

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Ministry
Emphasis in Leadership

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: ENHANCING THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS OF THE NEW CONVERTS
IN THE USA-RIVER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN
TANZANIA

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It is the wish of the church that when new believers join the church through baptism they will stay. On the contrary, the situation at the Usa-River Seventh-day Adventist Church reveals the opposite. Church records of 2012 and 2013 showed that membership at the Usa-River Seventh-day Adventist Church increased by 116. On the other hand, the church lost 576. This incident led the researcher to investigate reasons for this occurrence, then provide solutions to enhance church membership retention at the Usa-River Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In addressing this problem the mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative research was used to enhance a larger perspective that would be impossible to achieve by one type of research. It also assisted in the avoidance of bias within each type of research.

The data gathered showed that six problems contributed to church membership loss at the Usa-River Seventh-day Adventist Church: lack of Bible study among church members; low participation in family devotional life; poor attendance in worship services; poor participation in small groups; low involvement in witnessing; and poor follow-up ministry. A program was therefore developed, implemented, and evaluated to enhance the discipleship process among believers at the Usa-River Seventh-day Adventist Church.

After the intervention it was discovered that there was significant improvement in personal Bible study, family devotions, worship service attendance, and participation in small groups. Nevertheless, with this improvement, there was poor involvement in witnessing.

The follow-up ministry realized seven inactive church members beginning to attend church regularly. At the same time, it also attracted two non-Adventists who decided to join the church.

It is imperative to enhance believers' relationship with God because not only will they be enriched spiritually, but it will also boost their staying in the church. Involving church members into small groups and encouraging them to actively carry out the objectives of small groups will enhance their discipleship process. Additionally, church leaders should take seriously follow-up ministry. Church members need to be visited, prayed with, and strengthened regularly as they journey in their spiritual endeavor.

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USA-RIVER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN TANZANIA

A dissertation

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

by

James Mayunga Ajuok

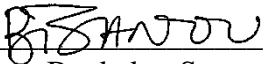
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
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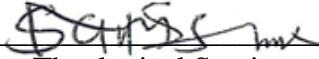
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Ministry Context

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, like other organizations, has a mission. The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to appeal to all people, kindred, and tongues to become disciples of Jesus Christ and to prepare them for His Second Coming. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is guided by the Holy Scriptures as well as the Holy Spirit to accomplish this mission. The church carries out her mission through: “Christ-like living, communicating, discipling, teaching, healing, and serving.”¹

Seventh-day Adventists wherever they live in the world commit themselves to: First, Christ-like Living—Demonstrating the superiority of Jesus Christ in their daily lives by moral, ethical, and social behaviors that are compatible with the life, example, and teachings Jesus. Second, Christ-like Communication—Perceiving that all members are summoned to dynamic witness, they minister through individual conversation, preaching, publishing, and the arts, the Bible messages concerning God

¹Seventh-day Adventist Church, “Mission Statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” accessed 27 June 2016, <https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/-/mission-statement-of-the-seventh-day-adventist-church/>. See also, Dayo Alayo, *90 Years of Adventism in Nigeria: A Compendium* (Bloomington, IN: Communication and / PARL Department of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nigeria, 2004), 9.

and the hope and redemption provided through the life, ministry, atoning death, resurrection, and high priestly ministry of Christ.²

Third, Christ-like Discipling—Upholding the utmost significance of ongoing spiritual advancement and growth among believers who embrace Jesus as Lord and Savior, Adventists tend and educate one another in righteousness, offer coaching for sound witness, and inspire responsive adherence to God’s will. Fourth, Christ-like Teaching—Recognizing that growth of perception and personality is significant to God’s plan of redemption, they enhance the development of a sound comprehension of and relation to their Creator, Scriptures, and all God’s creation. Fifth, Christ-like Healing—Endorsing the Bible principles of the health of the entire person, they prioritize on healthful life and alleviating sickness from the people and collaborate with God in His merciful service of restoration through service to the needy and ill-treated. Sixth, Christ-like Serving—Imitating Christ’s example, Adventists dedicate themselves to meek ministry, serving people who are most afflicted by “poverty, tragedy, hopelessness, and disease.”³

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is fast growing worldwide. The current membership is over 18,000,000.⁴ The trend shows that the church is rapidly expanding in Africa where there is currently about 45% of the world membership.

²Seventh-day Adventist Church, “Mission Statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” accessed 27 June 2016, <https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/-/mission-statement-of-the-seventh-day-adventist-church/>.

³Ibid.

⁴General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Archives and Statistics, “World Church Statistics-2011,” accessed 22 September 2013, <http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/Stats/SDAWorldChurchStatistics2011.PDF?q=docs/Stats/SDAWorldChurchStatistics2011.PDF/>.

Tanzania is one of the countries in which the Adventist Church is fast growing. It begun with six converts following the ministry of the first missionaries in 1903⁵ and as of September 2013 the Tanzania Union Mission (TUM) has about 450,000 members with five conferences and one field mission.⁶ Alongside this growth, the retention of members through effective discipling is fundamental (Matt 28:18-20; John 17:6, 8, 10; Acts 2).

The Usa-River SDA Church, located in the North East Tanzania Conference (NETCO), is about 24 km away from the union headquarters. It is in the south-west of the University of Arusha where I have worked as a lecturer since 2011; in the southern part of Mount Meru and in the south-western part of the highest mountain in Africa, Mount Kilimanjaro. This church provides a site for the university ministerial students to carry out ministerial practicum. I have had the privilege of ministering the word of God at Usa-River SDA Church. In 1997, the researcher together with fourth-year ministerial students, being led by their lecturer, conducted an evangelistic meeting within the territory of this church. It is the headquarters of Meru district to which the university church belongs.

Statement of the Problem

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church calls for retention of members in the church. However, the trend at Usa-River SDA Church is contrary.

⁵The first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to come to Tanzania were Abraham C. Enns and Johannes Ehlers. They landed in the then Tanganyika, establishing mission station on the southern part of the Pare Mountain among Wapare people. From there, alongside the ministry of the native missionaries, the Adventist Church spread to other regions in Tanganyika.

⁶Tanzania Union Mission-Adventist Online Yearbook, Office of Archives and Statistics, accessed 22 September 2013, <http://www.adventistyearbook.org/ViewAdmField.aspx?AdmFieldID=TZUM>.

According to the church records, at the end of 2011 there were 846 members. In 2012 and 2013 the Usa-River SDA Church received into membership 116 members through baptism. Unfortunately, the same period of time 576 members dropped out of church membership.⁷ There is therefore, a need to research on the causes of this occurrence, and to provide solutions that will enhance the discipleship process among new members of the Usa-River SDA Church.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop, implement, and evaluate a discipleship program aimed at enhancing retention of new members in the Usa-River SDA Church in Tanzania.

Justification

In John 17:12, Jesus affirms that those whom the Lord gave Him, He protected, guarded and no one was lost except the son of perdition. As He sends His followers to make disciples, they should endeavor to disciple all those who come to the faith in Him. Plans to grow numerically should go hand in hand with plans to nurture and retain converts in church membership. Discipleship is both about numerical and spiritual growth. It is impractical to talk about the growth of the church, if the number of people that leave the church is greater than that of those who join its ranks. Therefore, there is a need to research and address the causes of this trend.

Delimitations

Although the study addresses a union-wide concern, it is limited to the Usa-River SDA Church since it is impractical to carry such a research all over the union.

⁷Usa-River SDA Church Clerk statistical report (Clerk Report) sent to NETCO by Sylvester Domic Machunda-the Church Clerk.

New members who are admitted into the church are the primary focus of this project. This is because effective discipling of new members leads to authentic discipleship. While there is discipleship in the Old Testament, for the scope of this project, discipleship in the New Testament is the focal point.

Description of the Dissertation Process

This dissertation has six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the project. It describes the ministry context, states the problem and purpose of the dissertation. Then it highlights the justification of the project. Chapter 2 explores selected biblical passages and the writings of Ellen G. White to establish a biblical and theological foundation for discipleship. Exegetical and theological research is done to ascertain theological basis for the process of enhancing discipleship.

Chapter 3 focuses on the literature review. In the process, Christian writers' perspectives on enhancing discipleship process are reviewed. The implication of the term discipleship to Christian faith is examined. The Great Commission which is the foundation to making disciples is discussed. A conclusion summarizing the main insights is provided at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4 deals with the social, cultural, and religious context analysis. Interviews and questionnaires were administered to collect and analyze data related to the implementation of the project. A program to address the problem was developed and shared with the local church leadership.

The emphasis of chapter 5 is on the implementation of a strategy to enhance discipleship process in the Usa-River SDA Church in Tanzania. The following steps were followed to meet that objective: 1) the initiative was executed in the concerned church; 2) the results were analyzed and evaluated; 3) a comprehensive report was prepared and replicated in the dissertation.

Chapter 6 evaluates the implementation of the project, outlines lessons learned, and makes recommendations on details that require further action and those that require further research.

Expectations

As a result of this study, it is expected that:

First, the quality of the spiritual life of the of Usa-River SDA Church will be vibrant, and that they will be mature and firmly established upon sound doctrines. Second, believers who desire church membership will be aware of both its privileges and responsibilities. Third, new members will bear witness that they are true disciples of Jesus Christ and will be motivated to engage in making disciples. Ultimately, the rate of the membership dropout will be minimized. Fourth, this dissertation will become a model that will be used all over the union as a means of preparing baptismal candidates for baptism. Fifth, my perception of biblical discipleship will be enhanced.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

This research addresses the problem of the high rate of backsliding in the Usa-River SDA Church by analyzing how the church can take seriously the ministry of follow-up to new believers. Sometimes it may appear to be yearning of the leadership to see large number of people joining the church through baptism to the extent that the seriousness of the ordinance is diminished. Church membership needs to be considered as a spiritual commitment. It is not a matter of having one's name in the church records. Christianity is not a social club that one may decide to join today and leave tomorrow. It is neither a political party where one can walk in and out any time like changing clothes. It is a lifetime commitment whereby the one baptized makes a covenant to be attached to God.

Therefore, those who are involved in overseeing the church should endeavor in effective ministry of following-up new believers to assist the new believers be rooted in faith. They must make certain that, new converts understand the principles that to govern the church and bear proof that their lives have been changed and that they enjoy fellowship with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. New converts ought to be made disciples not just believers or Christians. They need not to be pew warmers but true followers of Jesus who in turn will also make other disciples.

This chapter explores selected biblical passages and the writings of Ellen G. White to establish a biblical and theological foundation for my project. It begins by

defining the terms disciple and discipleship then proceeds to examine the selected passages and the writings of Ellen G. White.

Disciple

The word ‘disciple’ comes from the old English word, ‘*discipul*’ and Anglo-French, ‘disciple.’ From Late Latin, the word, ‘*discipulus*’ was used to refer to a follower of Jesus in His lifetime here on earth. A disciple is one who believes and devoted in sharing the teachings of his or her master. According to the Gospels accounts, it refers to one among the twelve who formed the inner sphere of Jesus’ followers (Matt 10:1, 2; 11:1). A disciple also denotes a persuaded believer of a philosophy or of a person. From Latin before 12th century, a disciple denoted a pupil.¹ In addition, a disciple is described as “a follower of the doctrines of a teacher or a school of thought.”²

In the New Testament (NT) the word disciple (*mathetes*) is “frequently used in both the Gospels and Acts.”³ In addition to a few references to the disciples of Moses

¹*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “Disciple,” Libronix Digital Library. See also, Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, ed., “Disciple, Discipleship,” *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible (NIDB) D-H* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 2:128; and I. H. Marshall et al, ed., “Discipleship” *New Bible Dictionary*, Third Edition (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2010), 277 where it also stated that, “Since pupils often adopted the distinctive teaching of their masters, the word came to signify the adherent of a particular outlook in religion or philosophy.”

²*Collins Concise Dictionary*, s.v. “Disciple,” Libronix Digital Library. See also Sakenfeld, ed., “Disciple, Discipleship,” *NIDB*.

³Gerhard Kittel, ed., “*Mathetes*,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1967), 4:441.

(John 9:28), of John the Baptist (Matt 11:2), and of the Pharisees (Matt 22:16), all references to disciples are restricted to those who have received Jesus as their Lord and Master.⁴ The Greek word, *mathetes*, “appears more than 250 times in the NT.”⁵ In secular Greek, the word *mathetes* refers to a person who learns. A *mathetes* was an individual subjected to another person for the purpose of learning. Hence, he was considered a trainee to someone “in a trade or profession or a student of a philosopher.”⁶

However, the use of *mathetes* together with the verb *akolouthein* in relation to the followers of Jesus is unique. “*Akolouthein*, appearing fifty six times in the Synoptics and fourteen times in John, does not always refer to those who were disciples in the strict sense, as when it is used of the [multitudes] that followed Jesus (Matt 4:25; 8:1).”⁷ However, when *akolouthein* is used to refer to individuals (Mark 1:18; Luke 5:11; John 1:43), it shows the exceptional attributes of discipleship in connection to Christ.⁸

⁴Judith A. Dwyer, ed., “Discipleship,” *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought (NDCST)* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 294, Libronix Digital Library.

⁵Michael Downey, ed., “Discipleship,” *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality (NDCS)* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 281, Libronix Digital Library.

⁶Ibid. See also, Kittel, ed., “*Mathetes*,” *TDNT*, 4:441.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

The Call to Become Disciple of Jesus

While the students of the rabbis were expected to search for a master and then prove their being eligible for study,⁹ the followers of Christ are sought out and called by Jesus Himself (Mark 1:17-18).¹⁰ Jesus calls His disciples despite their level of educational experience or suitability. He welcomes them on the essence of their faith in Him. Faith therefore is the significant factor in the relationship between Jesus and His followers.¹¹

Consequently, for His followers, Christ is the Lord and not just a mere teacher. In the NT, disciples of Jesus are often portrayed as witnesses and attachments to the person of Jesus Christ. However, the call to discipleship does not simply mean that those who are called are to stay always at the side of Jesus; instead, they are admonished to go out and proclaim the good news¹² of salvation to mankind (Mark 16:15).

Discipleship

True discipleship in the NT denotes an individual following of Jesus. It influences every aspect of human life. It models one's approach toward possessions and affluence. Furthermore, it provides "a new meaning to love, changes the way an individual understands success and personal fulfillment."¹³ This study seeks to address

⁹Downey, ed., "Discipleship," *NDCS*, 281.

¹⁰Kittel, ed., "*Mathetes*," *TDNT*, 4:444. See also, Sakenfeld, ed., "Disciple, Discipleship," *NIDB*, 2:128.

¹¹Downey, ed., "Discipleship," *NDCS*, 281. See also, Sakenfeld, ed., "Disciple, Discipleship," *NIDB*, 2:129 and Marshall et al, ed., "Discipleship," *NBD*, 277.

¹²Kittel, ed., "*Mathetes*," *TDNT*, 4:452. See also, Marshall et al, ed., "Discipleship," *NBD*, 277.

¹³Downey, ed., "Discipleship," *NDCS*, 281.

this important issue to assist readers better comprehend the biblical concept of discipleship and hence, see how believers can become better disciples of Christ.

Definition of Discipleship

In trying to provide a clear definition, there seems to be some confusion on what constitutes discipleship. Is discipleship a matter of becoming a disciple? Or is it the process of being a disciple? Is it the process of being educated by a teacher? Or is it the process of becoming like a master? Is it a process for everyone or just a select few? There are three reasons for this uncertainty. First, the word disciple (*mathetes*) and its related verbal form *matheteuo* sometimes have an educational connotation (Matt 10:24; 13:52). In this case, discipleship is simply the process of being instructed by a teacher.¹⁴ On the other hand, discipleship appears to involve life transformation (Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34), in which case discipleship is simply the process of becoming like one's master.¹⁵

Second, at times the focus is on the beginning of the process (Matt 27:57; Acts 14:21), whereby discipleship is becoming a disciple.¹⁶ Third, there are nuances of meaning for the word disciple. Sometimes the word refers to those who occasionally followed Jesus (Matt 8:21). In this sense discipleship was a process whereby the crowds learned more about Jesus.¹⁷ On the other hand, the word discipleship is used of those who were being trained to be leaders of the church (Matt 17:1). In this case,

¹⁴Sakenfeld, ed., "Disciple, Discipleship," *NIDB*, 2:128.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 2:130.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 2:129.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

discipleship is the process of selecting a specific few to become like Christ through focused life transformation.¹⁸

Discipleship involves both becoming a disciple and being a disciple. At times the focus is on the entrance into the process (evangelism), but most often the focus is on growing in the process (maturity). Thus, discipleship includes both teaching and life transformation. It is a universal call and also an intense process for everyone desiring to follow Jesus. It is best to think of discipleship as the process of becoming like Jesus Christ.

The Implications of Discipleship

With the call to discipleship being the core of the New Testament epistles, there needs to be a balance between discipleship and ecclesiology. Several implications may be proposed. First, discipleship is a process that begins with believers taking the initiative in presenting the gospel to non-believers in order to bring them to salvation. This is followed by baptism and a continued process of teaching the Word of God. A disciple is not that believer who has made an intellectual ascent to a body of doctrines, but one who demonstrates his/her commitment to Christ in his/her daily life and continues to grow in his/her relationship with Him.

Second, the corporate teaching and a fellowship of a local church are indispensable for developing spiritual maturity in individual believers. In the local church, spiritual gifts are to be put into use (Rom 12), and it is the proper working of each member that builds the church and thus each member (Eph 4:16). Third, since discipleship has Christ-likeness as its ultimate goal (1 Cor 11:1; Eph 4:13, 15, 20; Col

¹⁸“Apart” [Matthew 17:1], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC)*, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1956), 5:438-439.

1:28), a human discipler must take precautions not to mess up the product. A disciple will become like one's own master whether for good or for bad (Luke 6:40).

Fourth, in-depth discipleship training was used to equip the foundational leaders of the New Testament church (Eph 2:20). Hence, it is logical that churches today think of discipleship as a step toward developing competent leaders. Fifth, discipleship should be a means for producing capable teachers (2 Tim 2:2). If the duty to help believers mature in order to be able to teach (Heb 5:11-14) was taken seriously, the problem of teacher shortages in many churches would be solved.

Sixth, discipleship is the means to the end of planting and developing local churches (Acts 14:21-23), thus building Christ's universal body (Matt 16:18). New Testament discipleship helps believers see the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) as the pattern for planting and building churches.

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)

Jesus Christ in His last address to His eleven disciples gave them the Great Commission. If we had only the account of Matthew it would have been concluded that only eleven disciples were present at the unknown Mount in Galilee. However, with the indication from Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:6, Jesus appeared to have gathered the eleven around Him on top of the Mount with more than 500 disciples at the foot of the mountain.

The meeting had been arranged beforehand. Jesus had told the apostles before His death about the site where He would meet them following His resurrection. He repeated the same when He met the women who had gone to the tomb only to receive a message from an angel concerning the resurrection of their Lord (Matt 28:9, 10). Thus, when the news about His resurrection was voiced in Galilee, believers came to the spot to listen to His applaud declaration. These appear to be Galilean disciples who

had been faithful to Jesus, and were now assembled to hear His declaration of exaltation.¹⁹

Upon this occasion, addressing His immediate apostles whom He had trained, worked with, nurtured, and now were ready to take over the ministry, Jesus began by elucidating to them three great utterances. These three great declarations include: “a great claim, a great commission, and a great promise.”²⁰

A Great Claim

Jesus declared that all authority had been given to Him both in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18). This statement articulates the absolute and indefinite authority and sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. It conveys the variety of gift given Him. “All power, every kind of force, every kind of dominion is in His Hands.”²¹ In addition, His sphere of dominion includes both heaven and earth. A specific pointed time when this all embracing authority was bestowed upon Him is reflected in the passage.

In the Revised Standard Version there is a small alteration in reading, which makes a great remarkable difference. It states, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” and this phrase, ‘has been given’, refers to a specific period of time. There is a connection between the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and His bestowal with this sovereign power.²²

¹⁹Alexander Maclaren, “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:16-20), *Exposition of Holy Scriptures (EHS)* (BiblioBazaar, 2008), Libronix Digital Library.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Charles H. Talbert, *Commentaries on the New Testament: Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 316. See also, Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Complete Published Ellen G. White Writings [CD ROM] (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 2008), 38-39 and Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 8:268, 269.

Commission to the Disciples

Following Christ's declaration that all authority has been granted to Him in heaven and on earth, one would have anticipated some word of encouragement and intensification to His disciples who were soon going to be left by their Master. Nevertheless, Jesus, considering His ministry to be incomplete without the involvement of His disciples, gives a commission in which all His true followers ought to get involved.

Jesus' final words in the Gospel of Matthew entail "one imperative surrounded by three subordinate participle clauses."²³ This implies one command implemented in three ways. The one command is to make disciples of all nations, and this command is carried out by going, baptizing, and teaching.

