from one source. Hence both the Old and New Testaments are for church growth.

Jesus and His Disciples

Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee called the disciples with the promise to make them fisher of men (Matt 4:18-22). Ellen G, White's comment reveals that as the people were called the spell of the world's enchantment was broken. The spirit of greed and ambition departed from their hearts and they were freed to follow the Savior.²⁷

²⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 2004), 281.

²⁶ Donald C. P. Senior and Carroll C. P. Stuhmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 141.

²⁷ White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 25.

Though Jesus came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel (), His approach to the Gentiles shows the universal motif of His ministry. Jesus' encounters with Gentiles such as the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mark 7:24-30) and the Centurion (Matt 8:5-10) are clear evidences of the universal dimensions of His ministry.²⁸ This means positive indication of the Great Commission in advance. There is the need to prayerfully call members of Ogoja to the gospel mandate and this study is set to achieve that.

Jesus and the twelve disciples constituted small group church. The Sermon on the Mount showcased Jesus and His disciples. This small group church was bathed with mission consciousness as her first public appearance began with public evangelism. The disciples were to learn by examples and precepts, as to represent their master both by words and action. Hence as Jesus addressed the multitude the disciples also heard for themselves the principles of the kingdom. These comprised the beatitudes, God's people to make the difference as light and salt of the world. Jesus elaborated the law about anger, sexual sin, oaths taking, and love towards enemies and being perfect as our heavenly father is, and others. In other words, Jesus used sermons and teaching sessions such as this to train and educate the disciples. Interestingly, Jesus has the exceptional gift of explaining complicated issues by using simple illustrations drawn from real life experiences and from the natural world.

Jesus healed all kinds of sicknesses and diseases practically as he moved along with his disciples. By implication, He was teaching how they could do the same. Notable among those diseases were the bleeding woman who demonstrated a touch of faith (Matt 9:20). The raising of the dead girl (9:23-26), and the demon possessed man

²⁸ White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 142.

(9:32-34). Towards the end of the Galilean Ministry Jesus said to them that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers (9:37, 38). These disciples must have learnt Christ's examples in character, outreach, teaching, prayer, perseverance, love and self-sacrifice.²⁹

Subsequently, Jesus appointed the Twelve and gave power to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of sicknesses and diseases. (Matt 10:1). He instructed them to go the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and preach that the kingdom of God is at hand, in addition to a host of other instructions (10:6-21). When the disciples returned they gave report of their evangelism effort. (Luke 9:10). The training and examples of Jesus in prayer and others learned by the disciples were fitting models of successful church growth strategies, which by implication are evidences of church growth. If such efforts and examples are adopted in Ogoja Church, it will grow.

Jesus and the seventy disciples are evidence of a growing church. Now the small church group of twelve has numerically increased to seventy. Similarly, Jesus sent them out two by two into every city and place they can go. He did not send them without strict instructions as in the former. He began by reminding them that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few (Luke 10:2). Then this was followed by a catalogue of instructions as could be seen in Luke Chapter ten verses three to sixteen.

The Seventy returned again joyfully with beautiful reports. Graphically put that the demons were submissive to them through the name of Jesus (10:17). Jesus, however, cautioned them not to rejoice because of the miracles but they should rejoice that their names are written in the book of life in heaven (10:20). Jesus rejoiced with the disciples because the purpose of His mission of earth is being met (10:21, 22). In

²⁹ Robin Daniel, *Mission Strategies Then and Now: An Introduction to Biblical Missiology* (Chester, UK: Tamarisk, 2012), 19–26.

this church of Seventy growth is evident.

Besides, the mentorship model of training played out very clearly in Jesus' interaction with His disciples. He emptied Himself in the disciple that they may behave and work like Him. Mentorship is a component of church growth, which can help the church in Ogoja to grow.

Jesus and the one hundred and twenty portray a fast-growing church.

The membership of the small church has increased to one hundred and twenty. Jesus loves his disciples such that after His resurrection, he stayed around them for forty days. Now that He was about to ascend into heaven, he assured them of the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5.). For this to be possible, the disciples were to wait for the promise of the Father (1:4). They are not to leave Jerusalem to other places until they are imbued with power. And this promise of the Father is needful for the worldwide mission mandate given to the church. Hence Jesus said: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (1:8).

The apostles returned to Jerusalem and went up to the upper room as they were commanded to do (1:12, 13). And they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication (1:14), desiring for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them, for them to be fitted to witness for Christ and win souls for Him. Following their sincerity of purpose God sent the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost day (2:1-2). And they began to speak in tongues and to preach boldly in the name of Jesus. Peter could preach and three thousand souls were baptized. This is another instance of church growth per excellent. The researcher strongly believes that Ogoja SDA Church will attain this spiritual height through prayers.

The Church in Jerusalem

This church began with 120 members including the apostles who prayed together in the upper room (1:12-15). When the day of Pentecost came they had the experience of the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised in Acts 1:8 before His ascension. They began to speak in tongues to declare the gospel of the risen Savior (2:1-4). Peter's preaching won 3,000 souls that were baptized. Therefore, this congregation grew from 120 to 3,000 which by analysis is almost twenty-five times growth

Additionally, in Acts 2:47 Luke says that "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Similarly, in 4:4 people who heard the message believed and the number of men increased to about five thousand. Likewise, in 5:14 multitudes of believers; men and women added to the church.

This is explosive growth through the principles of prayer, the Holy Spirit, inspiring worship, and signs and wonders (5:12). In like manners, Luke says that the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly and that many priest became obedient to the faith (6:1, 7). Besides, many thousands of Jews believed through preaching of the Word and the testimony of Paul (21:20). The early church encountered different cultures in their time and yet grew and expanded. If similar practices of the early church are introduced to Ogoja Church, the church will develop.

A Study of the Early Church Model of Church Growth

Apart from the expeditions and growth of missions in the Old Testament, history of church growth can be traced to the early church. The New Testament church was established in fulfillment of Christ promise at Caesarea Philippi to build His church (Matt 16:18) and was inducted or inaugurated with the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit supernaturally empowered the church

and granted her multiple converts (Acts 2:41) which marked the beginning of church growth and church planting.

The Early Church and Church Growth

First, the church was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), after they have waited upon the Lord ten days in the upper room (Acts 1:12-16). Ellen G. White reveals that the disciples did not wait in idleness, but in prayer and blessing to God continually in the temple (Luke 24:53), and claimed His promise; "Whatsoever you ask in My name you will receive" (John 16:23, 24), was reflected on His life, teachings, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession at the right hand of God.

In addition, they sincerely humbled their heart in true repentance and confession, recalled and understood all He taught them. The disciples had passion for souls and prayed earnestly for the promised power of the Holy Spirit to witness (Acts 1:8). They put aside their differences and desired for supremacy and prayed fervently for fitness to win souls for Jesus. They determined to bravely confess Christ to the world as a way to atone for their unbelief when Christ was with them.

They were together in Christian fellowship and there was unity among them. From a closer study of Act 2:42-47, the church understood the message of the risen Savior as a service of love for the Master and a moral duty to humanity and were obligated to do it selflessly, without any inclination to power, influence or any personal benefit. In fact, they perceived it a privilege to be Christ's disciple and to work for Him. The leaders were led by the Holy Spirit, and the church grew spiritually.

Humility and selflessness, service of love and fellowship if passionately introduced in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church will turn the course of

decline to both spiritual and numerical growth. People were elected (6:5) and the members worked according to their spiritual gifts as were empowered by the Holy Spirit. There were signs and wonders (2:11), Peter preached and about 3,000 were converted and miracles performed (2:41; 3:4-7). Explosive church growth was recorded with 5,000 converts (4:4), and Stephen preached powerfully (6:8). Phillip led by the Holy Spirit preached and baptized men and women in Samaria (8:12) and the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:35, 36).

The churches in Judah, Galla and Samaria were sustained by the Holy Spirit. Cornelius' family and friends were converted by the Holy Spirit's instruction to Peter (10:19; 11:14-18). The power of the Holy Spirit is inevitable in gospel ministry as insightfully asserted by Craig.³⁰

The researcher strongly posits that the presence of the Holy Spirit in Igoli-Ogoja Church bring out the best in the people, because members will discover their spiritual gift and employ them more efficiently. And the church will grow.

Spiritual Disciplines and Training of the Early Church

As the early church members detached themselves from previous relations, they disciplined themselves in the apostles' teaching, breaking of bread, praises and fellowship. They invested not only time, but energy and resources and some sold their property and brought proceeds (Acts 2:45).

All these emphasize the stewardship of money, time, and resources and especially love and care for the young Christian community. Attachment to the world and looking up to the society for standards and aspiration is one of the latent causes of

³⁰ Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, and Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 238.

church plateau. If such stewardship practices, love and detachment from the world is prayerfully introduced in Ogoja Church, a Christian community will exist there.

The early church engaged in Prayer and teaching ministries (Acts 2:42), and refused to serve table (Acts 6:1-4). This is a ministry of combination that could have killed their focus. They had no ulterior motive and so fulfilled a requirement according to Craig Ott Stephen J. Strauss "the church as a sign of the kingdom is an ecclesia, a called out assembly whose public life is a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument to which God is inviting all creation in Jesus Christ."³¹

Early church Christian activities fueled by the Holy Spirit also brought about nurture, care and hope in the second advent of Christ. The early churches' strategy and method for church growth appears to be holistic and caring for all the dimensions of life thereby preparing them for both internal and external transformations.

Spiritual disciplines such as prayer and teaching and studying ministries are essential for Igoli-Ogoja Church. In fact the balanced nurture and care will more than mere preaching without care bring non-believers to the church.

The apostles preached every day (Acts 19:8), which naturally involves retentiveness and memorization as they were devoted to words and prayer. The people asked for repentance (Acts 2:3, 3:19, 8:22, 13:38, 17:30, 19:18) and it brought both inner and external revival and transformation (Acts 2:43-47). Also, Paul emphasized inner changes and offering oneself as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2). Indeed, rote practices will naturally prepare many people for witness and evangelism in Ogoja Church like fire in the bones that cannot be stopped.

Spiritual disciplines for church growth are prerequisite. There are spiritual

³¹ Ott, Strauss, and Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, 196.

disciplines that are prerequisite for church growth. They include studying the word, witnessing, meditation, devotional life, fasting and prayer, practice and service, attachment to the community of faith among others. These spiritual disciplines help to develop spiritual characteristics such as faith, hope, and love and others.

Spirituality of the Early Church Tool for Church Growth

The Spirituality of the early church was unequalled and represented the ideal, that God required of the Israelites at mount Sinai for which he said, if they will obey His voice, they will become "a kingdom of Priest and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). Noticeable among them were faith, fellowship, oneness, holiness, universality and apostolicity.³² God's relationship with us is the foundation of our relationship with each other (John 15:15; 13:34, 35) which in turn imparts the growth of church. Also, God works in unity; hence it was manifest in His church (John 10:31; 17:20-23). Besides, communication will mean many voices with single heart and competence will lead to excellence.

Other admirable qualities of team players that will characterize Ogoja Church include dependability, discipline, enthusiasm, intentionality to mention a few.³³ God is the God of fellowship as seen in Jesus (Mark 1:29-31; Luke 14:1).

The caring attitude of the early church (Acts 2:45) stems from the tender caring heart of God, who alone supplies the needs of all His creatures at all times (Exod 16:35; Deut 8:16; Neh 9:20; Matt 6:25-33; Phil 4:19). Remarkably, Jesus advocated for humble service and exemplified it in His Ministry (Luke 4:18-21; Phil

³² Raoul Dederen, "Characteristics of the Church," in *Handbook of Seventh - day Adventist Theology*, vol. 12 (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 539.

³³ John C. Maxwell, *The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player: Becoming the Kind of Person Every Team Wants* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 1, 10, 19, 28, 37, 46, 71, 80.

2:5-11; Acts 10:38). The early church took a cue from that the early church (Acts 2:46). In addition, the early church "continued steadfastly with one accord (2:26).

God is the God of fellowship as seen in Jesus (Mark 1:29-31; Luke 14:1). God is a healer and restorer (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:3; Malachi 4:2; Matt 4:23; Luke 4:18,19). And this is consistent with the healings that characterized the early church's ministry (Acts 3:3-8). The fact is that God exudes in renewal (Psalm 103:5; Matt 11:29-30). God celebrates and rejoices. His celebration at creation ushered in the Sabbath (Gen 2:1-3), He rejoices when sinners return to Him (Luke 15 :) and He will celebrate at the marriage super of the Lamb (19:7-9).

Besides, the early church depended upon the Holy Spirit who empowered and used them. This is in conformity with the most precious promise of God's grace, to give them power after the Holy Ghost is come upon them (Acts 1:8). Interestingly, these attitudes and characteristics of the early church are the spiritual tools for church growth.

The miracles that amplified the Apostles gospel work is an authentic instrument to Cultivate churches. Obviously, genuine miraculous signs and wonders imparted by the Holy Spirit is clearly needed today in Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church. More so, the early church spirituality is worth emulating by the Ogoja Church.

Church in Cornelius House Acts 10:1-10; 14:27

Cornelius was a Roman centurion, a noble and a man of high standing. He was a proselyte, a man who sought God sincerely and was diligent in prayers. He was popular for his generous alms giving (10:2). He had a vision at the 9th hour of an angel of the Lord (10:3) who announced to him an answer to his prayers and alms

giving which were before the Holy throne of God (10:4).

The angel directed him to send for Simon surnamed Peter who was lodging in the house Simon the tanner at Joppa's river side who will tell him what he needs to do for his salvation (10:5-6). Rehearsing his experience with the angel of the Lord, he sent two of his private servant and his trusted orderly. The next day the three messengers set out and got to Joppa at the sixth hour when Peter went to the house top to pray. Incidentally Peter was hungry and desired to eat but he suddenly fell into a trance (10:9-10).

He saw the heaven opened and a certain four cornered basket descending to the earth, but containing all kinds of unclean animals. And he immediately heard a voice to him: "rise Peter kill and eat." Then he replied, not so Lord, I have not eaten anything common or unclean (10:11-14). The voice spoke again and said: "what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." This happened three times and the basket was taken back to heaven.

When Peter was thinking about the vision to understand its meaning, the messengers of Cornelius had arrived and the Spirit said to him three men are looking for you (10:15). He went down to see them. After hearing Cornelius message understood the meaning of the vision and followed them to Cornelius house (10:22-27). Then Peter explain the vision he saw, how God instructed him not to call any man common or unclean (10:28).

Peter then preached to him and his household, the message of the crucified, dead and risen savior and they all believed and while he was yet speaking Holy Ghost fell upon them (10:44). Then Peter commanded that they be baptized in the name of Lord and it was done (10:48).

This is church growth per excellent. God can direct people to His church in

difficult places like Ogoja. All it requires is to prepare people whom God can use and through the grace of God this project will achieve this all important goal of growing church at Ogoja.

Paul and his Ministry

Paul was assigned to carry the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; Eph. 3:1-12), but he usually begins his ministry among the Jews, usually at the local synagogue where the Old Testament was known and revered. So that he could get the sympathy of the Jewish audience and of the “God-fearers” and from the latter, minister to the Gentiles. The converts at Thessalonica included Jews and a great multitude of devout Greeks who were attracted by the One God and morality of Judaism (Acts 17:4). Paul started with Barnabas at Antioch (Acts 11:25-26; 12:24-25) and later added John Mark (12:25) and continued with Silas and Timothy (17:4, 10).

Paul’s ministry expanded God’s church in Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, Ephesus and others. A brief look at these churches will discover some church growth strategies that led to their development.

The church in Antioch (Act 11:19-27; 13:13-50). The dispersion of the disciples after the stoning of Stephen made many disciples to travel as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch (11:19). Among them were men from Cyprus and prophecies Cyrene who came to Antioch to preach to the Grecians there, about the Lord Jesus (11:20). The Lord was with them and a great number of Grecians believed and gave their lives to God (10:21).

This good news got to Jerusalem so the church sent Barnabas to Antioch (11:22) who later went to Tarsus in search of Saul (later called Paul). He brought him to Antioch and for one whole year they stayed in Antioch church teaching many people. Hence the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

The second time Paul and company came to Antioch he exhorted the congregation. He stood and preached a historical sermon about Israel, the prophecies and their fulfillment in John the Baptist and Jesus. His message was well received such that the gentiles requested its repeat the next Sabbath. The next Sabbath nearly the whole city were assembled to hear the message afresh. Seeing the multitude the Jews became envious and caused uproar. However, Paul and Barnabas boldly spoke and many that believed were ordained for eternal life. The people glorified God and the message of the risen Savior was published in the whole region.

Though Paul and Barnabas were driven out of the city, the many that believed are clear proof of church growth. More importantly the persistent, bold and passionate admonitions of Barnabas and Paul are growth strategies that can be used to foster growth in Ogoja Church.

Later when the brethren visited the church he (Paul) encouraged them to continue in the faith. They also ordained elders in the church after fasting and prayers (14:21-23). All these are additional strategies that Igoli-Ogoja Church will exploit.

The church in Thessalonica. As Paul reasoned and preached in the synagogue at Thessalonica, many people believed (17:1-4). But the unbelieving Jews were envious and caused uproar using miscreants to break the house of Jason to bring the apostles out. Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful hence; they embarrassed Jason accusing him of treason before the rulers, for having Jesus as king instead of Caesar (17:5-9). The brethren sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea (17:10-11). Paul and Silas' ministry in Thessalonica may not be adjudged as unsuccessful because the gospel has been preached. There is no doubt that the experience of Paul in Thessalonica will repeat at Ogoja. The power of the Holy Spirit through prayers and God's word will perform the miracle.

The church in Corinth (18:1-6). Paul found Aquila and Priscilla who returned from Rome because of the Decree of Claudius. Paul lived with them because they have the same vocation—tent making (18:3). He worshipped and preached in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. But when they opposed themselves, Paul shook his clothes and said: “your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles” (18:6).

Notwithstanding, Paul baptized many Corinthians among whom are Justus and his family who lived adjacent to the synagogue and Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue and his family. God graciously encouraged Paul by the night vision to keep preaching that He has much people in the city. Finally, God promised to be with him and that nobody will hurt him (18:9-10). As an obedient servant, Paul stayed in the city six months more preaching eloquently the word (18:11).

Again the Jews planned mutiny against Paul and arraigned him before Gallio, Achaia’s deputy charging him of false teaching (18:12-13). Gallio discharged the matter on grounds of religion since it was not a criminal or civil offence (18:14-15). Then on behalf of Paul, all the Greeks seized Sosthenes the chief ruler of the synagogue and assaulted him before the judgment seat but Gallio ignored them (18:17). So Paul stayed with them for some times before he proceeded to Syria. Finally, Apollos became a member of the Corinthian church (19:1).

Summarily, Paul’s missionary journey to Corinth evidenced church growth because, many people were baptized. Especially the baptism of the two key leaders and their households (Justus and Crispus) of the Synagogue in Corinth was a landmark achievement. Besides, the team spirit of Paul, Aquila and Priscilla will help the church in Ogoja and despite challenges that may come; God’s word must succeed in Ogoja as it succeeded in Corinth.

The church in Ephesus. As Paul arrived Ephesus, with Priscilla and Aquila (18:18, 19) he preached. He entered the synagogue and had logical argument with the Jews (18:19) and they pleaded with him to stay longer but he objected because he had proposed to travel to Jerusalem to keep the feast (18:21).

Then Apollos a Jew and a gifted public speaker, born in Alexandria and knowledgeable in the scriptures came to Ephesus Church. This man was bold and taught the doctrines of the Lord diligently, but he was only aware of John's baptism. To encourage him, Aquila and Priscilla took him to their house and taught properly (18:24-26). And when he proposed to travel to Achaia, the brethren in Ephesus gave him a recommendation letter, so that the Achaia brethren may receive him (18:27).

Paul returns to Ephesus church and was looking for certain disciples (19:1). Paul rebaptized them in the name of Jesus because they had John's baptism which was not accompanied with the Holy Spirit (19:5). And as he laid his hand upon the twelve disciples, the Holy Ghost came upon them; they spoke in tongues and prophesied (19:6, 7).

Paul had three months evangelism in Ephesus during which he persuaded the people on the doctrine of God's kingdom. But when he came across hardened unbelievers, Paul carefully separated the disciples from them to the school of one Tyranus where he continued his teaching daily for the next two years (19:9, 10).

God performed special miracles through Paul such that people were healed and demons possessed were also delivered through his handkerchiefs (19:11, 12). In addition, the seven sons of Sceva (a Jewish Chief Priest) who emulated Paul were humiliated by the devil (19:14-16). This news went round and brought fear upon both the Ephesians and Jews and God's name was magnified. Consequently, many that believed came and confessed and confirmed it by their deeds (19:18).

With these great miracles Demetrius (a silversmith who made wealth from the craft of making shrines for Diana) and the worship of Diana were threatened (19:24-28). For this reason he (Demetrius) and his co-craft men caused pandemonium throughout Ephesus in addition to arresting Paul's companions—Gaius and Aristarchus (19:29). However, this case was dismissed by the Towns clerk for want of criminal evidence (19:35-41).

In summary, Paul's preaching in the first missionary journey that moved the church members to request that he stays longer must have been very fruitful. His return to Ephesus and rebaptism of twelve disciples are strategic for church growth. More so the great miracles God performed through him, the disgrace of the seven sons of Scevae, that led many people to believe is an immense achievement for church growth. The Lord can replicate these experiences in Ogoja SDA Church.

Other churches. These include the churches in Macedonia (Acts 16:9-16), where Paul received a night vision, to go to Macedonia. Paul and Silas went and stayed there for some days and on the Sabbath, they went to the riverside outside the city to worship. Lydia a seller of purple was baptized. Subsequently, she requested that Paul and Silas may come to stay in her house. A damsel who was possessed with the spirit of divination, who also made much gain for her master followed with loud shout. Paul through the power of God cast out the demon.

Consequently, Paul and Silas were dragged to the market place, stripped naked, beaten and thrown to the prison. The Apostles have to pray and sing and earthquake struck and threw the prison doors open. When the jailor saw it, he attempted to take his life believing that the apostles had escaped. Paul said to him: "do thy self no harm for we are all here." The prison official seeing that it was a miracle offered himself and the family to be baptized (16:33-34). Subsequently the apostles

were released from prison (16:35-40). These activities are visible indications of church growth. They comprise the baptisms of Lydia, the jailor and his family and the miracle.

Others are the Church in Berea (17:11) where many of people believed; both Greeks and honorable women alike (17:12). When the Thessalonians Jews heard that Paul was preaching in Berea, they came and stirred the people. Also, Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea (17:14-15).

The fact that many people believed, and were studying the scriptures daily, shows that growth activities and strategies have taken root in the Berean church. This experience may be very discouraging however God can use some people in Ogoja Church to achieve His purposes even in the face of danger.

The Church in Athens is famous for Paul's persevering gospel work especially the Mars hill episode (17:16, 17). He Paul stood in the midst of mars hill and preached about the unknown God. In response the people mocked him preaching about resurrection among doctrines unacceptable to them (17:22-32)

However, certain men believed the teaching and stayed with him, among them are Dionysius the Areopagite and Damaris (17:34). The fact that these men believed and were subsequently baptized, clearly indicate that growth has occurred. When the gospel is preached powerfully through the Holy Spirit, Ogoja Church member and non-members will stick together to the Lord and the church will grow.

The Church in Iconium witnessed many Jews and Greeks believed the gospel (Acts 14). The Lord performed signs and wonders there to authenticate Paul's message. But the Jews stirred up the people against the apostles and there was division between the apostles and the Jews. Nevertheless, God's words was been preached which is evidence of church growth activity.

Similarly, the church in Lystra and Derbe where the Lord performed miraculous healing of the man with impotent leg from his birth is sign of God's action. And the people acclaimed that: "the gods are come in the likeness of men" (14:11). Later Paul and Barnabas visited Lystra to encourage the disciples to continue in the faith. They ordained elders in every church after fasting and prayers (14:21-23).

In this church there was evidence of church growth activities indicated by the ordination of Elders, fasting and prayers, encouragement to continue in faith and the miracle of healing. The researcher strongly believes that God can do all these great things in Ogoja Church.

Finally, he Churches in Syria and Celicia (Acts 15:41) the Church in Achaia Apollos was received and he became an asset to the believers because he consolidated their faith (18:27). Besides, he preached greatly and eloquently in the public and convinced the Jews from the scriptures, that Jesus was Christ (18:28). Preaching is an important activity for growing churches. The Church in Caesarea was visited by Paul on his way to back to Antioch (18:22). This could be called encouragement visit, which strengthens church member's faith to continue in the activities of church Growth. Paul spent sometimes strengthening all the disciples in The Church in Galatia and Phrygia (18:23).

Summary

In this chapter factors that favor church and evidences of growing churches in the Bible were discovered. The church growth components such as prayer showed how prayers enhance relationship with God. It also inspires boldness, fearlessness and power. Besides it invokes miracles for preaching the word. Research reveals how God's word, and its proclamation, Activities of the Holy Spirit, are indispensable for church growth. God's peoples' interaction and loving Community life and fellowship

fostered church growth. Jesus and His disciples constituted an example of a fast-growing church. The early church was not an exception.

Interestingly, the early church empowered by the Holy Spirit became the model for church growth. The church's communal life of holiness, social and relational graces of love, fellowship, unity, warmth and care propelled the church to growth. The growth was phenomenal; 3,000, 5000 and 10,000 converts.

Paul, Barnabas, Silas and Timothy to mention a few played major roles in growing churches in Antioch, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth and many more. But these successes were not without bruises, pains and imprisonments. However, through the power of the Holy Spirit they conquered the Roman world, penetrated diverse cultures with the message of the risen Savior. The researcher passionately believes that such actions and activities of growth will yield fruit in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

The biblical theological foundation, for biblical model of church growth has been established as prayer, God's Word and activities of the Holy Spirit and others. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the theoretical framework for this study.

It tends to consider general overview of church growth, history of church growth in America, different views of biblical church growth and church growth principles. And by contrast, it explores church pathology for the purposes of cautions in addition to quality characteristics of church growth as the leverage for church expansion.

Also it surveys insights from various authors and church growth experts to recognize principles, patterns and procedures of biblical church growth in relation to the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20.

General Overview on Church Growth

As the researcher begins this paper it may be necessary to have a general overview of the subject in order to effectively and efficiently reach the goals of the project. Six church growth unique elements that will serve as guiding principle in this study include:

1. non-growth makes God unhappy,
2. numerical growth of the church is the main concern with God and focuses on new disciples more than decisions,
3. Disciples are physical, identifiable, countable people that increases the church

numerically among others.¹

There are four axioms or propositions for church growth that are crucial for this project. They are one; that the pastor must see the necessity for the church to grow and be enthusiastic to pay the price (hard work). Two, the people must crave for the church to grow and be willing to pay the price (commitment). Three, the church must be in agreement that the goal of evangelism is to make disciples. More so the church must not (be suffering from) a terminal disease.² These propositions are obvious and the researcher needs to know beforehand the basics for the project as he embarks on it.

There are church growth characteristic principles which Dr. McGavran describes as

1. Priority of evangelism over material support and education.
2. Multiplication of unpaid leaders who can communicate Christ to unsaved relatives, neighbors, and fellow laborers.
3. Applying the sciences as tools to help win the millions without Christ.
4. Evangelism's priority is to responsive populations.
5. Evangelism's priority places winning of groups over individuals.
6. Growth principles can be discovered by analyzing growing churches.³

Although, scholars may agree with McGavran on the third distinctive principle, the researcher maintains that Christ is the Ultimate factor in church growth.

¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth: More Than a Man, a School, a Book*, quoted in Elmer L. Towns, John N. Vaughan, and David J. Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 1984, 99, accessed November 5, 2014, <http://100churchgrowthbk.pdf>.

² Wagner, *Your Church Can Be Healthy*, 24–28.

³ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth."