Go ye. Matthew 28:19, 20 constitutes the enormous warrant of the Christian church. Jesus summons, "Go [ye] therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (RSV). The Greek verb *poreuthentes* translated 'go' is actually not a command but a present participle 'going.'²⁴ It entails the idea, 'as you go,' 'as you travel,' 'as you proceed,' 'as you journey.' It does not convey a command to go, but the assumption that the disciples will automatically be going. In other words, 'Go ye' as it reads in the King James Bible, Jesus expresses the idea that, 'as you are going' make disciples.²⁵

²³Craig S. Keener, "Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20)," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)* 12:1 (2009): 3.

²⁴Warren W. Wiersbe, "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:16-20), *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament (BECNT)* (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 2001), Libronix Digital Library System.

²⁵Edward G. Dobson, et al., "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:16-20), *KJV Bible Commentary (KJVBC)*, Libronix Digital Library System.

Make disciples. The absolute command in the whole Great Commission is ‘make disciples,’ *matheteusate*, (verb imperative aorist active second person plural). Thus, Jesus said, “While you are going make disciples of all nations.”²⁶ No matter where we are, no matter where we go, we should be witnesses for Jesus Christ and seek to win true believers to Him. The term, ‘disciples,’ was the major popular name for the early believers. Being a disciple meant more than being a convert or a believer or a church member. A disciple is “a follower and student of a mentor, teacher, or other figure.”²⁷

The Greek term for disciple, *mathetes*, (a pupil or a learner), comes from a word meaning ‘to learn.’ Hence, to make disciples is to make learners, and those who would learn must be taught. A disciple is therefore a learner, one who follows a teacher and learns his wisdom. Disciples connected themselves to a teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. They learned not simply by listening, but also by doing.²⁸

Jesus had many followers, some of whom were merely spectators, while some were true believers. From this large crowd of followers He chose twelve whom He named apostles. These were His most intimate associates who formed an inner circle and naturally took their positions next to Him. They were the immediate recipients of the command to make disciples. He called them and taught them so that they may be able to teach others also.²⁹

²⁶Wiersbe, “Great Commission,” *BECNT*.

²⁷Merrill C. Tenney, ed. “Disciple,” *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 2:130.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Wiersbe, “Great Commission,” *BECNT*.

Since in the word ‘ye’ Christ included all believers to the very end of time, making disciples is the responsibility of every believer, and not just a small group of leaders. How more rapidly the Christian Church would advance, and how much powerful and better-off church members would be if each one was involved in the ministry of discipling another believer! “The only way a local church can be fruitful and multiply is with a systematic discipleship program.”³⁰ This is the commitment that every true believer should joyfully embrace.

All nations. In the Great Commission Jesus is not sending His disciples back to the house of Israel as He did in Matthew 10. Here He is sending them into the whole world. He tells them, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19). In this commission the triumphant living Lord is sending His ambassadors to proclaim His gospel throughout the world. They were expected to go and teach all nations including both Jews and Gentiles. Evangelizing all nations is not simply an episode of educating or preaching to them, but a full process of discipleship which involves teaching and training.³¹

Among all religions, Christianity was the first to encompass a truly international character. It destroys all barriers of race, nationality, society, economics, and social customs effectively. The gospel commission efficiently eradicates national boundaries, and people of all nations become members of one great brotherhood in which “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28).

Baptize in the name. The other two verbs in Matthew 28:19, 20, baptizing and teaching, as the first verb ‘go’, are both present participles. They also do not

³⁰Wiersbe, “Great Commission,” *BECNT*.

³¹Dobson et al., “Great Commission,” *KJVBC*.

constitute the great command but rather activities to be done in the accomplishment of the primary command to make disciples. Christ stated that disciples should be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The clause reads, “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” The noun ‘nations’ *ethne* in the preceding clause is an accusative neuter plural while, the pronoun for ‘them’ *autois* is a personal accusative masculine plural. Thus, baptizing them does not refer to ‘all nations’ but to the disciples to be drawn from nations.³²

Jesus articulates that, the disciples are to be baptized into the name, *onoma*, and not names. This is the sign of being immersed into fellowship with the one threefold God. The perfect status of Christian disciples is that they shall be with God and saturated with Him. They are disciples as long as they are flooded with God, and only in the measure in which they live and move and have their beings.

Teach to observe. Jesus Christ affirms that discipleship does not end with baptism. He proceeds to state that the baptized disciples ought to be taught to observe all things which He had commanded. It is noteworthy to recognize that He is not saying, teaching them what He had commanded, however, He says teaching them to observe or keep or obey or pay attention to what He had commanded. This gives an impression that the basics of what He had commanded had been taught to the disciples before being baptized. Now they are being grounded into those teachings to continue growing in the saving relationship with their Lord Jesus Christ.

Here Jesus is telling His disciples that they need to train themselves and others in conduct; not things to be believed but things to be done. Doctrines that are not

³²Maclaren, “Great Commission,” *EHS*.

wrought out in actions are empty. On the other hand, conduct that is not informed, penetrated, regulated by statements of belief, is unworthy of a Christian. What Christians need to know, they are to know in order that they may do, and thus inherit the benediction, which is never endowed upon them that know, but upon them that, knowing these things are blessed in as much as for the doing of them. “That training is to be continuous, educating to new views of duty; new applications of old truths, new sensitiveness of conscience unveiling to us, ever as [disciples] climb new heights to which [they] aspire.”³³

Accepting the gospel of Jesus entails an intelligence action. Only a perceptive Christian can be an authentic disciple of Jesus. Ideas of Christianity that make of rebirth and redemption a mere consent to faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior—important though they may be—pass over a most vital part of the gospel commission. It is as paramount to teach believers to observe the things Christ has commanded as it is to baptize.³⁴ Peter argues persuasively that faith in Christ calls for constant growth in “the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 3:18).

Neglecting the exercise of the mental faculties to comprehend the revealed will of God, results in no real discipleship, no factual growth. For that reason, instruction is imperative both before and after baptism. Without adequate training in the great truths of the good news, no authentic religious life can be realized. In addition, it should be noted that it is the marvelous love of Christ that subjugates hearts. Lacking real love for Jesus, “the doctrines and forms of religion lose their meaning and value.”³⁵ The disciples were admonished to teach others to keep that which Christ had commanded.

³³Maclaren, “Great Commission,” *EHS*.

³⁴“Teaching them,” *SDABC*, 5:556.

³⁵*Ibid.*

They were not expected to deal with human traditions and theories. Human teachings and human demands are of no importance before God. Any teaching that does not bear the authority of Jesus Christ has no room in the Christian church.³⁶ It can never be used to produce genuine disciples. Thus, we need to teach the baptized converts to observe all the teachings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to bring about their edification and exhortation as it is evident in the book of Acts of the Apostles.

The Great Promise

Lastly, Jesus gave His disciples a great promise. He said to them, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”³⁷ In other words, Jesus is giving them the assurance that He is with them all the days, even to the completion of the age. ‘I am’ indicates certainty as well as the discourse of One who is elevated beyond the underneath spheres where era rolls and the series of events take place. It does not matter how many they are, it does not matter their differences in “complexion, days of summer or days of winter, days of sunshine or days of storm, days of [their youthfulness] or days of stagnant, stereotyped old age, days of apparent failures and days of apparent prosperity,”³⁸ He is assuring them all of His presence.

When one reads these words of Jesus, having an idea that soon He was to be caught up to heaven thus leave His disciples physically pending the day of His magnificent Second Coming, such announcement seems strange. Nevertheless, He had

³⁶“Teaching them,” *SDABC*, 5:558.

³⁷New Revised Standard Version, 1989; “and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age. Amen.” (NKJV), 1982; “and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” (KJV); “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (NIV); “And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (NLT).

³⁸Maclaren, “Great Commission,” *EHS*.

already promised that He will send to them a Helper, the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). By virtue of this gift, He would be closer to them throughout the world than it could have been possible had He remained present bodily. Through the award of the Holy Spirit, every disciple of the Lord may find communion with Christ as did the ancient disciples.

Though this closing promise was given to the eleven apostles, it is transmitted to every generation of believers. Christ's constant presence, 'I am with you always', warrants the accomplishment of the church's mission because in the actual sense, it is His mission carried out by His disciples of all ages. The clause 'unto the end of the world' denotes until the end of the age, even unto the end of the church's age.

There is no excuse for failing to exercise this power in today's age. Relating the Great Commission to the promise of Christ to continually build His church, it is clear that He intends the church to be spiritually militant and evangelistically vibrant as contemporary disciples take His claims of lordship to the entire world in this generation.

Biblical Models of Discipleship

The previous section has discussed the process of discipleship. It has established the command in the Great Commission and activities done to accomplish that command. This section unfolds biblical models of discipleship. It examines the apostolic church model then describes Paul's instruction to the Thessalonian church members on how to take care of new believers.

The Apostolic Church (Acts 2)

The early Christian Church members were diligent and constant in their attendance upon the preaching of the Word of God. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. They never disowned nor deserted it. The word rendered

“continued steadfastly” (Acts 2:42 KJV), *proskarterountes*, means ‘adhere to one, devoted or remaining to one, not leaving or forsaking another’.³⁹ The apostle’s doctrine does not imply that the disciples held or believed the doctrines of the apostles, but rather it means that they adhered to, or attended to the apostles’ teaching or instruction.

Thus, here the word doctrine assumes a technical sense and suggests a “collection and arrangement of abstract views supposed to be contained in the Bible.”⁴⁰ In Scripture, the word denotes simply ‘teaching’; and the expression here implies that, the disciples continued to attend to the apostles’ instructions. One of the manifestations of conversion is an aspiration to be educated in the dogmas and responsibilities of religion, and readiness to attend to the proclamation of the gospel.

The disciples kept up the communion of saints. They continued in fellowship (Acts 2:42), and day after day they attended the temple together (Acts 2:46). The word rendered ‘fellowship’ (*koinonia*) often stands for ‘communion’. It suitably denotes ‘having things in common, or participation, society, or friendship.’ It may represent anything which may be owned in common, or in which all may participate. Thus, the early Christians had their possessions in common.⁴¹

The word fellowship to the apostolic church members meant more than being together. It meant having in common and probably referred to the sharing of their

³⁹Albert Barnes, “Acts 2:42,” *Barnes’ Notes (BN)*, Libronix Digital Library System.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

wealth. It appears to have been different from a form of modern communism, since the program was completely “voluntary, temporary, and motivated by love.”⁴²

The disciples of the apostolic church were not contented to assemble once a week for church services as usual. They met daily (2:46), cared daily (Acts 6:1), won souls daily (Acts 2:47), searched the Scriptures often (Acts 17:11), and increased in number daily (Acts 16:5). Their Christian life was a daily experience rather than a weekly routine. This was because the risen Lord “was a living reality to them, and His resurrection power was at work in their lives through the Spirit.”⁴³

The disciples not only had a mutual affection to each other, but a great deal of mutual conversation with each other. They were very intimate with one another, and took all opportunities to meet. They were concerned for one another, sympathized with one another, and heartily advocated one another’s interests. They had a great deal of holy love among them; and they vigorously joined in their public service. They frequently took part in the ordinance of the Holy Communion. They continued in the breaking of bread, in celebrating that memorial of their Master’s death as those who were not ashamed to own their relation to, and their dependence upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified (Acts 2:46).

The disciples, not thinking fit to celebrate the Eucharist in the temple, broke bread from house to house with those that usually met there to worship God. The Jewish bread was commonly made into “cakes, thin, hard, and brittle, so that it was broken instead of being cut. Hence, to [indicate] ‘intimacy or friendship,’ the phrase

⁴²Wiersbe, “The Church Walking in the Spirit” [Acts 2:42-47], *BECNT*.

⁴³*Ibid.*

‘to break bread together’ would be very expressive in the same way as the Greeks [designated] it by drinking together.”⁴⁴

Believers of the early Christian Church continued to congregate in the temple as a place of their gathering and ministry. In addition, they also convened in their various homes. The 3,000 new proselytes required instruction in the Word of God and fellowship with old members if they were to mature and become effectual witnesses. “The early church did more than make converts; they also made disciples.”⁴⁵ Breaking of bread probably referred to the believers’ regular meals. However, at the close of every meal, they most likely paused to remember their Lord by observing the Lord’s Supper.⁴⁶

Christians continued in prayers. Both before and after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost, believers continued instantly in prayer. Breaking of bread came in between the work and prayer; and it was an inducement to the disciples’ prayer and a splendid demonstration of the uplifting of their hearts to God. They endeavored in thanksgiving and were always praising God.

Followers of Jesus were loving and kind to one another; their benevolent was as prominent as their devotion, and their sharing in holy ordinances united their hearts to one another. “They had all things common...[so] that those who had much might have the less, and so be kept from the temptations of abundance; and [those] who had little might have the more, and so be kept from the temptations of want and poverty.”⁴⁷ They were joyous, and very unselfish in the use of what they possessed. Their

⁴⁴Barnes.

⁴⁵Wiersbe, “The Church Walking in the Spirit,” *BECNT*.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary*, vol. 6, *Acts to Revelation*, “Acts 2:42-47,” Bible Works 8.

religiosity was evidenced in sharing common meals; they did partake of their food with delight and bountiful heart.

The disciples raised funds for charity (Acts 2:45). They sold their possessions and goods. Some sold their lands and houses, others their stocks and the furniture of their houses, and shared the money to their brethren as every man had need. This act was meant to destroy selfishness. Thus, God owned them, and gave signal tokens of His presence with them (Acts 2:43). Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles of diverse sorts that confirmed their doctrine, proving that it was from God. The word in their mouths did wonders, and God blessed their endeavors for the increase of number of disciples (Acts 2:47).

The Loving Mother (1 Thessalonians 2:7-10)

Paul, being an apostle, was a man of authority; however he constantly used His power in love. Babies in Christ felt his warm loving care, as he nurtured them. He was like a loving mother who tendered for her children. It requires time and energy to take care of children. Paul did not entrust his converts to maids; “he made sacrifices and cared for them himself. He did not tell them to ‘read a book’ as a substitute for his own personal ministry.”⁴⁸

In 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9 Paul shifted the focus from the preacher’s role to the listeners’ responses. Instead of expecting his converts to support him financially, the apostle chose to serve rather than to be served for the interest of the Thessalonian new believers. Paul cared for their new believers as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her young children. This edifying illustration presents an excellent paradigm for all who are accountable for the well-being of new converts. If a tending mother is not well

⁴⁸Wiersbe, “Helping the Baby Grow Up,” [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *BECNT*.

nourished, she cannot supply sufficient food to her baby.⁴⁹ Likewise, a tending church ought to be well nourished spiritually for it to provide sufficient spiritual food to the new converts.

Paul was patient with the new converts. His affection for them shaped his patience, because “love suffers long and is kind” (1 Cor 13:4). Children do not mature spontaneously. They all go through growing challenges and experience problems as they grow up. Thus, Paul nourished the new converts the same way a nursing mother esteems her children. A breastfeeding mother gives her personal life to the child. A diligent mother cannot hand over her baby to someone else. The babe must be in her arms, next to her heart.⁵⁰

The nursing mother feeds herself then transforms food into milk for the child. In the same manner, a grown up Christian feeds on God’s Word and then shares its substance with the converts so they can mature (1 Pet 2:1-3). Since a nursing child may become sick as a result of the reaction to the kind of food the mother has eaten, a Christian who is nurturing, feeding others, should be cautious not to feed on harmful substance.⁵¹ The diet of a spiritual parent is vitally important to the spiritual health of a new Christian.

In addition to making sacrifices, having patience, and providing nourishment, a mother also guards her child. Likewise, Paul was ready to offer not only the good news but also his own life for the Thessalonians. His love for them was so great that

⁴⁹Thomas L. Constable, “1 Thessalonians 2:7-12,” *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Colorado Springs, CO: David Cook, 2002), Libronix Digital Library System.

⁵⁰Wiersbe, “Helping the Baby Grow Up,” [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *BECNT*.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

he was willing to die for them if needed. He did not only give the message of eternal life, the gospel of God, but also imparted his own innermost being as well. He gave whatever he had in order to help the beloved believers of Thessalonica. His love is evident, for genuine love finds expression in giving to people, not only to their spiritual needs, which are primary, but also to their physical needs (1 Thess 2:8). However, it is not easy to be a nursing mother. If one does not nurse the new believers on the milk of the Word of God, they cannot mature to value the meat of God's Word.⁵²

It may therefore be summarized that, one cannot go through the discipleship journey in solitude. The nature of discipleship requires an individual to intermingle with others to effect this journey. The community of believers is the right place where new believers are nurtured and instructed. This nurturing ought to be done tenderly like a nursing mother does to her baby.

The Concerned Father (1 Thessalonians 2:11, 12)

Having likened his conduct to the loving, unselfish care of a nursing mother, Paul also compared his behavior to that of a father. He regarded himself as a 'spiritual father' to the members at Thessalonica. This implies that he trained and instructed the new converts as a good father disciplines his children. The Greek word, *tekna*, translated 'children', underlines "the believers' immaturity as well as the apostle's affection" (1 Thess 2:11).⁵³

The instruction presented entailed firm constructive appeals—encouraging, and comforting (1 Thess 2:12), intended to awaken and to motivate acceptable behavior,

⁵²Wiersbe, "Helping the Baby Grow Up," [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *BECNT*.

⁵³Constable, "How the Gospel was Delivered," [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *Bible Knowledge*."

and solemn, sincere entreaty. Such an integration of appeals was effective in motivating the Thessalonians to action by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God used the Word of God in Paul's ministry, and many people in Thessalonica, were converted into the family of God (1 Thess 2:13).⁵⁴

The Word of God here refers to the message spoken by the apostle. When the Thessalonians heard it, they realized that it was not simply the words of man's wisdom but a message that had its source in God (1 Thess 1:5). The gospel is not the kind of message that a person would invent if he could. Christians at Thessalonica sensed the supernatural truthfulness of the gospel Paul preached as the Holy Spirit brought this conviction home to their hearts. Paul credited the changes in the Thessalonians to his spoken Word of God. Not only had it effected changes in them in the past, but also it was continuing to change them since they continued to believe it. Like a good medicine the truth of God will continue to heal sin-sick souls so long as people receive it by faith.

A father does not only beget children, he is also concerned about their welfare. The father labors to sustain his family. Thus, Paul labored because he loved the Christians at Thessalonica and sought to assist them as much as possible (1 Thess 2:9). Due to that, the church at Thessalonica prospered in spite of persecution. Members had been rightly born and rightly nurtured. Since fathers ought to be good examples to their children, Paul could confidently call the believers as witnesses for his exemplary life. Moreover, God had witnessed Paul's life hence Paul had no fear to acknowledge God as a witness for his devoted life in nurturing the church of Thessalonica (1 Thess 2:10).

⁵⁴Constable, "How the Gospel was Delivered," [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *Bible Knowledge*."

Paul's life was 'holy.' In Greek this signifies "to carefully fulfill the duties God gives to a person."⁵⁵ In addition, his life was also 'righteous.' This refers to "integrity, uprightness of character, and behavior. This is not the righteousness of the law but the practical righteousness that God works out in our lives as we yield to Him."⁵⁶ Furthermore, his life was 'un-blamable.' Literally meaning, "not able to find fault in."⁵⁷ Those who were against him could accuse him, but none could level any charge against Paul and prove it. Christians ought to be blameless and harmless as they live in this world.

A father is expected to dedicate time to speak to the members of his family. Paul understood the significance of instructing these new believers on the truths that were necessary for their growth in the Lord. He personally ministered to each of the believers at Thessalonica (1 Thess 2:11). Though busy, Paul set aside time to offer personal counseling to the members of the congregation. While addressing large groups is good, spending time with people on individual basis is indispensable. Our Lord Jesus Christ was never too busy to have time for individuals, even though He preached to crowds. Such ministry is a rewarding role that gives God glory.

A father needs to constantly encourage his children since children are easily disheartened. Likewise, Paul encouraged new converts. New believers should have somebody to exhort them in the Lord. Further still, Paul comforted them. The word 'comfort' carries the idea of "encouragement," with the preeminence on activity.⁵⁸ Paul made new believers feel better as well as made them desire to be healthier. A

⁵⁵Wiersbe, "Helping the Baby Grow Up," [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *BECNT*.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

father ought not to pamper children; rather, he must encourage them never to be giving up but to try over again. “Christian encouragement must not become an anesthesia that puts [believers] to sleep. It must be a stimulant that [stirs them] to do better.”⁵⁹

Finally, a father needs to charge his children. This word, ‘charge,’ means that Paul testified to new believers out of his own experience with the Lord. It emphasizes the idea of giving personal witness. Sometimes Christians go through difficulties so that they may share with new converts what the Lord has done. Paul’s aim through this fatherly ministry to new believers was that they may “walk worthy of God” (1 Thess 2:12). The same way a father expects to be pleased of his children, the Lord also wants to be glorified through the lives of His children. Paul ministered to new converts in such a personal way because he was instructing them how to walk. Every child ought to be trained how to walk. He must have good examples to follow. Paul exhorted them to walk worthy of the Lord (Col 1:10; Phil 1:27).

Christians ought to walk worthy of the calling they have in Christ Jesus (Eph 4:1). God has called them; they are saved by grace. They are a part of His kingdom and glory. One day they shall enter the eternal kingdom and share His glory. Thus, this assurance ought to govern their lives and make them want to please their Lord. First Thessalonians 2:7-13 gives us a beautiful example of how new believers were cared for in the New Testament. Children need discipline and love. Paul has shown believers how to raise spiritual babies. Christians must be faithful stewards, loving mothers, and concerned fathers. If they are not faithful to their Lord, they may find themselves becoming doting mothers and pampering fathers. This shows how the ministry of making disciples requires some costs to be met. Therefore, the following section is going to examine cost of discipleship.

⁵⁹Wiersbe, “Helping the Baby Grow Up,” [1 Thessalonians 2:7-13], *BECNT*.

Cost of Discipleship

The basic requirements for mature discipleship are not easy to follow. Christ never softened them at all. He declared in the Gospels the demands of discipleship in clear, challenging, and uncompromising language. Discipleship is costly, though not so much so as the price of salvation through Christ's blood (1 Pet 1:18-19). In addition, the rewards that Christ's faithful followers will receive far outweigh the cost of wholeheartedly following of Him (Matt 19:27-29).

Discipleship is a Costly Commitment (Mark 8:34, 35; Luke 14:26, 27)

While salvation is offered freely, discipleship is costly. Jesus addressing a crowd in one incident said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" (Mark 8:34, 35 NIV). Jesus did not mean that disciples must hate or lose their individual identities. Rather, self-sacrifice is a sensible preference to discern the person God wants them to be, and that should be the person they ought to be.⁶⁰ Love for Christ is the true reason for disciples' self-denial (John 4:19). Christ's love for mankind prompted Him to deny Himself and to give His life for humanity (John 3:16). Likewise, it may cost believers their lives to become Jesus' disciples.

Christ had His own cross upon which He died to save human beings (John 19:17). Likewise, every Christian has his or her cross (Luke 14:27) which designates

⁶⁰Henry W. Holloman, "Sanctification: Rediscovering the Transforming Power of Sanctification," *Understanding Christian Theology: 11: Training for Godliness; Discipleship and Disciplines for Sanctification*, ed. Charles R. Swindo and Roy B. Zuck (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), Libronix Digital Library System.

dying to self (Gal 2:20) and readiness to die for Christ, for His Gospel, and for others (Mark 8:34-35). The disciple's cross is more limiting than adversities experienced by both believers and non-believers. Carrying one's cross daily entails a voluntary acknowledgement of the accountability and suffering associated with being Christ's disciple.

To be a follower of Jesus implies that believers are ready to be the way He wants, go where He sends them, and do according to His command at any cost. To follow Christ might cost Christians their vocation (Matt 4:18-22; 9:9), vacate their dwelling places (Luke 9:57, 58), or avoid fulfilling traditional family responsibilities (Luke 9:59-62).

Discipleship is the process intended to do away with the old self, get rid of the old self and underscore the new self in a person, which is Christ's life within a believer. It deals with the significance of cultivating and enhancing the seed of the good news while starving out the flesh. "The difference between a defeated and a victorious [believer] is not a defect in their salvation but a difference in the quality of their discipleship."⁶¹

Discipleship Entails Radical Demands

While salvation requires faith, discipleship entails radical, ongoing, and long-term demands that some Christians are not ready to meet. Believers love to hear about salvation because it is free, but not to talk about losing their lives and paying a price to follow Christ. Nevertheless, Christ insists that, "If anyone comes to me and does not

⁶¹Tony Evans, "Discipleship is a Costly Commitment," *Totally Saved: Understanding, Experiencing and Enjoying the Greatness of Your Salvation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2002), Libronix Digital Library System.

hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26 NIV).

Discipleship involves total surrender to Christ that when compared to one’s love for Him, a person’s love for the closest people appears to be like hate. It is radical to ask people to hate themselves. This means that, when an individual says one thing and God says another, one chooses God. Discipleship is usually meant to be public and hence noticeable. If Christians deny Christ in their public lives through their actions, He will also deny them before His Father. Being a lukewarm disciple is going to lead to little blessing.⁶² Thus, a Christian ought to totally surrender and follow Christ.

Christians are called to place all they have at Christ’s disposal (Luke 14:33). They must be ready to submit to the Lord everything they are and have so that He can use them and their possessions for His purpose. God owns each believer by creation and redemption (1 Cor 6:19, 20). Their possessions are loans from the Lord (John 3:27) so that they serve as His stewards. Subsequently, God will multiply their resources so that they have more with which to minister to others (Matt 25:29).

Discipleship is Conditional

Many people desire the truth without the cost that is required to embrace the truth within them. They desire to be free of their problems, their addictions, or their challenges. However, for them to be free, they ought to know the truth. Moreover, for individuals to know the truth, they must abide or remain in Christ and hence demonstrate that they are true disciples (John 8:31-32). Discipleship has to do with the intensity of intimacy believers have with the Redeemer who guarantees their eternal

⁶²Evans, “Discipleship Makes Radical Demands,” *Totally Saved*.

life. God expects Christians to be thankful for their eternal salvation. He desires them to be grateful that due to the death of Christ on the cross, heaven is their home. If they will faithfully consider what God has provided to them and refrain from fretting “about whether He is going to take back His gift of salvation, [they will] be ready to follow Him in committed discipleship here on earth.”⁶³

Therefore, an individual who wishes to become a true disciple has to let the truth to be rooted inside him or her. Such a person needs to know the truth. And for one to know the truth he or she has to continue abiding in Christ hence testify that he or she is a true disciple. It is expected that a disciple will maintain close relationship with the Lord, take up his or her cross and follow Him. Without this total commitment to Jesus Christ an individual cannot be a true disciple.

Ellen G. White and Discipleship

This project having highlighted the biblical foundation of discipleship, the following section is intended to explore Ellen G. White’s understanding on the subject. Selected passages on love as the principle evidence of discipleship; conditions of discipleship; test for discipleship; and genuine profession of discipleship are explored.

Love the Principle of Action

Ellen G. White defines discipleship as “Christ’s likeness in self-denial and cross bearing.”⁶⁴ In the final gathering with His followers, White notes that, Christ expressed the great desire for Christians to love each other. This command appeared to be new to the disciples for they lacked love to one another. It entailed a new

⁶³Evans, “Discipleship Makes Radical Demands,” *Totally Saved*.

⁶⁴Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1992), 311. See also, Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2002), 351.

significance with regards to Christ's self-sacrifice. The whole function of grace is one conditional duty of love, of unselfish, self-denying endeavor. All who are saturated with Christ's Spirit will love others as He loved. This love will be the indication of their discipleship.⁶⁵

Love is the necessary source of action. It is the fundamental principle of God's government in heaven and on earth, and it should be the basis of the Christian's reputation. It is manifested in sacrifice. The plan of salvation was established in sacrifice. Christ sacrificed all for mankind likewise the disciples are expected to give all as an expression of their love to Him. Their regard to His nobility and glory will surpass anything else. White affirms that, if believers love Jesus, they will be ready "to live for Him, to present [their] thank offerings to Him... For His sake [they] will covet pain and toil and sacrifice. [They] shall sympathize with His longing for the salvation of men. [They] shall feel the same tender craving for souls that He has felt."⁶⁶

White continues to assert that, no simple exposition of truth or declaration of discipleship will redeem an individual. A disciple is not attached to Christ unless he or she is totally His. It is lukewarm in the spiritual experience that a believer becomes crippled in purpose and unstable in aspiration. The attempt to serve self as well as Christ leads to believer's hard-heartedness as a result he or she fails to persevere when tested.⁶⁷

It can rightly be observed that, for White, love to each other is a significant ingredient that makes one a disciple. In addition, a disciple is expected to deny self

⁶⁵Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2002), 677-678.

⁶⁶Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1940), 197.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*

and embrace the principle of love as the foundation of his or her character. By so doing a believer will have emulated Christ's character.

Conditions of Discipleship

White portrays Christ's significant question to Peter. She observes only one condition of discipleship that Jesus mentions to Peter, "Do you love me?" (John 21:17). For Peter to be entrusted with the shepherding of the Lord's flock, he had to embrace the love of Christ which is the essential qualification. "Knowledge, benevolence, eloquence, and zeal are all aids in the good work, but without the love of Jesus in the heart, the work of a Christian minister is a failure."⁶⁸

On the other hand, White adds that, remaining in Him, and to do His will are also conditions of discipleship. Unless these conditions are complied with, one cannot find rest. Rest is only in Christ. It can never be experienced without Him. Remaining in Christ is embracing Christ's character and identified with His interests. Only by abiding in Christ can a true disciple obtain maturity in grace. When believers are converted they will not be obstacles but will energize their brethren.⁶⁹

A Closer Test for Discipleship

White articulates that, candidates for baptism are not thoroughly instructed on the meaning of discipleship. It must be verified whether those seeking baptism are merely assuming the name of the church; or whether they are ready to side with the Lord to forsake the world and separate from its wickedness. When such converts demonstrate their full comprehension of their position, they should be accepted. However, when they still cling to the world's traditions and sentiments, they should be

⁶⁸White, *Desire of Ages*, 815.

⁶⁹Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1992), 110.

earnestly and lovingly helped. If they persist in their attitudes they must not be kept in church membership. The Lord expects those who constitute “His church to be true, truthful stewards of the grace of Christ.”⁷⁰

White affirms that, “there is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism.”⁷¹ She continues to emphasize that, baptismal candidates need more faithful teaching than is done these days. The fundamentals of Christianity should be clearly stated to new converts. No one should rely upon his or her claim of faith as a proof that he or she has a saving relationship with Christ. A new convert must not say that he or she believes, rather he or she must live the truth. “It is by conformity to the will of God in [his or her] words, deportment, and character that [he or she proves his or her] connection with Him.”⁷²

Christ’s dealing with the rich young man is presented as a lesson (Matt 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-23). The ruler’s wealth was given to him so as to prove his faithfulness as a steward. He was supposed to share his riches with the poor. Likewise, today God entrusts people with wealth, talents, and opportunities, so that they may be His instruments to assist the needy as well as the suffering. Those who use their given gifts as God expects become co-workers with the Redeemer. They bring souls to Christ because they are representatives of His character.⁷³

⁷⁰Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 128.

⁷¹Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 308. White stresses that, “The preparation for baptism is a matter that needs to be carefully considered. The new converts to the truth should be faithfully instructed in the plain ... Word of the Lord. [It] is to be read and explained to them point by point.”

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³White, *Desire of Ages*, 523.

Like the rich young man, to those who are in positions of trust and have much wealth, it can appear an enormous sacrifice to surrender all so as to follow Christ. However, this is fundamental to those who wish to become His true followers. Self-sacrifice is the substance of His teachings. “The joy of seeing souls redeemed, souls eternal saved, is the reward” to those who “put their feet in the footprints of” Christ who admonished the rich ruler to follow Him.⁷⁴

White makes it clear that, Jesus knows well every person who is humble. Such people have trials and they do err, yet they are heartbroken because they make sad their Redeemer who loved and gave His life for them. In a contrite heart they fall at His feet, fight His battle, and try to be generous to their fellow beings. They endeavor in sharing the good news with earnestness. Christ knows the abilities He has provided to every individual to minister to Him both in this present world and the world to come. It is His desire that those disciples shall never let Him down. He desires them to shine in His everlasting kingdom. Christians who will receive great honor are those who daily endeavor in taking up their cross and follow Him.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, White attests that obedience is not simply an outward observance, rather the allegiance of love. When the essentials of love are embedded in the heart, when individuals are transformed after the Creator’s image, the promised new-covenant is realized. Hence, “obedience—the service and allegiance of love, is the true sign of discipleship.”⁷⁶ Instead of freeing believers from compliance it is

⁷⁴White, *Desire of Ages*, 523.

⁷⁵White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 129.

⁷⁶Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 2009), 60.

belief, and belief only that enables Christians to partake of the grace of Jesus, which makes it possible for them to render obedience.⁷⁷

White insists that, Christians are not saved through their obedience. This is because salvation is provided free and it is received only by faith. However, obedience is the outcome of faith. When believers remain in Christ, if they embrace the love of God in their hearts; their feelings, thoughts, purposes and actions shall be in accord with the will of their heavenly Father as stipulated in the Decalogue. Thus, Christ shall change their hearts. He shall abide in their hearts by faith. As a result, He shall work in them to purpose and to act in accordance to His good will. The more they see the need of being driven to Him and to the Scriptures, the more they shall comprehend His character, the more they are going to be able to reflect Christ's image.⁷⁸

In sum it can be stated that, Christ expects those who wish to be part of His church to be true disciples. People who have experienced genuine conversion. People who have surrendered their lives fully to His love and by faith are loyal to Him. This loyalty is only possible when believers continue to remain in Him since without Him they cannot do anything.

Genuine Profession of Discipleship

White expresses that, a meager confession of discipleship is of no worth. The faith which saves an individual is less represented by many. When believers speak lightly about Scripture, and elevate their intuitions and feelings above God's standard, light ceases in them. Obedience is the only genuine test of discipleship. It is through the observance of God's law that a believer proves his or her genuineness to his or her

⁷⁷White, *Steps to Christ*, 60.

⁷⁸Ibid., 61, 62, 65.

confession of love. Once the doctrine believers accept eradicates sin in their hearts, purifies their souls from impurity, brings forth fruit into sanctity, Christians may be certain that that teaching is authentic. “When benevolence, kindness, tenderheartedness, sympathy, are manifest in [their] lives; when the joy of right doing is in [their] hearts, when [they] exalt Christ, and not self, [they] may know that [their] faith” is genuine.⁷⁹

There is an in-reach and out-reach work for disciples to do. They are expected to bear much fruit. The fruit they give forth is the only evidence of the essence of the Vine in the presence of the world. This is the evidence of believers’ discipleship. If their manifestation is such a quality that as offshoots of the Vine they yield abundant bunches of valuable fruit, then they put on in the presence of the world the emblem of God as His children. They become living letters accepted and read by all people.⁸⁰ In other words, Christ expects His true disciples to bear much fruit and become a blessing to the world.

Summary

This chapter has provided a theological foundation on how to enhance the discipleship process of new converts. Bible passages from the New Testament and the writings of Ellen White have been explored to establish a biblical and theological foundation for this project. It has been established that disciples are learners or pupils of Jesus Christ. While they include the apostles who formed an inner circle within Christ’s team, those who believe and follow Him as their Lord and Savior are also called His disciples. Disciples of Jesus are called by Him so that they may follow Him.

⁷⁹Ellen G. White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 2008), 146.

⁸⁰White, *Testimonies*, 5:348.

Discipleship is the process of growing to become like Jesus. It therefore encompasses both teaching and life transformation. The next chapter focuses on the literature review whereby Christian writers' viewpoints on enhancing discipleship process are dealt with.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two has presented a theological foundation on the enhancement of the discipleship process of believers. Biblical passages from New Testament as well as the writings of Ellen G. White have been examined to establish a biblical and theological foundation for this research. This chapter is devoted to unfold opinions of various Christian authors on enhancing the discipleship process.

Disciple

The principal facet in describing a disciple is the teachings of Jesus. Jesus was a successful disciple maker. When the Great Commission was given by Him, He was addressing the disciples He had chosen to augment the discipleship process following His ministry here on earth. Bill Hull summarizes Jesus' teachings on disciples as follows: Disciples are ready to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow their Master Jesus Christ. They are willing to put Christ before self, family, and their possessions. In addition, disciples are committed to Jesus' teachings, and to world evangelism. Disciples love others as Christ loves. They abide in Christ, are obedient, bear fruits, glorify God in everything, have joy and love their fellow followers of Jesus.¹

¹Bill Hull, *The Disciple-making Pastor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1988), 57.

Jesus declares that, if an individual is not prepared to make such dedication, he or she cannot be His disciple (Luke 14:25, 26, 33). Jesus does make a distinction between the significance for faith, leading to life eternal, and the call for commitment, leading to following Christ and becoming His disciple. Hull integrates four conclusions concerning the definition of disciple from the understanding of Jesus.

First, authentic revitalized believers are in principle disciples from the time of spiritual birth. True followers are disciples of Jesus Christ. Thus, the command to go and make disciples does entail evangelism. Introducing individuals to Christ is the first and foremost step to the Great Commission. Second, Jesus meant more than win mere converts. Although every devoted Christian is a disciple, Jesus' burden was more than just going and doing evangelism. When Jesus said, 'make disciple,' the disciples understood it to imply much more than merely getting humans to believe in Jesus. They understood discipleship to suggest making "out of others what Jesus had made out of them."²

Third, making disciples of all nations is identified as a desired result. The process is to convert, develop, and multiply many converts. Making disciples comprises the whole disciple making process, commencing with conversion to effective instructed disciple maker. The process of disciple making is the core of what Christ requires of His church. Disciple making draws people to the Redeemer, shapes them to maturity, and teaches them to multiply and be effectual for Christ. That is the role of the church. Believers "must be built, trained, taught, and led to [total] commitment to Jesus Christ."³

²Hull, *The Disciple-making Pastor*, 57.

³Ibid., 58.

Craig S. Keener concurs with Hull affirming that, Jesus commanded more than evangelism.⁴ Fourth, when Jesus charged the church to make disciples, He commissioned it with the role of making reproducing disciples.⁵ In other words, Jesus was talking about the quality of the product. Such quality of the outcome is of importance to world evangelization. Disciple making generates multiplication which is supreme to world evangelization as a process and strategy.⁶ Unfortunately the mission is endangered since the church has not gone beyond the initial pace to disciple making. More often, the church converts, baptizes, but fails to teach and train. The regrettable result is deficiency in reproduction and multiplication. God desires that every Christian be His disciple. He longs that every believer become spiritually generative.

Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples to assure that two things take place: that the church produces healthy products—reproducing disciples; and that world evangelization is realized. However, only disciples do reproduce and multiply; there is no other option. For that reason, disciple making should be at the center of every local church. It should be installed as first priority.⁷

⁴Keener, “Matthew’s Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20),” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)* 12:1 (2009): 14-15. See also Johnny D. Turner, *The Sacred Art: Growing Faithful Disciples in the 21st Century* (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing and Enterprises, 2007), 38. Turner notes that evangelism is one of the components of discipleship, yet it is not discipleship. Nevertheless, both go hand in hand. He describes evangelism as “reaching out and witnessing” while discipleship is “nurturing, teaching and training.”

⁵Hull, *The Disciple-making Pastor*, 59-60.

⁶Keener, “Matthew’s Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20),” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)* 12:1 (2009): 15.

⁷Hull, 60.

Marks of a Disciple

David Watson describes the marks of a disciple.⁸ He argues that, a disciple should be willing to serve. Christ continually taught His disciples this humble lesson of service through an illustration of washing their feet (John 13; cf. Mark 10:35-45).⁹ It was a custom of the Jews for the servants to wash the feet of the guests of a host before partaking in the meal that was prepared for them. During the last Supper that Jesus held with His disciples, Jesus taught His disciples that they need to be servants rather than expecting to be served. By His act of washing their feet, He communicated a lesson of humble service that they ought to render to others.

In addition, the relationship of the disciples with their Lord is displayed in their service to others. The church is where disciples learn to minister to their fellow believers. Jesus “preached, taught, healed, and served”¹⁰ those who were in need. Sequentially, for a church to be a community of disciples, it must be an institute whose goal is to serve the needs of others. For the church to accomplish this, believers ought to share their “gifts, talents, resources and love”¹¹ with those they come in contact.

Watson continues to establish that a disciple should learn to listen (Luke 10:41).¹² On the other hand, a disciple should be ready to be reprimanded (Matt.

⁸David Watson, *Discipleship* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1981), 75. See also, Glenn McDonald in, *The Disciple Making Church: From Dry Bones to Spiritual Vitality* (Grand Haven, MI: FaithWalk, 2004), 123, where he mentions the following six marks of a disciple: “A heart for Christ Alone; A Mind Transformed by the Word; Arms of Love; Knees for Prayer; A Voice to Speak the Good News; and A Spirit of Servanthood and Stewardship.”

⁹Watson, *Discipleship*, 75.

¹⁰Kimberly Credit, “Authentic Discipleship,” *The Living Pulpit* (Chicago, IL: American Theological Library Association), 34.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Watson, 75.

18:15).¹³ Disciples need to know that they are human beings who have fallen short of the glory of God. Thus, they are not immune to making mistakes. Therefore they do not only need to be good listeners but also be people who are ready to be reprimanded.¹⁴ By upholding such qualities, disciples will continue to grow in the saving relationship with Christ.

A disciple is expected to respect those in position of leadership (1Thess 5:21; Heb 13:17).¹⁵ Ellen G. White affirms this by expressing that God communicates through His appointed leaders. To reject messages that God passes through them, disciples refuse the voice of God. They close their hearts from receiving blessings intended by God for them by disrespecting His appointed messengers.¹⁶ God does choose or allow certain individuals to lead others. It is therefore pleasing to Him to see the subordinate submitting to those leaders in the Lord. A society can never be a good place to live in if subordinates sabotage those who are over them. Even among equals there are leaders as it is the case of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Father. Christ submits to His Father. Likewise, disciples should learn to submit to those who are leading them.