History of Church Growth in America

Historically, the first and second awakening which shaped American Christianity saw thousands of converts and phenomenal growth of churches. For example the First Great Awakening which began in New Jersey through Theodore J. Frelinghuysen in 1719 led to the increase in the number of Baptist churches in Massachusetts from six to thirty, and in Rhode Island, from eleven to thirty-six. Similarly, 150 new Congregational churches were organized in New England with forty thousand new members between 1740 and 1760. The Second Great Awakening started in the eastern United States (Virginia) in 1786 brought tremendous increase of Methodist church members from 3,030 to 10,158 between the periods of 1800 to 1805.⁴

Different Views of Biblical Church Growth

Many churches have different understanding of the biblical model of church growth. Some are weird while others are genuine.

The Contemporary Catholic Church

At the foundation of Catholic hermeneutics is doctrine of saving grace and sonship, called "divine filiation," and life of grace in the Western and East churches respectively.⁵ Catholic concept of spiritual is derived from some phenomena such as infant baptism, prayers of rosary among others.

In the Catholic view, when a believer baptizes and receives the redeeming grace of Jesus' cross and resurrection, he is saved from sin to sonship (Rom 8:21). And that this life of grace is a life of growth that comes to completion only when the

⁴ Terry, *Missiology*, 96–99.

⁵ *Ibid.* 74–76.

earthly phase is complete. Jesus wants human beings to share God's life (2 Peter 1:4).⁶

But in practical terms, the Catholic Church growth method is essentially by planting of church structures and people flock in.

Mainline Protestants' View

Mainline Protestants' believe in Social Gospel, justice and Social Action. They also believe in the "Priesthood of all believers. Joseph Driskill indicates that Mainline Protestants spread the gospel of Jesus based on love and acceptance and building liberal and social community.⁷ As a result they identify social sins and proffer social actions in love, service and solidarity based on two biblical texts (Micah 6:6-8; Matt 25:31-46) as its antidote.

Seventh-day Adventist Church View

Dudley and Cummings see church growth in two dimensions as internal spiritual growth and numerical growth. They maintain that both growths do not oppose each other rather they are essential parts of the same process which is soul winning and the establishment of God's kingdom. And that if church is to grow numerically the church members must be nurtured to grow spiritually.⁸

Bruce Manners in his research for Adventist spirituality indicates that a practical and a measurable response is realistic in a devotional life that comprises prayer and daily Bible reading, personal spiritual attributes such as humility, sincerity, tolerance, gentleness, compassion, integrity and caring for others. In addition,

⁶ Terry, *Missiology*, 76-77.

⁷ Ibid. 144.

⁸ Roger L. Dudley and Des Cummings, Jr., *Adventures in Church Growth* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1983), 16.

relationship, worship, communication and time so also money-tithing, witness, and present-future living necessary for church growth.⁹ He reiterated that Bible is essential for determining church growth because "it reveals the God who is the subject, the object, and the means of true spiritual life."¹⁰ And this appears to be the position of most researchers and global church growth experts. Indeed, the transforming power of the Bible is indescribable.

Church Growth Principles

There are many church growth principles advanced by church growth experts and scholars globally. And these principles include church growth as a spiritual exercise, prayer, the Holy Spirit, Lay involvement and spiritual gift, church leadership, discipleship, Small Group and inherent principles in growing churches. Below are details of these principles.

Church Growth a Spiritual Enterprise

Every church must understand that numerical and spiritual growth is of ultimate importance to God. Russell Burrill declares: "church growth is a divine work. Without His blessing all our human efforts cannot cause the church to growth"¹¹ This implies that church growth is a spiritual affair. Historically, Elmer Towns affirms this with greater emphasis that God wants his lost children found and folded, the call from death to life is a spiritual activity. This was conclusion drawn from in a three-day convention of 400 church leaders on evangelism and church growth held in Kansas

⁹ Bruce Manner, "Developing an Adventist Concept of Spirituality," *Ministry Magazine*, April 2008, 19–20.

¹⁰ Michael Green and Paul R. Stevens, *New Testament Spirituality: True Discipleship and Spiritual Maturity* (Surry UK.: Eagle Inter Publishing Service (IPS), 1994), quoted in *Ibid.*, 19.

¹¹ Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus*, 47.

City, Missouri on October 1976. Therefore, finding and folding of the lost is the church's one mission; to call men from death to life.¹²

Similarly, John Terry emphatically states that "mission is derived from a Conversionistic theology."¹³ By this Terry suggests that church growth includes change from carnal nature to the spiritual nature of God. Furthermore, Pierson sees the work for souls as cooperation with the Triune God, in three aspects; "as co-labor, co-suffering and co-witnessing."¹⁴ By implication, Pierson is saying that Godhead is personally involved in the service of soul winning. This can encourage Ogoja Church.

George Janvier lent credence to this with an emphatic statement: "what makes a church planter succeed is the Spirit. No church planter will succeed without putting a priority on his or her own spiritual growth."¹⁵ C. Peter Wagner substantiates this with the qualifications for serving God to include; knowing God and being saved, being filled with the Holy Spirit, prayerful life, commitment to the Body of Christ, obedience to the Lord, and being energetic and creative.¹⁶

Summarily, the church growth experts' positions are valid and oppose the contemporary model of church growth that is based on business tools and behavioral sciences only. Therefore, for a realistic church growth to occur in Igoli-Ogoja Church, God's presence needs to be domicile there, and members need renewal.

¹² Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 100.

¹³ Terry, *Missiology*, 5.

¹⁴ Roger S. Greenway, *Go and Make Disciples: An Introduction to Christian Missions* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1999), 54.

¹⁵ George Janvier, *Evangelism and Discipleship: Training for Africa* (Kaduna, Nigeria: Barak Press, 2001), 13.

¹⁶ Wagner, *Your Church Can Be Healthy*, 20–23.

Prayer a Real Principle for Church Growth

Prayer is the essential pre-requisite for church growth because it ensures divine guidance and enablement. Prayer is said to be the spiritual thermometer of the church. Dennis McCallum and Jessica Lowery, argue that talking to God about people is more important than talking to people about God.

By prioritizing prayers for others, we demonstrate that God's power is our only hope in preaching, witnessing, counseling and motivating others.¹⁷ The researcher also believes that church growth activities must be supported with prayers and dependence upon God. This belief indicates that Ogoja Church is not alone in work of church growth.

C. Peter Wagner describes prayer as communion with God which enables Christians to know more details about God's will, develop intimacy with God and specific role every Christian has to play in His kingdom.¹⁸ This assertion validates the earlier claim that prayer promotes human-divine relationship. With this Ogoja Church can grow spiritually.

Besides historically, Jesus set example of prayer ministry in the business of church growth. He fasted and prayed forty days and nights in the wilderness (Matt 4:1, 2). In Mark1:35, He constantly went to a solitary place to pray. Realizing the importance of prayer, His disciples interrupted His prayer, requesting Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1-13).¹⁹ Mason is right, Ogoja members will do similarly.

Academic scholarship has several proposals for soul winning endeavors, but

¹⁷ Dennis McCallum and Jessica Lowery, *Organic Discipleship: Mentoring Others Into Spiritual Maturity and Leadership* (Columbus, OH: New Paradigm, 2012), 114.

¹⁸ Wagner, *Your Church Can Be Healthy*, 21.

¹⁹ Melody Mason, *Daring to Ask for More: Divine Keys for Answered Prayer and Successful Ministry* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 2014), 109.

the researcher believes that these must be anchored in the power of prayer because God says, "for the researcher's thoughts are not God's thoughts neither are God's ways the researcher's ways ..." (Isa 55:8, 9. paraphrased). For example, Patricia Jo Gustin, strongly recommends application of the cross-cultural missionary models that converts the totality of a person by addressing the deepest level of culture; the excluded Middle, be included in three folds conversion experience of truth, allegiance and power, proffering functional substitute and integrating the Adventist truth into the culture.²⁰ It is cogent to say that prayer is the answer to this challenge, because it invokes the supreme power of God.

According to Mason, Golden Lapani, a Biology teacher and an ardent Muslim in Malawi, Africa, fell sick and was sent home to die. As he was preparing to die, he had three dreams in which, he saw Jesus telling him to become a Christian, and else he would die. He read the Bible and became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian and was healed with a changed life. He preached enthusiastically about Jesus in Malawi and eight thousand persons were converted with 50 percent of these coming from Muslim background. Unworried by the threats of Muslims to kill him, he began to pray and work. After five weeks, about three thousand more converts were added to the church.²¹ The researcher believes the missionary story and that God can replicate it in Igoli-Ogoja Church.

Thom S. Rainer writing on "Prayer: The Power behind the Principles" gave biblical evidences on how the prayers of the powerless disciples defeated all the weapons of the world against church growth. Clear instances include prayer of the

²⁰ Patricia Jo Gustin, "Cross-Cultural Evangelism: The Challenge Facing Adventism Today," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* (2008): 63.

²¹ Mason, *Daring to Ask for More*, 27–28.

early church before Pentecost (Acts 1:14), the believers' devotion to prayer (2:42). He concludes that prayer was the very source of power for explosive church growth of the early church.²²

The Holy Spirit

Donald A. McGavran, a premier missiologist of the twentieth century and father of the Church Growth Movement declares in unequivocal terms that "the role of the Holy Spirit in the growth of the church is supreme. Only God, not human forces build the church (Matt 16:18). The Holy Spirit overrides ordinary contextual and institutional factors to grant vigorous growth under rigid circumstances.²³ Indeed, the role of the Holy Spirit in church growth can only be experienced but cannot be explained.

Moreover, Peter Wagner's survey and final analysis of all kinds of growing churches in his country reveals the secret of such growth as, God at work through the Holy Spirit. Obviously, the Holy Spirit is the ultimate factor in church growth, because He engenders revival and the resultant repentance, renewal and growth. According to Towns, "the gift of the Holy Spirit enables men to confess sin, make restitutions, break evil habits, lead victorious lives, persuade other of the available power, bring multitudes to Christ and cause the church to growth exponentially."²⁴ And this was evident in the Early church (Acts 2: 38-47).

Palmer confirms this in his study of Pentecostal churches in Columbia, adding that to ensure greater church growth, every church must be revived, and every

²² Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*, 175.

²³ McGavran and Wagner, *Understanding Church Growth*, 144.

²⁴ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 187.

believer must be a disciple, faithful in Bible study, prayer, witnessing, giving and serving.²⁵

While Jonathan K. Dodson, the Pastor of Austin City Life in Austin, Texas noted with dismay the abject neglect of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in contemporary churches. In the work of discipleship, the Holy Spirit is indispensable because humans are enemies of God (Rom 5:10), spiritually dead in our sins (Eph 2:5), darkened in our hearts (Rom 1:21; Eph 4:18). More so, without the Holy Spirit's wooing, it is impossible for us to express genuine faith in God and render good service.²⁶ The biblical and scholarly positions of those authors are obvious, indicating that God is the ultimate in the business of church growth. Therefore, constant prayer for the Holy Spirit is urgently needed in Ogoja Church to enable the church to grow.

Revival and Church Growth

History of revival reveals two principal preconditions, which are prayer and feeding on God's Word. Prayer for revival is essentially the first step, followed by Bible study and Holy Spirit's presence. In hundreds of occasions prayer has brought revival as God's gift and not man. It frequently occurs when prayer is combined with Bible study. Revival in the churches of Europe and America were preceded by long years of detailed Bible study at homes and in the churches. The Korean revival had much of its power through careful Bible study, which has become an integral part of their Presbyterian Church's routine since its inception in 1895.²⁷

Biblical revival leads to holy living, not a mere emotional binge, but genuine

²⁵ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 187.

²⁶ Jonathan K. Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 87–90.

²⁷ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1997), 134–136.

humility, brokenness and yielding of oneself to God. Revival also, gives tremendous spiritual power to do God's will and for witnessing. When the Holy Spirit comes in one's life, sins are openly confessed and renounced, including evil habits of the mind and body, such as covetousness, hate, lust, addictions, idolatry and others. The Holy Spirit then gives a new standard of justice and mercy. Besides, revival drives Christians to effectively preach the gospel and multitudes are won to Christ and the church grows mightily. ²⁸This signifies that revival leads to spiritual vibrancy which empowers church growth, hence renewal of Ogoja Church may be a priority in this research.

Small Groups and Church Growth

The Small Group concept takes the lead in American church growth discussions these days. Historically, this principle was conceived from creation by God Himself; the three co-eternal beings (Gen 1:1, 26-27). Also God's statement that "It is not good that man should be alone" (Gen 2:18) and provides rationale for small group ministry. It was evidenced in God's organizational structure for Israel in the groupings of tribes, clans, families and individual households. It is prominently demonstrated in the leadership advice Jethro (Moses' father-in-law) offered to him, to divide the people in groups of thousands, hundreds. Fifties and tens (Ex 18:21-23).²⁹

Interestingly, Jesus had His group of twelve disciples which sociologists agree is the ceiling number for small group, and beyond which, some group dynamics changes to medium sized or group. So also, is the missional early church that met in homes to break bread and to have fellowship (Acts 2:41-27). Uniquely, this formed

²⁸ Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship*, 136–138.

²⁹ Kurt W. Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2011), 24–26.

the scriptural basis for the modern-day model of Small Group. 1) The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching (today's Bible study). 2) There were fellowship among them, composed of love care, sharing and nurture. 3) They broke bread together, meaning they shared and ate emblems of the Lord's Supper together. 4) They prayed together.³⁰

A perfect example of the power of Small Group in soul winning is seen in China. The Communist seized power in the 1950s and expelled all missionaries and persecuted indigenous Christians. By this they thought that Christianity has been eliminated in China. Through house churches or small group, Christian population in China grew between thirty and one hundred million. The Small Group activities has dominated American Church scene in most part of the twentieth century.³¹

Fortunately, the advantages of Small Group that will benefit the 21st century church are enormous. They include: 1) Lack of space restriction since they meet in homes, offices, schools or anywhere possible. 2) Freedom of expression. 3) Comfortable and friendship atmosphere for worship and nurture especially for the unchurched. 4) Bonding and intimacy, sharing and faith development that is life changing. 5) Assimilation of new members or prospects giving them the desired sense of belonging. 6) Pastoral care as pastors will become ranchers. 7) Discipleship will be an integral part of the routine.³² This is biblical and will enhance love in Ogoja Church.

³⁰ Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service*, 27–31.

³¹ Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*, 289–290.

³² *Ibid.* 293–294.

Church Planting and Church Growth

Rainer and Wagner see church planting as "the single most effective evangelistic method under heaven." And applaud Southern Baptist Convention and the Church of the Nazarene, Assemblies of God, for her success in church planting emphasis because they invest substantially their human and financial resources at all levels of their churches.³³ Like the early church that were at the cutting edge in reaching people for Christ (Acts 8:1-4), the church planting method will remove Christians from their comfort zones. This is God's plan and Ogoja Church needs it.

Rainer recommends Church planting options for the 21st century which include: the traditional model, in which the sponsoring church sends a nucleus of members to start a new church usually within a driving distance, to exist autonomously, with their assistance. Second, is the Colonization model, which is similar to the traditional but the nucleus members sent by the parent church relocate to a different geographical area, selling their homes and jobs to find new ones. Third, is the adoption model, which involves taking over dying churches and keeping them alive? Fortunately, they have similar effect. Others are the Church Split, Satellite, Multi-congregational, Multi- campus and sodality models.

The impact of church planting on church growth is enormous, however, it has some obstacles such as giving up members, loss of funds, startup cost, hurting other churches and harder work, and the end results are usually overwhelming.³⁴ The benefits outweigh the setbacks hence the researcher is passionate to use it in Ogoja.

³³ Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service*, 205.

³⁴ Ibid. 207–212.

Evangelism and Church Growth

There is a close relationship between evangelism and church growth. And since the heart of church growth is disciple-making, evangelism that produces no disciple is certainly not the type of evangelism that Christ proposed in the Great Commission.³⁵

To address the current trend of poor, sloppy, ill-prepared preaching, feeble, below-par, quickly prepared, half-baked and low cost preaching that produces no church growth; pastors should be called to power preaching. To achieve this, preachers have to submit themselves to the power of the Holy Spirit through prayers as the early church preachers (Acts 1:8, 14; 2:1-4). Preachers should be full of zeal, intensity and boldness (4:13, 29; 14:3). They are to proclaim with fear toward God and fearlessness toward men (4:19, 20; 5:29). And finally to preach with compassion and tears (20:19,).

And the methodology is to proclaim the Word indiscriminately to all kinds of people (10:1-48; 11:1-18), persuade and appeal to the mind (17:2, 17; 18:19; 19:8, 19), and to minister the word publicly and privately to individuals, families and large groups (2:41; 4:4; 13:44).³⁶ While the content of the preaching should include: the Person and the work of Christ, salvation by grace, appeal to the conscience about sin and guilt, focusing on eternity and accountability to God³⁷ and others.

However, there is now a paradigm shift in evangelism because of the sophistry in worldliness, which has rendered Cold-call confrontational evangelism less

³⁵ Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service*, 216.

³⁶ Ibid. 18, 87–97.

³⁷ Ibid. 71–74.

effective. Engel scale defines eight progressive steps unbelievers make to become disciples of Christ. They are

- 8 Awareness of a supreme being, but no effective knowledge of the gospel
- 7 Initial awareness of the gospel
- 6 Awareness of the fundamental of the gospel
- 5 Grasp of the implications of the gospel
- 4 Positive attitude towards the gospel
- 3 Personal problem recognition
- 2 Decision to act
- 1 Repentance and faith in Christ
- +1 Post-decision evaluation
- +2 Incorporation into the body
- +3 A lifetime of conceptual and behavioral growth in Christ

Therefore, evangelism that result in church growth will address unmet needs, break-up relationships, time management and be relevant to society as well as include Small Group.³⁸

The researcher believes that for effective church growth through evangelism, an intentional study of various cultures and recognition of the different categories of unreached people as well as developing appropriate methods of evangelism is necessary. Interestingly, Russell Burrill in his study of the complexities of American mission field, identified eight categories of unreached people namely: the non-Christians (Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, etc.), nominal Christians, those unhappy with institutional churches, the post-moderns, the atheists and agnostics, the Gay community, the New-Age, and those who attend or belong to other Christian

³⁸ Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*, 218–222.

churches.³⁹

Burrill went further to recommend the Adventist holistic approach to evangelism, the classic and one method that fits it all, which he described as the "magna carta" of Adventist evangelism as announced by Ellen G. White the "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people..."⁴⁰

Most essentially, for evangelism to accomplish the task of disciple making in normal and cross-cultural settings; to address the Worldviews of African Traditional religion, Muslim, Hindus people and others, Gordon R. Doss offers a number of recommendations. 1) That evangelism has to be culturally contextualized, technologically and economically sustainable as well as use of indigenous preachers. That Adventist evangelism methodology which developed from the American context whose audience was mostly Christians has to change and converts must experience a complete turn-around of their beliefs and practices.

Doss said that "heavy reliance on literature, public speaking, dialectical apologetic style, use of American/English logic system and a proof text use of Scripture" is obsolete; instead suitable methodology should be used. In addition, Doss recommends the recognition of cultural commonalities and the use of local illustrations as well as addressing dual allegiance with the scriptures⁴¹ it means reaching the people where they are with the scriptures.

Furthermore, Bruce Bauer offered veritable biblical appropriate functional substitutes for cultural ceremonies, customs, celebrations and events for pre-Christian

³⁹ Burrill, *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus*, 11–14.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 49.

⁴¹ Gordon R. Doss, "Adventist Response through Evangelism and Discipleship," in *Adventist Mission in Africa: Challenges and Prospects* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2007), 45–57.

practices to avoid creating cultural void or vacuum. They include 1) clear biblical teaching on the indwelling Holy Spirit and His power to protect, guardian angels and their role and function against the problem of protection from evil spiritual powers. This was successful in Cambodia. 2) Fervent prayer for the sick to experience the healing power of Jesus. A church in Cambodia practiced this regularly after each Divine Service, with the sick persons seating in the center of the church and prayed for their needs, with members in a circle laying hands on their heads. The result was awesome.⁴²

Contrary to the pre-Christian practice of offering sacrifices to appease the spirits and to ensure good crop and financial success, Pastor Bauer taught the Cambodians faithful tithing from their rice farms. As they embraced this teaching, God protected the rice farm of Mr. Ee from cut worms, to the amazement of his people whose farms were devastated. Similarly, Bauer recommends avid prayers and appropriate biblical teachings for happiness and harmony in marriage (and for children), the control of "bad" spirits, knowledge of the future and the dedication of houses, businesses and properties to God.⁴³ These suggestions are unique, practice of these in Ogoja Church may reduce adverse effect of devilish cultures on Ogoja people and the church will grow.

Receptivity and Church Growth

According to Rainer, George G. Hunter III recognizes that church growth's awareness and evangelism of receptive people is the greatest contribution of Church Growth Movement to this generation's evangelism. Recognizing Wagner's proposition

⁴²Bruce Bauer, "Adventist Response to Multiple Allegiances," quoted in *Ibid.*, 118–121.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 118–121.

that at certain times a people group, family and individuals are more receptive to the gospel than others described a resistance-receptivity theory. And for greater evangelistic results, more resources should be appropriated to such target group than the resistant group. Hunter's justifies this position with the biblical parable of the Sower, where the seeds that fell on the good soil bore more fruits (Matt 13:1-23; Luke 8:11). Similarly, John Mark Terry inferred that Paul who desired to be both faithful and fruitful preferred to preach to responsive people (Acts18:6).⁴⁴

Rick Warren concurs to this proposition, by alluding that spiritual receptivity varies differently as the soil; the hard, shallow, distracted and the receptive hearts. Further, he identifies the most receptive people to be those in transition and people under pressure, that "God uses both change and pain to get people's attention and get them receptive to the gospel."⁴⁵ Therefore for maximum effectiveness in evangelism, it has to be conducted among receptive people, in other words, sowing on good soil. This suggests a pre- evangelism survey for receptivity in Ogoja town for soul winning. In addition, Christ set evangelism strategy for the disciples by advising to depart from any town that rejects them, shaking off the dust of their feet (Matt 10:1-14).

Consequently, Rainer propagates Resistance/Receptivity Scale as stated below:

Highly Resistant to the Gospel					Highly Receptive to the Gospel					
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Strongly Opposed		Somewhat Opposed		Indifferent		Somewhat Favorable		Strongly Favorable		

⁴⁴ Terry, *Missiology*, 58.

⁴⁵ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth without Compromising Your Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 182–183.

Laity Involvement and Spiritual Gifts

Laity Involvement and Spiritual Gifts is a frequent principle of all growing churches. According to Sam Storms, God's power has come to those churches. Spiritual gifts are the presence of the Spirit Himself coming to expression in our ministry. By Paul's usage of the word "manifestation" (*phanerosis*) in 1 Corinthians 12:7, he meant that the Spirit makes Himself visibly evident in our midst when the Spiritual gifts are used.⁴⁶ In other words, the Spiritual gifts are part of God Himself.

James A. Stewarts quoted in Henry and Mel Blackaby's book: *What's So Spiritual About Your Gifts*, confirms this, by saying that "Many want the Spirit's power but not the Spirit's purity. The Holy Spirit does not rent out His attributes; His power is never separated from His glorious self."⁴⁷ Therefore, Henry Blackaby contends that if you do not have or walk in the Spirit you will not have the Spirit gift.⁴⁸ In essence, if one is not spiritual he cannot receive the Spiritual gift. This verifies the fact that church growth cannot be a secular or mundane event.

C. Peter Wagner, concludes that Spiritual gifts are reserved exclusively for committed Christians, who in effect are spiritual and consecrated Christians. He further advised that Spiritual gifts should not be confused with natural talent.⁴⁹ This further emphasizes the fact that church growth must be spiritual-driven in realistic sense.

⁴⁶ Sam Storms, *The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2012), 13.

⁴⁷ James A. Stewarts, *First-The Relationship*, quoted in Henry Blackaby and Mel Blackaby, *What's So Spiritual About Your Gifts?* (New York, NY: Multnomah Books, 2004), 16.

⁴⁸ James A. Stewarts, *First-The Relationship*, quoted in *Ibid.*, 14–18.

⁴⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Book, n.d.), 2.

C. Peter Wagner ranks well-mobilized laity as the second vital sign of a growing church. While Win Arn, leader of Church Growth Seminar, emphasizes its utmost importance with the recognition that church growth is uniquely dependent on the laymen and the pastor that enables members discover their gifts succeeds more than the pastor who does it all." ⁵⁰

In that understanding, Elmer Towns concludes that everyone is a potential minister used by the Holy Spirit to build the church. Ray Stedman, MacArthur, Getz and others believe this based on Ephesians 4:4-8 and 1Peter 4:10,11 while Donald C. Palmer confirms this in his survey of fourteen denominational leaders and twenty-eight pastors in Columbia.⁵¹ Indeed, the laity role is great, when spiritual gifts are utilized.

Rainer describes laity involvement in church growth as a return to the biblical mandate for all Christians' to do the work of ministry (Eph 4:12). It makes the church people-focused, instead of pastor-focused. Members are no longer audience, but contributing participants in the ministry and discovering their spiritual gifts according to God's design. It means abandoning the dependency model and embracing the equipping model. In addition, he calls it a new reformation, liberation from hierarchical structure and human mediator fought against by Martin Luther and others five hundred years ago.⁵² These authors' assertions indicate humble submission to the fact that God cannot blunder. Hence, this is recommended for Igoli-Ogoja Church.

⁵⁰ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 191.

⁵¹ Ibid. 192–193.

⁵² Ibid. 195–199.

Church Growth Depends on Leadership

The minister is the key figure in church growth and must have vision coupled with schedule of activities and budget to carry the congregation along (Prov 29:18).⁵³ Dr. Peter Wagner says it is “mounting evidence that pastor heads the list of factors common to growing churches in America.”⁵⁴

Similarly, Rainer inferred that leadership in general and particularly pastoral leadership is a major factor in church growth process.⁵⁵ He insists that a church growth leader, initiates action towards the God-given vision, and is an equipper of ministry, a rancher that still shepherds the sheep through others, a good steward of his/her time, prayer life, work, leisure habits, Bible study and family. Rainer maintains that a visionary leader is confident, deceive and optimistic and has an entrepreneurial spirit that enables him to envision possibilities, devise ways of making the possibilities come to fruition and direct resources to make good things happen. Besides, they tend to be proactive than reactive.⁵⁶ It means church growth rises and falls on leadership.

Elmer Towns concurs to this strategy by citing Robert Schuller, who led Garden Grove Community Church to over 7,000 membership. Towns defined leadership as "thinking ahead, planning for the future, exhausting all possibilities, envisioning problems and dreaming up solutions to them and then communicating the possibilities and the problem-solving ideas to the decision makers."⁵⁷ The leader then

⁵³ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, “The Complete Book of Church Growth,” 181.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 106.

⁵⁵ Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*, 185.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 188–189.

⁵⁷ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, “The Complete Book of Church Growth,” 196.

is an equipper and enabler who encourages every believer to minister (Eph 4:11, 12) unlike the superstars which is not God's agenda for His church.⁵⁸

Sherri Brown says successful church planters will be visionary leaders, who work to bring others along with them and create disciples and followers of Jesus Christ. Brown insists that vision without strategy is just a pipe dream. A leader with a clear sense of call will be a trainer and mentor of those that share the same vision, those that trust the leader and who are teachable.⁵⁹ These assertions are real to Jesus' agenda and suggest that the pastor takes a cue, to grow the church in Ogoja.

Referring to Paul's instruction to Timothy regarding criteria for church leadership as one, who properly leads and cares for his family (1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12), Towns concludes that church growth occurs when there is order and effective leadership. While Engel and Norton argue that the role of the Pastor is more than using people to accomplish programs but developing people into men and women of God.⁶⁰ Besides, top in Wagner's list of seven "vital signs" for a growing church is dynamic leadership (a pastor whose possibility thinking and dynamic leadership catalyzes the church into action for growth).⁶¹

These positions confirm the fact that refining and effective church program, vibrant and inspiring atmosphere of worship is a function of dynamic leadership that has specialized ministries. Such leadership provides activities for all segments of the church population and makes the church a spiritual oasis to attract people to its

⁵⁸ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 197.