Another mark of a disciple is that, a disciple should be willing to share his or her life with fellow humans, in frank and sincere fellowship (1 John 1).¹⁷ Jane Holslag is in accord with Watson. She says that when the body of believers assembles they

¹³Watson, 75.

¹⁴White, *Testimonies*, 4:62.

¹⁵Watson, 75.

¹⁶White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 54.

¹⁷Watson, 75. See also, White, *Testimonies*, 3:446; where she says, “God wants His people to be united in the closet bonds of Christian fellowship.”

take part in what God did in Christ through active sharing and engagement.¹⁸ Christ who is our example shared His life with others. While here on earth He was so generous to the extent that He was willing to share His life with humankind. He went as far as giving His life for mankind to be saved. He therefore expects His followers to be kind enough to share their lives with others.

Disciples should learn humility.¹⁹ They ought to “rejoice with those who rejoice, and be genuinely glad when others are blessed in some way or other” (Phil 2:3).²⁰ It calls for one who does not harbor jealousy in his or her heart to be happy with others who are prospering.²¹ The natural man usually is not glad to see others flourish. In fact, by nature humans harbor selfishness in their hearts and only wish that they individually thrive in life while others deteriorate in life. However, a true disciple should learn to genuinely celebrate at the success of others.

Disciples should first learn to examine their own lives rather than criticizing others (Matt 7:1-5).²² Besides, they should endeavor to discern their weaknesses and learn to “overcome them through the grace of God” (2 Cor 12:9).²³ White says that in most cases people hasten to pinpoint mistakes of others yet they may be more faulty, but do not see their defects. Disciples of Christ should deal with one another as they

¹⁸Jane Holslag, *Berlin Fellowship: East German Perspectives and Missional Encounter, 1961-1989* (Berlin: LIT Verlag Munster, 2013).

¹⁹Watson, 75. See also, White, *That I May Know Him* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2003), 122.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹White, *That I May Know Him*, 176. White affirms that “The Spirit of Christ will lead His [disciples] to be concerned not only for their success and advantage, but to be equally interested for the success and advantage of their brethren.”

²²Watson, 75.

²³Ibid.

wish the Lord to treat them in their weaknesses knowing that they too do err and need His mercy and forgiveness.²⁴

In most cases, Christians like criticizing others rather than trying to scan their own lives. They are at times tempted to think that they are better off while others are always wrong. However, true disciples should understand that they are human beings with weaknesses and sometimes they may be even worse than others. Consequently, scrutinizing ones' own life before judging others is vital.

The New Testament portrays Pharisees as people who were perfectionists. On the contrary, Watson attests that, disciples ought not to be perfectionists. They should avoid that attitude of self-righteousness, self-censure, self-sympathy, or a judgmental attitude. They need to acknowledge, like other human beings that they too make a lot of mistakes (James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10). They therefore should learn to accept themselves, as God accepts them in Christ.²⁵ This attitude of perfectionism is detrimental to spiritual growth. Disciples ought to avoid it for it may cause discouragement in their spiritual life.

Other marks of a disciple noted from Watson include: the ability to forgive (Matt 18:21); stickability—in that a disciple should not be a person who gives up easily when facing discouragement (Eph 6:10); he or she should be trustworthy—a person who can be trusted (1 Cor 4:2).²⁶ Allen R. Hunt also elaborates that “Forgiveness will unleash a power in [one’s] life that is underrated and often

²⁴White, *Testimonies*, 3:93-94.

²⁵Watson, 76. See also, Miriam Elliot in *Perfectionism: What’s Bad about Being Too Good* (Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit, 1987), 26 where she observes that “perfectionist can become frustrated after years of attempting the impossible. ... The end result ... is laziness.”

²⁶Ibid.

ignored... We fail to capture the power of forgiveness because we are afraid of it...or because we are sinfully stubborn. But the power is there waiting for us.”²⁷

When Stephen was being stoned by his enemies, he prayed to the Lord to forgive them since they did not know what they were doing. He had learnt to forgive even in critical times. He did not give up his faith though he was facing the danger of losing his life. He stands to be a letter to be read by disciples of Jesus today that they need to hold on, never give up when facing opposition.

Disciples should be those people who mind their own affairs (John 21:21).²⁸ Likewise, White indicates that there are some believers who like Peter are concerned with the affairs of others. They are eager to know the role of others, while are in danger of disregarding their own. Disciples should understand that their duty is to look upon and follow Christ.²⁹ Also, they should do little things well (Col 3:17). In addition, they should efficiently use their leisure time (Eph 5:15-17).

Disciples should aim first and preeminently to gratify God. They should avoid the tendency of seeking praise of others, or satisfy their own desires (2 Cor 5:9).³⁰ In the same vain D. Catherine Brown points out that an individual who harbors pride in himself or herself usually “seeks the praise and approval of others, and so [he or she]

²⁷Allen R. Hunt, *Everybody Needs to Forgive Somebody* (United States: Beacon Publishing, 2012), 4. See also Mary Hayes Grieco in *Unconditional Forgiveness: A Simple and Proven Method to Forgive Everyone and Everything* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 1-2 who indicates that “The experience of forgiveness is profound and refreshing.” She goes on to state that when a disciple forgives someone, he or she is saying that even though this experience of hurt has happened to him or her, he or she is going to completely release that pain and move on without it.

²⁸Watson, 76.

²⁹White, *Desire of Ages*, 816.

³⁰Ibid.

is led into the sins associated with vainglory.”³¹ Human preference is inclined at seeking praise of others especially when one has done well. However, disciples should ask themselves whether God is happy with whatever they do rather than seeking to receive praises from people.

Disciples should not only be able to listen, they should also learn to obey God when He speaks to them (Luke 5:4-9).³² This calls for the ability of discernment for one to be able to know when God speaks to such an individual so that he or she may quickly respond to Him.³³ True disciples do not harden their hearts when God talks to them. They readily obey knowing that it is the voice of their loving Father that is speaking to them.

Disciples express faith in God, even when there may be no outward signs to encourage their faith.³⁴ Many at times, when believers are in trouble, when they expect to see some signs that God cares but in vain, they turn to their own means to fix the problem. Even when it appears that God does not care, disciples of Jesus should

³¹D. Catherine Brown, *Pastor and Laity in the Theology of Jean Gerson* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 128. Brown continues to assert that “It is ... venial ... if one’s aim is to get ‘slight pleasure’ from the praise others, for the end—the seeking of this slight pleasure—is only a venial sin itself.”

³²Watson, 76.

³³Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Hearing God’s Voice* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 17-18. They affirm that even today God does speak to His people as He spoke to His people during the biblical times. Thus, people should be willing to hear Him. It is vital that disciples clearly comprehend what God is saying to them and know how to respond appropriately. God does speak to provide application of His Word to address specific situations in people’s lives. When He speaks, He is not penning down a new book of the Scriptures; instead, He is applying what He had already said in Scripture to a believer’s life. Throughout the Scriptures, whenever God communicated to an individual, that person’s life changed. Thus when disciples listen to the voice of God and then respond in love and obedience, their life will be transformed as well.

³⁴Watson, 77.

uphold their faith in God. They should always remember that their security is only in God.³⁵ This implies that disciples should not look for more temporal and material securities first and foremost. They should be ready to rely completely in God's love and His faithfulness. They should be ready to move as the Spirit leads them on, make amendments and adjustments according to the guidance of the Spirit of God. They need to have a sound knowledge of the precedence of God for their lives (Acts 6:2-4).

The Disciple's Profile

The nonnegotiable reality for the fruitful believer is abiding in Christ (John 15:1-8). By abiding in Christ, as a branch relies on the vine, the disciple will bring forth fruit. This teaching is fundamental to disciple making for Jesus continues to explain the fruit-bearing Christian who gratifies God.³⁶ He acknowledges such an individual as a disciple. He is addressing the apostles about disciples by explaining the most suitable disciple. In short, "Jesus describes the product of the Great Commission."³⁷

Hull describes that a disciple's profile has six dimensions. First, a disciple abides in Christ (John 15:7). 'Remain' comes from the Greek word *mena*, meaning "to abide or maintain contact for a sustained time."³⁸ Here Christ means that, there should be an intimate relationship between Him and His disciples. Admitting to Jesus requires two responses that enable an individual to remain in Him. The disciple must commit

³⁵Watson, 77.

³⁶John 15:8. See also Roy D. Beard, *Too Busy with Business to Hear God: Roadblock to Restoration* (Victoria, Canada: Trafford, 2004), 253; Emmanuel Adebisi, *Purpose of the Cross* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2013), 274-275.

³⁷Hull, 60.

³⁸Hull, 60-61.

himself or herself to the Scriptures. He or she will read Scripture, examine it, commit it to memory, and be competent to teach and appropriately apply it to everyday life (2 Tim 2:15). The believer must be well acquainted with the Scriptures through diligent study to confront temptation. In addition, the Word of God will guard the believer from false teachings.³⁹

Disciples study the Bible to renew their mind and model their own conduct. Moreover, they do so to acquire an understanding of God's principles as they relate to life. Thus, they can confront enticement and evil thoughts. Disciples are expected to understand what they believe adequately to discover counterfeit teaching.⁴⁰ As a result they will be able to defend their faith in Jesus among seekers of the Christian teaching (1 Pet 3:15).⁴¹ The Christian's connection to the Scriptures is the supreme issue in a dynamic walk. Everything concerning walking together with Jesus and living in the world is centered on that Word. Without an understanding of God's Word, the believer is weak.

Consequently, the disciple has devotedness to prayer (John 15:7).⁴² Hull agrees with Boone that disciples who abide in Christ and understand His Word know what and how to pray. Disciples are people "of informed and authoritative prayer. . . . Christians must master the basics that give them the spiritual foundation to maintain a

³⁹Ibid., 61-63. See also, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; White affirms that "We need to study diligently [the Scriptures] that we may gain a knowledge of the laws of God." (White, *That I May Know Him*, 297).

⁴⁰Hull, 63.

⁴¹White, *Evangelism*, 69.

⁴²Tommy Boone, *A Father's Gift of Prayer* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 12. See also, Sylvia Wilkey Collinson, "Making Disciples and the Christian Faith," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 3 (2005): 244.

lifelong commitment to Christ. ... Christians can best [use] spiritual gifts, talents and life circumstances when [they have] that foundation.”⁴³ Thus, the first mark of the disciples’ profile is that they remain in Christ by communicating with God through the Word and prayer.

The second dimension entails obedience. Bill Hull states that, a disciple is obedient to God (John 15:9, 10; John 14:21; Matt 28:20). Disciples should be taught to submit to God since it does not happen naturally. Jesus calls for loving compliance of His followers (John 15:9, 10; 14:15; 14:21). He believed that love is the same as obedience, that the actual deed of submissiveness is love. “The difference between the disciple and the non-Christian is the disciple’s commitment to obey God regardless of circumstances, feelings, or other pressures.”⁴⁴ An individual has only one way to exemplify loyalty to God; live by complete trust, go out in tender obedience, despite dread or feeling. If an individual does that, God pledges to esteem him or her in magnificent ways that one can encounter by no other modes. Thus, “a disciple’s life is one of close communion with God and walking in loving obedience, assisted by accountability.”⁴⁵

The third dimension is bearing fruits (John 15:8, 16). Jesus expects His followers to reproduce. If the disciples abide in Christ for adequate time they will give forth fruit (Gal 5:22, 23). The fruit of the Holy Spirit is above personal evangelism.

⁴³Hull, 64, 66.

⁴⁴Ibid., 67.

⁴⁵Ibid., 68. See also, Maky Fernandez, *A Call to Obedience: Accepting God’s Joy by Accepting His Will* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 14; Edet Esara, *Consider the Benefits of Obeying God* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2013), 27 where obedience is defined as “submission, veneration, and respect.” White in *Christ’s Object Lessons* pages 315-316 emphasizes the importance of obeying God’s law since it is the “transcript of His own character.”

However, bearing fruit outside personal evangelism is unbelievable. The test of the relationship of disciples to Christ is their behavior as well as their ability to disciple the world around them. The reality is that a “quality product will reproduce itself.”⁴⁶ The underlining fact is that, a trained group of believers, prepared in every local community will bear much fruit—fruit that stays.

The fourth dimension is glorifying God (John 15:8). The church is expected to glorify God through making disciples since believers who bear fruit do glorify God (Eph 3:20, 21). Christians who bear fruit are referred to as proven followers (John 15:8). Christ puts it clear that, to make disciples is fruitful because disciples will reproduce, create multiplication and thus, promote world evangelism.⁴⁷

The fifth dimension is that, “a disciple has joy” (John 15:11).⁴⁸ Hull believes that joy is an extraordinary perception of comfort that is the result of acknowledging that believers are pleasing to God. “Many martyrs and others who have suffered have [narrated] stories of un-bounding, uncontrollable joy during times of great suffering.”⁴⁹ Jesus admonishes anyone who is ready to try, to embrace joy through becoming a disciple.

The last dimension of a disciple’s profile is that, “disciples love as Christ loves.”⁵⁰ A true disciple will find it hard not to love others as Christ does love. The

⁴⁶Hull, 68-70.

⁴⁷John 15:2. See also, Credit, 34.

⁴⁸White in *The Great Controversy* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2012), 477 states that, “The Christian’s life should be one of ... joy in God.” See also, White, *Messages to Young People* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 138.

⁴⁹Hull, 71.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 72. See also, John 15:12-14, 17; White, *Testimonies*, 1:690; *Testimonies*, 2:169-170. “The most distinguishing and all-embracing marks of Christ’s mission is love that is evidenced in Christ-like character. ... If we are to love the world

label of a true follower of Jesus is love. Love is significant in its capability to draw others to the Savior. The spirit of Christ's ministry to humankind was "motivated, sustained, and underlined by love."⁵¹ Jesus calls upon His followers to follow His footsteps by loving their fellow humankind the same way He loves. No true believer will resist loving one another since that disciple's life will reflect the character of Christ.

The Disciple Making

The last noted words of Jesus prior to His ascension were, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19). Watson refers to this as Christ's master plan for the redemption of mankind. Nevertheless, this simple message is neglected by majority of churches in today's generation. Christ's disciples were expected to make disciples who would in turn make other disciples.⁵² Chan and Bauving agree with Watson that, from the beginning, God's purpose has been for every disciple of Christ to "make disciples who make disciples who make disciples until the gospel spreads to all peoples."⁵³

Watson defines a disciple as a follower of Jesus.⁵⁴ A disciple has committed himself or herself to Christ, to going after Christ's way, to imitating Christ's life, and to sharing His love and truth with other mankind. The verb 'to make disciple',

for Christ, we must first love each other in Christ and love each other as He first loved us," says Phillip G. Samaan in *Christ's Way of Making Disciples* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1999), 36.

⁵¹Ibid., 72-73.

⁵²Watson, 66.

⁵³Francis Chan & Mark Beuving, *Multiply: Disciples Making Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 20012), 7.

⁵⁴Watson, 66.

“describes the process by which [Christians] encourage another person to be such a follower of Jesus; it [refers to] the methods [they] use to help that person to become mature in Christ and so be in a position where he or she can now disciple someone else.”⁵⁵

Along the same line of thought, Pamela Dilmore indicates that the Greek word translated as ‘disciples’ refers to “following, learning, and teaching.”⁵⁶ She goes on to explain that the noun form of that term expresses a “pupil or learner.”⁵⁷ As believers follow Christ, they learn from Him then teach others what they have learnt. Dilmore affirms that discipleship is a lifetime process of learning and teaching. It therefore entails humility and love to others.⁵⁸ Dilmore understands making disciples to be not referring to mere addition of new believers into a church or expanding the congregation numerically. Rather, discipleship entails a cost that followers ought to meet. Disciples are expected to understand the gospel and apply it without

⁵⁵Watson, 66.

⁵⁶Pamela Dilmore, “Being and Making Disciples of Jesus Christ” in *The Living Pulpit*, 30. See also, Paul Hertig, “The Great Commission Revisited: The Role of God’s Reign in Disciple Making” in *Missiology: An International Review*, July 2001 where Hertig affirms that discipleship is a significant theme in Matthew. He says that the word disciples expresses Matthew’s distinct ecclesiological disposition. He observes that, ‘disciples’ appears “73 times in Matthew, 46 times in Mark, and 37 times in Luke.”

⁵⁷Ibid. Dilmore believes that a disciple is a learner who grapples with human shortcomings, and faith limitations. See also, Jonathan K. Dodson in *Gospel Discipleship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 29 where he emphasizes that the Greek word translated disciple refers to “student or pupil.” He continues to emphasize in the next page that, “For Jesus, discipleship was rational and relational.” In addition, Dave Early and Rod Dempsey in “*Disciple Making Is—: How to Live the Great Commission with Passion and Confidence* (Nashville, TN: B. & H., 2013), define a disciple as “a person who has trusted Christ for salvation and has surrendered completely to Him. He or she is committed to practicing the spiritual disciplines in community and developing to their full potential for Christ and His mission.”

⁵⁸Ibid.

compromise.⁵⁹

Kurt W. Johnson elucidates that the golden rule in making disciples is to start with a small group.⁶⁰ While Jesus spent some time with the multitudes, and at one incident sent out seventy followers on an important assignment, it is apparent that He involved most of His earthly ministry with the small group of twelve. Furthermore, among those twelve, He focused particularly on three—Peter, James, and John. Those three got the privilege of being with their Master in the death bed of Jairus’ daughter, on the Mount of Transfiguration, and in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Watson attests that, “it is impossible to disciple more than a small group at any given time if those disciples are to grow into true spiritual maturity.”⁶¹ Any responsible leader will as well devote his or her time with a small band of dedicated believers, “twelve probably being the maximum number for effective discipling” (2 Tim 2:2).⁶² The small number the better. Spending more time on a small number of people at depth, in order that they consecutively will be capable of doing the same with others, is ultimately far more beneficial than the much shallow instruction of a crowd. Watson observes that “small is beautiful and fruitful.”⁶³ Thus, when making disciples Christians should follow the example of Jesus by working with a small group

⁵⁹Ibid. Dodson on page 8 asserts that “discipleship is both gospel centered and community based. Gospel-centered discipleship is not about how we perform but who we are—imperfect people, clinging to a perfect Christ, being perfected by the Spirit.” Moreover, Dodson on page 38 confirm the writing of Dilmore by expressing that “A disciple of Jesus ... is someone who learns the gospel, relates in the gospel, and communicates the gospel.”

⁶⁰Kurt W. Johnson, *Successful Small Groups: From Theory to Service* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2011), 144.

⁶¹ Watson, 77-78.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

of believers whom they will be able to assist to be effective disciples who also in turn will help others become disciples. By so doing, in the long run, they will be able to make all believers become true disciples of Jesus.

The command of Christ to His disciples was ‘make disciples’ since disciples penetrate their world. Disciples reproduce themselves which leads to multiplication. Credit avows that, replication is significant in evangelizing the world and accomplishing the Great Commission.⁶⁴ Similarly Hull expresses that when Christians obey Christ’s commission, two sound things occur: they “create healthy Christians; healthy Christians reproduce, and the body grows, then multiples, and the world becomes evangelized.”⁶⁵

Hull suggests a radical change on the side of the churches. The church is not going to achieve much until it raises the issue, creates controversy, and is invited to sincerely embrace the Great Commission. In addition, pastors need to develop a willingness to reproduce themselves through believers and church members should be challenged to be self-feeding disciples. Furthermore, for much to be experienced, congregations should reach a stage whereby they will allow their pastors to devote much of their ministry in instructing and training the spiritually whole minority, instead of serving the impulses and wishes of the uninterested and wayward majority. A change will be realized only if ministers can be relieved from the busywork of evangelism. This should be done. Christians “can’t allow the contrary to continue, there must be change.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴Credit, 34.

⁶⁵Hull, 14-15.

⁶⁶Ibid., 15.

Regretfully, Collinson says that, the truth the Christian church has sacrificed is the quality of product.⁶⁷ The church has endeavored to evangelize the world outside disciple making. The impulsiveness of human essence and societal demands to achieve instant results has led pastors to opt for every shortcut. They have surrendered disciple making on the basis of cultural achievement, prestige, and instant need. Something ought to be done concerning the feebleness of Christianity. The church ought to upgrade its product; it should bear healthy, multiplying believers who influence the world for Christ. Hull stresses that “shortcut don’t work; most of the time we end up starting over again ... only one road leads to world evangelism: disciple making.”⁶⁸

In the same way Collinson maintains that discipling involves more than relating knowledge on beliefs. It encompasses the “development of attitudes, values, skills and behaviors” appropriate for all disciples.⁶⁹ She goes on to describe that discipling leads to development of intimate relationships. It embraces love, fidelity and meekness. Every disciple is a learner and can be used for the growth of others in loving, caring relationships. As the gospel is preached and embraced, as gifts are put into use, believers are nurtured and encouraged. Hence spiritual growth is enhanced toward maturity in Christ.⁷⁰ It can rightly be pointed out that Christians ought to take seriously the command of Jesus to ‘make disciples’ to bring about maturity of faith among believers.

Sharing lives. The apostles of Jesus observed Him at work. They labored together with Him. They posed questions to Him whenever they failed or

⁶⁷Collinson, 240.

⁶⁸Hull, 23, 24.

⁶⁹Collinson, 250.

⁷⁰Ibid.

misapprehend. “They went out in pairs to practice what they had learned...came back to report...asked more questions, [and] they received further instruction.”⁷¹ This is making disciples at its excellence, when profound intimate relationships are created within a band of believers who are staying, working, and sharing together.⁷²

Christian discipling to be referring to laying down one’s life for others, training the disciples to assume the responsibilities they have adopted until now. As believers mature spiritually, so their chances for Christian ministry grow correspondingly.⁷³ Carl Wilson says, “True multiplication therefore occurs when disciples are trained in evangelism and disciple building. No matter how dynamic the pastor, no matter how financially stable and well organized the church, expansion will not continue if people are not trained to minister.”⁷⁴

Paul, when writing to the Colossians, declared that it was his aim to “present every man mature in Christ” (Col 1:28). This is the ultimate goal in making disciples.⁷⁵ Since God is the God of all life, His concern is that we should become

⁷¹Watson, 80-81.

⁷²Ibid., 81. Marc Szydlik in *Sharing Lives: Adult Children and Parents* (New York: Routledge, 2016), i, affirms that “Sharing Lives explores the most important human relationships which last for the longest period of [their] lives.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *Life Together* (London: SCM Press, 2015), 8 adds that “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.”

⁷³Ibid., 82.

⁷⁴Carl Wilson, *With Christ in the School of Disciple Building* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 101.

⁷⁵White, *Gospel Workers* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2005), 369. White admonishes ministers to their work thoroughly as Paul did. They should not be satisfied with their success until they present to Christ members who have an authentic sense of their responsibility. She stresses that God would be pleased to have six members who are “thoroughly converted to the truth than to have sixty make a profession and yet not ... truly converted.”

whole people, not just religious people. Making disciples is not easy. Always it will mean hard work, coupled with spiritual wisdom and discernment that are gifts of the Holy Spirit. We must trust the Spirit's resources as we seek to obey Christ's Great Commission.

Discipleship

Lee C. Camp defines discipleship as “taking seriously the way of Christ in all our affairs and concerns.”⁷⁶ Christian faith is deemed to be fundamental since it calls for radical transformation, total transformation of every sphere of human undertaking in individual “relations, economics, and politics in homes, culture and social order.”⁷⁷ He believes that the gospel requires drastic discipleship. The call to total discipleship is therefore “not a call to burdensome moral perfectionism.”⁷⁸ On the contrary, it is a call to abandon the old paths of destruction and doom, to follow the new path of bountiful vigor and marvelous light with Jesus who is both light and life of the world.⁷⁹

The Need for Discipling

Many believers specifically in many major churches have experienced profound discomfort due to deficiency of moral and doctrinal teaching within the church. Doctrinal instruction has deteriorated in such churches. There is an acute short of dedication on the side of many professing believers, “and a corresponding

⁷⁶Lee C. Camp, *Mere Discipleship: Radical Christianity in a Rebellious World*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 48.

⁷⁷Ibid., 28.

⁷⁸Ibid., 28-29.

⁷⁹Camp, 29.

reluctance in Christian preaching to speak much about the cost of following Christ.”⁸⁰

Christians can rejoice that Christ has given up His life on the cross on their behalf, however how serious are they in taking up their cross daily and follow Him?

For a long time the church has sanctioned the club mindset of church membership. A good believer has been considered to be that who is like a sound club member; he or she goes to the club, remits his or her dues, and endeavors not to disconcert the club. Rejecting this type of mentality, Watson poses a question, “Where, however, does the New Testament speak about church-club membership?”⁸¹ He affirms, “Nowhere!”⁸²

Christians form parts of the community of believers, and individual members of each other; both ideas affirming their total dedication to Jesus and to one another.⁸³ Lack of devotion is evidenced by weakness of fellowship, slackness in evangelism, less involvement of members in ministry, abandonment of members’ spiritual gifts, unproductive worship services, inefficiency in devotional life, and extensive absence of prayerful life. Watson asks, “Who wants to belong to such a sick and ailing body?”⁸⁴

In this futile world, many people are searching for significant things appealing or of deserving dying for. It is for this purpose why cults are growing intensively,

⁸⁰Watson, 67.

⁸¹Ibid., 67-68.

⁸²Ibid., 68.

⁸³It is difficult to attain the privileges of being a member of the body of Christ if there is a lack of dedication and commitment to Christ and His principles. See Bernard Palfrey, *Anti-Christ* (s.l.: Lulu Com, 2009), 223.

⁸⁴Watson, 68.

while the renowned churches are degenerating. The secret of the success of these cults is that these cults demand sound discipleship.⁸⁵

There is an immense insufficiency of supervision in many churches. Countless believers are intensely perturbed by absence of coherent leadership from higher authority. Many Christians desire to follow courageous leaders who are ready to provide an obsolete prophetic call to the church; those who will motivate and train church members for the mission which is clearly applicable today. To put it differently, many believers are ready and yearning to be disciplined.⁸⁶

Turner says Jesus traveled with His disciples giving them direction and encouragement. He was patient with them. He waited patiently to let them grow into healthy disciples. Thus, the church also needs to do the same. It ought to be patient and wait on new believers to attain maturity in discipleship. New converts should not be let to go alone. They need to learn how to walk and understand where to go to avoid being crippled spiritually since they are not completely developed. The church should provide sufficient training for new disciples.⁸⁷

Deficiency in encouragement and instruction by the pastors of the local churches lead believers who could have been genuinely sanctified by the Spirit of God turn somewhere else for spiritual direction. In accordance with the belief of the church, evangelism has been neglected or there is an over-reliance on a famous evangelist to assume the responsibility placed upon the church. Neither attitude is biblical. While some members are summoned to become evangelists for the welfare of the entire church, the New Testament distinctly focuses on the witness of each

⁸⁵Watson, 68.

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Turner, 37.

believer.⁸⁸ Turner also points out that pastors are expected to encourage all believers to value discipleship. This is fundamental to church life without which the religious life of the church will be crippled.⁸⁹

Watson provides a thoughtful illustration: Let us assume that a gifted evangelist is able to convert 1, 000 persons each day of every year, how much time would it take him to convert the entire globe for Christ? The answer is over 10,000 years. But if one is a reliable disciple for Christ, and if that individual could through the help of God win one person to Christ every year; and if he or she could then train that person won to win one other person for Christ every year, what time would it take to convert the entire world for Christ? The answer is only 32 years.⁹⁰

If there are churches where discipling is apprehended earnestly, many souls are being converted to Christianity through personal witness of every believer. It is essential for several shepherding or discipling programme to be developed. If the entire church chooses not to consider this demand seriously, “it has only itself to blame for any unhelpful and divisive alternatives.”⁹¹ This therefore exemplifies the significant role that discipling plays in the growth of the church. Making disciples should be embraced by any church that is willing to draw people to Christ and prepare them for the Second Coming.

⁸⁸Watson, 69.

⁸⁹Turner, 38.

⁹⁰Watson, 69.

⁹¹Ibid.

The Call to Discipleship

Watson affirms that, each Christian is invited to a luminous and devoted discipleship, no matter what the individual cost may be. Watson clearly puts it that, “the verb disciple, *mantheno*, occurs 25 times in the New Testament (six times in the Gospels), while the noun disciple, *mathetes*, comes no less than 204 times, exclusively in the Gospels and Acts.”⁹²

Watson observes that, “in secular Greek, the word [*mathetes*] meant an apprentice in some trade, a student of some subject, or a pupil of some teacher.”⁹³ During the Old Testament eras similar primary meaning was applied to the disciples of Moses, who were pupils of the Law of Moses; and the disciples of the Pharisees, who were concerned with correct and comprehensive understanding of Jewish traditions as provided in the written as well as oral Torah. The disciples of John the Baptist were totally devoted to their teacher and also to his teaching.⁹⁴

Called by Jesus. When individuals consider themselves as disciples who have been individually selected by Christ, this ought to adjust their attitude towards Him and induce them for the ministry He has committed to them. It is only when believers begin to consider themselves as selected, summoned and sent forth by Christ that they shall have any real sense of their responsibility to surrender their bodies to Him ‘as a living sacrifice, whole and acceptable to God’. It was this persuasive conviction of God’s tender calling, of Christ’s discretion of the Spirit’s supreme work that empowered the disciples to be courageous in their ministry, to persevere in their

⁹²Watson, 19.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., 19-20.

affliction and to lead lives worthy of their calling (Eph 4:11).⁹⁵

Called to Jesus. The call by Jesus was also a calling to Jesus. The calling to Jesus was wholly individual: His followers were to accompany Him; “to be with Him,”⁹⁶ and to dedicate themselves fully to Him. They had to trust in Him, become disciples by asking forgiveness of their sins, and believe in Him. Watson affirms that, “discipleship means knowing Christ, loving Him, believing in him, and being committed to Him.”⁹⁷ In like manner, Credit notes that disciples may not truly follow Jesus unless they meet costs that go along with it. What Jesus calls for is disciples’ commitment and relationship.⁹⁸

Called to obey. Jesus calls His disciples to wholehearted compliance of their entire lives (Matt 7:21; Luke 6:46). To become a true follower of Jesus means to come after Him, to model oneself according to His ways, to embrace His desire and will for one’s life. The call to become a disciple of Jesus is the call to abandon the old selfish life and to accept Him as one’s personal Savior. Watson believes that “inward belief must be accompanied by outward obedience. There is no [genuine] faith without

⁹⁵Ibid., 21; C. Clifton Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Reduction in Current Debate*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), 39. Black holds the same opinion that it is Jesus who calls disciples charging them to adopt a particular life-style pleasing to Him. See also, J. H. Hegeman, et al., *Practice and Profile: Christian Formation for Vocation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 189.

⁹⁶Jeannine K. Brown, *The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2002), 99.

⁹⁷Watson, 22-23.

⁹⁸Credit, 34.

obedience, and there is no discipleship either.”⁹⁹

Nonetheless, as Watson notes, many believers within Christendom desire the relaxed concession of provisional discipleship. However, the truth is uncomfortably apparent: “if Christ is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all. There is no half-measure in the discipleship of Jesus.”¹⁰⁰ The church at this time is desperately in need of genuine disciples who will cling to Jesus in unwavering submission and allegiance. Biblical witnessing should focus on God’s kingdom, affirm His rule, and call believers to rigorous obedience.¹⁰¹

Called to serve. Though the disciples of Jesus were called primarily to be intimate with Him, Christ also commanded them to go and proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God (Matt 10; Mark 1:17). God in His benevolence desires to make a personal effort to meet the needs of His children who are craving for help; nevertheless He has preferred to do that first and foremost through the disciples.¹⁰² If believers are caught up with the desire to address their own personal needs primarily, or if they are yearning for status and high ranks within the community of believers, they shall be useless to God. True followers are summoned to serve; and servants

⁹⁹Watson, 24. Mohrlang also affirms that “the disciple is called to obey [Christ];” Roger Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 77. White affirms that genuine faith is manifested in obedience; White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Coldwater, MI: Remnant, 2013), 153.

¹⁰⁰Watson, 24.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 24-25. See also, Phillip G. Samaan, *Christ’s Way of Making Disciples* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1999), 42; David C. Pack, *The True Jesus Christ: Unknown to Christianity* (Bloomington, NY: iUniverse, 2009), 224. “This is the rule of conduct for all who would become [Christ’s] disciples. Nothing short of obedience can be accepted.” White, *Desire of Ages*, 523.

¹⁰²Ibid., 27. See also, White, *The Publishing Ministry* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1983), 277.

should be willing to go where they are sent by their master and do what the master commands.

Called to a simple life. Jesus called His followers to a life meekness and poverty. Similar to their Master the disciples were to be ready to forsake their dwelling places, people, careers, and securities for the purpose of God's kingdom.¹⁰³ However, as they sought first His kingdom, all that they needed would be provided for them. What was required of them was to have trust in God and stop being troubled like the unbelievers. While this extreme discipleship was applicable to the Twelve, all Christians were urged to live a simple life whereby they had their belongings in common; and thus this became the experience of the apostolic church. On the same note, Watson concludes that, "it is when we can be trusted with material goods, learning to live on the New Testament principles of 'enough' that God will entrust us with the gifts of His spirit that will immeasurably enhance our own lives as well as those we serve."¹⁰⁴

Called to suffer. When Christ called His followers to follow Him, they were to be ready to go according to His way which is the road of the cross. If they had to offer their individual lives to others they ought to apportion their joys as well as their pains.¹⁰⁵ Jesus endeavored to get them ready for this kind of sacrifice by talking

¹⁰³Ibid., 27-28. See also, Keener, "Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20)," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)* 12:1 (2009): 16-18.

¹⁰⁴Watson, 28.

¹⁰⁵"Of all the gifts that heaven can bestow upon men," White asserts, "fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the [weightiest] trust and the highest honor;" *The Ministry of Healing* (Silver Springs, MD: Better Living, 2006), 478; See also, Donald Senior, *Jesus: A Gospel Portrait* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 53; Philippians 1:29.

openly about His personal afflictions and the afflictions which His disciples must encounter (Matt 16:21). Watson remarks, “Discipleship also involves spiritual grief.”¹⁰⁶

The more disciples desire to love their Lord, and the nearer they get to His marvelous spirit of love, they must not be astonished if they experience the torture of His godly agony. Suffering is unavoidably entwined into the framework of discipleship. Nevertheless, disciples shall always discern that it is within the experience of anguish that God works most intensely in their lives.¹⁰⁷

Called irrespective of qualification. The call to obey, to serve, to live a simple lifestyle, to suffer, and if necessary to die, is familiar to all true followers of Jesus. Moreover, they are to surrender their lives totally to Him and to their fellow believers as members of His spiritual community on this earth. The Christian community is not an association that people belong for the purpose of having their needs met; “it is a body, a building, a family, an army”—some of the images which show that, by receiving the call of Jesus, disciples have a duty that they cannot circumvent if they are to be His true followers.¹⁰⁸

It is not a matter of feelings and individual choices; it is a question of embracing with the greatest thought “the conditions and demands of discipleship” that Christ places upon His disciples.¹⁰⁹ As has been noted, disciples are no longer their own. They have been chosen by Christ, called by Him, bought by Him, they therefore

¹⁰⁶Watson, 31.

¹⁰⁷Watson, 31.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 32.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 32-33.

now belong to Him. By virtue of this fact, they also belong to one another, however easy or difficult, joyful or painful they may find this to be. Christ extends to them His grace and call to discipleship regardless of their qualifications.

What Does Discipleship Entail?

Rob Warner, in his book, *I Believe in Discipleship: The Adventure of Living*, discusses what discipleship entail. His arguments are as follows. First, discipleship entails “lifelong learning.”¹¹⁰ Rob Warner establishes that, in the New Testament the word translated as disciple denotes a learner. In the Gospels students are not expected to complete their studies from the school of Christ’s discipleship. Thus, discipleship is an experience of life: progress in comprehension would be articulated in a growing lifestyle. Warner acknowledges that, to become a disciple is to become a learner; in “theory and in practice, and there was always more for his first disciples to learn in the discipleship school of Jesus.”¹¹¹

Second, discipleship entails “lifelong following.”¹¹² Werner says that, at the center of discipleship is an ongoing opportunity to learn to grow as well as a devotion to follow the Master (Matt 4:20, 22, 25). He believes that genuine discipleship involves following in the Lord’s footsteps. However, the path of Christ is in no way

¹¹⁰Rob Warner, *I Believe in Discipleship: The Adventure of Living* (London: Holder & Stoughton, 1999), 10. “So far as discipleship is concerned, it is a lifelong learning. You not only begin to be a disciple, you also continue to be a disciple. As long as we are in this world we are disciples, and there is no graduation. We learn and learn and learn Christ which is a lifelong experience;” Stephen Kaung, *In Footsteps of Christ* (New York: Christian Fellowship, 2012), 6. See also, Michael Horton, *The Gospel Commission: Recovering God’s Strategy for Making Disciples* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 194.

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Disciples “are called to keep moving, growing, learning, becoming ... lifelong disciples.” Ann Spangler, *Praying the Names of Jesus: A Daily Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 139.

possibly to be secure. It indicates servant-hood and trust, inviting believers to risk taking and meet the cost of placing others first. Thus, discipleship is a way of life that often demands of believers' new course of trust and self-denial.¹¹³

Third, genuine discipleship is “whole-life discipleship.”¹¹⁴ Werner continues to explain that, discipleship entails a total, ongoing and lasting compliance to the preferences of Christ. Advancement in discipleship denotes a growth in totality and incorporation, in believers' identity, their values, and their entire life experience. Christian discipleship that is genuine not only to the Old Testament but also to the New Testament designates the entirety of being in the ministration of Christ. The rationale of biblical Christianity has often been in no way below total life discipleship.¹¹⁵

Fourth, genuine discipleship is a “life-enriching.”¹¹⁶ Jesus once said to find God first and foremost and embrace His kingdom (Matt 6:33) is not to lose contact with life, but to embrace life in all its richness (John 10:10). Werner sees here an apparent biblical foundation of discipleship. It is for lasting learners. It is for believers who will persist in practicing Christ's ways. It has connotations for the entire life, and not mere religious or sacred zone. It is intended to become life-enriching, conveying a sound awareness, fullness and enjoyable to each phase of human survival.¹¹⁷

¹¹³Warner, 10.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 10. See also, Paul Tanner, “The Cost of Discipleship: Losing One's Life for Jesus' Sake,” JETS 56/1, 2013, 54; James A. Hamish and Justin LaRosa, *A Disciple's Path Companion Reader: Deepening Your Relationship with Christ and the Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2012), 72.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

The cost of discipleship. Jesus did not promise a trouble-free life to His followers. Moreover Christ came to build His community of believers. Rather than being a comfortable society existing wholly for the good of its members, the church should be God's instrument for the ministry to the entire of world, existing principally for the advantage of its non-believers. Hence, church-membership entails discipleship, and that implies accommodating the total prerequisites that Jesus certainly made.¹¹⁸

Jesus was so sincere concerning the cost of discipleship that many of the excited crowds who flocked after Him turned back and no longer went with Him. Jesus calls believers to put their entire trust in God, and not in the vague riches of this world. Faith is the heart of all genuine discipleship, for without faith it is impossible to please God. In order to experience the veracity of faith disciples must therefore anticipate situations where they have to believe in God.

The path of obedience. If people want to be Christ's disciples, they must embrace His prime sovereignty as Lord over each aspect of their life, with no any exception. If they reject Him as Lord, He cannot be their Savior. Watson testifies that, "with Jesus it is all, or nothing."¹¹⁹ To belong in God's kingdom is to recognize Christ as "King, and if Jesus is King, His Word has authority and must be obeyed."¹²⁰ On the other hand, the call of Jesus to His followers was also a call of love. Their submission to His Word implied having confidence in His love.¹²¹ If Christians deny Christ's Word, they doubt His wisdom and distrust His love, and hence cannot become His

¹¹⁸Watson, 231

¹¹⁹Ibid., 232-234.

¹²⁰G. Wright Doyle, *Jesus: The Complete Man* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008), 129.

¹²¹John D. Street, *Men Counseling Men* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 154.

disciples. The Lordship of Jesus implies that no individual may have similar assertions with Him to believers' faithfulness and commitment. There cannot be concession. There is no uncertain submission.

The necessity of faith. The reason for Jesus testing disciples' obedience is to lead them to the point of legitimate faith in Him, even though all God's endowments to employ are provided 'by grace', they are accepted by faith. Believers are therefore justified by faith. They have entrance into the presence of God by faith. They assimilate the Spirit of God by faith. Christ lives in their bosom by faith. However, "the faith which is able to receive God's grace will be proved by obedience to God's Word. Without obedience, there is no faith."¹²²

It is important that John expresses in his Gospel that the opposite of believing in Jesus is disobeying Him (John 3:36). The disciples of Jesus are the true followers of Jesus. They have devoted themselves to walk the same as Jesus walks. They have promised themselves to a life of total compliance. When they fail to be obedient they have to repent and seek Christ's forgiveness immediately, for sin degrades the discipleship and destroys the relationship. Faith without obedience is not binding. At the same time, discipleship without faith is also null and void.