⁵⁹ Sherri Brown, "Breaking Through Growth Barriers in New Churches" (Leadership Network, 2009), accessed November 5, 2014, http://leadnet.org/breaking_through_growth_barriers_in_new_churches-2/.

⁶⁰ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 230.

⁶¹ Ibid. 196.

activities. And this is what is needed in Igoli- Ogoja Church.

Discipleship: Key to Phenomenal Church Growth

John Jackson insightfully reiterates, “Whether reproducing on a large scale to grow a church of thousands, or reproducing on a smaller scale to plant numerous churches, the key is in reproducing disciples.”⁶² This means disciples that make other disciples. Besides biblical definitions offered by Burrill in the last chapter, Peter Wagner defines disciple from theological perspective as one whom the power of the Holy Spirit comes and make a new creature (2 Cor 5:17).

Ellen G. White states clearly; “Just as all the wisdom and the skill of man cannot produce life in the smallest object in nature, so is conversion of the soul. But only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in the heart of men.”⁶³ Bill Hull emphasizes that discipleship includes “one-on-one mentoring, disciplined program of Bible study, scripture memorization and training in witnessing and speaking. It is a whole life process that involves both God's grace and the individual efforts.”⁶⁴

Interestingly, Gerson Santos confirms that discipleship is a lifetime affair.⁶⁵ The researcher concurs to these as the core issue in church growth that meets God’s standards, it can spur Ogoja Church to growth.

⁶² John Jack, n.d., 8, accessed May 20, 2013, 072_breaking-through-growth-barriers-in-newchurches.pdf-AdobeReader.

⁶³ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000), 67.

⁶⁴ Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 18–19.

⁶⁵ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Committee on Mission to the Cities, *Do We Have a Strategy for Making Disciples in the Cities? Is It Working?* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015), 14.

Furthermore, Dodson sees the goal of discipleship as the fight of faith. The New Testament usage of fight, *agonizo*, from which the English word agonize is derived, connotes, to contend, struggle with difficulties and dangers antagonistic to the gospel. The biblical fighting is a spiritual challenging to believe the truth of the gospel, hence Paul enjoined Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith..." (1 Tim 6:12; 1:18-19). And refusing to fight gives the opponent (Satan) to take advantage and that once the fighting begins we must never stop nor lose heart (2Cor 4:1, 16).⁶⁶ C. Peter Wagner in his book: *Your Church can Grow* declares: "God wants us to be bold. He wants us to take risk for Him; He expects a high return from His stewards."⁶⁷

Making disciples through effective discipleship programs is essential, as evangelism and getting new converts is not complete without actually making them disciples. Elmer Towns reiterates that discipleship is key principle for qualitative church growth after spiritual gifts, body life and edification.⁶⁸ Discipleship is taking an active part in our Christianity and developing a real and transformative relationship with God.⁶⁹ Discipleship is important for church growth because Jesus commanded it, hence it is a duty.⁷⁰

Dr. Win Arm concludes that the local church is God's plan for making disciples and winning the world.⁷¹ This implies that church growth includes

⁶⁶ Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship*, 57–59.

⁶⁷ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1998), 57.

⁶⁸ Jack, 153.

⁶⁹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Youth Ministries Department, *Steps to Discipleship* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1990), 26.

⁷⁰ Janvier, *Evangelism and Discipleship: Training for Africa*, 53.

⁷¹ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 103.

explorations of soul-winning evangelism, research and scientific analysis, aggressive leadership, faith and goal setting. In this sense, discipleship will be a veritable tool for Ogoja Church.

Pastor Harthern shares seven spiritual principles for church growth which includes: 1. The Lord is willing to build the church, 2. What is born of the spirit is spirit and vice versa. 3. People come to where they get fed. 4. Pastors' prayer should be for God to help them do what He is blessing and not what they are doing. 5. Faith development. 6. Total reliance upon the Holy Spirit for church growth. 7. Training /leadership development and unity.⁷² Indeed, this is a biblical task for Ogoja Church.

Historically, there existed pre-Christian examples of discipleship through mentorship, spiritual guidance that temper people's tendency for laziness, losing focus or yielding to temptations. These provided for human needs such as relationship to nurture, apprenticeship for competence, accountability for tasks, submission for shaping and wisdom for decision making. Prominent among these were the great Greek philosophers such as Plato, Socrates and Herodotus.⁷³ This history is authentic and can strengthen Igoli-Ogoja Church members to practice discipleship, and the church will grow.

Growth Principles Inherent in Growing Churches

There are varieties of American Church Growth, which are making unique contributions to modern church growth movements. Three elements that broadly distinguish them are 1) church renewal, 2) growing churches, and 3) the Church

⁷² Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 103.

⁷³ Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ*, 52–54.

Growth movement. The church renewal method leads different Christian group to become more homogeneous as a body using sociological principles, group dynamics and personal discipline. The second aspect of American church growth mobilizes a homogeneous body to multiply itself in a heterogeneous population. Examples include the Fundamentalist super churches which use "capable leader and a mobilized laity committed to a well-defined code of spiritual and social disciplines directed towards capturing entire cities for Jesus."⁷⁴ These are intentional actions which can be useful to Ogoja Church.

The principle of expectancy is crucial to church growth. World acclaimed Church growth experts such as McGavran and Arn call this principle "a common denominator of growing churches" which is fervent faith. C. Peter Wagner calls it indispensable condition for church growth.⁷⁵ It implies expectancy backed with actions in faith. This could be helpful to Igoli-Ogoja Church.

The principles of spiritual gifts, pastoral leadership and delegation are essential to phenomenal church growth. According to Dr. McGavran, spiritual gifts are essential for church growth. For instance, research shows that the evangelist is a special gift for church growth.⁷⁶ Dr. Win Arn insightfully postulates that each founding pastor tends to attract his own kind of people (homogeneous group) and therefore, the church grows phenomenally.⁷⁷

Neil Braun, educational missionary to Japan observes that the major secret of rapidly growing churches is in the principle of delegation. That is recruiting and

⁷⁴ Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ*, 89.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 105.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 103–105.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 10.

training large number of people and placing them in responsible places of leadership. Dr. Wagner cautions that a pastor that does not delegate may never have his church grow after it attends a membership of 200.

Pathology of Church Growth

It may be appropriate to discuss research findings on why churches do not grow to serve as a guide to the prospective church growth pastors. Just as medical doctors (pathologists) conduct an official examination of a dead body to ascertain cause of death, in like manners a dying church could be diagnosed by accredited theologians. C. Peter Wagner confirms this: “One of the techniques long used by medical science, but not too frequently by church men is that of autopsy.”⁷⁸ Hence some church growth experts have attempted to describe conditions of dying churches, to include Arrested church growth, arrested Spiritual development ethikitis and koinoitis and others.

Arrested Church Growth

Wagner enumerates factors responsible for arrested growth to include: 1) excessive feeling of “family” spirit within a given church and feelings of irritation toward “outsiders,” 2) spiritual “birth control” expressed through undue attention toward “Christian perfection” and 3) “bad air” generated by self-centered bickering within the congregation.⁷⁹ The Ogoja Church seems to suffer partly from this decease.

⁷⁸ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church* (Glendale, CA: G and L, 1976), 124.

⁷⁹ Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert, “The Complete Book of Church Growth,” 105.

Arrested Spiritual Development

This disease is as a result of numerical growth without quality growth, also persons making an initial decision to accept Christ, without growth in their relationship with the Lord as well as members lacking in the basic discipleship commitment. This appears to be the characteristics of most of the 21st century churches. It negates the conversion view point of church growth and therefore should be dreaded by Igoli-Ogoja Church. Its cure could be the Holy Spirit intervention.

Ethikitis

Ethikitis is semi metropolitan ethnic migration, otherwise known as changing neighborhood. It is an obvious problem in Igoli-Ogoja Church. This is as a result of the movement of young school leavers (young members of the Church) to bigger cities in search of greener pastures. And sometimes the migration could be for either racial, ethnic, social, or economic reasons. A similar example is found in other parts of the world. “Ethnitis is a chief killer of churches in USA today; example is Zion Evangelical Free Church of Chicago.”⁸⁰ Prayer and job creation may be the solution.

Koinonitis

This is the sweet fellowship among the body of Christ. People have a deep love and concern for one another. All available time and resources are invested on old members with little or no attention to outsiders. Thom S. Rainer describes such churches as the ones that great commission has become great omission.⁸¹ This disease is obvious with Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church. It healing could be derived from Bible

⁸⁰ Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church*, 125.

⁸¹ Thomas S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2014), 39–41.

study, prayer and Holy Spirit power.

Other Diseases

Hyper-cooperativism. This occurs in churches that spend much of their energy and time cooperating with other churches in programs such as revivals, Bible schools, and city-wide crusades. As a result, there is little or no time for growth activities in the church. Sociological Strangulation: This is caused by influx of new members being so great that the facilities actually become inadequate. This appears obvious in modern times hence most contemporary churches employ business methods as the solution.

Old age and people's blindness. Old age is caused by conditions beyond the control of the local church. The community is static, no one moving in and no one moving out. As residents die, they are not replaced.

Ellen G. White also describes other signs or diseases of a dying church. They include spiritual pride, a desire to dictate, an ambitious longing for honor and position, not being evangelistic conscious, lack of self-control and changing communities.⁸² Indeed except one (lack of self-control), all others are apparently seen in the Church.

Quality Characteristics of Church Growth

There are quality distinctiveness that mark healthy and growing churches. Christian A. Schwarz in his natural church development (or quality church growth) enumerates them to include passionate spirituality, empowering leadership, gift-based ministry, and effective structures. Others are inspiring worship services, Holistic small group, need-oriented evangelism and loving relationship.

⁸² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1948), 5:241.

Empowering Leadership

Empowering leadership means leadership that empowers others. More than spiritual superstars, empowering leaders excel in Church growth. They equip, support, motivate and mentor individuals to become all that God wants them to be in diverse areas of ministry. The belief is that God has a unique calling for every individual.

A combination of explanation, motivation and liberation are essential ingredients. It requires the great gift of explaining complicated realities to people through sermons, Bible studies, or teaching session, liberation is the art of investing oneself into others to fulfill their God-given visions.⁸³

Gift-Based Ministry

In Gift Based Ministry, leadership helps its members to identify their gifts and find or create ministries that match them. When we work in harmony with our spiritual gifts we accomplish extra ordinary things, instead of human strength and ordinary accomplishment. This is a secret of great result accomplished by gift- based ministry in church growth.

Besides, those using their spiritual gifts are happier, more effective, misunderstood for their great success. More so churches function according to God's design and achieve greater success and the three dimensions of gift- based ministry, Wisdom, Commitment and Power are in balance.⁸⁴

⁸³ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (Queensland, Australia: NCD Australia, 2006), 106–107.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 108–109.

Passionate Spirituality

Growing churches are distinguished from non-growing ones to the degree faith is actually live out with commitment, passion and enthusiasm. Prayer and Bible study have significant relationship to the quality and quantity of church as they attend personal spirituality. Success of passionate spirituality, in church growth is on cultivating the form of spirituality that is truly based on the word of God directed by the Holy Spirit and focused on the world.⁸⁵ It means prayer is lifeblood of the church.

Effective Structures

Although some may argue that "all things are lawful but not all things that edify" (1 Cor 10:23), the most important criterion for church growth structures is the extent to which it fulfills their purposes. Otherwise, every church has to develop or create the structures that suit their specific goals, church size, history and denominational identity. And which must assist people to experience God (upward dimension) enhance fellowship of believers (inward dimension), strengthen mission to the world (outward dimension). Therefore, demeaning leadership pattern inconsistent or inconvenient worship service times, programs that are not effectively reaching their intended audience should be changed.⁸⁶ The researcher is in total agreement with this and recommends it for Ogoja Church.

Inspiring Worship Service

Inspiring worship service clearly distinguishes growing churches from non-growing ones, whether they follow a formal or a more free-flowing style. Inspiring worship services that constantly improve and maintains balance between high quality

⁸⁵ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 110.

⁸⁶ Ibid. 112.

liturgy, teaching and praise is a denominator of healthy and growing church.⁸⁷ Warren says "attracting seekers is the first step in disciple making."⁸⁸

Citing Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:23-25, Rainer maintains that worship serves dual purposes for believers and non-Christians, affecting them positively. Besides, it has become the experimental point, and increasingly the entry point experience for the unchurched new comers into the churches.⁸⁹ Rainer insists that to reach people in this 21st century, church services should not be boring and lifeless, predictable and repetitive, money collection centers with unkempt facilities. In addition, sermons should be relevant to daily life and worship atmosphere should be celebrative, friendly, relaxed, positive and expectant. Besides, every facet of the service should be planned bearing guests in mind.⁹⁰ Researcher believes it enhances sweet fellowship.

Holistic Small Group

Holistic Small Group is usually a cell group of not more than twelve members actively engaged in ministry. It is the very essence of the church of Jesus Christ that provides believers with intimate community. Therefore, it rules out anonymity and embraces friendly atmosphere of people you know and are acquainted with. As a church microcosm Holistic Small Group nurtures the heads, hands and hearts, through the eight quality characteristics by individual member participation is devoid of programmatic decision. Besides, it offers the greatest opportunity to bring about

⁸⁷ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 114.

⁸⁸ Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*, 79.

⁸⁹ Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, 225–226.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 227–230.

dramatic changes without holding an official position.⁹¹

According to Rainer, the first Christian church operated Small Group pattern, in the homes (Acts 2:46). They were "large enough to win thousands but small enough to have a personal touch."⁹²

Need-Oriented Evangelism

Obviously, evangelism plays a central role in church growth event. Research identifies the decisive ingredient or secret of successful evangelism of growing churches to be Need-Oriented Evangelism. This kind of Evangelism shares the gospel in such a way that answers the questions and meets the needs of non-believers in practical terms through praying, caring and sharing the gospel. In other words, Need-Oriented Evangelism stresses prayer and supernatural dimensions of life, cares for people and ministers to their needs and shares the gospel. This evangelism is usually most successful where gift-based ministries are practiced.

Loving Relationships

It is an indisputable fact that growing churches "display a higher love quotient than stagnant or declining ones."⁹³ This is measured by how much time members spend with each other, outside official, church-sponsored events, the number of invitations to meal, pastor's awareness of the personal needs of the churches' lay people and pragmatically addressing them. According to Schwarz, "authentic love endows a church with a much greater magnetic power than all the marketing efforts in the world." This happens in an environment where members follow tenets of the truth,

⁹¹ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 116.

⁹² Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*, 289.

⁹³ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 120.

justice and grace. Besides, it is usually successful in a small group setting, where people know their strength and weaknesses and where give and take is practiced.⁹⁴

Summary

This chapter has explored the scholarly and intellectual mines for church growth globally and has harnessed with thorough academic scholarship, global best researched principles. They are prayer, Holy Spirit, revival, small group, church planting, evangelism. Others are receptivity, laity involvement and spiritual gifts, leadership and discipleship. Interestingly, majority of these principles are biblical and already discovered in the theological foundation of this study. Therefore, developing biblical model of church growth strategies for Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church is an innovation.

Research indicates that of all the principles, the role of the Holy Spirit is supreme for growing churches. That among other things, the Holy Spirit overrides contextual and institutional factors against growth and engenders repentance, confession, giving up of evil habits and the consequent sustainable growth.

Prayer is discovered by research to be the power behind the principles of church growth. That constant prayer brings the petitioner into relationship with God. Church planting is described by research as the single most effective evangelistic method under heaven, while small group concept is generating waves as the leading growth principle in America. Similarly, the pastor heads the list of factor for growing churches in America as the equipper of ministry and the rancher that still shepherds the sheep through others

Finally, laity involvement and gift-based ministries are the most frequent

⁹⁴ Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 120–121.

principles of all growing churches in America. While quality characteristics such as empowering leadership, passionate spirituality, need-oriented evangelism, loving relationship among others are predominant features of most mega growing churches.

It means that next chapters there will be strategy design and implementation of these principles of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CHAPTER 4

A STRATEGY DESIGN FOR CHURCH GROWTH IN OGOJA SDA CHURCH

This chapter is concerned with mission strategy design for church growth, after the model of the New Testament church integrated with best insights of modern research and dependent upon the Holy Spirit for the 21st century. It is an attempt to determine what the Lord desires His church to accomplish in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church; it involves a careful examination of the past, present and prayerfully discerning future realities with a plan of action to reach them.¹

This section focuses on the presentation of the ministry context, project design and summary. Besides, this section considers some of the principles discussed in the previous chapters in order to design a suitable strategy for sustainable growth. This may be possible by applying missiological methods, patterns and church growth principles in the local situation.

Presentation of the Ministry Context

In this section there will be a description of Cross River State in general, by looking at the landscape and climate, demography and the economy of the area. Others are the cultural information, religious beliefs and affiliations. Then the project setting which includes study of the local situations such as the background, history and geographical context of Igoli-Ogoja will be looked into. Also to be considered are

¹ Terry, *Missiology*, 3–4.

the actual growth situation of Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church which includes three years membership trend of the church and description of the church before the project implementation.

History of Cross River State of Nigeria

The present Cross River State got this name on February 1976 as a rename of the then South Eastern State which comprised this State and AkwaIbom States. The said South Eastern State was created on May 27, 1967. Cross River State is bounded in the North by Benue State, in the East by the Republic of Cameroon, and in the south by the bight of Bonny and the Atlantic Ocean. In the South-East it shares boundary with Akwa Ibom State and in the Mid-West with Abia State. And in the North-West it shares boundary with Ebonyi state.

Background

The name, Cross River State was derived from the main River in the state that flows from the Cameroon Mountains meandering through most of the Local Government Areas of the State into the Atlantic Ocean. This River has many tributaries and streams that formed the high water ways that served for migration, trade root and for civilization. And this was the basis of the Cross River Basin Development Authority.

Landscape and Climate

The state covers an area of 23,074 square Kilometers. The climate of the state is majorly tropical rain forest. The topography of the State is majorly hilly, mountainous and partly flat lands. The economy is predominantly agriculture /trading.

Demography

Demography of a country is “the study of human population and the ways in which they change, for example the study of how many births, marriages and deaths happen in a particular place at a particular time.”² The population of the state was 2,259,681 as at 2010 from the Federal Office of Statistics. The State has some tourist sites such as the Obudu Cattle Ranch in Obudu, Agbokim Waterfalls in Ikom, Old Residency Museum in Calabar.³

Economy

Cross River State is composed of 18 local Government Areas naturally situated in the three major geographical regions of the state. They are 1) Lower Cross River region comprising Calabar South and Municipality, Akpabuyo, Odukpaniakalocal Government Areas and Bakassi clusters. The middle cross River region comprises Akamkpa, Biase, Yakurr local Government Areas, while the Upper cross River are made up of local Government Areas such as Obubra, Ikom, Boki, Etung, Obodu and Ogoja among others.

Cultural Information

Cultural beliefs of the people Cross River State include that dress and appearance are signs of position, wealth and prestige. Food and eating habits, dining and drinking are seen as social experiences. Matters regarding relationships, family and friends, center on extended family which are accorded high degree of loyalty and responsibility. The same goes to age and social status. The people value good ethical

² Della summers, “Demography,” *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (Longman, 2005).

³ Eko, *African Evangelization: Problems and Prospect Ecclesiastical and Evangelistic Perspectives*, 38–40.

behavior which helps people to live peacefully and securely. They comprise honesty, respect for human lives, right to property, respect for elders and sanctity of marriage. Harmonious living and extended family structure are given high premium. In this structure, parents, grand-parents, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces live together in mutual love and respect and care for their children and grand-children.

And this gives rise to families, compounds, hamlets villages and clans. Hence they set rules governing families and marriages. This communal relationship makes personal decision to be subject to the approval of the family. They also believe in social and political structures where by rites of kingship are exclusive rights of persons from the royal families. Persons of the royal family are chosen for coronation to be chiefs or village heads. Ancestors are consulted at coronation ceremonies to appease them. And the coronations are usually held on the *UruaEte* (the father's market day) for the Efik people which is usually on Saturdays.⁴

Religious Belief and Affiliations

The people of Cross River State believe in the supernatural "God," pantheons, ancestors, forces and charms and mediums which are believed to be the gods of the land. The people's concepts of taboos are derived from whatever appears to be contrary to the will of divinities. So taboos are offensive to the divinities. Other beliefs comprise belief in life after death and re-incarnation which promote their ancestral worship. They love to have individual gods, charms, amulet or other forces for personal protection against any harm or witchcraft. They also believe in totems.⁵

⁴ Eko, *African Evangelization: Problems and Prospect Ecclesiastical and Evangelistic Perspectives*, 51–54.

⁵ Ibid. 54–57.

Background of Ogoja Town

In considering the background of Ogoja people it is cogent that attention be given to their worldview, culture and onset of civilization in the area. It may be significant to consider their origin from the perspective of migration and inter-ethnic boundaries.

The Worldview of the people of Ogoja is essentially animistic and magical as the people of other parts of the state as has already been discussed. Dual allegiance is commonly practiced there. Church attendance is a matter of convenience or ceremony.

The culture of Ogoja people and the entire Northern Cross River share striking similarities with that of their kith and kin in Cross River State. There is no significant difference in their drumming and dancing style, mode of dressing as well as traditional religion and festivals. Linguistically, Ogoja is diverse hence the medium of communication is simple English. Yet following their nationalistic attachment they love so dearly their own local dialects and speak it proudly.

The climate is tropical and well-marked out by wet and dry seasons. The landscape is mountainous and few flat lands.

Economically, Ogoja people are predominantly farmers. However, there are few traders, public servants and those engaged in transport business. Presently, seven banks operate in Ogoja town and twelve markets carry out commercial activities on a 5-day market week where farm produce such as yams, garri, beans among others are sold in large quantities. There are also daily markets in Ishibori, Ogboja and Abakpa towns.

The early advent of Roman Catholic Mission in the area, in 1906, brought education and civilization to Ogoja. Hence Ogoja was one of the provincial

headquarters before the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970.⁶

Geographical Setting

Igoli-Ogoja is strategically located at the heart of Ogoja town, close to the Ogoja Local Government headquarters, Government hospital, prisons, market and banks in the town. Ogoja Local Government Area is a local Government in Cross Rivers State of Nigeria. Ogoja town has an area of 972 km² and population of 171,901 as at 2006 census. The town was one of the provinces during pre-colonial independence.

It consists of many tribes, which includes: Ishibori (this village has different clans such as Uhmuria, Ikaptang, Ikajor, Ishinyema, Ikariku, Imerakorm) and Igoli as the central town. Mbube, being one of the major tribes, comprises different villages, including: Odajie, Adagum, Ekumtak, Idum, Ojerim, Egbe, Nkim, OgberiaOgang and OgberiaOchoro, Oboso, Benkpe, Edide, Bansan, Aragban, etcetera.

Their major source of livelihood is subsistence agriculture, basically farming of cassava, yams, palm oil, and palm wine among others. Ekajuk, is one of the major clan in Ogoja Local government area. Divided into Ward I and Ward II, and includes major communities such as Nwang, Ekpogrinya, Esham, Egbong, Nnang, Ewinimba, and Bansara (which are collection of a group of villages).

History of Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church

The church planting effort began after the Nigerian Civil War (of 1967-1970), in 1972 when Elder Paul O. Chuku's family and two other families of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Amocha Oshiri in Ebony State moved to settle in Mfom II for

⁶ John Murphey, "Ministry of Information, Ogoja," interview by Researcher, May 12, 2015.

business. There was no presence of Adventist Church there at Mfom II, Ogoja hence they started a branch Sabbath School there with three families namely: Paul O. Chuku, Abel Aloh and late Peter Chuku. Between 1976 and 1977 these families relocated to Ishibori, Ogoja in search of greener pastures for their businesses and in the absence of the Adventist Church in that big city of Ogoja, they began one.

Immediately, Elder Paul O. Chuku started a branch Sabbath School in his house with those families and some other people from diverse places. Subsequently, they located and brought Thomas Ihya, Abel Aloh, Joe Enyinnaya from Aba. With the increase the Branch Sabbath School they moved to late Elder Peter Chuku big parlor and afterwards, to Ishibori Primary School with a token of six bottles of malts and a monthly rent of one hundred and fifty (#150.00) naira only paid to the head master.

The Primary School became un-conducive with the activity of rough community boys who dumped refuse in their worship hall, branded and black mailed them blood suckers (witches and wizards) and secret society people because Saturday worship was strange in that land. With these challenges, they finally moved to Igoli Primary School. In the new place worship became more effective and lively with the presence of many new members such as Deacon Samuel Chuku, John Odii, John Obasi, from Ugwulangwu and David Nwokike from Ngwaland in East Nigeria Conference. Unfortunately, no indigene accepted the Adventist faith.

In 1978, the President of the then South East Mission Station, Pastor... on his way to Obudu Cattle Ranch located the church from their church's sign post. He visited with them and encouraged them. Meanwhile these pioneer Adventists were remitting their tithes and offerings to their home church and district presently EbonyState. On a second visit, the President invited the church to a camp meeting at Humbonuzor, which was successfully attended. At this camp meeting, Brother Daniel

Nwokike was introduced as their first Literature evangelist and this marked the beginning of their existence as a church in the then South East Mission Station. Thereafter, many pastors were posted to serve in Ogoja.

As a matter of necessity, the church and the Literature Evangelist began a search for a worship place which materialized at the time of Pastor E. O. Udoh Senior at the present church site No.18 Stadium Road. Amazingly the Lord brought Doctor Cock and his wife from Poland who canvassed and secured financial assistance in dollars from his home church to facilitate the building construction which got to an advanced stage. Consequently, the church family increased, and the administration seeing the sweet bond of love and fellowship among the members organized them into the sisterhood of churches on September 4, 1984 by Pastor A. Adeniji. Eventually, Ogoja Church is now a Mission Station headquarters church.

The elders and pastors that led this church include: 1. Elder Paul O. Chuku 2. Elder Daniel Anyanwu 3. Evangelist Umorem Nwokike 4. Pastor Nkpa 5. Pastor Nkwa 6. Pastor B. E. O. Udoh Snr. 7. Pastor E. E. Eko 8. Pastor Aniekan Jonah Mohr 9. Pastor Bassey Michael Adams 10. Pastor Itorobong Etokakpan (2014-2016).⁷

Table 1. Membership Trend for Three Years

Year	Membership	Baptism
2013	219	19
2014	338	14
2015	451	9

The statistics was supplied by the church clerk of Seventh-day Adventist Church Igoli-Ogoja from the church's record book.

⁷ Elder Paul O. Chuku and Elder John Obasi, "Foundation Members of Ogoja," interview by Researcher, May 25, 2015.

Description of the Church Before the Project

There were no significant church activities that could warrant growth in the church. Bible study was a rare feature of the church, while pastor's baptismal class was not in existence. Wednesday mid-week prayer meeting was poorly attended. The Sabbath School teachers' class and Friday Vesper service suffered the same fate. Also Friday Evening Youth Program was totally forgotten.

There was a trend of poor, ill-prepared preaching in the church. Preaching roaster was seldom prepared by the pastor or the First elder. Consequently, best sermons are either quickly or ill prepared, or casual preaching. There was no fasting and prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church is blessed with a vibrant, energetic and pragmatic pastor and zealous elders. The church has a robust membership for this project. The church compound is superlatively spacious with a conducive auditorium for this project. The Adventist Women Ministries (AWM) Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM) departments are active.

Although she has good membership, they are mostly adults and the aged because the youth are in schools and others, out of town in search of greener pastures. The elders of the church are mainly strangers and businessmen. The opportunity the church has is in the area relationship because majority of adult members are in business and transportation through which they are in constant touch with the community. Besides, majority of members live among the community people in their clustered settlement.

The greatest threat to the church is the long existence of Catholicism and long held devilish traditions. Other threats are long distances between Sister Adventist Churches, unemployment and poverty. People there are in abject poverty because

there are no industries and establishments to employ them.

The Adventist Church was not growing for more than a decade. The membership had significantly reduced and there seemed not to be any intentional program to put it on the path of recovery or idea of what could be done to reclaim the lost members. There was no outreach or evangelism program, nor was there any program to bring the church in contact with the people of immediate community.