Christian Discipleship

The focus of Christian discipleship is the expectation to consider the Scriptures as the authoritative revelation of God in all issues of life, salvation and righteousness. Clearly connected to the understanding of the Bible is the necessity to build up a powerful prayer life. For the sake of making disciples today, Christians should devote quality time and effort in a lasting and meaningful process of nurturing. Belonging

¹²²Watson, 234-235.

should be followed by instruction, worship, and living in accordance to the Christian ethics and teachings. Believers are summoned to be with Christ, enhancing relationships and nurturing an awareness of belonging. Followers are asked to provide, receive, do and to belong. They are invited to be with the Lord. “To be with Jesus, nurturing His presence, feeling company with Him and cultivating His intimacy, are essential expressions of the mission of the church.”¹²³

The Great Commission

When Jesus was about to ascend in heaven following His resurrection, He gave His disciples a commission that is famously known as ‘The Great Commission’. This commission is recorded in the following passages (Mark 16:15-17; Luke 24:47, 48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8) however this section is going to focus on the Gospel of Matthew chapter 28:18-20. This is because this passage provides essential clarity to the rest four passages.

Foundation for disciple making (Matthew 28:18-20). Hull notes that the objective of Matthew 28:18-20 is world evangelization. Its objective is world evangelization which leads to the population of God’s kingdom. This passage comprises one of the most vital words of Jesus concerning the church. It forms the essence of what the church is all about and what it does. It is so essential to the Great Commission perception.¹²⁴

Three significant activities are called for in the passage. These are ‘going, baptizing, and teaching.’ Hull affirms that “‘going’ is a circumstantial participle that

¹²³Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross, eds., *Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 41, 66.

¹²⁴Hull, 50-51. Hertig refers to it as “the heart of Jesus mission mandate.” Hertig, 346.

could be understood to mean, ‘as you are going.’”¹²⁵ It is correctly observed that, the command in the passage is not ‘to go;’ Christ supposes and His followers understood that evangelizing the world is not for the inactive. Thus, as one goes through life experience, when he or she travels or lives a confined life, this work is committed to him or her. As a matter of fact, baptizing and teaching qualify the major commanded activity of the passage. “The subsidiary and qualifying work associated with the commanded action is to baptize and teach.”¹²⁶

Another key point emphasized is that, baptizing converts demands that new converts make an open declaration of faith. An open, formal, and remarkable profession of a different life is the significance of the baptism. Conversely, teaching believers to be obedient cuts a broad area during Christian experience. Furthermore, baptizing and teaching converts to obey make a complete account of the Great Commission.¹²⁷

¹²⁵Hull, 51. “The participle nature of the Greek term [translated ‘go’] makes ‘going’ a better translation than ‘go.’ ... Additionally, the Greek term translated as ‘go’ has the sense of moving from place to place. Thus, as [disciples] go about [their] daily lives, [they] take hold of the opportunities that come [their] ways and reach out to the world.” Christopher Baidoo-Essien, *Examining the Great Commission: A Call to Study* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 76-77.

¹²⁶Ibid., 51-52. See also, Keener, “Matthew’s Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20),” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies (AJPS)* 12:1 (2009): 3, 4; Baidoo-Essien, *Examining the Great Commission*, 76-77, 79. “Baptizing them ... and teaching them to observe all things ... should be read as further qualifying and describing the main verb, ‘make disciples,’ and not as independent activities.” Teaching here should not be taken as an argument in favor of baptizing new converts then taught. Instead it “refers to the upbuilding of the church;” Paul Wesley Chilcote and Lacey C. Warner, *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 81.

¹²⁷Hull, 52.

It is apparent that the “imperative command of the text is ‘make disciples’.”¹²⁸ This refers to the plan for reaching the world and the procedure necessary for bringing replication and multiplication to the global mission. The Great Commission devoid of reproduction is evangelism crippled from nape down. By Jesus specifically commanding His disciples to make disciples, He prescribed the product of the ministry of the church. Jesus never said, ‘make converts’ or ‘make Christians’. Becoming a new believer or a Christian does not inevitably equal multiplication. Albeit many believers are spiritually infertile; many do not spread the gospel. When a true follower is made, two outstanding things take place: a disciple becomes wholesome and spiritual; a disciple reproduces and in turn becomes disciple maker, hence triggering multiplication.¹²⁹

Hull articulates that, disciples resolve the catastrophe at the heart of the church. Disciple making generates a quality substance and an efficient task force. This is the plan of God for His people. “Disciples are the product; baptizing and teaching to obey are the qualifiers.”¹³⁰

Ben Witherinton agrees with Hull that when Jesus commissioned His disciples to ‘go and make disciples of all nations’, He talked about two activities in which they would participate. Witherinton emphasizes that, in Greek, “both activities are

¹²⁸Hull, 52. “The Greek term translated to ‘make disciples’ is where the force of the command is. ... Thus Jesus was commanding the disciples to go make disciples.” Baidoo-Essien, *Examining the Great Commission*, 77.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid.

subordinate to the main verb ‘make disciples’ and explain how it is to be done.”¹³¹

First, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and second, teaching them to observe all Jesus has commanded His disciples to do. Alongside this command, Jesus gave His church the authority to execute it.¹³²

Hull ascertains that, advancement toward making disciples should not be disregarded if Christians need to adhere to the Great Commission. To make disciples requires answerability or else believers will not be instructed to obey. Only disciples who have positioned themselves in a trustworthy learning spirit will become replicators. From among these will escalate those who have been endowed with leadership gifts and unique competences, who will make the disciple-making foundation of any community of believers. Sequentially, they encourage atmosphere for disciple making and reproduction. This leads to an escalation of the church. “Disciple making is the heart of the church, because it is the heart of the Great Commission.”¹³³

To summarize, adherence to the Great Commission hinges on three activities: a deliberate plan that describes and educates disciples; a dedication to multiplication by training in evangelism with accountability; and a dedication to reproduction by exceptional training so as to create disciple-making leaders. These are the pillars of conformity to the Great Commission, anything less is not acceptable.

Christian initiation. In the New Testament believers are initiated through baptism. Baptism is usually preceded by the preaching of the gospel about Jesus

¹³¹Ben Withering, *Troubled Waters: The Rethinking the Theology of Baptism* (Wacos, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 40.

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Hull, 53.

Christ. Rinaldo Ronzani states that, baptismal preparation entailed catechesis about the mystery of Jesus. He mentions the account of the two disciples to Emmaus as a paradigm of catechesis founded on Scripture. The proclamation of the good news and catechesis are intended to bring the individual to transformation and faith. Ronzani observes that, repentance is a fundamental component in the pilgrimage of initiation, alongside faith and a novel way of life.¹³⁴

Samuel M. Powell articulates three human actions in and by which God offers grace during baptism. They include “repentance and amendment of life prior to baptism; learning the faith prior to baptism; and public confession of faith before baptism.”¹³⁵

It is noteworthy to highlight that, at the moment of conversion the pilgrimage of discipleship commences with baptism as the rite of passage. Baptism, which is an ordinance offered in the context of rebirth succeeded by teaching disciples to keep all that Christ had commanded His followers. In this sacrament, a new believer forsakes his or her old inclination to flesh to associate with the death and resurrection of Christ. The ultimate goal of discipleship is Christlikeness. Regardless of largely diverse beliefs and creedal positions, baptism stands as the uniting passage of rite for all believers, hence its indispensable importance must be effectively taught to new believers.¹³⁶

The baptism debate. There has been again and again contention among Christian groups in relation to whom baptism is intended for, how it is supposed to be

¹³⁴Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation* (Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publications Africa, 2007), 48.

¹³⁵Samuel M. Powell, *A Theology of Christian Spirituality* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 53.

¹³⁶Walls, 29.

administered, and why it is vital. According to the Catholic Theology, infants are being baptized mainly to cleanse original sin. On the other hand, the Eastern Orthodox Church understands baptism mainly as the ordinance through which an infant or adult is incorporated into the church, the ‘mystical body of Christ’. On the contrary, the Presbyterian churches disapprove the Catholic understanding. They believe that baptism is the sacrament through which infants are integrated into the covenant which God made with His children, the same way circumcision meant in the Old Testament.¹³⁷

Some Protestants understand baptism is meant for the individuals who have decided to trust fully in Jesus Christ. A minority who administer adult baptism believe that baptism is God’s design to remit sin in follower’s life. The most accepted perceptive amidst Protestants who administer grown-ups baptism it is because they believe it to be an outward open evidence of God’s inner work. This is the prevalent perspective amidst the Baptists.¹³⁸

The biblical baptism. Baptism is the rite of passage into Christian discipleship and hence it is meant only for individuals who are mature enough to decide to have faith in and submit to Jesus Christ. Baptism is insignificant except for an individual decision to be Jesus’ follower. While in the Old Testament God made a covenant bond with a whole nation, in the New Testament God’s covenant involves all believers. Accordingly, it was important in the Old Testament to provide the symbol of the covenant—circumcision—to babies because they belonged to the nation with which God made the covenant. On the contrary, it is definitely not the case to teaching of the

¹³⁷Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academy, 2009), 215.

¹³⁸Ibid.

New Testament since God's covenant is made with believers, and babes cannot believe. Everywhere within the New Testament baptism and salvation are provided to only individuals who can fulfill the "conditions of believing, repenting, and obeying Jesus Christ."¹³⁹

Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Dennis Smith affirms that water baptism is inadequate. It is just an outward public testimony that one has decided to profess faith and follow Jesus Christ. The believer should be baptized by the Holy Spirit. In fact, a Christian is first born of the Spirit then baptized. This empowering of the Holy Ghost is indispensable for the Christian to possess the capability to live a triumphant life and effectively witness for Jesus.¹⁴⁰

Boyd and Eddy say that, baptism was ordained partly as the means of making an individual a true follower and it is reasonable only in the setting of disciple-making. It was not meant for immature persons who cannot be taught and make decision to keep all that Christ commanded. The ministry of the earliest disciples of Jesus makes it clear that baptism is part of disciple making. Disciples adhere to Christ's command to make disciples and hence to baptize and teach those disciples. During the incident of the Pentecost (Acts 2) Peter declared to his listeners, 'repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus'. Baptism becomes meaningful when an individual is encouraged to repent of his or her sins. In short, "baptism is an act of discipleship that can be entered into only by people old enough to be disciples."¹⁴¹

Boyd and Eddy continue to affirm that, it was only following the Samaritans'

¹³⁹Boyd and Eddy, *Across the Spectrum*, 216.

¹⁴⁰Dennis Smith, *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit: What is It? Who Needs It? Why Receive It?* (Shelton, CT: The Arthur, 2009), 20.

¹⁴¹Boyd, 216-217.

belief after Philip's proclamation of the gospel that "they were baptized both men and women" (Acts 8:12).¹⁴² Again, after the Ethiopian Eunuch had accepted the gospel about Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he was baptized (Acts 8:35-38). On the other note, Peter proposed Cornelius and his household for baptism following the proof of their faith in the Lord (Acts 10:44-49). In addition, Lydia and her household were baptized after God had opened her heart (Acts 16:14-15). Furthermore, the disciples of John the Baptist were baptized following their belief upon Paul's preaching about Jesus Christ then they received the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 19:5-6).¹⁴³ As already been noted above, baptism ought to be carried out only to those who are mature enough to decide to abandon the life of sin, embrace a new life, and cherish a healthy moral sense before God. Baptism should therefore be preceded by instructions upon candidates aspiring for it.

In like manner, Witherington designates that baptism was an act that was meant only for adults. From the event of the baptism of Cornellius and his family, he deduces that, only members of the family who accepted the good news and were endowed by the power of the Holy Ghost were baptized. He acknowledges the fact that a person has to be mature enough to apprehend and receive God's Word and the pledged Spirit.¹⁴⁴

At the occasion of the rebirth of the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30ff), Paul and Silas proclaimed God's Word to the jailer's household and he as well as his family were instantly baptized. While the focus was on him, he and all his family were filled with gladness in this conversion, indicating that they all believed. In Acts 8:26-40 we

¹⁴²Boyd, 217.

¹⁴³Ibid., 217-218.

¹⁴⁴Witherington, 48.

also read of the conversion of the God-fearing African who would have received a low-grade place in most of the Jewish religious activities since he was a eunuch.

Moreover, following the teaching that was offered by Philip followed the baptism of the eunuch. Witherington finds in the texts above, a clear indication of the close connection of faith and water baptism.¹⁴⁵ In short, it is right to conclude that, only adults who are able to hear, understand and believe the Word of God, then confess their sins, are the ones eligible for both Holy Spirit and water baptism.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature on how to enhance discipleship process. Definitions of a disciple according to Jesus have been highlighted. It has been noted that true believers are followers of Jesus. They are more than mere converts, instead, are people who exemplify a Christ-like way of life, disciples who are able to make others disciples too. This is because discipleship entails multiplication. Disciples are willing to offer humble service to others; people who are willing to listen and be corrected. They highly esteem those in leadership positions. Moreover, they are kind enough to share their lives with others. They scrutinize their own lives before criticizing others. In addition, disciples are willing to forgive. They are trustworthy and have trust in God.

In the Great Commission, the risen Lord Jesus calls Christians to expand good news to the ends of the earth, making disciples of all nations, peoples and tongues. New disciples need to be baptized and be taught to put into practice everything that Christ taught while on earth. They need to continue growing in Christ so do old members. As disciples grow in the character of Christ, in their individual lives and in

¹⁴⁵Witherington, 49, 53, 54.

their relationship, they are also intended to keep on producing more disciples. The church is expected to keep on growing in quality and quantity. Thus, effective discipleship process of new believers becomes crucial to this sustained vitality and growth.

The next chapter analyzes the social, cultural, and religious context of the project. It discusses how interviews and questionnaires were managed to collect and analyze data connected to the execution of the project. A program to address the problem in order to enhance discipleship process of new believers is created.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Chapter three has discussed different Christians' perspectives on enhancing a discipleship process. This chapter deals with the social, cultural, and religious context analysis. It describes how interviews and questionnaires were administered to collect and analyze data that informs the implementation of the project. A program to address the problem is developed for the enhancement of the discipleship process of new members. The overall goal of the project is to reduce church membership dropout at the Usa River SDA Church from 576 (about 500%) to 300 (about 260%).¹

The chapter has five sections. Section one describes the macro-context and micro-context of my ministry context. Section two describes the type of research chosen for this project. It provides the rationale for selecting the type of research employed. It also explains why the study is appropriate. Moreover, it narrates the process used to select participants in the project and provides reasons as to why those people are chosen. Criteria for sampling procedures and selection are highlighted. Lastly, the section identifies the instrument to be used in the collection of data. Section three explains data collection procedures, presents and describes the findings. Then data is analyzed. Section four unfolds the designed intervention to be used in

¹These calculations are based upon the year 2012 and 2013 when the project began. As already been stated earlier, during that period of time, the Usa River SDA Church received into its membership 116 members through baptism. However, during the same period of time it lost 576 members.

addressing the problem of the project. Section five provides the summary of the chapter.

Description of the Ministry Context

Macro-Context

Tanzania is one of the countries in East Africa (See figure 1 below). In the East it borders with the Indian Ocean. To the North are Kenya and Uganda. To the North-West, are Rwanda and Burundi, and to the West is Congo. To the South-West are Zambia and Malawi, and Mozambique to the South.

Tanzania is the largest country in East Africa. It incorporates two countries that were amalgamated together: Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The island of Zanzibar is about 640 square miles in area while Tanganyika is about 377360 square miles in area. According to the national census that was conducted in 2014, the population of Tanzania was 49,039,138.²

Soon after the independence (1961) the government of Tanzania under the leadership of Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere came up with the policy of *Ujamaa*. This policy was “Nyerere’s African version of socialism.”³ Under this policy people were moved from their ancestral lands to community villages. These community villages were furnished with basic social services including schools, hospitals, and water supply. Apart from a small piece of land given to each family for domestic farming, there was a large piece of land for cooperative farming.

²David Lawrence, *Tanzania: The Land, Its People and Contemporary Life* (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: New Africa Press, 2015), 7.

³Ibid., 8.



Figure 1. The Map of Tanzania⁴

⁴“The Map of Tanzania,” accessed 29 July 2017, http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/data/13030/tj/ft138nb0tj/figures/ft138nb0tj_00001.jpg.

Nyerere ruled from independence up to 1985 when he stepped down after having ruled for 24 years and Ali Hassan Mwinyi superseded him. Following his enthronement to the presidency, Mwinyi began to liberalize Tanzanian economy. Instead of continuing the policy of *Ujamaa*, he introduced capitalism. As a result socialism and one-party rule were officially renounced in the early 1990s.

Economy of Tanzania. The economy of Tanzania is largely based on the sector of agriculture. Lawrence notes that agriculture composes about “40 percent of the gross domestic product ... and about 85 percent of the exports.”⁵ Nevertheless, Tanzania has many minerals.⁶ It is among the leading providers of gold in Africa. It is the only producer of an immensely valuable mineral known as Tanzanite. Again, massive accumulations of uranium have been discovered in the southwestern part east of Lake Nyasa. In addition, the country is among the world’s largest producers of diamonds. Moreover, it has enormous quantities of nickel, platinum and other minerals. Also, it has been discovered that Tanzania has a rare mineral, coltan in Mbeya region. This mineral is used in the “development of missile guidance systems

⁵Lawrence, 23. Annabella Skof says in *Sustaining and Sharing Economic Growth in Tanzania*, ed by Robert J. Utz (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2008),169; “International estimates that include informal activities in agriculture suggests that Tanzania’s informal economy accounts for about 60 percent gross national income.” Peter Wobst also states in *Structural Adjustment and Intersectoral Shifts in Tanzania: A Computation General Equilibrium Analysis* (Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute, 2001), 9; “85 percent of Tanzania’s population lives in rural area and is mainly engaged in agricultural activities, generating about 50 percent of gross domestic product.”

⁶Peter Gibbon, *Liberalised Development in Tanzania: Studies on Accumulation Process and Local Institutions* (Uppsala, Sweden: Nordiska Africaintitutet, 1995), 48; Terence McNamee, Mark Pearson, and Wiebe Boer, *Africana Investing Africa: Understanding Business and Trade, Sector by Sector* (New York: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2015), 231.

and other area of high technology including the manufacture of computers and cell phones.”⁷

Lastly, in recent years, it has been discovered that Tanzania has vast volumes of gas that is being used for domestic cooking as well as for generating electricity. Large deposits of “coal and iron” have also been found.⁸ All these show how Tanzania is a rich country in minerals, though citizens are not benefiting much from these resources.

National parks, lakes and mountains. Tanzania is well known worldwide for its attractive national parks.⁹ Each year thousands of tourists visit Tanzania National Parks to view wildlife and birds. On the other hand, there are three extraordinary inland bodies of water that border Tanzania. Two of these are relatively deep and narrow lakes formed within the Western Rift Valley. Lake Nyasa lies within Malawi but forms part of Tanzania’s southwestern border. Lake Tangayika marks the country’s western border and lies partly in Tanzania. By volume, “Lake Tanganyika is the third-largest freshwater lake in the world.”¹⁰ It is the deepest lake in Africa and the world’s longest.¹¹

⁷Lawrence, 23, 24.

⁸Ibid., 23.

⁹These National Parks include: Ngorongoro National Park, Serengeti National Park, Mikumi Natiaonal Park, Arusha National Park, Lake Manyara National Park, Tarangire National Park, Ruaha National Park, Gombe Stream National Park and Mahale Mountains National Park. These parks are sources of foreign currency income for the country.

¹⁰Bev Pritchett, *Tanzania in Picture* (Minneapolis, MN: Twenty-First Century Books, 2008), 13.

¹¹Ibid.

The third lake is Lake Victoria. It is the second-largest freshwater lake by area in the world.¹² It spreads over the boundaries of Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. It is the main source of the Nile River, the longest river in the world. Lake Nyasa, Lake Tanganyika and Lake Victoria apart from providing marine transport, they are sources of fresh fish that are used domestically as well as for exports. Tanzania comprises of two outstanding mountains: Mount Kilimajaro which is the highest in Africa with snow at the top, and Mount Meru. Every year these mountains attract a number of tourists who come to climb them and view their beautiful nature.

Population. Tanzania is a sparsely inhabited country. However, there are places that are highly populated particularly in the plateaus of the northeast (Kilimanjaro region) and southwest, the coastal regions, and in the northwestern region of the country. Most of the Tanzanians are members of the Bantu linguistic group thus they speak compatible languages. The largest tribe is the Sukuma comprising a population of about three million. There are about 140 tribes in the mainland Tanzania.¹³

Kiswahili. Kiswahili is the national language of Tanzania spoken by Tanzanians though in addition each tribe speaks its own language. It is the intensely spoken African dialect in Africa when one considers the many countries where it is spoken. It is spoken in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Comoro, and in Mogadishu (Somalia). It is the solely African dialect which is among the legitimate languages of the African Union (AU). In addition, it is the most broadly taught African language in the world.¹⁴ Kiswahili originated in the East African Coast in Tanzania

¹²Pritchett, *Tanzania in Picture*, 13.

¹³Lawrence, 25.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 36, 37.

and Kenya where Arabs integrated and intermarried with Africans for many years. Its grammar and vocabulary is African. It is primarily a Bantu language as well as Bantu in structure.¹⁵

History of Christianity in East Africa. Christian mission endeavors on Eastern African mainland is dated in 1844 near Mombasa through the ministry of Johann Ludwig Krapf.¹⁶ Nevertheless, it had little success. Krapf was an outstanding linguistic and explorer. He visited Kilimanjaro and Usambara, both of which proved to be more promising to Christianity than the Kenyan coast. Nevertheless, he did not succeed to establish a Christian community. The trend changed when missions were established in the interior, north of Lake Victoria in Buganda from 1877 onward. However, below half the Ganda became Christians in 1911. Usually missions followed after the activities of colonialists instead of preceding it. Missions took advantage of improved communication and widespread concern in western education. Christianity, therefore, got firmly rooted in East Africa in the twentieth century rather than nineteenth century.¹⁷

Tanzania was equally categorized into Christianity, Islam, and Africa Traditional Religion at independence. However, Muslims lost an initial vantage due to the Christian education system. The first Christian evangelizers were the Catholics followed by the Lutherans and the Anglicans. The early missionary societies included

¹⁵Lawrence, 37. See also, John Ndembiwe, *Tanzania: The Land and Its People* (Pretoria, South Africa: New Africa Press, 2008), 69.

¹⁶Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 137.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 130, 137.

“the Spiritans, White Fathers, and Benedictines.”¹⁸ Baur observes that, “The Evangelical Lutherans are...the largest Protestant denomination”¹⁹ in Tanzania.

Following independence led by Mwalimu Nyerere, the president faced intensive opposition. He was a staunch member of the Catholic Church and most of TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) followers were Christians. Yet Muslims felt that the country was Islamic. Thus, they ardently held that the president was supposed to be a Muslim. To avert this attitude from reality, Nyerere announced that “his government did not tolerate any discrimination of race, tribe and religion, and coined the slogan: *TANU haina dini*—TANU has no religion, only the members of TANU have each his religion.”²⁰ This declaration was the basis for the separation of religion and state. It caused the religious climate to calm down, though religions continued to expand.

Micro-Context

Tanzania is one of the countries in the southern hemisphere in which the Adventist Church is fast growing. Adventism in Tanzania began with six converts following the ministry of the first missionaries in 1903.²¹ However, in 2013 Tanzania

¹⁸John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, Second Edition (Nairobi, Kenya: Pauline Publications Africa, 2009), 350.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 354.

²¹The first Adventist missionaries to come to Tanzania were: Johann Ehlers and A.C. Enns. They were sent by the Adventist Church in Germany under the visionary leader, Ludwig Richard Conradi. See, Stefan Hoeschele, *Christian Remnant—African Folk Church: Seventh-day Adventism in Tanzania, 1903-1980* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2007), 51, 57. Hoeschele states that these missionaries settled in the South Pare at Mamba-Giti, which they named Friedenstal (valley of peace). There they established the first mission station among the Pare. Then in 1905 they established another mission at Kihurio. A year later they launched a third centre at Suji. From Pare land, Adventism was taken to Lake Victoria region then it spread to the rest of the country.

Union Mission (TUM) celebrated about 450,000 members with five conferences and one field mission.²² Usa River SDA Church, located in North East Tanzania Conference (NETCO), is about 24 km away from the union headquarters. It is situated in south-west from the University of Arusha where the researcher has worked as a lecturer since 2011; and it is in southern part of Mount Meru and south-western part of Mount Kilimanjaro. It is located within the region comprised mostly by the Meru tribe. Major religions within the territory include Islam and Christianity whereby major Christian denominations that comprise the majority of believers include Lutheran, Catholic and Anglican.

Usa River SDA Church was established as a Sabbath School branch in 1972 with four members under Burka SDA Church which is located within Arusha town. These members were nurtured by two lay evangelists. In 1973 members increased to 16 and as a result it was organized as a company. Members held worship services at Leganga Primary School (located within Usa River town) since the church had no plot or building. Fortunately, in 1987 a plot was acquired and a church building was raised. On 24 June 1990, Usa River SDA Company was organized as a church with 126 members; whereby 51 members worshipped at the mother church (Usa River) while 75 members were in the companies of Merarani. In 1996 Merarani companies were also organized as a church. In 2004 members at Usa River and other new eight companies including Ngarasero, Kikatiti, Tengeru, Nkoaranga, Ulonga, Magadirisho, Mukidoma A and Mukidoma B increased to 600.²³

Evangelism within Usa River territory experiences numerous challenges that have slowed down church growth. First, many places are un-entered areas where

²²TUM Online Yearbook.

²³Clerk Report.

Adventist message has not been preached. Adventists are not present in many villages. Second, infrastructure is very poor. There are poor roads and insufficient telephone services. Third, companies are scattered; there are long distances from one company to the other. Fourth, the tradition of the local people, the Meru, concerning funerals and family relationships affect ones' practice of religion. Fifth, many believers comprise of secondary and college students who stay only for very short period of time and do not take seriously membership transfer. Sixth, the church experiences emergence of new cults including Remnant Sabbath, Pentecost Sabbath and Reformers that claim membership of some members.²⁴

The vision of Usa River SDA Church is to prepare its members for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and to make disciples of all the people who live within and outside its territory by enriching them upon the Scriptures. The church therefore is determined to bring spiritual services, health services, and social services to the local people with earnest pace. Thus, the church at Usa River has laid down the following plans to achieve its vision. First, to increase church membership from 386 of the year 2013 to 600 by the end of 2014; second, to strengthen teams of lay evangelists; third, to determine how many church members understand and observe the fundamental beliefs of the SDA church and assist members whose understanding is low to be true disciples of Jesus Christ.²⁵

²⁴Clerk Report.

²⁵Ibid.

Type of Research Methodology for the Project

Carol M. Roberts mentions that there are two main types of research: quantitative and qualitative. However, there is what she calls a “hybrid approach” which combines the two broad categories of research.²⁶ She identifies four factors that determine the type of research methodology a researcher chooses. First is the problem of research that the researcher wishes to explore. Second is the purpose for the study. The third factor is the theory unto which the research is to be based upon. The fourth factor is the nature of the data to be dealt with.²⁷ On the other hand, the selection of research methodology may also be based upon the research skills that the researcher and his or her research committee members possess.²⁸

The type of research employed in this study was the mixture of quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research is “about quantifying relationships between variables.”²⁹ John Creswell provides the following definition of qualitative research. “Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The

²⁶Carol M. Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending your Dissertation*, 2nd ed. (London: Corwin, A SAGE Company, 2010), 142.

²⁷Ibid., 141.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ronald A. Nykiel, *Handbook of Marketing Research Methodologies for Hospitality and Tourism* (New York: The Haworth Hospitality & Tourism Press), 55. In addition, in page 56 Nykiel provides two principal advantages of qualitative research: First, “it allows (the ... interviewer) for interaction with respondents. This freedom allows for in-depth probing of issues and yields great detail in responses.” Second, “it allows interaction between respondents. ... This interaction often stimulates discussion that uncovers issues unanticipated during the design phase.” On the other hand, Nykiel mentions the disadvantage of quantitative as that “the issues are only measured if they are known prior to the beginning of the survey.”

researcher builds a complex holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.”³⁰ As has been noted above, mixed methodology is the type of research that Roberts calls a hybrid approach. Descriptive research methodology was used to discover reasons for losing many members from the church. It was also used to pinpoint strategies to enhance discipleship process of new believers in order to reduce this trend.

Rationale for Selection

Mixed methodology type of research was chosen to allow “greater depth of understanding and insight”³¹ than when only one type of research was used. In addition, the blending helped to avoid “biases” found in each of the single type of research.³² Thus, the hybrid approach was used to discover reasons for losing many church members. In turn, this was helpful in developing strategies that can enhance church membership retention and reduce this occurrence.

Population and Sample

The project used local church members to get primary data. Thirty nine church members provided reliable information on what would be the causes for the dropout of

³⁰John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA [u.a.]: Sage, 1997), 1-2. See also, Karin Klenke, *Qualitative Research in the Study of Leadership* (USA: Emerald Group, 2008), 7; Ian Boxill, Claudia Maureen Chambers, Eleanor Wint, *Introduction to Social Research: With Application to the Caribbean* (Kingston, Jamaica: Canoe Press University of the West Indies, 1997), 45, 46; who define qualitative research as “a data gathering technique which allows access to in-depth feedback about or from subjects and situations.” They explain that one of the great advantages of this type of research is “the insight into attitudes, behavior, and motivation which it affords investigators.” On the other hand it is disadvantageous in that it “rallies primarily on subjective assessments in data collection phase.”

³¹Roberts, 142.

³²Ibid.

members and what could be done to address it. Additionally, focus group discussion was conducted among four local church leaders and two union personnel were interviewed to get information to complement the questionnaires that were answered by local church members. Those leaders provided in depth data on the same as well as get unexpected variables that would emerge in the process. The interview was intended to collect more exhaustive data than the questionnaire could provide.

James P. Neelankavil defines sampling as “a procedure that uses a small number of elements of a given population as a basis for drawing conclusions about the whole population.”³³ He continues to assert, “Because of cost and time constrains in conducting a survey of the total population, sampling is often the only efficient method available to obtain information from the population.”³⁴ Thus, sampling refers to a small group of individuals drawn from the targeted group to get information. Accordingly, this is the only sufficient procedure to be used especially when using the whole group may appear to be costly in terms of finance and time spent. With this in mind, the researcher chose to use random representative sampling volunteers in administering the questionnaires. The sample was 100 members out of the population of 356 (of the mother church)—that is about 28%. Nevertheless only 39 out of possible 100 members filled and returned the forms—that is 39%. The rationale for working with this group was to get reliable, non-biased information.

³³James P. Neelankavil, *International Business Research* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 2007), 240.

³⁴*Ibid.*

Research Instrument

Data was collected primarily through questionnaire which was designed by the researcher (See Appendix A). Focus group and individual interviews were used to complement data gathered through questionnaires. Data was also drawn from local church registers, statistical reports for the year 2013, 2015 and 2016.

The questionnaires. The questionnaires were shared with five team members before administering them to the 100 members of the targeted church. After the team members³⁵ having gone through them, some questions were rephrased, and others added after the researcher discovered that they were relevant to the study. The questionnaire proved to be reliable since it could provide dependable results when administered in the targeted congregation. The questionnaire had both open and closed ended questions. Closed ended questions provided almost predetermine responses and were simple to analyze. Open ended questions gave room for the respondents to express additional feelings and thoughts. The questions in the questionnaire were developed in such a way as to help the researcher discover the reasons for losing many members from the church. The responses to the questions provided the researcher insight as to how leadership can enhance discipleship process. Hence improve new church membership retention. As already mentioned above, team of five members who not only gave a moral support but also formed a prayer band assisted the researcher.

The focus group. As already been noted above, in addition to questionnaires, the researcher also used focus group discussion to complement the questionnaire. The questions for the focus group are in the appendix B. The focus group discussion was

³⁵Five team members were chosen on the basis of their commitment and willingness to sacrifice their time for the project.

led by the researcher and the outcome was recorded in a note book. The focus group entailed four local church leaders of the Usa-River SDA Church. This discussion was meant to allow for the probing information and seeking clarification where it deemed necessary.

The researcher gathered the four local church leaders at the premises of the church to discuss the topic. During the discussion the researcher had open ended questions that were asked to find out reasons for losing many members from the church. In addition, they were meant to find out what leadership can do to enhance new church membership retention.

Individual interview. Individual interviews were also employed to complement the questionnaire. The questions for individual interviewees are in appendix C. The interviews were carried by the researcher and the responses were recorded on a note book. In total two people were interviewed. The researcher had open ended questions that were asked to find out reasons for losing many members from the church. In addition, they were meant to find out what leadership can do to enhance new church membership retention. These questions were meant to explore information and seeking clarification where it was indispensable. That interview was meant to gather more detailed information than the questionnaire could provide.

Data Analysis

Having described research instruments that were used to collect data, this section analyzes how data was collected and presented. Then it describes the findings and data analysis. Thereafter a description of the intervention followed. Lastly, the section highlights limitations to the project.

Data collection procedures. The survey was conducted by using a questionnaire which was administered by the researcher with cooperation of the team

members. This was meant for accessibility to the sample and to maximize the response rate. The questionnaire was administered within two weeks long to provide ample time for the respondents. At the end of the two weeks forms were collected.

Respondents who were not able to avail their responses within that time were followed-up in their homes to collect their forms. Team members were so helpful in this follow-up process. The focus group and individual interviews comprised of oral structured questions which were asked by the researcher and responses noted in a note book.

Data presentation and analysis. Total responses mentioned above were 39 out of 100. The data gathered through questionnaires is presented using tables and analyzed. Personal information entailing: age in church membership; owning the Bible; Bible study; family devotion; the kind of ministry that led the member to baptism; and tithing; is presented in Table 1 below. The table is followed by an analysis.

Analysis. The data below shows that most of the members have stayed in the church for more than 6 years. The expectation from a person who has more than 6 years in church membership is that he or she knows much concerning the church: its teachings and practices. Because of that, the data also shows that these members value the Bible since most of them possess the Bible. Despite the fact that they possess the Bible, the data shows that they are not regularly studying their Bibles; hence other problems may result from this failure.

Since the number of those who study their Bibles regularly is low, its effect is reflected on the family devotional life, which indicates less involvement. Bible study and family devotion have a direct relationship with tithing. A strong Bible student is

presupposed to create an authentic desire to serve God. Likewise, a family devotional individual is expected to reflect that on matters of family's income and God.

Table 1. Discipleship Process: Personal Information

Age in Membership			Bible Possession			Bible Study			Family Devotion			Baptism			Tithing		
2 and below	2	5%	Possess	37	95%	Regularly	10	26%	Regularly	16	41%	Baptismal Class	20	51%	Regularly	12	31%
3-5	7	18%	No bible	2	5%	Less often	27	69%	Less often	15	38.5%	Public evangelism	12	31%	Less often	18	46%
6-10	15	38.5%				No study	2	5%	No devotion	5	13%	Satellite	1	2.6%	No tithing	4	10%
Over 10	15	38.5%							No response	3	7.7%	Personal evangelism	4	10%	Don't know	5	13%
												No response	2	5%			
Total	39			39			39			39			39				39

In short, data on personal information showed that both family devotion and Bible study were relatively low. As a result its effect was reflected in tithing, which was also low. Worship attendance in mid-week prayer meetings; open and closing of the Sabbath; week of prayers; camp meetings; Sabbath School; and divine service; are shown in Table 2 below.

Analysis. Since the previous data showed low involvement of church members in family worship, its aftermath is portrayed in worship attendance. As can be seen in the table below, there is low attendance in mid-week prayer meetings, opening and closing the Sabbath, and camp meetings. In addition, low involvement in studying the Bible has a bearing on Sabbath School attendance. When an individual is not committed to studying the Bible, he or she does not put effort in studying the Sabbath School Quarterly. For that reason, such an individual fails to attend Sabbath School where members are expected to have an in-depth discussion of the Word of God.

On the other hand, the data showed more value placed on the divine service over the Sabbath School. This shows more interest in listening to preachers, which though is good, is not expected to replace Bible study. Personal Bible study and family worship form the foundation for worship attendance. When personal Bible study and family worship are low, a believer is likely to have poor attendance of mid-week prayer meetings, opening and closing the Sabbath, week of prayers, camp meetings, and Sabbath School. Table 3 below describes church ministries in witnessing, involvement in departments and clubs that concern a church member as well as participation in small groups. It also underscores follow-up/visitation ministry

Table 2. Discipleship Process: Worship Attendance

Mid-week Prayer			Opening/Closing Sabbath			Week of Prayers			Camp Meeting			Sabbath School			Divine Service		
Attend regularly	10	26%	Attend regularly	12	31%	Attend regularly	10	26%	Attend regularly	10	41%	Attend regularly	15	38.5%	Attend regularly	24	62%
Attend less often	17	44%	Attend less often	22	56%	Attend less often	22	56%	Attend less often	22	56%	Attend less often	23	59%	Attend less often	14	36%
Do Not attend	12	31%	Do not attend	4	10%	Do not attend	4	10%	Attend only on Sabbath	3	7.7%	Do not attend	1	2.6%	Do not attend	1	2.6%
			No response	1	2.6%	No response	3	7.7%	Do not attend	3	7.7%						
									No response	1	2.6%						
Total	39			39			39			39			39			39	

Table 3. Discipleship Process: Church Ministries

	Witnessing		Involvement dept and clubs			Involvement small groups			Members visited by					
									Elders		Deacons			
Regularly	1	2.6%	Fully	12	31%	Fully	9	23%	Quarterly	0	0%	Quarterly	4	10%
Less Often	25	64%	Less often	17	43.6%	Less often	16	41%	Yearly	7	18%	Yearly	3	8%
Not witnessing	6	15.4%	Not involved	6	15.4%	Not involved	14	36%	Not visited	32	82%	Not visited	32	82%
Don't know how	7	18%	Don't know	4	10%									
Total	39			39			39			39			39	

Analysis. Bible study and Sabbath School attendance have an absolute bearing on witnessing. This is because for a person to successfully share his or her faith, he or she is anticipated to share what he or she knows. Besides, one of the programs of Sabbath School small units is to plan for evangelism. As previously noted, involvement in Sabbath School was low and as a result, participation in evangelism was affected. When taking part in evangelism goes down, an individual's growth is impinged. This is because as one witnesses he or she experiences spiritual growth at the same time.

Subsequently, departments and clubs in the church are like some kind of family units. Therefore, low involvement in the family devotion and witnessing have a direct impact on the participation in larger entities like departments and clubs. The data showed low involvement in small groups. As already been stated, in Sabbath School and departments and clubs there are small bands in which authentic believers are expected to take part. Since there is low involvement in such units, other effects become evident. The data showed low participation in small groups where nurturing and witnessing are expected to be vibrant. With this in mind, it can be stated that many members of Usa River SDA Church are experiencing malnutrition because they are not involved in the process whereby they can be nurtured to maturity.

Furthermore, the data showed low follow-up. Pastoral visitation is significant when it comes to nurturing believers. When it is low, members are less nurtured and this may lead to backsliding. It is during visitation that members, who are weak in Bible study; family devotions; and attendance in church worship services; get encouraged to fully embrace those spirit lifting activities. It is also during visitation that meaningful motivation can be done for the involvement of members in groups that

concern them in order to participate in witnessing. In the long run, church members experience growth in saving relationship with Christ.

Open-ended questions analysis. Within the questionnaires were two open-ended questions that were testing two significant issues. The first question needed members to pin point reasons as to why Usa River SDA Church loses many members. The second question was intended to let members themselves suggest what discipleship process can be adopted to minimize church membership loss. The following were the findings.

Most members (67%) highlighted that weak follow-up/pastoral visitation is the major cause for church membership loss. This was followed by poor relationship between believers and low understanding of the fundamental teachings of the church that scored twenty eight percent each. Surprisingly, apostasy only was twenty three percent whereas low involvement in witnessing was ten percent. This open ended question agreed with the data presented above that there was weakness in pastoral visitation at Usa River SDA Church. It also affirmed that since there is low involvement in small groups which is expected to foster good relationship among believers, its effect is poor relationship between members.

According to the members of Usa River SDA Church who answered the questionnaire, the discipleship process that can be adopted is to enhance pastoral visitation and praying with members in their homes. About eighty percent mentioned efficient follow-up program. For this reason a follow-up/pastoral visitation program made a significant part of the intervention developed and implemented as is reflected below. Enhancing good relationship among believers as well as strengthening Bible teachings understanding scored relatively the same (about twenty six percent). Thus, an intervention was developed to address the same.

Focus group discussion and interview data presentation and analysis. As already noted above, focus group discussion encompassing four church leaders of Usa-River SDA Church was carried out and two external leaders were interviewed to supplement the questionnaires filled by members. The two external leaders were picked up since their responsibilities at the union office made it possible for them to visit the concerned church and get acquainted with what was going on. For the sake of confidentiality, positions and responsibilities of the two external leaders interviewed are concealed.

There were several questions that were dealt with, however, only two of them that were most significant for this study will be presented. These two questions were: First, why does the church lose many members? Second, what discipleship process can be adopted to minimize this trend hence enhance church membership retention? The following description entails major issues that came up.

Three of the four leaders of Usa-River SDA Church affirmed the fact that there is poor follow-up ministry. This is due to the fact that leaders who are supposed to dedicate their time in nurturing members through visitation are too busy with their everyday activities. In addition, they highlighted that there is poor relationship among church members. This implies that small groups are not effective in this church.

The two external interviewees pointed out five major reasons for losing many members. These reasons included: poor nurturing; poor relationship among church members; weakness in presenting the Adventist's teachings; low involvement in family devotions; and low involvement in Bible study. As can be seen, the two external interviewees have provided the same ideas as those that were noted by church members who filled questionnaires. It can therefore be concluded that reasons for losing church members are relatively the same within Tanzania.

From the focus group discussion and interviews the following ways to minimize membership loss were highlighted. First, enhance visitation program in order to nurture church members. Second, improve effectiveness in small groups through Sabbath School classes. In these classes the vision of the world church of 'Total Member Involvement' in church ministries is expected to be nurtured. Third, encourage good relationships among members. Whenever a new member enters the church he or she should have at least 6 friends from among the old church members. This can be made possible through assimilating the new church member into a small group. Fourth, as Jesus puts it in Matthew 28:19, believers should be assisted through the power of the Holy Spirit to internalize the fundamental beliefs. This will be a realization of the Great Commission.