Problem Statement of the Project

Observation has shown that the church is not growing; rather she is gradually losing her members, worse still everyone seems satisfied with the situation. Therefore the church was in dire need of an appropriate church growth strategy that would help it recover from spiritual death, and facilitate her growth.

Research Design for Church Growth

Based on the components of church growth discovered in the Bible and the insights, principles and patterns for growing churches assembled from the review of literature, research design was formulated. The components for church growth or enlargement of God's kingdom include prayer, God's Words, activities of the Holy Spirit among others. Accordingly, the growth principles comprise revival and receptivity, laity involvement and gift-based ministries, evangelism, discipleship and leadership to mention a few. Similarly, some church growth patterns such as love, care, warmth, fellowship, unity and daily renewal among others were discovered to be predominant feature of the early church.

Therefore research design was formulated to investigate if Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church was engaging these apparatus of church growth or practicing the principles that grow churches. Again it became pertinent to probe into the possibility of the church being in relation with the growth patterns found in the

early church. Absence of those qualities or components, principle and patterns will therefore, require their restoration, to rekindle life in the church and growth will be a natural outcome.

Type of Research

The type of research to be used in this project is the mixed method. The study of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church will employ a qualitative research method in addition to a quantitative practical data analysis method. The first method is aimed at gathering information through sustained contact with the people where the research team spends their time to carry out religious activities together. Data collected from this qualitative research technique will be useful when analysis are conducted using the statistical process.

Rationale for Selection of the Research Method

In this study the empirical method alone will not be sufficient to obtain results, effects and outcomes the project implementation may offer. Specifically, in this study participant's observation, in-depth interviewing and interactions will be used by the researcher and team leaders to evaluate the project. It will penetrate their culture by observing the people, the activities engaged in and their surroundings. In-depth interviewing involved repeated face-to-face encounter between the researcher and informant. Since the evaluation may not be presented in numerical (statistical) forms, there was the need to use the mixed method that will complement each other.

Conversely, sentimental, spiritual and perhaps social responses will be analyzed through qualitative techniques which mere quantitative method may not adequately express. Hence the mixed method seems most suitable since it utilizes the qualitative and the quantitative (empirical) methods.

Appropriateness to this Study

More importantly this study will effect church growth in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church. The resultant effect of her growth would naturally impact the numerous un-entered communities in Ogoja geographical area. This is pertinent because souls are perishing. Churches need to be planted in Ekajuk, Edor, Bekwarra, and others as was planted in Bible times in Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus Syria and Celicia to mention but a few.

Then appropriateness of this study may be seen in the people's affective responses which cannot be quantified. The people of Ogoja town will be convinced through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Word, prayer, and relational approaches of the church. Then they will ruefully accept the gospel and passionately proclaim the gospel to their neighboring communities. In like manner, church will certainly grow in Ogoja area and in the entire Northern Cross River Mission station.

Population and Sample of Participants

The total population of the church is 308 and 30 members were sampled from the membership for questionnaire. For the focus group three categories (five in each) of the church members were considered.

Criteria for Sampling Procedures and Selection

The church membership is diverse in terms of age, sex, education, marital and baptismal status. In whatever state in life one finds himself or herself so their opinions and perspectives differ on a particular issue. In order to poll a composite of the church membership that will adequately represent all the categories, a stratified random sampling method was adopted.

Table 2. Population Segment Participation in Questionnaire

Youth 20-29		Adult 30-39		Senior People 40-49		Old People 50-59		Very Old 60 and above	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
11.0	36.6	15.0	50.0	3.0	11.1	1.0	3.3	=	=

In the process, the corresponding numbers of questionnaire to each population segment were youth 11, adult 15, senior people 3, and very old people 1. The thirty in all and thirty copies of the questionnaire were distributed and retrieved at once.

From the respondents' demographic information male and female participation in the questionnaire was equal (50% respectively). The married members' participation was 60% while the single was 40%. By this, the questionnaire was administered to the more responsible members of the Church; hence their information is most reliable.

Considering the age bracket of participants; 20 – 29years youth represent 36.6% while adults 30-49years of age constituted 50%; seniors (40-49) years was 4.4%; Very old (50 – 59years) comprised of 9.0% and old people; 60years and above accounted for 0%.

In educational qualification, it was administered to 30 members as follows FSLC 40%, Post Primary 36.6%, questionnaire for Bachelors 22.2%, Master's Degree 0.9%, and Doctorate Degree 1.2%. By occupation, farmers were 26.6%, teachers 3.3%, business people 30.3%, Civil servants 6.6% while the unemployed /self-employed were 30.0%.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used namely focus group and questionnaire. First, the focus group were interviewed in a face-to-face interactive forum, then followed by the questionnaire a week after.

Focus group is crucial at this level of study. To realize the purposes of this section using the focus group, three categories or population segments of the local church will be interviewed and polled to find out the basic problems and challenges causing the church to plateau, as well as proffering suggestions for the possible solutions. The most relevant church members to be considered will be the most critical and resentful, the most intelligent and resourceful and the custodians of history of the church and the most experienced.

Consequently, youth within the age bracket of fifteen to twenty one (young university undergraduates and perhaps young graduates) will form focus Group 1. Young people between ages twenty two and thirty five (the working class and perhaps unemployed) will constitute Focus Group 2. The last group will be the elderly and the most experienced.

While the most serious, skeptical, and resentful category Focus Group 1 will be interviewed to identify the problems of the church, Focus Group 2 will be interviewed to suggest the possible solutions and the elderly will be interviewed using questions applied in Focus Groups 1 and 2. The purpose of this method is to balance the positions of the two Focus Groups as to realistically address the problem of the church. The history of the church will showcase the membership trend from the nascent vibrant beginning of the church to her decline, as well as emphasize the factor responsible for the lack of growth.

Consequently, interview questions for the focus groups were designed to investigate the problem of the church. Some sample questions are presented below:

1. This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing
2. What do you think is the problem or problems?

3. Does the church organise spiritual programs such as Bible study, prayer and witnessing?

Findings from the Focus Group 1 indicate that there is no love for one another, no unity, no fellowship, warmth and care in the church rather, power tussle and struggle for supremacy, ethnicity, classism, personal and family recognition abound. Besides, there are evidences of apathy towards spiritual issues. For instance, interest in Bible studies is grossly lacking, there appears to be no enthusiasm for soul winning, or intentional plans for church growth /planting. Worse still there is no spiritual preparation before the sparsely conducted evangelisms, sermons are not inspiring, while worship services are more secular and tends to feed the emotional binges of members. There were no deliberate lay involvement programs for witnessing.

Administering questionnaire in this study is important. In an attempt to implement the biblical model of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church, a questionnaire also was administered using the stratified sampling technique. Some of the questionnaire sample questions are presented below:

1. There is evidence of constant prayer and enthusiasm for prayer programs.
2. There appears to be increase in Bible study in recent times.
3. Perhaps there could be the possibility for increase in Bible study if church begins one.
4. There is evidence of genuine repentance in the church.

In a total population of 308, youth (20-29years) were 36.6%, adults (30 – 49years) 50%, senior people (40-49 years) 11.1%; Old people (50 – 59years) 3.3% and very old people (60years and above) 0%. A questionnaire was therefore administered according to the percentage proportion of each age bracket. Hence the corresponding numbers of questionnaire to each population segment were youth 11, adult 15, senior people 3, old people 1 and very old people is nil. The thirty copies of

the questionnaire were distributed and retrieved after the exercise. Therefore out of a total population of 308, 30 were given the questionnaire and they were all faithful to fill and return them since it was on-the-spot exercise.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an integral part of any research and implementation project. It is useful for the purposes of investigation into participants' responses as to classify reactions in order to have clear viewpoint and proper direction of the project.

Data Collection Procedures

For the focus group, data collection procedure used was by oral conversation. This was due to the fact it was an oral interview and face-to-face friendly discussion. Each focus group was given ample time and relaxed atmosphere. Tape recorder was used by the researcher to collect responses.

Then for the questionnaire, the collection procedure was simply by receiving back the papers handed over to the participants on the spot. They were also given enough time and the entire church auditorium and outside were used, whereby each person worked independently. Though it appeared like an examination setting, it was a conducive and stress free situation. More so participants had been informed well in advance the nature and procedure of the questionnaire.

Presentation and Description of Findings

Tables, charts and figures were used in the presentation of data as well as written documentations. Description of findings was presented in purely written forms.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Interview with Focus Groups 1- 3, examined the deficiencies of the church and proffered solutions to them. The several suggestions given, appears to suggest biblical model of church growth approach. This could be achieved, through restoration of the church's spiritual vibrancy. Revival which will include Bible study, prayer, love and interpersonal relationship may be helpful.

Bible study for instance, will include Bible reading, Bible listening, Bible study, Bible stories and drama (Rev 1:3). Other areas of renewal will comprise constant prayer, witnessing and gift-based ministries. Constant prayer may be subdivided into prayer of intercession, partnership prayer, praying through, rebellious prayer and Daring to ask for more and testimonies. Witnessing and gift-based ministries have their unique module and practice which are applicable in various situations and circumstances.

Analysis of Demographic Information

In view of the importance of demographic information in this section of the project it, it will be appropriate to present it in a graphic form for easy understanding.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	12	40.0
	Female	18	60.0
Marital Status	Married	18	60.0
	Single	12	40.0
Age	20-29	11	36.7
	30-39	15	50.0
	40-49	3	10.0
	50-59	1	3.3
Education Level	FSLC	12	40.0
	Post Primary	11	36.7
	Bachelors	6	20.0
	Masters	1	3.3
Occupation	Farmer	8	26.7
	Teacher	1	3.3
	Business	10	33.3
	Civil Servant	2	6.7
	Unemployed	9	30.0
Baptism Status	Baptized	26	86.7
	SS Members	4	13.3
Office	Officers	3	10.0
	Board Members	9	30.0
	Departmental Leaders	18	60.0

From the respondents' demographic information male and female participation in the questionnaire was 40% and 60% respectively. The married members' participation was 60% while the single was 40%. By this, the questionnaire was administered to the more responsible members of the Church; hence the respondent information may be reliable.

Considering the age bracket of participants; 20 – 29years youth represent 36.6% while adults 30-49years of age constituted 50%; seniors (40-49 years) was 11.1%; old people (50 – 59years) comprised of 3.3% and very old people (60years and above) accounted for 0%. In educational qualification, it was administered to 30 members as follows FSLC 40%, Post Primary 36.6%, questionnaire for Bachelors

22.0%, Master’s Degree 3.4%, and Doctorate Degree 0.3%. By occupation, farmers were 26.6%, teachers 3.3%, business people 30.3%, Civil servants 6.6% while the unemployed /self-employed were 30.0%.

Looking at baptismal status, baptized members were 86.6% while Sabbath School members’ participation was only 13.3%. By this, more knowledgeable regular members participated in the questionnaire. By church office, Church officers were 11.1%, board members 28.9% and departments which embrace all other members were 60%. This shows that officers and board members who possibly could have given false information to protect their image were not in dominance. Hence the result of the questionnaire could be fairly said to be unbiased.

Analysis of Respondents’ Responses

Responses of respondents reveal more of the unseen realities of the state of health of the church. It elicits the opinion and views of members on the current spiritual position of the church. Table 4 indicates that none of the 30 respondents strongly agreed that there is evidence of constant prayer. Even though ten persons or 33.3% agreed that there is, a total of 63.3% coupled with no opinion of 3.3%, certainly shows that the church needs a revival.

Table 4. Evidence of Constant Prayer and Enthusiasm for Prayer Programs

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%	No	%
30			10	33.3	12	40.0	7	23.3	1	3.3

Table 5 shows that 6.7% strongly agrees, 13.3% agrees while 16.7% and 63.3% respectively disagrees and strongly disagrees. This strongly suggests that the church is in abject need for renewal.

Table 5. Increase in Bible Study

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	2	6.7	4	13.3	5	16.7	19	63.3	-	-

Table 6 indicates that 16.7% strongly agrees, 63.3% agrees while 6.7% and 10.0% respectively disagrees and strongly disagrees. Only 3.3% had no opinion. This strongly signifies glowing hope for biblical literacy and sound doctrine which will nourish the church to growth.

Table 6. Possibility of Increase in Bible Study

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%	No	%
30	5	16.7	19	63.3	2	6.7	3	10.0	1	3.3

In Table 7, only 6.7% strongly agrees, 30% agrees but 50% disagrees and 13.3% strongly disagrees. As can be seen from the respondent's response, about two-thirds disagree with the presence of genuine repentance in the church. This portrays lack of spiritual life in the church.

Table 7. Genuine Repentance

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%	No	%
30	2	6.7	9	30.0	15	50.0	4	13.3	-	-

Responses in Table 8 show nil in Strongly Agrees, 33.3% Agrees, 40% Disagrees, 23.3% Strongly Disagrees and 3.3% in No Opinion. As can be seen, two-thirds of the responses are in the negative. This portrays a loveless church that needs renewal.

Table 8. Increased Awareness of God's Love

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	-	-	10	33.3	12	40.0	7	23.3	1	3.3

Table 9 demonstrates Strongly Agree=>10%; Agree=>26.7%; Disagree=>30%; Strongly Disagrees =>30% and No Opinion =>3.3%. From the foregoing, two-thirds of the respondents' reactions are in the negative. And this is an indication of a declining Church.

Table 9. Evidence of Remarkable Love for One Another

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30		10.0	8	26.7	9	30.0	9	30.0	1	3.3

Table 10 indicates Strongly Agrees => 13.3%, Agrees =>26.7% Disagree=>30%, Strongly Disagrees => 26.6 while No Opinion => 3.3%. This shows that the church needs a restoration.

Table 10. Positive Internal Experiences/ Family-like Connection

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	4	13.3	8	26.7	9	30.0	8	26.6	1	3.3

Table 11 represents the responses as follows: Strongly Agrees = 6.7%, Agrees =20.0% Disagrees =33.3%; Strongly Disagrees =33.3 while No Opinion = 6.7%.

From this result, two-thirds answer in the negative. This portrays a church that is not lively with the Christ's presence.

Table 11. Evidence of Fellowship and Warmth in the Church

Respondents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	NO	%	No	%	No	%
30	2	6.7	6	20.0	10	33.3	10	33.3	2	6.7

Responses in Table 12 are thus: Strongly Agree => 23.3%; Agree => 33.3%; Disagree => 16.7%; Strongly Disagree =>26.6% No Opinion => nil. From the foregoing, a narrow margin exists between the affirmative and the dissenting. Majority of the respondents may not know the membership strength.

Table 12. Increased Church Attendance

Respondents	Strongly Agree (SA)		Agree (A)		Disagree (D)		Strongly Disagree (SD)		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	7	23.3	10	33.3	5	16.7	8	26.6	1	3.3

Table 13 shows as follows: Strongly Disagree => 16.7%, Agree => 26.7%, Disagree =>30%, Strongly Disagree => 20% and No Opinion => 6.7%. As can be deduced 43.4% are in agreement while 50 are in disagreement which is a narrow

margin, yet the church needs revival.

Table 13. Commitment to Serve

Respondents	Strongly Agree (SA)		Agree (A)		Disagree (D)		Strongly Disagree (SD)		No Opinion	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	5	16.7	8	26.7	9	30.0	6	20.0	2	6.7

Table 14 is about evangelism and discipleship indicates: Strongly Agree => nil %; Agree => 13.3%; Disagree =>43.3%; Strongly Disagree =>23.3%, No Opinion =>20%. Consensus grossly under weighs disagreement. As can be inferred there are members and not disciples in the Church.

Table 14. Reality of Evangelism and Discipleship

Respondents	Strongly Agree (SA)		Agree (A)		Disagree (D)		Strongly Disagree (SD)		No Opinion (NO)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	-	-	4	13.3	13	43.3	7	23.3	6	20.0

Table 15, responses on membership increase through baptism indicate: Strongly Agree => 6.7%, Agree => 30%, Disagree => 53.3%, Strongly Disagree => 6.7% and No Opinion => 13.3%. As can be worked out; 36.7% consensus as against 56.6% Disagreement and No Opinion 6.7% is dangerous. It means the Church is not engaging in evangelism and witnessing activities.

Table 15. Membership on the Increase through Baptism

Respondents	Strongly Agree (SA)		Agree (A)		Disagree (D)		Strongly Disagree (SD)		No Opinion (NO)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	2	6.7	9	30.0	16	53.3	1	3.3	2	6.7

In table 16, responses for lay involvement and gift based Ministries illustrate: Strongly Agree => 10.0%, Agree => 13.3%, Disagree =>40%, Strongly Disagree => 30%, and No Opinion => 6.7%. The table show consensus 23.3 compared to opposition of 70%. More than two-thirds are saying no such activity in the church. Hence much more revival work is required in the Church.

Table 16. Lay Involvement and Gift Based Ministries

Respondent	Strongly Agree (SA)		Agree(A)		Disagree (D)		Strongly Disagree (SD)		No Opinion (NO)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
30	3	10.0	4	13.3	12	40.0	9	30.0	2	6.7

In the summary next page, responses in No Opinion column are ignored, because they are generally of low percentages.

Table 17. Summary of Analysis of Respondents Results Table

Table	Description	Total Agree %	Total Disagree %	Remarks
4	Evidence of constant prayer and Enthusiasm for Prayer Programs	33.3	63.3	The Church obviously needs revival
5	Increase in Bible Study	20.0	80.0	Portrays abject need for restoration
6	Possibility of increase in Bible Study	80.0	16.7	Indicates hope for biblical literacy/Sound Doctrine
7	Genuine repentance	36.7	63.3	Lacks Spiritual life and needs renewal.
8	Increased awareness of God's love	33.3	63.3	Appears a Loveless church that needs revival.
9	Evidence of remarkable love for one another	36.7	60.0	This seems to be a declining church
10	Positive internal experiences/ family-like connections	40.0	56.6	This church needs restoration to vibrancy.
11	Evidence of fellowship and warmth	26.7	66.6	Church seems to lacks the presence of Christ
12	Increased Church attendance	56.6	43.3	Narrow margin disparity, yet needs renewal
13	Commitment to serve	43.4	50.0	This church needs revival
14	Reality of evangelism and discipleship	13.3	66.6	This church seems to lacks disciples
15	Membership increase through baptism	36.7	56.6	Church seems not to have spiritual life to increase
16	Lay Involvement and Gift-Based ministries	23.3	70.0	More revival work required in the church

Summary

So far, respondents' results clearly indicate positive response on table 4; possibility of increased Bible study. Respondents' responses on Tables 8, 10, and 11 show narrow margin variations between the negative and the positive. Table 14 reveals more than two-thirds on the Disagree columns, while the rest tables portray about two-thirds on the negative thereby stressing the need for urgent revival program to qualify the church for growth.

Designing of the Intervention

Consequently, the following steps will be taken to ensure adequate preparations to conduct the research; obtaining permission from the Church Board, Conference Executive Committee, identification and training of group leaders. And this is the gracious prescription of Doctor Burrill.⁸ Preparation of materials for intercessory prayers/training of prayer team members will also be undertaken.

Obtaining permissions from the church board is appropriate. It is necessary to obtain the consent and approval of the Church leaders. As the Church Board and Executive Committee members get the detailed information, aims and objectives, and spiritual benefits of this program, they will pass the idea to the entire church membership. Besides the Board will lend her moral and financial support to the program, while the individual members will be agents for the advertisement and promotion of the program.

Furthermore, the leaders are expected to give their blessings and encouragements and perhaps lend helpful insight for the achievement of the goals of this project. Invariably, as church leaders meet at higher organizations to discuss the problems and prospects of the church, such meetings may bring huge blessings in the form of incentives and inspirations for such dissertation. As this is an invertible step, it was obtained on October 26, 2015 (see appendix A for confirmation). Similarly, the consent of the Administrative Committee of the Northern Cross River Mission Station (NCRMS) was sought and obtained on the 8th of November, 2016 (see appendix B for confirmation).

⁸ Russell Burrill, *Rekindling A Lost Passion: Recreating A Church Planting Movement* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1999), 117, 118.

Identification and Training of Group Leaders is strategic to the success of this project. The importance of training leaders in an organization cannot be over emphasized. Carl F. George, reflecting on the importance of training leaders defines leadership in terms of people’s followership of the leader. This is contrary to the common practice of election or appointment, or popularity based on education, titles or impressive set of credentials.

He further stated that, “A leader inspires commitment in people and turns a vision into a concrete reality.”⁹ In response to this, a good number of energetic youth and elders and young women will be identified and selected as leaders, and trained subsequently.

“Nehemiah – the man with a mission” will be the theme of the training. Additionally, inspirations will be drawn from other Old Testament revivals for this Dissertation. Nehemiah is an exceptional for leader. He was a patriotic statesman, his spiritual and noble characteristics include: patriotism (Neh.1:1-4), prayerfulness (1:5-11; 4:4, 5, 9), faith (2:20; 4: 14), courage (4:20; 6: 10, 11), diligence (4:21 - 23), firmness in the right (13:11, 17, 25), earnestness in reforms (5; 13:15-21) etc. For details see appendix H.

Project Design will continue with intentionally formulated steps and list of activities that will be carefully followed to implement the project. Some of the steps and list of activities are in the appendix.

Description of Intervention Strategy

The researcher will be accessible to all church members, be friendly to the families and show interest in their children and affairs to win the needed confidence.

⁹ Carl F. George, *The Coming Church Revolution: Empowering Leaders for the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1991), 40.

The researcher will pay a familiarization visit to all the families in the church to know their peculiarities and create the much needed acquaintances. The researcher will hold a fervent seasons of prayer with the families during the visit.

The researcher will interview Focus Groups of the specially selected members, and administer questionnaires on members that will be selected through the stratified random sampling. There will also be was the analysis of focus group findings and data analysis of respondent responses to the questionnaire in order to ascertain the peculiar situations of the church

Identification and selection of group leaders will be based on competence and on voluntary basis. In addition, more young people will be considered in view of their role in renewal and church growth programs. In other words, this will enable the researcher to tap the energy, zeal and creativity of the young people. Training of leaders will require specialists or people who have some skills coupled with adequate preparations. As a result, the researcher will assemble four pastors working under him and give them special orientation to assist him train the group leaders. It means that the training session could break into four sessions at the same time.

During implementation of the project, some pastors in the Mission station will be invited from their districts to serve as resource persons. The local church pastor, will be assigned to lead out in the regular revival programs. Other pastors will be given workshop and seminar topics to deliver, then other roles to perform during the programs. Although prepared materials will be given to them, they are expected to bring in their own creativity and wisdom to make the program pragmatic and vibrant.

Material preparation for constant prayer will include materials for intercessory prayer, partnership prayer and rebellious prayer among others. Prayer of rebellion is persistent prayer such as in Luke 18:1-8, parable of widow and the unjust judge.

Rebellion kind of prayer is symbolized by her persistence in requesting the judge to do something.

It is a prayer against status quo, the state of the world in its sin and fallenness. It is the absolute and undying refusal to accept as normal, what is completely abnormal. It is the rejection of every agenda which class with “thus said the Lord,” every scheme, every opinion whether culturally or socially, or historically generated. The kind of prayers are expressions of the unbridgeable chasm that separates good from evil, a declaration that evil is not a variation of Good but the very opposite.¹⁰ It is this kind of prayers that usher in revival.

Therefore members will be taught how to engage in the above prayer in addition to “Praying through and daring to ask for more” which is intended to request on continuous basis, God’s interposition in exceptional things such as miraculous healing and deliverance as an entering wedge to some un-entered and gospel unreceptive areas.¹¹ Also, praying that God directs unbelievers to His church through dreams and vision.

There will be prepared materials for Bible study that will focus on: how to deliver creative Bible study, Bible studies come alive (thematic Bible study) and relational Bible study. There will be materials prepared for spiritual gift seminar and spiritual gift discovery so also for love, interpersonal relationship/ constant visitation.

The Intervention implementation will be a six-month (November 2015-April 2016) program that will be full of restoration activities. The programs will embrace the local church, Union and General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist revival and

¹⁰ David Well, “Prayer Rebellious Against the Status Quo,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 159–160.

¹¹ Mason, *Daring to Ask for More*, 137.

reformation programs. As soon as permission to implement the project is granted promotions and advertisement of the program will start in earnest tentatively fixed from October 27-31, 2015. Then November 4-5, 2015 will be for fasting with prayer and identification/selection/training of the group leaders respectively. November 18-20, 2015 special revival half week program will take its course. December 17-20 will be annual camp meeting program of the union.

January 6-17, 2016 General Conference scheduled operation Global rain and prayer program will be given priority. On February 19-21, 2016 the special revival half week program will be held in the church. March 5-12, 2016 a special revival week long program will be conducted. In the month of April, tentatively April 17-30, 2016 will be program evaluation activities. These special programs will run alongside the regular weekly renewal programs as will be seen in following paragraphs.

Other programs of the project implementation will include monthly fasting with prayer Morning 6.00am – 12noon. This is expected to hold on Wednesdays which is already a traditional day of prayer. Additionally, the audio Bible DVD will be played in every Church program. It will add beauty to the programs and encourage members to participate actively in the daily Bible reading plan of the General conference. There will be regular studies of some selected portions of the Fundamental Belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The regular Sabbath School teachers' class that holds on Thursdays will be given a fresh impetus.

Besides, the normal Tuesday Action Unit fellowship program will be made livelier to encourage greater participation. Consequently, worship leaders will equip to lead better with some innovativeness. There will be a reawakening in the usual family devotion to adequately encourage participation in the daily Bible reading plan of the General Conference revival and reformation program.

For emphasis the fasting and prayer programs will be organized for the Holy Spirit guidance and preliminary introduction into the project implementation as said earlier for November 4, 2015. Identification, selection and training of group leaders for effectiveness in leading out during the implementation of project will be carried out on November 5, 2015. Then a half week revival program fixed for a morning and evening which will feature eight renewal sermon topics to actually ignite the revival fire comes up on November 18, 2015

Two important lectures for leaders during their training session are Nehemiah the man with a mission then Revival and the Young People. This will be carried out to sensitize the leaders for action, before a repeat of those two lectures to the church members. Lectures on Nehemiah the man with mission, Youth and revival and Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop are in the appendix. Below is part of the Lecture.

Old Testament revivals are replete with many examples of how the Lord can use young people to achieve renewal among his people. i) Joshua and the generation under 20 (Deut. 1:20). ii) David the young Hero (1Sam. 17:33), iii) Josiah the young King started a revival in the 8th year of his reign. (2Chron. 34:3) and Jeremiah the young prophet (Jer.1:6, 7) etc., all were used by God. Similarly the New Testament revivals history cannot be complete without the mention of John the Baptist and his radical message (Mark1:6). Jesus began His ministry at about the age of 30, while the age of his disciples probably ranged between 21 to 36 years of age.

In Church history, the Great Reformers of 1500s like John Calvin was converted at the age of 25 who within a period of one year completed the first draft of his famous book: *Institutes of the Christian Theology*. Martin Luther also, was a young man when he came to lime light in Christian history. Phillip Melanchthon, a

scholar at the age 21 years was used by God. Besides, the Great Awakening of 1700s witnessed a group of revivalists such as George Whitefield (who began to preach at the age of 21). Jonathan Edwards, a young preacher in Northampton, Massachusetts whose sermons in 1734 transformed young men who began revivals in New England. And finally the Canadian revivals of 1948 to mention a few are encouraging evidences of what God can do with the young people. And this may be part of the fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel 2:28.¹²

With reference to “Youth First”, a paper prepared by the General Conference Youth department, Founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were Young people. Adventist pioneers include James White who started his ministry at the age of 21, Ellen G. White at 17, J. N. Andrew at 21, Uriah Smith at 20. This suggests that God uses young men to accomplish great feats of church growth. And one may conclude that God is looking at the young men of this church to ignite revival fire that will prepare many for his kingdom. Another important material is spiritual gift seminar and discovery workshop is displayed here below:

Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop

The under listed, are some Spiritual Gifts and the possible activity of someone possessing each of them. These were advanced by God to the New Testament Church of the first century. God could add more to this, according to the needs and demands of His work in this 21st century. Going by the Gift inventories, there are some characteristics that are associated with such Gifts that will enable you to begin to identify some gifts that the Lord must have endowed you with. They include for

¹² Mason, *Daring to Ask for More*, 137.

example Prophets: Prophets are often bold and articulate. Servers (those in ministry) are faithful and loyal. Teachers are clear thinkers. Encouragers know how to motivate others. Givers are generous and trusting. Leaders are good organizers and managers. Mercy and caring people are happy to give their time to others.¹³

Prayerfully, the under listed inventories and the possible activities will assist gift exploration and discovery. In view of the importance of Spiritual gifts in the Church, special arrangement was made to achieve maximally in the exploration of these Gifts.

Seminars and workshop for this strategy were carried out during the Weekend Retreat see appendix H for details. In any venture, for project evaluation to be successful the following basics are essential:

1. Significance: Can the project have impact in the growth of the church in Igoli-Ogaoja?
2. Competence: Does the project have the competence to be incorporated into the operational system the church's evangelism and church growth?
3. Effectiveness: Is it acceptable to the leadership of the church that have key role to play in the implementation of the project. In other words, can the church contribute meaningfully to the execution of the project?
4. Growth: Has the church experienced growth rate since the program was introduced?
5. Sustainability: Has the project strengthened the spirituality of the church and has it encouraged many members to be part of her future growth.

Important Assumptions

In the logical frame work, the researcher has identified a number of assumptions that will enable the project to succeed. Therefore, this study will consider

¹³ Tyndale House Publishers, *Life Application Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 2050.

assumptions in order to ascertain that the project's goals are achieved. It is the researcher's passionate assumption that the leadership of the church and Mission Station will lend financial support.

It is assumed that prayer and Bible study and others will play key role in the revival and witnessing programs of the church, which will eventually lead to church growth. Also it is assumed that project committee will be formed from the various sectional heads to monitor the activities of the program at each level.

Most importantly, it is assumed the project will be operating at two levels. 1) That Group leaders will be elected at the church level for the smooth running of the program. 2) That Bible reading and prayer will be supported at all levels including the Mission Station. Ultimately, it is assumed that these areas of implementation will spur the church into spiritual vibrancy and growth in Ogoja area and the entire Northern Cross River Mission Station.

Monitoring and Interim Evaluation

To improve performance and achieve the desired goal, it will be necessary to have an in-built monitoring and interim evaluation system. The goal is to improve current and future management of the outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is mainly used to assess the performance of projects, institutions and programs set up by Government, international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations.

The continual evaluations make for effective monitoring and collection of data throughout the process. Though monitoring has to do with practical observation and checking of progress and quality of the project. It is a consistent evaluation method that helps to deal problems that may arise with the day to day supervision of the project.

It may be necessary to evaluate the church and her facilities to ascertain her

capability of hosting this project. And the SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and treat) system may be most appropriate. The reason is that it enables researchers to quickly assess the strength, weakness, and opportunities and treat that may present themselves in the church.

Limitations

Initially this project was strange to the members because the researcher was newly posted to the recently created mission station. Therefore both the researcher and the project were not understood at the beginning.

In addition, the audio Bible DVD listening program which was planned to be played one hour to every church program was not realized due to power supply. This will be carried out in subsequent phases of this project implementation. Another constraint was non-availability of deacons an hour to the program to set the public address system.

The challenge of accessibility was a limiting factor. If the church were more centrally located in the town, members could easily walk to the church. Also invitation of friends to the church without spending money would have been an advantage. Lack of water and regular power supply sometimes affected programs.

The researcher encountered problems such as lack of books and materials to begin with. The Venue of the project as well as the members of the church were initially strange to the researcher. There was some resistance at the beginning of the project design.

Project Report

The project implementation was completed on April 16, 2016. In view of the need immediate report due high expectations, brief verbal report was presented to the local church elders on Saturday April 30, 2016. Then a formal interim written report

was sent to the church clerk on Tuesday May 3, 2016 (see appendix I for details).

The report contained in brief, the activities carried out on each scheduled date, theme, purpose, the attendance, and selected members' impressions and observations. Others were names of facilitators and profile as well as peoples' general impressions about the program. It also highlighted strength and weaknesses such as participation, opening and closing times.

The report was necessary to win the confidence of the church. Besides it would encourage the church to support the project morally and financially, and for continuity as part of the regular program of the church. Besides, it was to assure the church of enjoying the full benefits (goals) of the program.

The evaluation process involved participants' observation, casual or formal and informal interview of selected members. Again, the services of the some group leaders who were specifically trained for such interviews were enlisted. Sometimes non-member friends in the neighborhood were also indirectly requested to make comments on sermons, seminars and workshops that were held.

The Mission Station received a copy this report on May 4, 2016. In the same vein, the leadership was expected to reciprocate by continued support to the program in the church. It was expected that the Mission station may carry out some of those strategies in other churches that may have similar challenge as Ogoja Church. For details see appendix J.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter described this project, beginning from the conception to its preparation, project implementation and report. It provided an eye view of how the project came to mind, the concern and intentions. It gave a brief description of the theological foundation, literature review, and the ministry context situation. Others were the place the project was carried out, where and when the permission for the project was obtained, findings from Focus Group and questionnaires among others.

This study was borne out of the researcher's concern for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which was not growing in Igoli-Ogoja. Whereas other Christian churches were increasing in numbers, expanding in sizes, many others were experiencing phenomenal growth and building cathedrals in every town and village in Cross River State, the Adventist Church rather declining. There was obvious decrease in membership.

Project Preparation

There is the saying that planning a preparation process is the beginning of success in any event or program. Hence, it became necessary that adequate preparation be made in order to effectively design the program for a biblical model of church growth in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church.

Planning process and goal setting (evaluating values and principles) does not preclude God's sovereignty or the power of the Holy Spirit, rather it catalysis human activity for church growth. Planning increases efficiency unites the team with singular

plan and vision and measures effectiveness according to plan and vision. Goal setting equates faith and must be relevant, measurable, significant, manageable and related and others.¹ Indeed, C. Peter Wagner affirms that goal setting is biblical (a kind of faith projection; Heb. 11:1 that pleases God), natural (the brain and nervous system constitutes goal striving mechanism reminder) and practical. For instance, many examples abound on how faith projections have accelerated church growth.²

Hence preparation for this Dissertation involved the study of relevant passages in the Old Testament, Christian Church History in Acts 2:41-47 and other related New Testament passages. Relevant contacts and consultations were made for advice, from my advisor, Professors Kelvin O. Onongha and S. M. Nwaomah at the Babcock University Extension campus of Adventist University of Africa (AUA). The co-operation and permission of the Northern Cross River Mission Station administration and Ogoja Church Board were enlisted to conduct this research.

Investigation was conducted on the growth pattern of the church by gathering the church membership statistics for three years (2013-2015) from church record book. Thereafter, an explanation of the benefits of the program was made available to the departmental leaders and the church at large, during a special Sabbath School session.

The researcher read newsletters and reports of the church to find out more details about the church. Interview was conducted on the history of Ogoja Church with a group of elders, most of whom were eye witnesses and foundation members of the church. They also shared with the researcher the culture, socio-economic life and

¹ Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, 265–258.

² C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies for Church Growth: Tools for Effective Mission and Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal Book, 1989), 158–159.

traditions of Ogoja town.

Identification and selection of group leaders as well as a training session was conducted the following day as scheduled, in a congenial atmosphere of the church auditorium. Subsequently, focus group interviews were conducted. Similarly, questionnaires were developed and administered among the members. This was followed by an analysis of information and data which informed the development of the intervention program and implementation.

Description of the Theological Foundation

As part of the preparation for this research, the theological foundation for biblical model of church growth was established. From the Old and the New Testaments components (or qualities that facilitate) the enlargement of God's kingdom or church growth were discovered to include prayer, God's word and activities of the Holy Spirit. Others were fellowship and relational graces, discipleship and mentorship to mention a few. Besides, evidences of church growth abound which include the children of Israel, Jesus and His disciples, the church in Jerusalem, Cornelius house, Antioch, Corinth and Ephesus to mention a few. Biblical foundation revealed that Jesus used Job-in-training pattern of education to prepare His disciples for church growth. And the same approach was used by the early church and Paul.

As a model of biblical church growth, the study of early New Testament church Acts 2:42-47, was conducted. The purpose was to examine the pattern, methodology and principles employed that stimulated such extraordinary growth of the early church.

Hypothetically, it is believed that the principles and methodologies of church growth derived from these texts will be the authentic and the most reliable instruments to grow churches that will meet God's standards. This research proposes

that the fruits of such biblical church growth will be eligible to prepare disciples for translation into the kingdom of God and in particular, Ogoja Church.

The study of the early church in Acts 2:42-47 revealed spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fellowship, Bible study and witnessing which the church engaged in. At the same time, unity and cooperation, warmth and care as well as daily renewal empowered by the Holy Spirit were the patterns and methodologies the church espoused. And these activities and graces enabled the church to grow up to 3000 and 5000 and others. As may be seen, close relationship promotes cooperation, unity, peace, love and trust both to God and fellow human being. And these are vehicles for evangelism and church growth.

Description of Literature Review

Preparation for implementation of this dissertation would be incomplete without reviewing literatures on the subject. Hence in the process of literature review for church growth, several books, journals and other related literatures were examined to glean the best and current global insights possible on the subject. Authors such as Bruce Ashford noted with dismay the absence of Scriptures in the formulation of mission strategies of some churches. Aubrey Malphurs believes that such churches may not be making disciples³

Christian A. Schwarz proposes that spirituality is the universal principle for church growth. As a result he enumerated the eight quality characteristics of a growing church to include empowering leadership, gift-based ministries and passionate spirituality. Others are effective structures, inspiring worship, need-oriented evangelism, holistic small group and loving relationship. Many other authors

³ Aubrey Malphurs, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting: A Guide for Starting Any Kind of Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 137–138.

supported this view which includes George Janvier, C. Peter Wagner, to mention but a few.

Indeed, the researcher shares the same view, and it signifies that a growing church must be prayer-led as well as a spirit-filled church. Moreover, some of these quality characteristics were part of the intervention package for Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The literature review ascertained a number of sound church growth principles espoused by scholars and world renowned church growth experts. They comprise prayer, the Holy Spirit, revival, small group, church planting and evangelism. Others are laity involvement and spiritual gifts, discipleship, leadership and receptivity and others. Interestingly, the researcher is passionate to apply them in Igoli-Ogoja Church.

Description of the Project Venue

The venue for this project implementation was Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church. This church serves as the district headquarters church for Ogoja district and incidentally, the Mission headquarters church and as a result, has some advantages over other churches in the Mission Station. The church is accessible by its location at Ogoja town and in the midst of a clustered residential environment. It has modern facilities such as sound public address system, generator, projector and screen. It has spacious church auditorium painted and fitted with modern doors and windows. The interior has a modern torch of cooling system, decorated pulpit with a marching backdrop. Indeed, the auditorium is conducive for conferences, seminars and workshop. The church compound has event arena (sufficient space for car park and extracurricular activities) with some cover trees for outdoor class activities. In summary, it has all it takes to implement this Dissertation.

Permission

It was necessary to obtain the consent and approval of the Church leaders. To be precise the approval of the church Board and the Mission Station administration were obtained on October 26 and November 8, 2015 respectively.

As the Church Board and Executive Committee members got the detailed information (aims and objectives, and spiritual benefits of this program) they shared the idea with the other church members. Besides, the Board lent her moral and financial support to the program. The Board took the decision to give wide publicity to the program and to make budgetary provisions for it in her 2016 annual budget. Individual members became vanguards for the advertisement and promotion of the program even in their neighborhood.

Interestingly, the leaders gave their blessings and encouragements for the success of the program. Helpful insight for the achievement of the goals of this project came in the form of gift materials, money, and narration of the church history, culture and tradition of Ogoja people. They also blessed the program with their presence and that of their family members. Their cooperation and willingness to serve was amazing.

As this is an invertible step, permission was obtained on October 26, 2015 as mentioned earlier (see appendix A for confirmation). A similar gesture was obtained from the church through her church at business meeting, held between regular Sabbath school and divine service period. However, this was carried out for the purposes of publicity and information.

Similarly, the consent of the Administrative Committee of the Northern Cross River Mission Station (NCRMS) was sought and obtained on the 8th of November, 2016 (see appendix B for confirmation). In the same manners, the administration

approved it, wrote a letter of congratulation and in addition, promised to support financially as the need arises.

Description of Findings from Focus Group/ Questionnaire

Focus Group 1: Questions/ Interviewees' Responses

Focus group 1 comprised of the youth within the age bracket of fifteen to twenty-one (young university undergraduates and perhaps young graduates), who are usually critical of what is wrong and wants that which is good. This group was interviewed on the general problems of the church and to proffer possible solutions. Findings from this group reveals that there was no love for one another, no unity, no fellowship, warmth and care in the church rather, power tussle and struggle for supremacy, ethnicity, emphasis on class (that is homogeneous group). Besides, the desire for personal and family recognition abounded in the church.

The group complained that issues were handled at personal levels and attributed such attitudes to lack of genuine repentance. As a result, nobody is willing to serve or work together and there appeared not to be awareness of God's love. The outlook of the church worship services and meetings seems to be secular. The interviewees tried to justify this by arguing that church meetings sometimes looked like that of the village or town's meetings.

There was the consensus that outreach, Bible study, prayer programs came seldom and that there was lack of enthusiasm for them. Worse still, it was observed that it appeared that members go to other churches for prayers and to find solution to their problems. In other words that it seemed that some members have magical worldview. Sometimes, the church lacked people to lead out in mid-week or vesper services and someone would pick Bible and go to preach sermon he or she did not

prepare. This Group noticed that baptism and communion services came once or at most twice in a year. And it was usually the baptism of member's children or close relations. Interviewees also observed that there was no baptismal class for the newly baptized members and prospects. Finally, they observed that the Adventists Women Ministries and Youth departments were lively due to the sponsorship of some members. Some of the findings in direct quotation of the interviewees' responses are presented below:

This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches and in reality, is this church growing? Answer: "no," "not at all," "not even like the modern churches around." For more details see appendix D.

Focus Group 2: Questions/ Interviewees' Responses

Focus group 2 is composed of senior youth between ages twenty two and thirty five (the working class and perhaps unemployed). These appeared to be the most intelligent and resourceful members of the church. Findings from this group confirmed that such problems observed by focus group 1 exist in the church, but in lesser degree than was presented by previous group.

The interviewees added that there appeared to be no enthusiasm for soul winning, or intentional plans for church growth. It was observed that few evangelisms were conducted with little or no spiritual preparations, such as fasting and prayer, and that sermons were not inspiring. Worse still worship services tended to feed the emotional binges of members. Further it was observed that there were no deliberate plans to involve the laity in witnessing programs.

This group suggested that the most intelligent way to address the problems was to allow Bible study and constant prayer to handle the issues without

confrontation. Also this group emphasized the need for interpersonal relationship, laity involvement and pastoral visitation.

Some findings in direct quotation of the interviewees' responses are presented below: This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing? Answer: "no," "not quite," "not as one may think," "growth is relative," For more details see appendix E.

Focus Group 3: Questions/ Interviewee's Responses

Focus Group 3 was constituted of the elderly and the most experienced members of the church. Interestingly, none of these groups knew about the interview the researcher conducted with the other groups. The purpose of this arrangement has been explained in the previous chapter. This was to avoid biased views and to enable the researcher realistically ascertain to the root cause of the problem.

Summarily, this group in answering the questions frankly admitted the existence of some problems. The interviewees tried to justify some on the grounds that the administration at Calabar was far from the church. Generally, from their responses, these problems actually exist. Interviewees proffered solutions similar to those of the previous groups. The suggestions included organizing spiritual gift seminar and spiritual gift discovery workshop which could help to a great extent. Finally, there was the consensus that with the presence of an ordained minister, baptism and communion services of the church could be held at regular intervals. Some findings in direct quotation of the interviewees are presented below:

This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches in reality, is this church growing? Answer: "It will grow." "We hope it will grow" "The church is growing." "Growth cannot easily be

measured.” For details see appendix F.

Findings from Questionnaire

Responses of respondents reveal more of the unseen realities of the state of health of the church. It elicits the opinion and views of members on the current spiritual position of the church.

Responses on evidence of constant prayer and enthusiasm for prayer programs

Indicate that none of the 30 respondents strongly agreed that there is evidence of constant prayer. Even though ten persons or 33.3% agreed that there is, a total of 63.3% coupled with no opinion of 3.3%, certainly shows that the church needs a revival.

Reactions to increase in Bible study show that 6.7% strongly agrees, 13.3% agrees while 16.7% and 63.3% respectively disagrees and strongly disagrees. This strongly suggests that the church is in abject need for renewal.

Feedback on possibility of increase in Bible study reveals that 16.7% strongly agrees, 63.3% agrees while 6.7% and 10.0% respectively disagrees and strongly disagrees. Only 3 had no opinion. This strongly signifies glowing hope for biblical literacy and sound doctrine which will nourish the church to growth.

Response to evidence of genuine repentance, presents 6.7% on strongly agrees, 30% agrees but 50% disagrees and 13.3% strongly disagrees. As can be seen from the respondent’s response, about two-thirds disagree with the presence of genuine repentance in the church. This portrays lack of spiritual life in the church.

Similarly, answers to increased awareness of God’s love show nil in Strongly Agrees, 33.3% agrees, 40% is agrees, 23.3% strongly disagrees and 3.3% in no opinion. As can be seen, two-thirds of the responses are in the negative. This portrays a loveless church that needs renewal.

At the same time, reply on evidence of remarkable love for one another demonstrates as follows: strongly agree 10%; agree 26.7%; disagree 30%; strongly disagrees 30% and no opinion 3.3%. From the foregoing, two-thirds of the respondents' reactions are in the negative. And this is an indication of a Church without love.

Consequently, responses to positive internal experiences and family-like connection indicate thus: strongly agrees 13.3%, agrees 26.7%, disagree 30%, strongly disagrees 26.6 while no opinion 3.3%. This shows that the church needs a restoration.

Similarly Answers to evidence of Fellowship and Warmth in the church show as follows: strongly agrees 6.7%, agrees 20.0%, disagrees 33.3%, strongly disagrees 33.3 while no opinion 6.7%. From this result, two-thirds answer in the negative. This portrays a church that is not lively with the Christ's presence.

Respondents' responses to increased church attendance appear thus: strongly agree 23.3%; agree 33.3%; disagree 16.7%; strongly disagree 26.6% and no opinion nil. From the foregoing, a narrow margin exists between the affirmative and the dissenting. Majority of the respondents may not know the membership strength.

Respondents' reactions to Commitment to Serve show that strongly disagree is 16.7%, agree 26.7%, disagree 30%, strongly disagree 20% and no opinion 6.7%. As can be deduced 43.4% are in agreement while 50 are in disagreement which is a narrow margin, yet the church needs revival.

Sampled members' reactions to reality of evangelism and discipleship indicate: strongly agree nil %; agree 13.3%; disagree 43.3%; strongly disagree 23.3% and no opinion 20%. The Consensus grossly under weighs disagreement. As can be inferred, there are members and not disciples in the Church.

Respondent responses to membership increase through Baptism show that the Church is not engaging in evangelism and witnessing activities. This is represented by the following results: strongly agree 6.7%, agree 30%, disagree 53.3%, strongly disagree 6.7% and no opinion 13.3%. As can be worked out; 36.7% consensus as against 56.6% disagreement and no opinion of 6.7%. This is dangerous.

Similarly, responses to lay involvement and gift-based ministries portray that consensus was 23.3 compared to opposition of 70% this simply means that more than two-thirds are saying that there are no such activity in the church. Hence much more revival work is required in the Church. This was demonstrated as follows: strongly agree 10.0%, agree 13.3%, disagree 40%, strongly disagree 30%, and no opinion as 6.

Data Analysis

Findings from Focus Group 1 indicate lack of love for one another, absence of unity and fellowship, abject lack of tenderness and care in the church rather, struggle for supremacy and others. Findings from Focus Group 2 added lack of spiritual preparations for evangelisms; un-inspiring sermons, emotional worship services, absence of intentional plans to involve the laity in outreach and witnessing program among others.

From the foregoing, it may be inferred that the church is desperately in need of spiritual renewal. The several suggestions given, appears to propose biblical model of church growth approach which could be achieved through sermons, seminars and workshops. And the content of those programs could be revival in Bible study, constant prayer, love and interpersonal relationship, and gift-based ministries and others. These program contents may be appropriate to Igoli-Ogoja Church. Responses to questionnaires are subject to different analytical interpretations. For instance responses to evidence of constant prayer and Enthusiasm for Prayer Programs that has

aggregate of 33.3% in agreement and 63.3% in disagreement suggests that the church needs revival in those areas of church life.

Similarly, responses to increase in Bible study which show 20% in the agreement and 80% in disagreement which indicates that the church needs Bible study to be rekindled in that church. In similar vein, the responses to evidence of Fellowship and Warmth in the church, two-thirds answer in the negative. This portrays a church that is not lively with the presence of Christ. Although respondent responses to increased church attendance show a narrow margin disparity— 56.6% on the positive and 43.3% for negative, e respondent may not know the actual membership statistics. Still the church needs restoration.

Seminar/Workshop/Sermon Material Development

Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop

The under listed, are some Spiritual Gifts and the possible activity of someone possessing each of them. These were advanced by God to the New Testament Church of the first century. God could add more to this, according to the needs and demands of His work in this 21st century. Going by the Gift inventories, there are some characteristics that are associated with such Gifts that will enable you to begin to identify some gifts that the Lord must have endowed you with. They include for example Prophets: Prophets are often bold and articulate. Servers (those in ministry) are faithful and loyal. Teachers are clear thinkers. Encouragers know how to motivate others. Givers are generous and trusting. Leaders are good organizers and managers. Mercy and caring people are happy to give their time to others.⁴

Prayerfully, the under listed inventories and the possible activities will assist

⁴ Tyndale House Publishers, *Life Application Bible*, 2050.

gift exploration and discovery. In view of the importance of Spiritual gifts in the Church, special arrangement was made to achieve maximally in the exploration of these Gifts.

Seminars and workshop for this strategy were carried out during the Weekend Retreat. See appendix H for details.

Table 18. Gifts and Possible Activities

Gifts	Possible Activity
Teaching	Teacher in Sabbath school, Small groups, Bible Studies, Seminars
Service	Deacon, Deaconess, Visitation, etc.
Knowledge and Wisdom	Resource Person for Ministry Groups, Teaching Activities, Seminars, etc.
Exhortation	Peer Counseling retreats, Youth Ministry, Support Groups
Discernment	Bible-study groups, Sabbath school classes' leader, counseling.
Faith	Ministry Groups that need encouragement and long-range planning.
Giving	Regular and special needs giving.
Apostleship	Church planting, planning new ministries, serving in previously unentered areas.
Pastoring	Visitation, area spiritual coordinator, small-group chaplain, etc.
Evangelism	Door-to-door ministries, apprenticeship programs, public meetings, seminars.
Mercy	Hospital visitation, community-service outreach, prison ministries.
Hospitality	Receptionists/greeter ministries, small-group activities, community service.
Administration	Organizing activities, Chairing and managing groups.
Missionary	Any activity across ethnic or cultural boundaries.
Intercessory prayer	Intercessory-prayer ministries, small group prayer leader.
Helps	Church maintenance, Deacons, Church-office personnel, ministry in groups.
Leadership	Elder, Deacon, committee chairperson.

Leaders were trained in the church auditorium with the theme: "Nehemiah the man with a mission." The highlight of devotional for the training session was an exposition on the man; Nehemiah. Part of the sermonette is presented here below:

Topic: "Nehemiah – the Man with a mission." Inspirations were generously

drawn from other Old Testament revivals such as Joshua (Joshua 24:1-28), and Josiah (2 Kings 23:1-8, 21-25) among others. The revival of Nehemiah's is exceptional for leaders. He was a patriotic statesman, his spiritual and noble characteristics include: patriotism (Neh.1:1-4), prayerfulness (1:5-11; 4:4, 5, 9), faith (2:20; 4: 14), courage (4:20; 6: 10, 11), diligence (4:21 - 23), firmness in the right (13:11, 17, 25), earnestness in reforms (5; 13:15-21) to mention a few.. For details see appendix G.

Afterwards, there was a lecture entitled: "Revival and the Young People." Below is part of the Lecture. Old Testament revivals are replete with many examples of how the Lord can use young people to achieve renewal among his people. i) Joshua and the generation under 20 (Deut. 1:20). ii) David the young Hero (1Sam. 17:33), iii) Josiah the young King started a revival in the 8th year of his reign. (2Chron. 34:3) and Jeremiah the young prophet (Jerem.1:6, 7) among others, all were used by God. Similarly the New Testament revivals history cannot be complete without the mention of John the Baptist and his radical message (Mark 1:6). Jesus began His Ministry at about the age of 30, while the age of his disciples probably ranged between 21 to 36 years.

In Church history, the Great Reformers of 1500s like John Calvin was converted at the age of 25 who within a period of one year completed the first draft of his famous book: *Institutes of the Christian Theology*. Martin Luther also, was a young man when he came to lime light in Christian history. Phillip Melanchthon, a scholar at the age 21 years was used by God. Besides, the Great Awakening of 1700s witnessed a group of revivalists such as George Whitefield (who began to preach at the age of 21). Jonathan Edwards, a young preacher in Northampton, Massachusetts whose sermons in 1734 transformed young men who began revivals in New England. And finally the Canadian revivals of 1948 to mention a few are encouraging

evidences of what God can do with the young people. And this may be part of the fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel 2:28⁵

With reference to “Youth First”, a paper prepared by the General Conference Youth department, Founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were Young people. Adventist pioneers include James White who started his ministry at the age of 21, Ellen G. White at 17, J. N. Andrew at 21, Uriah Smith at 20. This suggests that God uses young men to accomplish great feats of church growth. And one may conclude that God is looking at the young men of this church to ignite revival fire that will prepare many for his kingdom.

Additional Steps taken prior to Implementation

From logical frame work, the researcher made some assumptions in order to keep the project in perspective. One, that prayer and Bible study would play a significant role in the renewal and growth of the church. Two, that the project committee have to monitor activities of the project at each level from the beginning to the end of implementation. Three, that Group leaders need be elected at the church level for recognition by members and to give them sense of belonging, to enable them maintain smooth running of the project. More importantly, it was assumed that implementation of this project will promote church growth in the entire mission field.

Project Implementation

All sermon, seminar and workshop materials for the project implementation were ready. And the church was properly informed and as a result, the church members were prepared for the implementation.

⁵ George G. Hunter, *The Contagious Congregation: Frontiers in Evangelism and Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1979), 20, 19.

Description of Intervention Activities

Design of intervention strategies started with a planning process that intentionally formulated steps and list of activities that were carefully followed to implement the project. The researcher came to the level of the church members, visited members' homes, became friendly and acquainted with the people. The purpose of this was to win members' confidence and cooperation to ensure the project was successfully implemented and to achieve the goals.

Identification and selection of leaders was conducted on November 5, 2015. Leaders were identified and selected on voluntary basis from church ministries department such as Adventist Men Ministries, Adventist women Ministries and largely from Adventist Youth Ministries. The level of awareness and publicity created by church leadership was awesome. This prompted sound cooperation that made members willingly volunteer with excitement. This process took place after a divine worship session in the church.

Training of leaders was carried out on November 5, 2015. There was a fasting with prayer session the previous day that interceded for the power of the Holy Spirit and His guidance through the program. Attendance of the fasting program was impressive due to the support of the church leadership and the huge publicity accorded it. Some members freely provided a sumptuous lunch which served for the breaking of the fast. Additionally, car and motorcycle owners were seen conveying less privileged members and visitor to their homes. The level of cooperation was indeed high.

The Bible study "come alive" material is displayed here below: Bible Study Come Alive, unique place of the Bible in Spiritual restoration involves Bible Study, daily Bible Reading / audio Bible DVD emphasized the importance of the principles

of Bible Study as well as daily reading and hearing of God's word. For more details see appendix H. In addition, the audio Bible DVD was planned to be played one hour to every church program. This was enabled those, who for tight schedules may not meet up all their daily readings in between church weekly programs to cover up. But for constraints of power supply and readily available deacon an hour to the program it was not realized. This will be carried out in subsequent phases.

This was followed by the training proper in the various areas each of the leaders were designated to serve. Leaders were grouped and given orientations according to their skills, training, exposure and experience in the five key areas of project implementation.

Patterns of prayers. Prayer had four subheadings namely; prayer of intercession, prayer of rebellion (against abominable status quo), praying through and daring to ask for more, and partnership prayer. 1) Prayer of intercession focused on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, genuine repentance, obedience, disciple making and total restoration. 2) Constant prayer of rebellion (Luke 18:1-5) concerns itself with the ugly and unchristian practices in the church and the community. Few examples are power tussle, politics, pride of opinion and inordinate ambition for prosperity and success, demon possession of members.

“Praying through and daring to ask for more” is intended to request on continuous basis for God to do the uncommon things such as miraculous healing and deliverance as an entering wedge to some un-entered and gospel unreceptive areas. Also, prayers were said for God to direct unbelievers to His church through dreams and vision. Besides, there were prayers that God may break house hold, ancestral and territorial curses, vows, or commitments that may be responsible for peoples' negative to the gospel. This is particularly common in some areas of Ogoja that are highly

Catholic dominated. Evangelism programs conducted in such areas have always recorded no baptism. 4) Partnership prayer requires that members should have prayer partners, who will be praying with them on regular basis until the number of the partners increases with time from two to twelve.

Training for Bible studies was held on November 22, 2015. Others were trained on Bible study series which are subdivided into three namely: how to deliver creative Bible study, Bible studies “come alive” (thematic Bible study) and relational Bible study. 1) How to deliver creative Bible study deals basically with how to use Bible games, Bible stories, Bible drama and pantomime to teach Bible lessons. The purpose for this method is to make Bible lessons indelible in people’s memory. 2) Bible Studies Come Alive (thematic Bible study) utilizes power point presentation (marched with colors and appropriate beautiful pictures to depict scenes and events) to deal with topics such as fulfilled Bible prophecies, identification of God’s Church, Bible promise, Second Advent of Christ, Benefits of Genuine revivals. 3) Relational Bible Study series treats beautiful relational Bible issues in the scriptures such as brothers in the Bible (Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob), Sister (Mary and Martha), also fathers and mothers in the Bible.

Some others were trained in interpersonal relationship and visitation, witnessing, lay involvement and Gift-based ministries. Interview of the three Focus Groups was conducted on Wednesday, November 25, 2016 at different times during the day. Administration of questionnaire on the sampled members was held on Sunday November 29, 2015. Both events took place in the church auditorium. These were followed by analysis of focused group findings and data analysis of respondent responses to questionnaire in order to ascertain some situation of the church. Following the order of sequence, there was a planning process and goal setting to

evaluate values and principles discovered in the theological foundation and review of literature. There was a preparation of materials for sermons, seminars, workshops and retreats. Project intervention design was developed and organized in a systematic way.

The six months (November 2015-April 2016) Intervention implementation program was packed full with Spiritual restoration activities. The programs ranged from the local church, Union and General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist revival and reformation programs. As soon as permission to implement the project was granted on October 26, 2015 the project team went into action with promotions and advertisement from October 27-31, 2015. Fasting with prayer and identification/selection/ some training for the group leaders were held on November 4 & 5, 2015 respectively. On November 18-20, 2015 special revival half week program was conducted. Similarly, December 17-20 was annual camp meeting program which held at Ikom town. It was well attended by Igoli-Ogoja members.

Then on January 6-17, 2016 was the General Conference operation Global rain and prayer program. Special revival half week program was carried out on February 19-21, 2016 in the church. On March 5-12, 2016 a special revival week long program was conducted. The month of April was program evaluation activities. These special programs ran alongside the regular weekly renewal programs.

Seminars/workshop/sermons conducted. The sermons topics delivered include: the power of the Holy Spirit in revival, the widow's oils, revival and reformation testimonies, the awesome blessings of Bible studies, and amazing blessings of interpersonal relationships. Others were the blessings of spiritual gifts, the buried treasure –the bible, revival and reformation-the favored king, Jehoshaphat. Furthermore, sermons on: relationship is the key to happy living, and the power in

constant prayer, were held once each.

There were seminars held during the intervention program implementation. They include: love, interpersonal relationship and visitation which Pastor Bernard delivered on three occasions. Pastor E. S. Essien delivered the two Spiritual gift seminars and two spiritual gift discovery workshops. Then Pastor U. Enyia the youngest and more vibrant from Obubra Group gave a devotional topic captioned: the rich young ruler and deceased churches.

Some pastors in the mission station were invited as resource persons.

Beginning with the Host, Pastor Itorobong Etokakpan (Ogoja District), Pastor Etuambom S. Essien of Obudu District, pastor Solomon C. Bernard of Ikom District and Pastor UchennaEnyia of Obubra Group were all involved in the program. The reason for their invitation is obvious. They were invited to lend a helping hand as well as learn some of the revival strategies as to implement them in their local churches.

Pastor Etokakpan led out in most of the regular programs that featured in the evenings namely: Friday, Saturdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays as the host Pastor. They include activities such as Fasting with prayers, Bible study come alive, 100 days of prayers, and operation global rain. Others are Sabbath school teachers' class, Audio Bible program and family morning and evening devotions.

The pastor arranged with families to know their scheduled time for morning and evening devotions and drew his private roaster to visit the families unannounced with the researcher. This made many families to keep faith with their devotions as they were always expecting their Pastor and the Mission President to visit them. The purpose of this program was to develop the devotional life of members and also to enable cue into the revival program. The local church sponsored the pastor's transportation. According to the church treasurer it cost them Fifteen thousand, five

hundred and fifty naira only.

Pastor Solomon C. Bernard, an amiable and passionate pastor, delivered seminar on love, interpersonal relationship and visitation which he delivered on three occasions. Others were relational Bible study three times and sermons on; relationship is the key, and the power in constant prayer, once each. He also led out in two workshops, once each on constant visitations and benefits of communal Christian community. Expenditure for his transportation and feeding was twenty four thousand, seven hundred naira only. Fortunately, the district parsonage at Ogoja has guest room and two other rooms that served for the pastors' lodging.

Pastor E. S. Essien delivered the two Spiritual gift seminars and two spiritual gift discovery workshops as a more senior pastor to others who also know the value of good work done. He also handled a devotional topic: "oh there is joy when the work is done." The purpose of this program is to involve all members in ministry according to their giftedness to enhance efficiency of members. The cost of his transportation and feeding stands at nineteen thousand four hundred and fifty naira only.

Then Pastor U. Enyia the youngest and more vibrant from Obubra Group gave a devotional topic captioned: the rich young ruler and deceased churches and handled prayerful discussion questions in a church hall meeting such as 1) what must I do when my church is dying? 2) What must I do when my church is very sick? 3) What did Paul mean in Philippians 1:3-5 when he thanked the church for her in the gospel? Pastor Enyia's transport and feeding was twenty five thousand two partnership hundred naira only

Any other aspect of implementation. Additionally, a monthly Fasting and prayer programs usually held on first Wednesday of each month were organized during the period of Implementation. Interestingly it is ongoing in the remaining

period of intervention. Constant prayer was identified by James M. Boice as the third item in the disciples' preparation for restoration which actually occurred on the Pentecost.⁶

Implementation of the program was started with a half week revival program on November 18, 2015 in a morning and evening sections program during which eight sermon topics were delivered namely: the widow's oils, revival and reformation – testimonies, the awesome blessings of Bible studies, and amazing blessings of interpersonal relationships. Others were the blessings of spiritual gifts, the buried treasure –the bible, revival and reformation-the favored king, Jehoshaphat.

Other programs of the project implementation include monthly fasting with prayer Morning 6.00am – 12noon. Additionally, the audio Bible DVD was played one hour to every Church program. This arrangement was to enable members on tight schedules, those who probably travelled to meet up all their daily readings which Perhaps were overlooked in between church weekly programs to cover up. Also, study of some selected portions of the Fundamental Belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, (a part of the scheduled chapter), in every midweek service were conducted. Sabbath School teachers' class holds on Thursdays by 5.00pm -6.00pm and mandatorily taught by the pastor.

Besides, the Tuesday Action Unit fellowship used the book: *Steps to Christ* (one or half) a page each day. Programs such as singing, testimonies, prayer requests and seasons of prayer were held within the staid period of 7.00 – 8. 00 pm were carried out.

Each family was amply encouraged to hold compulsory morning and evening

⁶ James Montgomery Boice, *Acts: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), 33.

devotions participating in the daily Bible reading plan of the General Conference. Song service, meditation and seasons of Prayer were other activities of family devotion.

Evaluation

According to this subheading, this section is concerned with program evaluation. Obviously, having designed and implemented a pragmatic program to restore to Spiritual vibrancy in Igoli-Ogoja SDA Church for church growth, for a period of six (6) months, it is essential to evaluate it, in order to establish the degree of success. This will serve for the purposes of future application and benefit of other churches and perhaps further research.

For the focus group semi structured and closed and open-ended questions were asked the participants in the church auditorium. There were three focus groups comprised of five persons each. The first group are made up of young people who are jealous that the church of God be a model and so are more of the realistic view for improvement. The second focus group was more of middle-aged and working-class members who were to confirm the first group and to proffer possible solutions. The third focus group comprised of the elderly who were more experienced in church administration. Third focus group questions were structured for the group to confirm or object to the answers and position of the first and second focus groups. These focus groups were given additional opportunity to say more about the ailing situation of the church. Each group performed very responsibly.

The questionnaires were designed in semi-structured, formal and simple questions for better understanding. The respondents acted responsibly fill the questionnaires which were collected on the spot. The respondent responses were analyzed accordingly and used for the design of intervention.

Consequently, various methods and devices were employed which basically included interviews and personal observations with face-to-face interactions. Interview was conducted with selected church and Board members, in addition to those selected by stratified random sampling to ensure unbiased report. While personal observations were carried out for each of the set goals following the particular strategy that was implemented.

In the implementation, four vital strategies were used. They were constant prayer, the Bible Study Come Alive (The unique place of the Bible), Interpersonal relationship/ Constant visitation and Spiritual Gifts Seminar / Discovery Workshop. Prayers with fasting were a regular part of the program.

On April 17, 2016 the researcher interviewed some church board members, in the church, to critically but fairly assess the intervention program. Selected group leaders specifically trained for this evaluation carried out this responsibility on monthly bases. Others were the pastor, three serving elders and head deacon. First, in the month of December, that was December 21, 2015 after the camp meeting, and second on January 24, 2016. Others were February 28 and March 20, 2016. Then final evaluation was on April 17, 2016.

These supplied results of evaluation as follows: 1) By base line assessment, regular attendance was 18-23 members at prayer meetings. In December 21 attendance was 35 adult members excluding non-members and children. January, February and March evaluation indicated 40, 45 and 39 respectively. Contextual element such as fasting was responsible for the decrease in March.

These evaluations were carried out in the church. And the results were clearly stated in qualitative forms. Participant observations show that members were happy to attend prayer meetings. This was evident in prayers said during the series of

visitation, fellowship programs and other meetings. There were that sense of expectancy and hope among members as more testimonies of answered prayer were said during prayer meetings.

Bible studies were seen to be more lively and interactive in nature. Some young secondary students shared testimonies about of witnessing experience with fellow students. More members were observed requesting for tracts to share with neighbors and friends. Some members call on phones; others came to researcher and pastor to get Bible quotations to answer questions asked by Bible friends. Also participant interviews confirmed those observations.

Observations indicated that there were more Christian relational practices among members. These include visitations, cordial and lovely interactions and more group singing during weekly programs. Participant interviews indicated that some members shared business ideas, problems and prospects together. This signifies that somehow the relational graces as it was in the early church was taking root in the church

Following the discovery of Spiritual gifts members' attitude to work and services in the church were observed to be whole heartedly done. And to a great extent worship was observed to be more inspiring. Some level of preparedness and skills in preaching were also observed. These were also confirmed by participant observations.

Project Report

The first phase of the project implementation was completed on April 16, 2016. Therefore, the project report was an interim one which covers the first six months November 2015 to April 2016.

Report to the Local Church

In view of the fact that the project is ongoing, (with two larger phases remaining) brief verbal report was presented to the local church elders on Saturday April 30, 2016. Then a formal interim written report was sent to the church clerk on Tuesday May 3, 2016 (see appendix I for details).

The report contained in brief, the activities carried out on each scheduled date, theme, purpose the attendance, and selected members' impressions and observations. Others are names of facilitators and profile as well as peoples' general impressions about the program. It also highlighted strength and weaknesses such as participation, opening and closing times.

The report was necessary to win the confidence of the church. Besides it would encourage the church to support the project morally and financially, until full implementation is conducted. Besides, it will assure the church of enjoying the full benefits (goals) of the program when it is completed.

The evaluation process involved participants' observation, casual or formal and informal interview of selected members. Again, the services of some group leaders who were specifically for such interviews were enlisted. Sometimes non-members friends in the neighborhood were also indirectly requested to make comments on sermons seminars and workshops that were held.

Report to the Conference

The Mission Station received a copy of this report on May 4, 2016. For details see appendix J. In the same vein, the leadership was expected to reciprocate by continued support to the project. It was expected that the Mission station may carry out some of those strategies in other churches that may have similar challenge as Ogoja Church.

Closing Remarks

The strategy design for biblical church growth in Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a journey of uncertainty and experimentation. Presentation of the ministry context opened the researcher's understanding about the people of Ogoja and the history of the church. Instrument used in the study revealed the actual challenge of the church, which is spiritual lethargy.

Appropriate renewal intervention was designed and implemented accordingly to restore the spiritual vibrancy of the church. The researcher zealously worked with the facilitators, trained team leaders and the church members to implement the project. The results are clear indication that is on the path of spiritual and numerical growth.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION

Evaluation in any project execution is very important. This section considers concise summary of the dissertation, evaluation of the entire project from the beginning to project implementation and weighing of the output, effects and future actions. It presents a concise summary of the dissertation, description of the final evaluation method used and as well comparison of the two previous evaluations. This section covers of interpretation of data, drawing conclusion from data, examination of intervention outcomes in clearly qualitative terms. Also it presents lessons learned, conclusion and list of recommendations and details for further research on the subject.

Summary of Dissertation

The biblical model for church Growth was conceived out of the researcher's concern for the declining status of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Igoli-Ogoja. The purpose of this project was to research into best church growth strategies and to implement them to stimulate the Church to growth. To achieve this task, it required a detailed study into the history and spiritual life of the Church as to discover the specific problems plaguing the church. In addition, it was vital to research into the biblical and theological foundation, as well as review of current literatures on church growth.

Furthermore, it was crucial to design an intervention program and to implement it in the Igoli-Ogoja Church to redress the Church to the path of qualitative growth. This research was studiously carried out using the Bible, scholarly text books,

journals and articles on church growth. Then biblical factors that facilitate church development and growth principles from review of literatures were assembled. The literature review tends to validate the biblical keystones that church growth originates from God, who is the basis and means of growing churches. Besides, it confirms that the factors revolve around God.

The biblical factors such as prayer, God's Word, proclamation of the Word, activities of the Holy Spirit, fellowship and God's people's community life and others were invaluable. While the growth principles such as church renewal, small group, church planting, evangelism and receptivity, laity involvement and Gift-based ministries were very useful. Others worthy of note were discipleship and leadership, growth principles inherent in growing churches, principles of expectancy and staff longevity and others were discovered.

An apt description of the local setting of Igoli-Ogoja Church was judiciously considered and chronicled, for the purposes of discovering her peculiarities and perhaps certain environmental factors that must have been responsible for her numerical down turn. Besides, this was to enable the researcher determine the particular growth strategies as to design appropriate intervention program suitable for her expansion.

And these included, the people's culture, geographical location of the Church, history of the Church and her membership trend. There was also a description of the history of Cross Rivers State. The SWOT method of evaluation was adopted to assess the areas of the Church's strength and weakness. In addition the peculiar Church challenge was determined while other information about the Church was gleaned through survey and questionnaires that were administered.

Focus group interview was conducted with 15 persons (in three groups) in

selected from different population segments of the church. Afterwards, there was administration of questionnaires to thirty (30) stratified sampled members, which reveals that the church does not have spiritual characteristics nor engage in spiritual disciplines that bathed the early New Testament church. The disciplines and practices of the early church comprised Bible study, prayer, communal Christian life, and fellowship, witnessing and daily renewal with the Lord.

The above investigations revealed further that the Church was deficient in several areas of vibrant church life. Some of which are active witnessing, Bible study, sound interpersonal relationship, sincere love for God and Gift- based ministries. Most especially the Church lacked the knowledge, or seemed to have lost sight of God's love.

Following the Church's extreme lack of interest in Bible Study, prayer, witnessing, interpersonal relationship certain goals were set for her reawakening. Some of these goals were increased awareness of God's love and sincere commitment to serve Him, and remarkable love for one another. Others were increase in the number of Bible Study, Evangelisms and majority participation in the both of these, as well as increased attendance in worship and weekly programs.

To achieve these goals adequate arrangements and preparations were made in terms of advertisement and promotions, logistics, resource persons and materials. First, awareness was created among Church leaders and a formal Church board's permission was obtained. Group leaders were identified, selected and trained accordingly. Appropriate resource materials were gathered from libraries, internet, among others. Obviously all these adequately informed the designation of the intervention program and the subsequent implementation.

In an effort to design and develop appropriate interference programs for this

project, four important strategies were carefully considered. And these were in the light of the peculiar Church challenge, the set goals and timeframe for the implementation of the program. They were Bible study, fellowship/constant visitation, Spiritual gift seminars/discovery and constant prayer. See the appendix, for the designed programs and contents.

The unique place of the Bible in revivals was designed to impart biblical truth, to create the much required love and desire for the Bible study and reading. Also to teach the best method of Bible study which will lead to better understanding of biblical truth. This design included lectures /seminars on topics such as the Bible as the buried treasure, the Bible the book of the hour, what the Bible can do for you. Others were how to study the Bible, principles of Bible study, and Bible reading come alive workshop. Finally, daily Bible reading plan of the General Conference for the quinquennium was adopted coupled with audio Bible reading DVD to encourage more reading and listening to the word.

Spiritual Gift Seminar / discovery workshop was designed to create awareness of Spiritual gifts in the Church and how to discover them. Also to sensitize members on the inherent dangers for not using their spiritual gifts. Consequently Seminar topics such as what is spiritual gift, spiritual gifts likened to parable of the talent and Spiritual Gift discovery were prepared to meet these objectives

Building on the spiritual characteristics and disciplines found in scriptures and principles in current literatures, intervention strategies were designed to return the church on the part of health as to stimulate growth. They were intentional constant intercessory prayers, pragmatic systems of Bible study, brilliant fellowship (love) and visitation programs as well as qualitative gift-based ministries. It is the implementation of these intervention strategies that will be evaluated to ascertain the

degree of success, whether the goal of church growth has been achieved.

Description of the Evaluation Methods Used

Some team members were of service in this work of evaluation. The evaluation consisted of conscious realistic and dynamic observations as it had to do with growth, interviews that weighs effects, imparts and feelings that may not be clearly seen.

In other words, the project used both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation. The reason was because growth is a natural phenomenon that is physically seen and measurable, but the latent and spiritual elements which are not visible are perceivable. Those willing and readily available to assist in the evaluation program included the local church pastor, the three serving elders, head deacon and the seven member project committee members.

Description of Evaluation

The project is a continuous one and has three phases, therefore this section evaluates the first phase. Though the total result of the evaluation may not be fully realized with in the short period of six months, there were positive indications for the overall renewal and optimal growth. The entire atmosphere of the church during each meeting and most especially on the Sabbath looks friendly and inviting.

General Attendance of Programs

Attendance to programs generally has improved, while lateness has drastically reduced. From the third month of the project implementation, majority of members came to church programs on time to meet up with the audio Bible listening program and seasons of prayer that accompanied it.

Attendance to Bible study which stood at 14-19 average at the beginning of

this program increased to between 30-35 persons in each meeting. Attendance to prayer meetings had remarkably improved with a noticeable presence of some non-members. At the beginning of this project implementation, 18-23 persons were usually in attendance, but presently the number has increased to 30-40.

The pastor confessed that it is a miracle that members could leave their shops and civil servants obtain permission to attend the monthly fasting and prayer programs on Wednesdays. Indeed, attitude to church programs had been comely and members have been favorably disposed to attend the new programs of this project. The same attitude was exhibited in terms of group programs such as group or class meetings, visitations to members or members' neighbors including hospitals patients.

Constant Intercessory Prayer

Prayer in this project was designed to encourage vibrant and devotional life in every member of God's family. Also to create in members the burning desire to depend upon God. It was also designed to proffer better methods and environment, and key to victorious Christian life. As a result a standard monthly fasting and prayer program, as well as time and best intervals for prayer were designed. In addition, daily Bible reading with meditation on Ellen G. White books, "Follow the Bible and Believe the Prophets" program of General Conference was adopted and implemented. Interestingly, the above designed programs were implemented to the letter as contained in the implementation chart.

The constant prayer and prayer partnership, rebellious prayer against the ugly status quo with the church, cannot be underestimated in the success of this project. This was evident in the series of prayers during visitation, fellowship programs, and especially the monthly prayers with fasting programs. Besides, the prayer partnership introduced in this Church, through this project added flavor and relational graces of

love, bonding and interpersonal relationship.

There was more prayer consciousness among members. Members who are in business could close their shops to attend prayer meetings and visitation appointments. Working class members also did similarly. Prayer as a spiritual discipline inculcated in members the attitude of hope and waiting on the Lord for temporal and eternal blessings. The sense of hope and expectancy could be clearly seen on members' faces and disposition.

One demon possessed was miraculously delivered, while several testimonies of answered prayers were rendered in the church. Notable among those were evangelism success in Abakpa town where several attempts and evangelisms to win souls proved futile with no baptism in the past. But evangelism conducted in that town yielded three souls and a branch Sabbath School is in existence there.

Eleven out of nineteen prayer partnership groups had their meetings regularly. Five had an increased membership of two members each; four had one additional member each while three out of the five had in addition one non-member each. Other prayer partners met occasionally and by proxy through phone conferencing.

Bible Study

Recently, a good number of church members happily demand for tract and magazines to read and to share to friends and neighbors. A good number of young people in secondary schools shared with the researcher their witnessing experiences with class mates and friends. There was an appreciable enthusiasm on Sabbath afternoon outreach. There was increased prayer request for Bible friends. Presently there was the demand for interpretation of the audio Bible program in the local dialects of Igoli and Ibo for better understanding. Our response was to summarize each chapter in the local dialects. Members old and young who are gifted in story

telling now entertain the church during Friday evening Youth programs. Currently the church is planning to package the stories as another model of evangelistic series which will be shared in the neighborhood or part of public evangelisms.

Love/Interpersonal Relationship/ Visitation

Members' reaction to seminars on 'community the essence of trinity' 'Church as a relational community' and 'principles of interpersonal relationship' was exciting. The same attitude was shown in the workshop on 'early SDA Social meetings,' church social programs that were designed to reawaken interest in the already existing social programs, such as birthday, child dedication, property dedications among other.

There was noticeable increase in love and interpersonal relationships. Though many still complain about their jobs and businesses within the week days, weekends became a beehive of activities for neighborhood and hospital visitations, and outreach programs. And on their return to join the church's vesper services, members' cheerful faces greet the researcher and the pastor an indication of successful programs.

Members were more endeared to stay in church from Sabbath morning to evening. Four cases of misunderstanding among members were resolved during the period under review, while two cases dissolved naturally. Though church welfare budget for the year finished in a period of three months, members were hopeful that they will not lack.

Gift-based Ministries/Spiritual Discovery

Members' responses to spiritual gift awareness and discovery programs were amazing. They received them with excitement because some have not heard it before, others extolled the merits of spiritual gift in the life and growth of the church. For instance members were happy for the specialization, cooperation, compensation

ministries perspectives of the Gift-based program. Besides, the belief that it will reduce mediocrity, friction and all the problems that characterize nominating committee encouraged most of them to discover their gifts.

Members were happy to identify and work with members that share the same spiritual gifts with them. Teachers, preachers, singers, leaders and those endowed in the service lines tendered prayer request for greater efficiency. This they did privately to me and some came as a group like the singing groups. Also observable were the focused and the intentional aspect of spiritual gift. Shortly before the end of the implementation and during evaluation period, Sabbath and divine service were becoming increasingly lively and interesting.

Lessons Learned

During the period of implementation, the Lord performed some miracles. One, the said deliverance of a demon-possessed young lady and a three-year feud that had existed among some members was resolved through the power of prayers. Two, non-members attended our programs and were comfortable and friendly, unlike in the past. Three, many lethargic members became active and receptive and recent evangelism and outreach programs of the church has been rewarded with better results. The implementation program was very hectic and demanding, yet the Lord graciously supplied the needed strength. Finally, the Lord supplied new ideas about operating a day care school in Ogoja SDA Church compound.

There was a strange incident whereby an officer of the church suddenly got angry and abandoned the program for no good reason. However, the officer apologized the next day, but could not substantiate what was the cause of the emotional upset. This indicates that the enemy of Christ was not asleep and as uproar

greeted church growth effort of Paul in Antioch, Thessalonica and others so it will be in Igoli-Ogoja Church.

Conclusion

The project was successful in view of the fact that the church's problem was discovered and appropriate intervention was designed, implemented and which eventually solved the crisis. The problem was diagnosed to be spiritual lethargy and a renewal intervention was applied which brought spiritual vibrancy to the church.

In one word church's spiritual growth gives birth to her numerical increase and growth. This discovery will have significant application in Igoli-Ogoja Church as well as in all the churches in Northern Cross River Mission Station.

Recommendations

Based on the researcher's experience with this study, it would be appropriate to recommend that the leadership of the Igoli-Ogoja Church should follow religiously the schedule prepared by the researcher to the completion of the project. And the venue has to be the local church in order to maintain the interest of members and prospects.

Also that the research be used as a model by the Mission leadership to both regenerate declining churches for effective growth and to equip growing churches for continued and sustainable church growth. That the newest key to spiritual gift discovery be used in similar strategy developments for church growth as a kind of regimen to multiply churches through efficient prayer and maximum laity involvement. This could be achieved through the pastors at the district headquarter churches from Sunday September 4, 2016.

Similarly, it would be necessary to recommend that the Mission Station administration should invest more time and resources on the implementation of this

project to enhance better results. This would also mean that further studies be conducted on this project for the churches in the entire Mission field to benefit maximally by training the pastors. That these pastors be mandated to hold these programs in the district headquarter churches and to invite professionals to ministers as resource persons accordingly.

That there could be an elected coordinator at the Mission level to manage restoration activities at the church and district levels, requiring quarterly reports as it is the practice with evangelism and baptism. Besides, it may be appropriate for the Mission to provide policy guideline to make revival programs a regular feature of the church.

That intentional weekend prayer conferences be held compulsorily biennially directed by the Mission administration to acquaint members with the principles of prayer (and in particular rebellious prayer) to prepare church officers to conduct interesting prayer programs taking into cognizance the peculiar challenge to unlock church growth in the area. The take-off date for this program could be January 1, 2017 at the district headquarter churches.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH



Northern Cross River Mission
18 Stadium Road, Igoli, Ogoja,
Cross River State.
Tel: 08038917433,
07010808071
E-mail: charlesgoodnagmail.com

Tuesday, November 10, 2015

The President
Northern Cross River Mission Station
18 Stadium Road
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State

Sir,

**ADCOM APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF SPIRITUAL-
DRIVEN CHURCH GROWTH PROGRAM IN IGOLI-OGOJA SDA CHURCH**

I bring you warm Christian greetings in Jesus' name.

Following the action of the Administrative Committee of the Northern Cross River Mission Station (NCRMS) on November 8, 2015 on the above, I wish to convey to you, the Committee's best wishes for your Doctor of Ministry (DMin.) program, as well as the her consent for the said program in Igoli -Ogoja SDA Church.

The Administrative Committee sincerely believes that this program will be of huge benefit to the church. And that it will eventually spread to other churches in the Mission Station. We hope that this program will anchor the Revival and Reformation program of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Besides, it will foster the much needed balanced growth (high spiritual vibrancy of members, numerical growth, financial breakthrough, and infrastructural development) in the Mission Station.

We most sincerely wish you a glorious successful ministry like that of Mark Finley, Dwight Wright Nelson, Derek Morris and other SDA Doctor of Ministry pastors of international repute.

Therefore the Committee unanimously voted this approval and prayed for a successful implementation of the program.

Thanks.

Yours in His Service

Pastor Etuambom Sylvester Essien
Protom Secretary



Ogoja District

(In South-East Conference)

SDA Church
Stadium Road
Ogoja
Cross River State Nigeria

Friday, October 27, 2015

The President
Northern Cross River Mission Station
18 Stadium Road
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.

Sir,

**APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF SPIRITUAL-DRIVEN
CHURCH GROWTH PROGRAM IN IGOLI-OGOJA SDA CHURCH**

I am directed to convey to you firstly, the Board's congratulations for your Doctor of Ministry (DMin.) program as well as the Board's approval to conduct the above program, which will be of immense benefit to the church. This was one of the Board's actions in her meeting of 26th October, 2015.

We sincerely believe that this program is needed at this time to validate the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Revival and reformation program, as well as grow our church in this area, where Catholicism and tradition has erected a wall of barrier, against hearing and believing the three angel's message. Besides, the Board is optimistic that your academic advancement is an indication of brilliant and productive Gospel Ministry.

Therefore the Board unanimously voted this endorsement and prayed for a brilliant success in all your endeavours in this direction.

Thanks.

Yours in the Lord

for
Elder A.C. Lamboy
Church Clerk

Friday, October 27, 2015

The President
Northern Cross River Mission Station
18 Stadium Road
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.

Sir,

**APPROVAL TO IMPLEMENT THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF SPIRITUAL-DRIVEN
CHURCH GROWTH PROGRAM IN IGOLI-OGOJA SDA CHURCH**

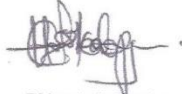
I am directed to convey to you firstly, the Board's congratulations for your Doctor of Ministry (DMin.) program as well as the Board's approval to conduct the above program, which will be of immense benefit to the church. This was one of the Board's actions in her meeting of 26th October, 2015.

We sincerely believe that this program is needed at this time to validate the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Revival and reformation program, as well as grow our church in this area, where Catholicism and tradition has erected a wall of barrier, against hearing and believing the three angel's message. Besides, the Board is optimistic that your academic advancement is an indication of brilliant and productive Gospel Ministry.

Therefore the Board unanimously voted this endorsement and prayed for a brilliant success in all your endeavours in this direction.

Thanks.

Yours in the Lord



for
Elder A.C. Lamboy
Church Clerk

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing
2. What do you think is the problem or problems?
3. Does the church organise spiritual programs such as Bible study, prayer and witnessing?
4. Does the church organize community guest day/ port luck programs at least once or twice in a year?
5. Does the church organize share your faith, public evangelism programs?
6. What do you think the church should do in order to grow?
7. What other things can you suggest for the progress and growth of the church?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

DEVELOPING BIBLICAL MODEL OF CHURCH GROWTH FOR IGOLI-OGOJA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

This questionnaire is designed to elicit your response for the purpose of data collection to enable researcher discover and implement a biblical church growth strategy for Igoli-Ogoja Seventh-day Adventist Church. The information given will be used strictly for the academic purpose of providing solution to a declining church and will be kept in stern confidentiality.

However, you reserve the right to volunteer the needed information or not, and/or to refrain from participation in this focus group interview. Also you may wish to object to the questions or state your views since your actions are purely on personal volition. Besides, any action you may wish to take will not be used against you in any way. You are required to demonstrate your Christian sincerity based on your conviction to tick Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D) and No Opinion (NO) to any of the questions.

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	SD	D	NO
1.	There is evidence of constant prayer and enthusiasm for prayer programs					
2.	There appears to be increase in Bible study in recent times.					
3.	Perhaps there could be the possibility for increase in Bible study if church begins one.					
4.	There is evidence of genuine repentance in the church					
5.	There is the increased awareness of God's love in the church					
6.	Following God's love, there is evidence of remarkable love for one another in the church.					
7.	Also, there is evidence of positive internal experiences/family-like connection in the church.					
8.	There is evidence of fellowship and warmth in the church in recent times					
9.	There appears to be increased church attendance in church service and weekly programs.					

10.	Can it be said that there is noticeable commitment to serve among members					
11.	There is the reality of evangelism and discipleship in the church					
12.	Church membership is on the increase through baptism					
13.	There is evidence of laity involvement and gift-based ministries in the church					

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP 1: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES

1. This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing? Answer: "no," "not at all," "not even like the modern churches around."
2. What do you think is the problem or problems? Answer: "Pastor we pretend too much, there is no love in this church, even as I speak, there are misunderstandings arising from pride; you don't know I am elder? You don't have respect, is it because we are in the same church? Don't you know that I am this and that? I am from here and there, in my place church is well organized. Pastor even among the elders there is no unity, sometimes, we see and hear them disagree openly. They compete for the position of First Elder and compare which elder or church officer did well during his/her tenure. Some church officers want their wife and family to be recognized during Divine Service introductions." In fact some people have stopped attending church and others have taken transfers because of these attitudes of members.
3. Does the church organise spiritual programs such as Bible study, prayer and witnessing? Answer: Pastor the only one I know is Thursday lesson study which sometimes does not hold because pastor or Sabbath School superintendent travelled or sometimes the teachers do not attend and so on Sabbath one person who studied the lesson will teach the whole church. Prayer is the one of midweek prayer. The attendance is poor, and sometimes no preaching roster/schedule so any volunteer can lead out. As for witnessing pastor we hardly go out for witnessing"
4. Does the church organize community guest day/ port luck programs at least once or twice in a year? Answer: The church recently organizes one special half year program that combines feeding together, communion service, revival and baptism. During this program guest speakers are invited from sister Seventh-day Adventist Churches and conferences.
5. Does the church organize share your faith, public evangelism programs? Answer: "Pastor, the church does not have money so we participate in yearly pulpit exchange evangelism of the Union or conference or any other evangelism organized by conference evangelism department.
6. What do you think the church should do in order to grow? Answer: Let there be love in the church of God, we preach it, let us practise it as we preach. Pastor give member's jobs and more people will attend church. Pastor let there be lively programs as we see in other churches. Let Wednesday midweek prayer, vesper and Sabbath sundown services be interesting, more so let Sabbath divine services

be inspiring. Teachers' class and Sabbath School programs should be attractive.

7. What other things can you suggest for the progress and growth of the church?
Answer: "Pastor I suggest that there should be more Bible study, prayer and outreach programs in the church." "Let conference bring money for evangelism." "If the Mission Station will bring somethings we can do together to give us money, outsiders will join our church." "The Pentecostals give their members loan for business."

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP 2: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES

1. This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing? Answer: "no," "not quite," "not as one may think," "growth is relative,"
2. What do you think is the problem or problems? Answer: "Pastor there is need for mature programs in the church such as well- organized Bible study, prayer to address certain ills in the church." "Social programs for love and bonding." "Pastor, we need love and bonding in this church." "There is need for unity among our leaders." "The church needs to be friendly." "Lack of serious programs and attitude of members could be responsible for drop outs in church membership." "Let other pastors too visit us." "There is need for weekly programs to be well packaged."
3. Does the church organise spiritual programs such as Bible study, prayer and witnessing? Answer: "Pastor it holds once in a long while." "The prayer and lesson study programs of Wednesday and Thursday respectively are poorly attended" "Witnessing programs come seldom." "We need tracts and magazines but we are told that they cost money." "Members need to be involved in programs." "Pastor need to visit members regularly.
4. Does the church organize community guest day/ port luck programs at least once or twice in a year? Answer: "There is one the church organizes once a year then the special camp meeting program at the end of the year." "During this program guest speakers are invited from sister Seventh-day Adventist conferences." "Another one is harvest thanks giving service."
5. Does the church organize share your faith, public evangelism programs? Answer: "Pastor, money is the challenge here, so we participate in yearly pulpit exchange evangelism of the Union or conference or another kind of evangelism could be the departmentally organized evangelism by Cross River Conference." "Share your faith comes occasionally when tracts are available." "Evangelism conducted two years ago was without preparation and proper planning and at last there was no baptism."
6. What do you think the church should do in order to grow? Answer: "Some members travel out for greener pastures, while other relocate because of transfers and for other reasons." "Actually there are no industries in Ogoja to give members job for them to stay and attend church." "Lively programs as there are in other Adventist Churches will help the church to grow." "There should be live and enthusiasm in weekly programs like the Wednesday midweek prayer, vesper and

Sabbath sundown services.” “Sabbath School and divine service programs could be well organized and the church will grow.” “There church leader could plan good retreat, fasting and prayer programs to revive the church.”

7. What other things can you suggest for the progress and growth of the church?
Answer: “Pastor, there should be church owned project or business ventures to employ our youth.” “More Bible study, prayer and outreach programs in the church will help the church to reach out and some will join the church.” “If the Mission Station will support the church with some money, the church will go for evangelism.” “Leaders need to show interest in evangelism, where there is the will, there will be the way.”

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP 3: QUESTIONS/ INTERVIEWEE'S RESPONSES

1. This is God's church, you must have heard or visited other Seventh-day Adventist Churches, and in reality is this church growing? Answer: "It will grow." "We hope it will grow" "The church is growing." "Growth cannot easily be measured."
2. What do you think is the problem or problems of the church? Answer: "Pastor, Calabar is too far from here, they do not come, and our pastor goes there on workers' meeting only." "This place is hard due to long presence of the Catholic church. They have nursery, primary, secondary and even school of nursing for medical workers." Catholic Church members are employees in those establishments
3. Does the church organise spiritual programs such as Bible study, prayer and witnessing? Answer: "Pastor, we used to hold Bible study on Sabbath afternoons." "The church organises prayer on Wednesday and lesson study programs on Thursdays." "Witnessing programs come seldom for obvious reasons." "But I feel that we need to do more of these programs now."
4. Does the church organize community guest day/ port luck programs at least once or twice in a year? Answer: "The church organizes three special programs in a year; the special mid-year program, harvest thanks giving service and camp meeting, wonderful programs." "These three programs are more spiritual that community guest day or port luck programs." "We invite guest speakers from sister Seventh-day Adventist conferences."
5. Does the church organize share your faith, public evangelism programs? Answer: "Pastor, we need much money to conduct evangelism in Ogoja, so we participate in yearly pulpit exchange evangelism of the Union or conference. "Share your faith comes occasionally when tracts are available." "Evangelism conducted two years ago there was no baptism, so we need to plan well."
6. What do you think the church should do in order to grow? Answer: "Bible Study, prayer and witnessing are good provided we will not loss our uniqueness." "Yes Bible study is nice but people (our members inclusive) are more interested in prosperity gospel, will they attend?" "Prayer is good but we shall not pray; Holy Ghost fire in this church." "Actually there are no industries here to give members job for members to stay and attend church." "Witnessing is good, but people are more concerned for visions and miracles, will they listen to us?" "What attract people to church is no longer sound doctrine, but visions, miracles and financial break through."
7. What other things can you suggest for the progress and growth of the church?

Answer: “Pastor, I think that regular communion services, delegation and involving every member in one activity or the other will help.” “Provided it will not turn the church to another Pentecostal church.” “God forbid!” “There should be church owned business ventures to employ our youth.” “More Bible study, prayer and outreach programs in the church will help the church to reach out and some will join the church.” “The Mission Station will support the church with financial assistance for the church to go for evangelism.”

APPENDIX G

SCHEDULE FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Project Design will continue with intentionally formulated steps and list of activities that will be carefully followed to implement the project. Below are some of the steps and list of activities:

B. Preparation of Materials

- a) Intercessory Prayers/Training of Prayer team members
- b) The Unique place of the Bible Studies/ Witnessing
- c) Seminar on Gift-Based ministry/Lay involvement

C. Strategy for Intervention

a) General Preparation

- (i) Recruitment of Prayer team leaders/Meeting (25/09/15)
- (ii) Fasting and Prayer Session for Holy Spirit Guidance

b) Strategies

- (i) The unique place of the Bible
- (ii) The Bible as the Buried Treasure – Seminar
- (iii) The Bible – The book of the Hour
- (iv) Benefits of Bible Study **SERMON**

c) The Principles of Bible study

- (i) How to study the Bible – Seminar
- (ii) Principles of Bible study – Seminar
- (iii) Bible reading come alive – workshop
- (iv) Daily Bible reading / Audio Schedule – Seminar

d) Intercessory Prayer

- (i) Devotional life - Seminar
- (ii) God Works through Prayers - Seminar
- (iii) Importance of Intercessory Prayers - Seminar
- (iv) Divine Key to Answered Prayer (Rebellious) - Seminar

e) Gift-Based Ministry

- (i) What are Spiritual Gift and their Purpose? - Seminar
- (ii) Spiritual Gift Discovery - Workshop
- (iii) Spiritual Gift Kept Alive – Seminar

Fasting and Prayer Program

1. Song Service
2. Opening Hymn
3. Scripture Reading
4. Special Musical Rendition
5. Sermonette: The Rich Young Ruler and Deceased churches
6. Seasons of Prayer /Testimonies
7. The Great commission becomes the Great omission
8. Prayer for the Holy Spirit (individually & 7 persons)
9. The Church's Hall meeting/ Straight Talks

10. Individual Statements and Prayers of commitment

11. Seasons of Prayer

12. Relationship is the key

13. Closing Hymn

14. Benediction

Special Half-Week Program

Wednesday 18/11/15 Morning: 6.30 -12. 30 Fasting/ prayer for the Holy Spirit (Widow's oil) Evening: 6.30-7.30 Revival & Reformation Testimonies

Thursday 19/11/15 Morning: The Awesome Blessings of Bible studies

Evening: Amazing Blessings of Interpersonal relationship

Friday 20/11/15 Morning: The Blessings of Spiritual Gift

Evening: The Buried Treasure-Bible

Saturday 21/11/15 Morning: Revival & Reformation – United Prayers

Morning: Season of Prayer/Seminar -- 30 minutes Morning: Sermon Jehoshaphat 2

Chron. 20:20 (Pk.190)-30 minutes

Weekend Retreat (Feb. 19-21, 2015)

Day 1: Friday: Devoting: Biblical Revivals & God's blessings - 30 Minutes

Activity: Singspiration & season of Prayer 15 "

Seminar: Awesome Benefits of Spiritual Gifts 15 "

Activity: Singspiration / Prayer / Closing Exercise 20 "

Day 2: Saturday Morning Devotion: what the Bible can do for you 20 "

Seminar: Community the Essence of Trinity 30 "

Activity: Singspiration---- 5 "

Seminar: Bible Study Comes Alive--30 "

Sermon: Church as a Relational Community - 30 "

Afternoon: Workshop: Principles of Bible Study --- 1 hour

Seminar: Spiritual Gifts and its purposes -30 Minutes

Activity: Singspiration & Seasons of prayer - 10 "

Workshop: Principles of Interpersonal Relationship -1 hour

Activity: Special songs / Prayer --15 Minutes

Seminar: Agape love Divine Tool for Interpersonal Relationship -45 minutes

BREAK / SUPPER

Evening: Devotion: Early SDA Social Meeting -- 30 Minutes

Seminar: Spiritual Gifts ----30 Minutes

Activity: Bible Reading / (Audio) Come Alive 45 "

Activity Closing Experience

Day 3: Sunday: Devotion: Spiritual gifts likened to parable of Talents - 30 "

Love Feast of the Corinthians - 30 "

Workshop: Spiritual Gift Discovery -- 1 hour

Activity: Singspiration / Season of prayer - 15 minutes

Seminar: Church Social Programs Builds Relationship 30 "

Seminar: Constant visitation builds Relationships 30 "

Activity: Light refreshment --- 20 minutes Activity: Closing Exercise -- 10 minutes

Departure!Departure!!Departure!!!

The above programs were carried out except Agape Love Divine Tool for Interpersonal Relationship and Love Feast of the Corinthians.

Special Week Program (March 5-12, 2016)

Monday 5/3/16 Morning: 6.30 - 6.30 Sermons

Evening: 7.30 – 8.30 Devotional Reading

Monday 6/3/16 Morning: 6.30 - 6.30 Sermons

Evening: 7.30 – 8.30 Devotional Reading
Tuesday 7/3/16 Morning: - Elijah's encounter at Mt. Carmel I king 18 (Pk. 143)
Evening: – Devotional Reading and Prayer
Wednesday 8/3/16 Morning: 6.30 -12. 30 Fasting/ prayer for the Holy Spirit
(Partnership) Evening: 6.30-7.30 The Zeraphate Woman
Thursday 9/3/16 Morning: The People behind the temple Ezra 3: (Pk. 560)
Evening: - Devotional reading & prayer
Friday 10/3/16 Morning:- Zerubbabel Ezra 4. (Pk. 618)
Evening: – Jehoshaphat 2 Chron. 20:20 (Pk.190)
Saturday 11/3/16 Morning: - Centering Relationship with Community Guest day
Morning: - Season of Prayer -- 30 minutes Morning: - Sermon --30 minutes

APPENDIX H
WORKSHOP HANDOUT

NEHEMIAH – the Man with a Mission

Text: “But they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?” (Neh 6:2, 3. Niv).

Nehemiah rides by night among ruins. Silently he traverses the circumference of the city, past heaps of debris, broken walls, shattered gates as he rides he thinks. The night is a good time to get the big picture, to weigh possibilities. He begins to see clearly what must be done, and his role in the work, to build the wall of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was one of the famous favorite Bible personalities. He has left a post of comfort and honor in the palace of the Persian King Artaxerxes to try to help his people, the returned exiles. They are in a sorry state: Jerusalem’s walls are broken down, its gates are burned, and the people are disheartened.

His plan to rebuild Jerusalem is no an easy one. Their numbers are few. The surrounding inhabitants of the land oppose the project. Some of the Jews themselves have married the people of the land and are in league with them.

But Nehemiah was not discouraged rather as a man of prayer, he prayed per second per second. His book is interlaced with prayer. He records the silent petitions he offered to God as he faced the key decisions. He is also a person of faith. “the god of heaven will give us success,” he replied to those who opposed the rebuilding project (Neh. 2:20 Niv.) Out of this life of prayer and faith was born a vision. Nehemiah saw clearly what needed to be done and set about to make it happen. He rallied the people to the work-priests, artisans, merchants. All pitched in as their names were listed in chapter 3.

The enemies did not like it. They mocked and ridiculed: “What are they building – if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their walls of stones” (Neh.4:3 Niv). They used their sympathizers among the Jews to sow doubts and rumors. They plotted to attack; Nehemiah mounted guards at the vulnerable places.

They tried to disorganize Nehemiah. “Come, let us meet together,” they said (Neh. 6:2 Niv). But Nehemiah responded, “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down” (verse3, Niv).

What a man? A man, with a Mission.¹ So you must be for this revival to be a success. There will be distractions and discouragements. But don’t give up, rather, like Nehemiah pray per second per second and the Lord will see us through Amen.

¹ William G. Johnsson, *Jesus: A Heart Full of Grace* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2007), 212.

Nehemiah's life story provides many principles for effective leadership that are still valid today. (1) Have a clear purpose and keep evaluating it in the light of God's will. Nothing prevented Nehemiah from staying on track. (2) Be Straightforward and honest. Everyone knew exactly what Nehemiah needed and he spoke the truth even when it made goal harder to achieve. (3) Live above reproach. The accusations leveled against Nehemiah were empty and false. (4) Be a man of constant prayer, deriving power and wisdom from God. Everything Nehemiah did glorified God.

Nehemiah was filled with righteous indignation at the blatant manner the Jews were breaking God's law and disregarding the covenant they had previously reaffirmed (Neh. 10:30) The people had promised not to allow their children marry pagans. But during Nehemiah's absence, the people had been intermarrying thereby breaking the covenant with God. His severe treatment of stern rebuke, curses, pulling some of them on the hair and making them to take oath contrast between his great faithfulness to God and the people's neglect, disobedience and disloyalty to God (Neh.23:25,26). He referenced the sordid experience of King Solomon and how it brought calamity on the whole nation of Israel²

He rebuked the rich and affluent against extortion and oppression of the poor. He reminded them of the three yearly tithes that were set aside for the poor and the 7th year Sabbath for the land to lie fallow. Nehemiah also ransomed certain Jews who were had been sold to the heathens. Swiftly he corrected the profanation and contempt of God's temple by throwing the properties of Tobiah out of an apartment of the temple and consecrated priests and Levites to continue their temple services.

“The work of restoration and reforms carried on by the returned exiles under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, presents a picture of a work of spiritual restoration that is to be wrought in this closing days of this earth's history.”³

SPIRITUAL GIFTS FOR SERVICE

(a) *II Corinthians 12 Paul listed various gifts bestowed on the Church. In verses 29-30 are these questions “are ? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracle? Have all the gift of healing? Do all congress? Do all interpret? The gifts are in three categories: outreach or turning or maturing in the faith and, Administrative. Below are the definitions of some gifts.*

(b)

² Tyndale House Publishers, *Life Application Bible*, 820.

³ Ellen G. White, *Messenger of Hope: Connecting with Jesus* (Seoul, Korea: Everlasting Gospel, 2005), 480.

No	Spiritual gifts	Special ability that God gives some church members for	Bible text (s)
A) Outreach and evangelism gifts: Resulting in the numerical growth of the Church membership			
1	Evangelism	Sharing the gospel in a way that people become Jesus' disciples	Eph. 4:11; 2Tim. 4:5
2	Missionary	exercising whatever spiritual gifts possessed in a second culture	Rom. 1:5; 15: 16
3	Apostle	Planning churches & caring for regional groups as fronts-line pioneers	I Tim. 2:7; Acts 9:15,16
4	Mercy	Empathy and compassion on people with problems. And assisting	Matt. 25:23-40
5	Healing	Curing illness and restoring health without natural means	I Cor. 12:10,28
6	Miracles	acts observed to have altered ordinary course of nature	I Cor. 12:10, 28
7	Deliverance	Casting out demons and evil spirits	Acts 16:16-18; Mark 5: 1-20
8	Tongues	Learning/using language(s) not one's own (e.g. The Pentecost)	I cor. 12:10, 28; Acts 2:411
9	Interpretation	Passing divinely inspired message in the vernacular	I Cor. 12:10; 14:26-28
10	Voluntary poverty	Leaving material comfort and luxury & adopt life at poverty level	I Cor. 12:10; 14:26-28
B) Spiritual Maturity Gifts: Fostering spiritual growth, providing discipleship training and membership support			
11	Prophecy	Receiving & communicating message from God to His people	I Cor.12:28; I Thess. 5:19-21
12	Teaching	Passing ideas, attitude and skills to the health & ministry of Church	I Cor. 12:28; 2Tim. 2:1-2
13	Pastor	Assuming long-term role for spiritual welfare of believers	Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 5:1-3
14	Knowledge	Discovering accumulating, analyzing and clarifying info & ideas	I Cor. 12:8; Eccl. 12:11
15	Wisdom	Insight into how knowledge may best be applied to specific needs	I Cor. 12:8; Eccl. 12:11
16	Exhortation	Saying words of comforts, consolation, encouragement and counsel	Rom. 12:8 Heb. 3:13
17	Discernment	Knowing if certain behaviors / ideas are Divine, human or Satanist	I Cor. 12:10; Heb. 11:8-10
18	Faith	Discerning/accepting with confidence the will and purpose of God	I Cor. 12:9; Heb. 11:8-10
19	Intercession	Regular and axtens for others, with answers	Acts 12:5-17 ; I Tim. 2:1-2
20	Hospitality	Open arms/homes & welcome to those in need of friendship, etc.	I Pet. 4:9; Heb. 13:12
21	Celibacy	Being single. Unmarried and not suffer undue sexual temptations	I Cor. 7:7; Matt 19:12
22	Martyrdom	Undergoing Suffering for the faith,	I Cor. 13:3; Acts

		even to death, with joy	7:60
C) Administrative gifts: Dealing with financial/physical/human management, and membership support			
23	Leadership	Setting goals & communicate same to others for term work	I Tim. 5:17; Acts 7:10
24	Administration	Understanding short & long term goals and device/execute plans	I Cor. 12:5, 28 Titus 1:5
25	Helps	Investing talents in the [life and ministry of others to develop gifts	I Cor. 12:28; Acts 11:24-26
26	Giving	Liberal/Cheerful contribution of resources to the gospel work	Rom. 12:8; Acts 11:24-26
27	Service	Identifying unmet needs and use available resources to meet same	Eph. 6:5-8; Rom. 12:7

(c) 21

(d) The list above is not exhaustive. Note that the gift of singing is not listed. That does not mean it is important. The Lord and the church want every member to identify his or her gifts and, use them in serving humanity and God the Creator.



Bible Reading/Study Come Alive

The reading of the Bible has its merits. Ellen G. White confirms this: “a great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads”.

I just like in the Bible Study, many people have different ideas about reading the Bible. Some people handle it like charm or amulet. They flap it open randomly and read the first text that catches their attention, believing what God speaks to them In that way others take a tent here and there and feel satisfied that they have read from Genesis to Revelation, splendid,. These approaches to Bible reading accomplish little or no appreciable results. Some people start out with earnest determination to read

through the whole Bible, but give up after glancing at the few chapters. Unable to find anything captivating or bored down by some unfamiliar phraseology. They abandon it as if it were beyond their ability.

However, to overcome the above problems the New King James Version (NKJV) or (NIV) of the Bible is recommended to avoid boredom and hard phraseology. Again some useful hints prescribed by Arthur S. Maxwell will be helpful

1. A genuine Bible student could begin with one of the simplest books such as the Gospel of Mark. It is brief and interesting earliest record of the life and death of Jesus Christ.

2. He could continue with the Gospel of Matthew, which repeats the stories and actions in Mark, in addition to many of Jesus' teachings which Mark omitted.

3. St. Luke's Gospel could be the next. It is a more detailed record of the life and activities of Jesus.

4. Now he could read the John's Gospel written half a century after Luke's Gospel. It is different from other Gospels in some respects and yet the most beautiful of all.

Having gone through the Gospels with glee, the next step could be the Bible stories with variety of subjects.

For example in genesis we have creation story (Gen. 1: – 2)

1. Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the church. Vol. 5 (...), 388.

2. Arthur S. Maxwell ... 63 – 66.

The story of Adam (2:4 – 5: 32); the story of Noah: the flood repopulation of the earth, the tower of Babel (6:1-11:32) etc.

The next could be the biographies which narrates the good as well as bad sides of various Bible characters. The Bible student could select biographies of Joseph from his birth as the first son of Rachael, Jacob's beloved wife, Moses the great liberator of the Hebrews, Joshua the general who led Israelites to the promised land, David the mighty king of Israel etc. (*For more biographies and their relevant sections in the Bible see appendix*).

Another approach to Bible reading is the topical method. The student could thrill himself with prophecies and their unfailing fulfillments. This builds the student's confidence in the word of God.

Principles of Bible Study

- (1) The Bible must be studied reverently with two sincere desires to know and to practice the truth "if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine". John 17:17

Ellen G. White, "Giving Bible Study" R&H 19 April, 1906 p.9.

Marshall J. Grosboll. Steps to life (Washington DC church ministries department, 1985), 11.

1 bid; 12

To understand the Bible we must study the scriptures. (2Timothy 2:15) we must ask God to help us as did David (Psalm 119:18).

- (2) We have to accept the Bible as God's voice to us "sanctity through thy truth: thy word is truth John" John 10:27, 28;

1Thessalonians 2:13.

- (3) The Bible is its own commentary / interpreter

Jesus open the understanding of the two men traveling to Emmaus by using the thing written in the Law of Moses (Genesis – Deuteronomy), the prophets and in the Psalms concerning Himself. (Luke 24:27, 44, 4, Isaiah 28: 9, 10, I Corinthians 2:13, 14).

Interestingly various Bible writers touch on similar subjects. Therefore to find the

Bible's full and clearer understanding on, a given topic subject, we must gather together all the various authors have written on a given topic.

(4) There should be perseverance in research

The Bereans "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily... "Acts 17:11. Also Christ enjoins diligent search of the scriptures. (John 5:39).

(5) There should be no adding or taking away from what the Bible says (Revelation 22:18, 19; Proverbs 30:5, 6; Deuteronomy 4:2)

Conclusion

It must be noted that secret things belong to God, while the revealed things belong to us and our children (Deut. 29:29). We must sincerely admit with brother Peter that there are some things hard to understand (2 Peter 3:16, 17). To such we remain contented with the truth we have understood.

The Unique Place of the Bible in Revival (Seminar)

The Bible as a Buried Treasure -

Arthur S. Maxwell likened the Bible to a buried treasure. He illustrated this, fact with a rich farmer's story from Ancient Greece. This farmer on his death bed told his sons that he buried his treasure in his fields. If they would be rich they should dig it. After the old man's death, his two sons eager to find the hidden treasure dug over the land with mattocks and spades in a fury of expectant enthusiasm and hopefulness". Though without success, the soil in every field had been carefully turned over. Then came the spring season, the fields were cropped with the corn. And then came summer and harvest season. Lo and behold, it was unprecedented bumper harvest. Their wise old father's plan had succeeded.

According to Arthur Maxwell, so is the Bible. If we dig it with all the spiritual tools at our disposal, we will "be rich in all the best and most beautiful things life has to offer". This means that if we read it, study it, meditate upon it and pray over it we will reap a marvelous harvest of Spiritual blessings – peace, strength, courage, Hunter nee

BENEFITS OF BIBLE READING

1. Gives productivity and prosperity (Psalms 1:1-3)
2. Helps to overcome sin (Psalms 119:11)
3. Gives wisdom (Psalms 119:98)
4. Fills the heart with joy (Psalms 119:111)
5. Gives joy for life (Jeremiah 15:16)
6. Develops love towards God (John 14:21)
7. Offers knowledge of salvation (2 Timothy 3:14-15)
8. Brings happiness (James 1:25, 27)
9. Increases faith (Romans 10:17)
10. Ensures the presence of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:16-17)
11. Provides orientation and safety (Psalms 119:105)
12. Reanimates life (1 Peter 1:23-15; 2:1)

Principles of Interpersonal Relationship

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Six ways to make people like you (*Dale Carnegie*)

Become genuinely interested in other people Alfred Adler, a famous Viennese

psychologist said “it is the individual who is not interested in his fellow men who has the greatest difficulties in life and provides the greatest injury to others fast for, give money, food etc. to those you have to.

Give a captivating smile Simple statements like “I am glad to see you with a broad and bright smile on your face can go a long way to heal people or a person’s despondency

Your smile is a messenger of your goodwill. It brightens the lives of all that see it. Please do not be too serious. Jesus smiled.

Call people by their name A person name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language. If somebody mis-spelt or called your name wrongly? How do you feel? ... A name is more than gold (Prov.22:1).

Be a good listenerWe need to encourage people to talk about themselves, their interest etc. and show interest in what they are saying by reflection (nodding your head or voice response). Ask questions also etc., he will like to answer or enjoy and add some spices.

Talk in terms of other person’s interest: Meet people at their levels in your communication; address them from known to unknown. Ask them about their families, jobs and progress in life.

Make other people feel important and do it sincerely: Tell people about their spiritual growth and to improve them so that they will know you are interested in their spirituality and general welfare.

Five ways to tell people their fault without offense or resentment

12 ways to win people to love us and God. (p.16, 17)

1. I bid. 98

2. Andrews L. Ewood.“ Leading God’s flock: Fundamental Techniques in handling people”. Ministerial and Family Life Handbook (WAD) 15, 16.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does Jesus promise of commitment (Heb. 13:5) mean to you Personally?

2. In 1978 Thomas Hanson of Boulder, Colorado, sued his parents for \$350,000 on grounds of malpractice of parenting. Mum and Dad had botched his upbringing so badly. What is your advice to such parents? What about our children’s claim of lack of cover. How can the Church Comfort genuine and good parent in such case.

3. What are the forces in your society that work against your family unity

Ans. Societal norms, selfishness and satanic influences.

The more closely members of a family are united the more influence they exact outside the home. (*Adventist home p. 37*).The secret of true family and church unity is union with Christ. Not diplomacy, management, super human effort though can assist. The closer we come to Christ the nearer we are to each other. (*Adventist home p.179*).

Therefore “Christ is the center who draws all disconnected relationships together in His body on the cross. His love counts and wins sinners, reconciling them within a warm and carving fellowship that astounds the world and glorifies God.

Another key to unity is sharing the fruit of the spirit: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness faith, meekness and temperance (Gal. 5:22)

Quarterly, p.8

I bid. 99

I bid. 100

I bid. 101

Selfishness – Family Destroyer

Phil. 2:3-5 “Let nothing be done through strife and vain glory but in Lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

4 Look not on your things only but on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you...

1 Jn. 3:16-18 Christ laid down his life so we ought, for the brethren, love not the world, but truth.

Principles of Interpersonal Relationship in the Bible

Therefore relational principles abound in the scriptures and the book of Proverbs seems to have the greatest collection of this materials. They include:

- ❖ Proverbs 12:25 – Anxious heart weighs a man down, kind words cheers up.
- ❖ Proverbs 15:1 – A gentle answer turns away wrath but harsh words stir.
- ❖ Proverbs 17:9 – covering offence promotes love, but repeating the matter separate close friends.
- ❖ Proverbs 17:22 – A cheerful heart is good as medicine, but crushed spirit dries up bones.
- ❖ Matthew 12:34, 35 – Good trees bring forth good fruits.
- ❖ Philippians 2:2-11 – Consider others better than yourselves.

Living the Love We Promise

Like marriage & friendship family promises sadly enough Bible history is filled strewing with examples of failed promises, broken trust and lack of commitment. The stories of Gomer and Hosea (Hosea 1:1-6; 3:1-3) David and Uriah’s wife (), Joseph hated by his brothers (Gen. 37:17-28) to mention a few. That notwithstanding, the Bible also has striking examples some people who, by God’s help and grace maintained their promises Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:16-18, 2:11,12,20;3:9-13; 4:10,13) David and Jonathan



Believe *His Prophets*

Weekly Spirit of Prophecy Reading Guide
2015



DATE	BOOK	CHAPTER(S)
July 12-18	Steps to Christ	1-2
July 19-25	Steps to Christ	3-5
July 26 - August 1	Steps to Christ	6-7
August 2-8	Steps to Christ	8-9
August 9 - 15	Steps to Christ	10-11
August 16-22	Steps to Christ	12-13
August 23-29	Christ's Object Lessons	1
August 30 - September 5	Christ's Object Lessons	2
September 6-12	Christ's Object Lessons	3-5
September 13-19	Christ's Object Lessons	6-7
September 20-26	Christ's Object Lessons	8-10
September 27 - October 3	Christ's Object Lessons	11-12
October 4-10	Christ's Object Lessons	13
October 11-17	Christ's Object Lessons	14
October 18-24	Christ's Object Lessons	15
October 25-31	Christ's Object Lessons	16-17
November 1-7	Christ's Object Lessons	18
November 8-14	Christ's Object Lessons	19-20
November 15-21	Christ's Object Lessons	21-22
November 22-28	Christ's Object Lessons	23
November 29 - December 5	Christ's Object Lessons	24
December 6-12	Christ's Object Lessons	25
December 13-19	Christ's Object Lessons	26-27
December 20-26	Christ's Object Lessons	28
December 27 - January 2	Christ's Object Lessons	29

To download the 2016 Weekly Spirit of Prophecy Reading Guide, go to www.RevivalandReformation.org/bhp



Believe His Prophets

Daily Bible Reading Guide 2015



Date	Book/Chap	Date	Book/Chap	Date	Book/Chap	Date	Book/Chap	Date	Book/Chap
12-Jul-2015	Gen 1	17-Aug-2015	Gen 37	22-Sep-2015	Ex 23	28-Oct-2015	Lev 19	3-Dec-2015	Num 28
13-Jul-2015	Gen 2	18-Aug-2015	Gen 38	23-Sep-2015	Ex 24	29-Oct-2015	Lev 20	4-Dec-2015	Num 29
14-Jul-2015	Gen 3	19-Aug-2015	Gen 39	24-Sep-2015	Ex 25	30-Oct-2015	Lev 21	5-Dec-2015	Num 30
15-Jul-2015	Gen 4	20-Aug-2015	Gen 40	25-Sep-2015	Ex 26	31-Oct-2015	Lev 22	6-Dec-2015	Num 31
16-Jul-2015	Gen 5	21-Aug-2015	Gen 41	26-Sep-2015	Ex 27			7-Dec-2015	Num 32
17-Jul-2015	Gen 6	22-Aug-2015	Gen 42	27-Sep-2015	Ex 28	1-Nov-2015	Lev 23	8-Dec-2015	Num 33
18-Jul-2015	Gen 7	23-Aug-2015	Gen 43	28-Sep-2015	Ex 29	2-Nov-2015	Lev 24	9-Dec-2015	Num 34
19-Jul-2015	Gen 8	24-Aug-2015	Gen 44	29-Sep-2015	Ex 30	3-Nov-2015	Lev 25	10-Dec-2015	Num 35
20-Jul-2015	Gen 9	25-Aug-2015	Gen 45	30-Sep-2015	Ex 31	4-Nov-2015	Lev 26	11-Dec-2015	Num 36
21-Jul-2015	Gen 10	26-Aug-2015	Gen 46			5-Nov-2015	Lev 27	12-Dec-2015	Deut 1
22-Jul-2015	Gen 11	27-Aug-2015	Gen 47	1-Oct-2015	Ex 32	6-Nov-2015	Num 1	13-Dec-2015	Deut 2
23-Jul-2015	Gen 12	28-Aug-2015	Gen 48	2-Oct-2015	Ex 33	7-Nov-2015	Num 2	14-Dec-2015	Deut 3
24-Jul-2015	Gen 13	29-Aug-2015	Gen 49	3-Oct-2015	Ex 34	8-Nov-2015	Num 3	15-Dec-2015	Deut 4
25-Jul-2015	Gen 14	30-Aug-2015	Gen 50	4-Oct-2015	Ex 35	9-Nov-2015	Num 4	16-Dec-2015	Deut 5
26-Jul-2015	Gen 15	31-Aug-2015	Ex 1	5-Oct-2015	Ex 36	10-Nov-2015	Num 5	17-Dec-2015	Deut 6
27-Jul-2015	Gen 16			6-Oct-2015	Ex 37	11-Nov-2015	Num 6	18-Dec-2015	Deut 7
28-Jul-2015	Gen 17	1-Sep-2015	Ex 2	7-Oct-2015	Ex 38	12-Nov-2015	Num 7	19-Dec-2015	Deut 8
29-Jul-2015	Gen 18	2-Sep-2015	Ex 3	8-Oct-2015	Ex 39	13-Nov-2015	Num 8	20-Dec-2015	Deut 9
30-Jul-2015	Gen 19	3-Sep-2015	Ex 4	9-Oct-2015	Ex 40	14-Nov-2015	Num 9	21-Dec-2015	Deut 10
31-Jul-2015	Gen 20	4-Sep-2015	Ex 5	10-Oct-2015	Lev 1	15-Nov-2015	Num 10	22-Dec-2015	Deut 11
		5-Sep-2015	Ex 6	11-Oct-2015	Lev 2	16-Nov-2015	Num 11	23-Dec-2015	Deut 12
1-Aug-2015	Gen 21	6-Sep-2015	Ex 7	12-Oct-2015	Lev 3	17-Nov-2015	Num 12	24-Dec-2015	Deut 13
2-Aug-2015	Gen 22	7-Sep-2015	Ex 8	13-Oct-2015	Lev 4	18-Nov-2015	Num 13	25-Dec-2015	Deut 14
3-Aug-2015	Gen 23	8-Sep-2015	Ex 9	14-Oct-2015	Lev 5	19-Nov-2015	Num 14	26-Dec-2015	Deut 15
4-Aug-2015	Gen 24	9-Sep-2015	Ex 10	15-Oct-2015	Lev 6	20-Nov-2015	Num 15	27-Dec-2015	Deut 16
5-Aug-2015	Gen 25	10-Sep-2015	Ex 11	16-Oct-2015	Lev 7	21-Nov-2015	Num 16	28-Dec-2015	Deut 17
6-Aug-2015	Gen 26	11-Sep-2015	Ex 12	17-Oct-2015	Lev 8	22-Nov-2015	Num 17	29-Dec-2015	Deut 18
7-Aug-2015	Gen 27	12-Sep-2015	Ex 13	18-Oct-2015	Lev 9	23-Nov-2015	Num 18	30-Dec-2015	Deut 19
8-Aug-2015	Gen 28	13-Sep-2015	Ex 14	19-Oct-2015	Lev 10	24-Nov-2015	Num 19	31-Dec-2015	Deut 20
9-Aug-2015	Gen 29	14-Sep-2015	Ex 15	20-Oct-2015	Lev 11	25-Nov-2015	Num 20		
10-Aug-2015	Gen 30	15-Sep-2015	Ex 16	21-Oct-2015	Lev 12	26-Nov-2015	Num 21		
11-Aug-2015	Gen 31	16-Sep-2015	Ex 17	22-Oct-2015	Lev 13	27-Nov-2015	Num 22		
12-Aug-2015	Gen 32	17-Sep-2015	Ex 18	23-Oct-2015	Lev 14	28-Nov-2015	Num 23		
13-Aug-2015	Gen 33	18-Sep-2015	Ex 19	24-Oct-2015	Lev 15	29-Nov-2015	Num 24		
14-Aug-2015	Gen 34	19-Sep-2015	Ex 20	25-Oct-2015	Lev 16	30-Nov-2015	Num 25		
15-Aug-2015	Gen 35	20-Sep-2015	Ex 21	26-Oct-2015	Lev 17	1-Dec-2015	Num 26		
16-Aug-2015	Gen 36	21-Sep-2015	Ex 22	27-Oct-2015	Lev 18	2-Dec-2015	Num 27		

To download the 2016
Daily Bible Reading Guide,
go to:
www.RevivalandReformation.org/bhp

APPENDIX I

PROJECT REPORT: CROSS RIVER STATE

The Researcher
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.
Monday May 2, 2016
The Board Chairman
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.

Dear Pastor,

Report of Project Implementation: Strategy for Biblical Church Growth in Igoli-Ogoja Church

The researcher hereby presents the report of the afore-mentioned project for your information and necessary action.

Fasting and prayer for this project and selection and training of team leaders were held respectively on November 4 & 5, 2016 with the theme: "God leads the church." It featured two lectures: Nehemiah the man with a mission and revival and the young people and others.

November 18-20, 2015 was special revival half week program with the theme: "revival blessings from the Lord." It featured a morning and evening programs during which revival sermons such as the widow's oil, the awesome blessings of Bible studies, the blessings of spiritual gifts, amazing blessings of interpersonal relationship and others were presented. November 22, 2015 was training for Bible studies.

December 17-20, 2015 featured annual camp meeting at Ikom town with the theme: "reaching souls for Christ." It presented revival sermons, seminars, lectures and workshop activities. Members were drawn to Christ with topics such as the reformed work of the last days, overcoming end time crisis, the power of constant prayer and prayer partnership, the early church social meetings and many others.

January 6-17, 2016 was the General Conference operation Global rain and prayer program. Another special revival half week program was carried out on February 19-21, 2016 while March 5-12, 2016 special revival week program was conducted in addition to the monthly fasting and prayer programs.

On April 17, 2016 the researcher interviewed some church board members, in the church, to critically but fairly assess the intervention program. Selected group leaders specifically trained for this evaluation carried out this responsibility on monthly bases. Others were the pastor, three serving elders and head deacon. First, in the month of December, that was December 21, 2015 after the camp meeting, and second on

January 24, 2016. Others were February 28 and March 20, 2016. Then final evaluation was on April 17, 2016.

These supplied results of evaluation as follows: 1) By base line assessment, regular attendance was 18-23 members at prayer meetings. In December 21 attendance was 35 adult members excluding non-members and children. January, February and March evaluation indicated 40, 45 and 39 respectively. It was discovered that farming season was responsible for the decreased attendance of 39 in March.

Both the evaluation team interviews and Participants' observations show that members were happy to attend prayer meetings. This was evident in prayers said during the series of visitation, fellowship programs and other meetings. There was that sense of expectancy and hope among members as more testimonies of answered prayer were said during prayer meetings. The increased attendance, livelier Bible classes and the expressed desire to extend the time are positive indicators for church growth. There was increased awareness of God's love; positive changes in spiritual life and members' willingness to go for outreach are signs of growth.

The presence of visitors and the frequent demand for tracts and magazines for friends and the witnessing activities of the youth are positive indicators that the program was successful. Besides, the miraculous deliverance of the demon possessed lady, the resolutions of some disputes and new found interpersonal relationship among members are success stories for the interim.

In view of the temporary report, the researcher uses this medium to request for continued moral and financial support for the remaining phases of the project. There is the fervent hope that the church will grow and return to the membership of 400.

Thanks.

Yours Sincerely,

The Researcher

APPENDIX J

PROJECT REPORT: NORTHERN CROSS RIVER MISSION

The Researcher
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.

Monday May 2, 2016
The Chairman
Administrative Committee
Northern Cross River Mission Station
Igoli-Ogoja
Cross River State.

Dear Pastor,

Report of Project Implementation: Strategy for Biblical Church Growth in Igoli-Ogoja Church

The researcher hereby presents the report of the afore-mentioned project for your information and necessary action.

Fasting and prayer for this project and selection and training of team leaders were held respectively on November 4 & 5, 2016 with the theme: "God leads the church." It featured two lectures: Nehemiah the man with a mission and revival and the young people and others.

November 18-20, 2015 was special revival half week program with the theme: "revival blessings from the Lord." It featured a morning and evening programs during which revival sermons such as the widow's oil, the awesome blessings of Bible studies, the blessings of spiritual gifts, amazing blessings of interpersonal relationship and others were presented. November 22, 2015 was training for Bible studies in Ogoja Church.

December 17-20, 2015 featured annual camp meeting at Ikom town with the theme: "reaching souls for Christ." It presented revival sermons, seminars, lectures and workshop activities. Members were drawn to Christ with topics such as the reformed work of the last days, overcoming end time crisis, the power of constant prayer and prayer partnership, the early church social meetings and many others.

January 6-17, 2016 was the General Conference operation Global rain and prayer program. Another special revival half week program was carried out on February 19-21, 2016 while March 5-12, 2016 special revival week program was conducted in addition to the monthly fasting and prayer programs.

On April 17, 2016 the researcher interviewed some church board members, in the church, to critically but fairly assess the intervention program. Selected group leaders

specifically trained for this evaluation carried out this responsibility on monthly bases. Others were the pastor, three serving elders and head deacon. First, in the month of December, that was December 21, 2015 after the camp meeting, and second on January 24, 2016. Others were February 28 and March 20, 2016. Then final evaluation was on April 17, 2016.

These supplied results of evaluation as follows: 1) The base line assessment, regular attendance was 18-23 members at prayer meetings. In December 21 attendance was 35 adult members excluding non-members and children. January, February and March evaluation indicated 40, 45 and 39 respectively. It was discovered that farming season was responsible for the decreased attendance of 39 in March.

Both the evaluation team interviews and Participants' observations show that members were happy to attend prayer meetings. This was evident in prayers said during the series of visitation, fellowship programs and other meetings. There was that sense of expectancy and hope among members as more testimonies of answered prayer were said during prayer meetings. The increased attendance, livelier Bible classes and the expressed desire to extend the time are positive indicators for church growth. There was increased awareness of God's love; positive changes in spiritual life and members' willingness to go for outreach are signs of growth.

The presence of visitors and the frequent demand for tracts and magazines for friends and the witnessing activities of the youth are positive indicators that the program was successful. Besides, the miraculous deliverance of the demon possessed lady, the resolutions of some disputes and new found interpersonal relationship among members are success stories for the interim.

In view of the temporary report, the researcher uses this medium to request for continued moral and financial support for the remaining phases of the project. There is the fervent hope that the church will grow and return to the membership of 400.

Thanks.

Yours Sincerely,

The Researcher

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ashford, Bruce Riley, ed. *Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011.
- Baur, John. *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*. Second Revised Edition. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines, 2001.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Mel Blackaby. *What's So Spiritual About Your Gifts?* New York, NY: Multnomah Books, 2004.
- Boice, James Montgomery. *Acts: An Expository Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997.
- Brown, Sherri. "Breaking Through Growth Barriers in New Churches." Leadership Network, 2009. Accessed November 5, 2014.
http://leadnet.org/breaking_through_growth_barriers_in_new_churches-2/.
- Burrill, Russell. *How to Grow an Adventist Church: Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus*. Fallbrook, CA: Heart Research Centre, 1999.
- _____. *Rekindling A Lost Passion: Recreating A Church Planting Movement*. Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1999.
- Daniel, Robin. *Mission Strategies Then and Now: An Introduction to Biblical Missiology*. Chester, UK: Tamarisk, 2012.
- Dederen, Raoul. "Characteristics of the Church." In *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*. Vol. 12. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000.
- Dodson, Jonathan K. *Gospel Centered Discipleship*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012.
- Doss, Gordon R. "Adventist Response through Evangelism and Discipleship." In *Adventist Mission in Africa: Challenges and Prospects*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 2007.
- Dudley, Roger L., and Des Cummings, Jr. *Adventures in Church Growth*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1983.
- Eko, Enebieni Enebieni. *African Evangelization: Problems and Prospect Ecclesiastical and Evangelistic Perspectives*. Abakpa Nike, Nigeria: Vickson, 2010.
- Elder Paul O. Chuku, and Elder John Obasi. "Foundation Members of Ogoja." Interview by Researcher, May 25, 2015.

- Finley, Mark A. *Receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit: 10 Days in the Upper Room*. Oshawa, Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2011.
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Committee on Mission to the Cities. *Do We Have a Strategy for Making Disciples in the Cities? Is It Working?* Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015.
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Youth Ministries Department. *Steps to Discipleship*. Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1990.
- George, Carl F. *The Coming Church Revolution: Empowering Leaders for the Future*. Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1991.
- Greenway, Roger S. *Go and Make Disciples!: An Introduction to Christian Missions*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1999.
- Gustin, Patricia Jo. "Cross-Cultural Evangelism: The Challenge Facing Adventism Today." *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* (2008).
- Hull, Bill. *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006.
- Hunter, George G. *The Contagious Congregation: Frontiers in Evangelism and Church Growth*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1979.
- Jack, John, n.d. Accessed May 20, 2013. 072_breaking-through-growth-barriers-in-newchurches.pdf-AdobeReader.
- Janvier, George. *Evangelism and Discipleship: Training for Africa*. Kaduna, Nigeria: Barak Press, 2001.
- Johnson, Kurt W. *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2011.
- Johnsson, William G. *Jesus: A Heart Full of Grace*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2007.
- Lovelace, Richard F. *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, n.d.
- Malphurs, Aubrey. *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting: A Guide for Starting Any Kind of Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011.
- Manner, Bruce. "Developing an Adventist Concept of Spirituality." *Ministry Magazine*, April 2008.
- Mason, Melody. *Daring to Ask for More: Divine Keys for Answered Prayer and Successful Ministry*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 2014.
- Maxwell, John C. *The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player: Becoming the Kind of Person Every Team Wants*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002.

- McCallum, Dennis, and Jessica Lowery. *Organic Discipleship: Mentoring Others Into Spiritual Maturity and Leadership*. Columbus, OH: New Paradigm, 2012.
- McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1997.
- McGavran, Donald A., and C. Peter Wagner. *Understanding Church Growth*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990.
- Murphey, John. "Ministry of Information, Ogoja." Interview by Researcher, May 12, 2015.
- Ott, Craig, Stephen J. Strauss, and Timothy C. Tennent. *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Patterson, George, and Richard Scoggins. *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle of Church Reproduction*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2002.
- Rainer, Thomas S. *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive*. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2014.
- _____. *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology and Principles*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 1993.
- Schwarz, Christian A. *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*. Queensland, Australia: NCD Australia, 2006.
- Senior, Donald C. P., and Carroll C. P. Stuhlmueller. *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983.
- Storms, Sam. *The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2012.
- Strong, James. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.
- Summers, Della. "Demography." *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Longman, 2005.
- Tasie, G. O. M. *Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Niger Delta, 1864-1918*. Tuta Sub Aegidepallas, Netherlands: Brill Academic, 1978.
- Terry, John Mark. *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*. Edited by Ebbie C Smith and Justice Anderson. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998.
- Towns, Elmer L., John N. Vaughan, and David J. Seifert. "The Complete Book of Church Growth," 1984. Accessed November 5, 2014. <http://100churchgrowthbk.pdf>.

- Tyndale House Publishers. *Life Application Bible: New International Version*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991.
- Vitrano, Steven P. "Christian Commitment." *Ministry Magazine*, April 2008.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Strategies for Church Growth: Tools for Effective Mission and Evangelism*. Ventura, CA: Regal Book, 1989.
- _____. *Your Church Can Be Healthy*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1979.
- _____. *Your Church Can Grow*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1998.
- _____. *Your Church Can Grow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church*. Glendale, CA: G and L, 1976.
- _____. *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. Ventura, CA: Regal Book, n.d.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.
- Well, David. "Prayer Rebelling Against the Status Quo." In *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009.
- White, Ellen G. *Child Guidance*. Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1954.
- _____. *Messenger of Hope: Connecting with Jesus*. Seoul, Korea: Everlasting Gospel, 2005
- _____. *Steps to Christ*. Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1940.
- _____. *Steps to Christ*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2000.
- _____. *Testimonies for the Church*. 9 vols. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1948.
- _____. *The Desire of Ages*. Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 1954.
- _____. *The Ministry of Healing*. Ontario, Canada: Pacific Press, 2004.
- The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal (SDA Hymnal)*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1987.

VITA

Name: Charles J. Goodhead

Background: I was born on December 19, 1959 to the family of Late Mr./Mrs. Francis Bieshia D. Goodhead of Opobo town presently in Opobo/ Nkoro Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. I was convinced and converted into the truth as expressed in the infallible Holy Writ, especially of the Three Angels message and got baptized into the SDA on August 14, 1978.

Family: I got married to Chidinma Roseline Goodhead nee Nwogu (of Okudu Mba) on Sunday December 18, 1988. The family is blessed with five lovely children.

Education

2006-2009 MA Pastoral Theology from Adventist University of Africa (Kenya)

1996-1999 BA. Theology (Minor in Business Administration) from Adventist Seminary of West Africa, (ASWA, now Babcock University).

1983-1985 Diploma in Accountancy from Rivers State University of Science & Technology.

1975-1980 West African School Certificate (WASC) from County Grammar School, Ikwerre /Etche, Rivers State.

1980-1975 First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) from Obibi Town School, Obibi Etche.

Ordination

2007 Ordained into the Gospel Ministry of the SDA Church and currently hold commissioned ministerial credential from Rivers Conference.

Experience:

2012- Executive Secretary of Rivers Conference

2011-2012 Youth/Chaplaincy Director, Rivers Conference

2001-2011 District Pastor of Five different Districts

1981-2001 Civil Servant in the Rivers Civil Service

1986-1991 Executive Secretary, Rivers State Youth Council.

Hobbies: Hockey, Music, Reading, and Travelling.