Comparatively, it can be noted that both the two groups of dealt with in the focus group discussion and interview respectively were in agreement concerning ways of minimizing loss of members. They established that, first and foremost, follow-up program needed to be strengthened. During visitation members are encouraged to have meaningful family worships and studying the Scriptures. In addition, effectiveness in small groups has to be encouraged. This will also enhance the good relationships among believers as members relate within the Sabbath School classes. Not only that but also members are encouraged to participate in ministry according to their spiritual gifts. Hence, as it has already been pin pointed above, for the scope of this study, the intervention was developed to embrace family devotion and Bible study, small groups through Sabbath School, and visitation program.

Intervention

From the data presented above and the interviews six problems came out: low studying of the Bible; low involvement in family devotion; low attendance in worship services; low participation in small groups; low involvement in witnessing; and poor follow-up/pastoral visitation. These problems can be formulated into three groups as follows: First group, studying the Bible and family devotional programs; second, attendance in worship services and participation in small groups; and third, witnessing and follow-up/pastoral visitation scheme.

In order to address these problems which affect discipleship process at Usa River SDA Church, the following intervention was opted which entailed three activities. Firstly, teaching members how to give quality time to Bible study and family devotion. Three questions were addressed: the appropriate time to conduct family worship, morning and evening; who should lead the family worships?; how well should family worship be organized to motivate high participation of members of the family.

Suggestions provided include: encouraging children to memorize Bible texts; each member given an opportunity to mention his or her prayer requests; awesome music; Christian stories; delegating each member to lead worship; discussing Bible texts; and dramatizing Bible stories. Also the duration of family worship be short enough to let children enjoy the worship. Some valuable gifts would be given to a child who does well in any of the above programs.

The third question was about the appropriate time to conduct Bible study. What procedure should be followed in studying the Bible in such a way that the study may enrich a person?

Secondly, provide a seminar on enhancing discipleship process by highlighting essentials for effective Sabbath School small groups. This aimed at not only improving Sabbath attendance but also attendance in worship services in general. Eight fundamental elements were covered.

First, conduct a felt need assessment. It was emphasized that the Sabbath School superintendent, with the cooperation of the church elders, deacons and deaconesses, ought to carry a detailed investigation and analysis of the needs of his or her church family. Then create programs to address/meet those needs. Second, foster fellowship among Sabbath School members. It was articulated that every Sabbath School class teacher at Usa River SDA Church should design time for members of the class to share experiences from the past week with one another. Members may meet outside the church premises for times of fellowship and further study of the Word of God. Those fellowship programs may include: potlucks, retreats, birth days parties, etc.

Third, encourage memorization of Scriptures. Since Sabbath School is a time for enhancing discipleship process, the leader of the class works toward encouraging members to learn the weeks' memory verse. This energizes the soul with spiritual safeguard to help meet the challenges of life.

Fourth, the ideal class size. Emphasis on the ideal class size of 6-8 should be maintained for sound management and effective participation of members. Large classes should be discouraged since they diminish meaningful participation of class members. Fifth, affirm Sabbath School class members. The class teacher to have a well-organized way to recognize and celebrate the presence of class members in the class. He or she should also have a sustaining method to acknowledge their absence

and organize a follow-up immediately, where the missing member is visited and encouraged to attend the next Sabbath.

Sixth, encourage each Sabbath School class member to be concerned about the needs and challenges of the other members of class. When one member gets into a problem, immediately the leader organizes a visit by the group and wherever possible the group joins hands together to assist their fellow member in need.

Seventh, focus on outreach program. The Sabbath School class leader's responsibility of encouraging each class member's involvement in outreach program is emphasized. This means that each member of the class is motivated to share his or her faith through his or her talents and spiritual gifts.

Eighth, involvement of every member of the church in Sabbath School class. Through this active participation Sabbath School is built and the church as well. Every member on the church membership record should be involved in a Sabbath School class. Inactive members should be reclaimed and assigned classes.

Thirdly, conducting a productive follow-up program that will go along with in-rich program to enhance discipleship process of inactive members of Usa River SDA Church. The following activities were carried out.

First, inactive new members to be visited were identified. Then, a team for follow-up program was identified. Thereafter, the team members for follow-up ministry were trained. Afterward, the team members got acquainted and built relationships with the inactive new members.

Subsequently, the team members carried out discipleship process through visiting the inactive new members, helping them overcome challenges that made them inactive and then encouraging them to begin being active. Finally, the process was evaluated.

Limitations

The following are the limitations of the study which had been noted. First, data from questionnaire was based upon volunteer sample which did not necessarily identify the population to which those involved belong. Second, only Usa River SDA Church was involved, thus the outcomes may not be applied to all churches in Tanzania. The method used, mixed method, was more expensive and time consuming to carry out. Lastly, mixed method required a diverse set of research skill in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies which the researcher does not claim expertise.

Conclusion

Ministry always takes place in contexts where some factors enhance or hinder the church's mission and ministry. The analysis of the macro and micro-contexts has revealed potential challenges and opportunities for ministry at the Usa River SDA Church. This calls for the development and implementation of an effective strategy that uses the available opportunities to address challenges to ministry in this context. This is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTATION

The previous chapter has described the social, cultural, and religious context analysis of the project's ministry context. It has also expounded how the data related to the implementation of the study was gathered. Furthermore, it has provided analysis of that data. The analysis has been followed by a developed program to enhance discipleship process of the members of Usa River SDA Church. The aim of the program has been established to minimize membership loss at the concerned church.

This chapter unfolds how the intervention was implemented to enhance discipleship process at the Usa River SDA Church in Tanzania. A chronological narrative of the implementation process is presented. Then an evaluation of the outcome is underscored. The chapter ends with a conclusion which summarizes main ideas realized in the implementation process.

Program to Enhance Discipleship Process

This chapter is divided into two sections that are intended to discuss the program developed for enhancing discipleship process of members at the Usa River SDA Church. The first section presents the program developed while the second section reveals the outcome of the evaluation done. The program developed has two phases entailing familiarization of the program to members of the Usa River Church, and training program.

Familiarization of the Program

In order to maximize participation of members of the Usa River SDA Church into the program, the researcher used one Sabbath divine service to create awareness of the members. It was deemed necessary because the full understanding of the program to be undertaken would necessitate complete support and involvement of the members. Members who were present were about 300. Then in the afternoon of the same Sabbath the researcher expounded on what the program was going to entail.

The turn up in the afternoon was a bit lower than during the worship service in the morning. Only about 150 members availed themselves. This was because, part of those who did not return were children who were not directly involved in the program. The rest of the church members just opted not to return.

On that afternoon program the findings from the questionnaires and interviews were presented. Then a detailed program on how to address the problems that aroused in the data collection was described. This program was intended to enhance discipleship process among the church members.

Findings from questionnaire. As already noted, this section describes the findings from the questionnaires that were filled by church members. The data showed that many members had been to the church for a long time. For members to have been in the church for more than 6 years, its implication is that they were well acquainted with the teachings and practices of the church. This is evident in their esteem of the Bible. Almost all church members had Bible and this was one of the strengths of the Usa River SDA Church.

However, with this strength of Bible possession, there was a weakness in that, many church members did not allocate quality time to study their Bibles. Due to this failure, other problems resulted. One of the problems was family devotion. From the

data, many church members did not get involved in family devotional life. Since study of the Bible and family devotion have a bearing on a believers' relationship with God, tithing, which expresses that relationship, was also low.

In most cases worship attendance is closely connected to family worship. A believer who values family worship will also be committed to attending worship services. Given the fact that family devotion was low, likewise not many church members attended mid-week prayer meetings, week of prayers, opening and closing the Sabbath, and camp meetings.

Besides, a person with low participation in family worship even his or her attendance to Sabbath School deprecates. Thus, the data showed low involvement in Sabbath School that in turn affected participation in small groups where nurturing takes place. Members who were attending Sabbath School were few compared to those who came to church during divine service.

Since there was low attendance in Sabbath School, small groups, where members are organized for witnessing, sharing the Word of God, was affected. This ultimately is likely to result in low spiritual growth. And when people slow down spiritually, most probably the end result is backsliding. At the end a believer may drop out from the church altogether.

Additionally, from the data it was observed that follow-up ministry was also low. Many church members did not receive this spirit lifting service. It is a spirit lifting service due to the fact that in visitation members are nurtured and cared for.

It is during that ministry that individual members can open their hearts and express personal challenges they are going through. In many cases when certain challenges are not checked, in the long run, they lead to discouragement upon the

individual concerned. Discouragement ultimately causes a believer to backslide. Hence, regular visitation is indispensable.

It is during visitation that inactive members are woken up to revival. It is where those who are struggling with quality time for personal devotion, family devotion and attending church services are encouraged to get involved in those spiritual activities. In addition, those who are failing to be faithful in tithing are motivated to be faithful in tithing. Therefore, leaders ought to dedicate their time in visiting church members regularly.

Loss of church members. It was observed that the major reason why the church lost many church members was poor follow-up/pastoral visitation. This was followed by poor relationships among church members. On the other hand, not many of the members recognized low understanding of the church's teaching and apostasy to be causes of church membership drop.

Suggested ways to reduce church membership loss. From the data it was noted that a major way to enhance church membership retention was effective follow-up program. Promoting good relationship among church members was also cited. In addition, grounding members upon the teachings of the church was brought up as well.

Findings from the focus group discussion and interviews. From the focus group discussion and interviews it was articulated that weak follow-up ministry is the outstanding cause for church membership loss. A major reason for this weakness was that majority of leaders are pre-occupied with their everyday activities. Hence they did not get ample time to do visitation. Besides, the district pastor had a large territory making it difficult to provide effective spiritual nurture.

Insensible relationship among church members was also noted as one of the causes for church membership loss. Furthermore, low involvement of members in

family worship and Bible study also affected church membership retention. Not only that, but also, low understanding of the Adventist Church beliefs was highlighted.

Suggested ways to minimize church membership loss. Suggestions provided by interviewees to minimize church membership loss included enhancing follow-up ministry. Leaders should be committed to pastoral visitations. When a person accepts to be a church elder or deacon/deaconess, he or she should understand that one of his or her responsibility is to visit members. Since that self-awareness and commitment was lacking, church members did not get the spiritual nurture they needed. As a result they became weak spiritually.

From the interview it was noted that participation in the small groups through Sabbath School was to be promoted. This was expected to not only strengthen the church but also make it possible for members to relate well. Lastly, the interviewees suggested that instruction on church doctrines was to be strengthened.

Intervention. From the results of questionnaires and interviews presented there was a need to develop a program that was to address the weaknesses identified. Therefore this part of the project presents types of the program that were developed to meet main challenges that affected church membership retention at the Usa River SDA Church.

The program was intended to demonstrate an effective way to follow-up ministry. In addition, seminar was given to church members on how to dedicate quality time for studying the Bible. Members were also enlightened on how they could effectively carry out family devotions and have meaningful Bible studies. Five Sabbath School class teachers and their assistants were trained on how to effectively conduct Sabbath School classes.

The following section begins by unpacking about the seminar offered to church members on family devotions and Bible studies. Then, it describes about the training provided to the selected Sabbath School teachers. Lastly, it deals with follow-up ministry providing a bird's eye view on what it entails.

Seminar. A seminar encompasses a meeting that involves a presenter and recipients discussing together information on an identified topic. It offers an occasion where a topic is explored by discussion, and to discover any problems involved. The presenter usually prepares himself or herself. Then gives the presentation thereafter throws the ball ready for discussion.

The recipients are expected to be proactive to make the discussion of benefit to all participants by contributing their opinions and asking questions. The presenter is not expected to provide lectures or sermons to the participants, instead he or she should create an atmosphere for participants to actively be involved in the discussion. He or she encourages contributions from the recipients through probing questions that kindle further debate. At the end of the seminar conclusions are drawn and some suggestions and recommendations may be given for implementation.

Seminars are significant since they generate opportunities to analyze topics in depth. Furthermore, they enable sharing of ideas in such a way that one's thinking is advanced. Not only that but also participants learn from the experiences and knowledge of others. Still, participants get the opportunity to learn perspectives and ideas that they might have not otherwise reflected on. With that in mind, the researcher conducted seminars to the Usa River Church members to enhance their participation in family devotion and personal Bible study.

Training. Training is the process that imparts required skills to leaders of an organization for effective, skillful, and qualitative performing a particular task. It is

not endless, but administered periodically in a given specified time. In most cases it is given by a person who is professional or knowledgeable in allied field.

It can therefore be stated that, training is a process intended to develop expertise or expand the already existing intensity of knowledge. Its intention is to equip leaders in order that they may perform their present job better. It fills the vacuum between what the leader has and what the position demands.

Any training entails time and effort. In some cases it may also require financial obligations. Thus, an organization ought to be extra cautious while developing a training program. The objectives of a training program should be clearly specified. The method of training to be employed should be carefully chosen to meet the needs and objectives of the project.

It is advisable after the implementation of a program following the training, an evaluation be carried out to test the effectiveness of the training offered. This type of a feedback from the trainees may be given in the form of questionnaires that the trainees are asked to fill at the end of the program. By so doing, it helps the trainer to assess whether the time, effort and (money) invested were worth or just a total waste.

Follow-up. By follow-up it is intended to explain about pastoral visitation. Going to the family of a member, spending some time trying to know his or her whereabouts, sharing the Word of God, and praying with the individual is what follow-up entails. Follow-up shows that a leader cares. The person visited acknowledges that the leader shares in his or her desire to be successful.

Follow-up is a signal of the leader's realism. It assists those who are visited change their habits. Jesus visited Zacchaeus in his home and by that visit, Zacchaeus pledged to change his habit. He practically demonstrated that by promising to return to those he had taken their wealth illegally (Luke 19).

Sometimes when people are not visited they develop dysfunctional habits of relating to others. By follow-up, a leader is creating an opportunity for the visited to grow and consolidate Christ-like life. It is a moment of helping individuals to improve and not cast blames on them.

A leader who visits his or her members has the capacity to nurture relationships. Such a leader has the ability to acknowledge the innermost needs of his or her members. This assists in enhancing membership retention of current members as well as admitting new ones. Pastoral visitation is so powerful in accomplishing what public evangelism cannot.

Church members sometimes may be inclined to endure dull sermons, poor administration and organization, but they will not endure a deficiency in visitation. It should be recalled that a major reason why Usa River SDA Church lost more members was poor follow-up. Thus follow-up ministry is of great importance for the well being of church members.

The following section presents how a training program was conducted at Usa River SDA Church to enhance church membership retention. The training program entailed: Bible studies; devotional life (both personal and family); improving Sabbath School objectives including effective small groups; and effective follow-up ministry.

Training Program

As previously noted, in order to enhance a discipleship process at the Usa River SDA Church with the purpose of enhancing church membership retention a training program was developed and implemented. This section therefore endeavors to describe the implementation of that training program entailing: Bible studies; devotional life; Sabbath School; small groups; and follow-up ministry.

Seminar on Bible study. Studying the Bible refers to reading of the Scriptures with a prayerful attitude contemplating or meditating upon what the text or passage mean. As an individual reads the Bible he or she should keep in mind the question: What does this text/passage say? Then the reader needs to move another step by asking himself or herself: What does this text/passage mean?

Meditation is the process that shapes the individual parts into a unified understanding of the biblical truth. In other words, it refers to a deep reflection and thinking. It is therefore a contemplative—an intelligent process.

The next step is to seek to know how the text/passage can be applied in every-day life. The reader should allow the Scriptures speak to him or her personally in order to enhance spiritual growth. He or she must allow the Word of God change his or her life. He or she should therefore ask himself or herself: How do the divine truths and principles contained in this text/passage apply to him or her in terms of his or her attitude and actions?

A one week seminar (between 22.11.2015 to 28.11.2015) on the significance of studying the Bible was given to members of the Usa River SDA Church. This seminar ran from 5:00pm to 6:30pm from Sunday to Friday and was concluded on Sabbath afternoon. The average number of members that attended daily was 112. This was about 28% of the total membership. On Sabbath afternoon the number increased to 178, which was about 45%.

The seminar was so exciting and enriching not only to the members who attended but also to the presenter. This was because of dynamic questions and discussions that prevailed throughout the seminar. Topics that were covered included the following: the significance of studying the Bible; the qualities of the Scriptures;

ten things the Bible can do to a believer; ten hopes and dreams from the Bible to a believer; and how to study the Bible.¹

Each presentation was done for 30 minutes then followed by 30 minutes of reflection, questions and discussions. Thereafter, a session was closed with a season of prayer. On Sabbath afternoon a brief review of all the topics was done, followed by discussions. At the close, church members pledged to set apart quality time daily for Bible study and prayer. A prayer of dedication was offered following the response to the appeal meant to dedicate quality time studying the Word of God.

Seminar on devotional life. In this busy world where human beings measure success by what they do, it becomes so difficult for people to have quality time with God. Human beings do not have time for spiritual growth through their intimate relationship with their Creator. Time to be spent with God is viewed to be nonessential. It is considered time to be spent by people who do not have anything to do.

Many people ask; where is that time that a person can spend alone with the Lord? There are a lot of forces that drive human beings into many activities or business. Some people view time to be alone with God to be practically impossible.

David acknowledged importance of being alone with his God on a daily basis. Although he went through challenges and pressures that were drawing him to an opposite direction, he still had time with God. He purposed in his heart that nothing will hinder him from being with his Creator daily (Psalm 5:3).

It was this intimate relationship between David and God that enabled David to grow in faith till he became a man after God's heart. The morning watch is so significant for it makes a person to grow in his or her knowledge of God more

¹See Appendix D.

intimately. Such an individual through that practice is daily being transformed to Christlike character.

Unless Christians decide to spend time with God, making it a priority, all the hours spent in their daily busy activities will not be wisely spent. Spiritual disciplines of meditating on God's Word and praying are remarkable to spiritual growth. The Devil usually deceives God's people working tirelessly to make time spent alone with God difficult. He knows that when a believer does not have quality time with God, that believer is prone to spiritual failure. Thus he wins that individual to himself.

Thus, getting time to spend with God is very important to a Christian. It is only through seclusion with God that Christians are able to grow in their relationship with God. As a result be able to keep the mind of the Spirit of God and maintain their spiritual equilibrium as God becomes the center of their lives.

So far, the significance of getting time alone with God has been established. This encompasses the family. A Christian family ought to set time when it spends with the Lord to get strength from Him to face life's challenges.

In order to enhance both personal and family devotional life to members of the Usa-River SDA Church a seminar, for a whole week (between 06.12.2015 to 12.12.2015), was provided. The seminar began on Sunday and ended on Sabbath afternoon. With the exception of Sabbath, the congregation gathered at 5:00pm to 6:30pm daily.

Topics covered included: Significance of daily devotions; Devotions for spiritual growth; Bible reading plans; Family devotionals; Classic devotionals; Lifestyle devotionals; and Devotional for thanks giving.²

²See Appendix E.

The daily seminar was divided into three sections. The first section which was 30 minutes long was for the presenter to give presentation. This was followed by a time of discussion; also 30 minutes. During this time the members reflected on the topic presented, asked questions, and took part in discussions. The last section which was about 30 minutes was dedicated to prayers seeking God's power to embrace daily devotional life.

The targeted members was 396 however those who attended daily by average were 136 that is about 34%. On the Sabbath afternoon the number increased up to 183; this was about 46%. After reviewing the topics that were covered throughout the week that Sabbath afternoon, followed by general discussion, Lord's Supper was conducted. The atmosphere was highly spiritual and members pledged by the help of God to dedicate quality time in personal and family devotions. This enhanced their daily walk with God, hence boosted discipleship process among them.

Training of Sabbath School class teachers. Five class teachers with their five assistants were trained on how to handle Sabbath School classes. The training was done within three days (between 08.01.2016 to 10.01.2016). Three sessions were used to conduct the training. First session was on Friday 4pm to 6pm; the second session was on Sabbath as from 4pm to 6pm. Then the last session was done on Sunday from 9am to 1pm. This was done for the purpose of smooth continuity from one presentation to the other.

Topics that were covered included: The role of Sabbath School teachers; The teachers' qualifications; The preparation for teaching; The power of teaching; The methods of teaching; and Growing continuously. The first two topics were presented within the first session. Topics three and four were presented in the second session and topics five and six were presented in the third session. The material used for training

was adopted from Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.³

The training was so exhilarating. The participants were amazed as they were exposed on new ideas that they had never come across. After that training, five Sabbath school classes were organized for the trainees to put into practice what they had learnt. These classes had 8 church members each.

This training was preceded by a general seminar that was conducted on a Sabbath afternoon. The participants included four church elders, Sabbath School superintendent and the three assistants, and all class teachers. Church members who were interested were also invited.

This was a general seminar intended to provide an overview to enhancement of discipleship process through highlighting essentials for effective Sabbath School small groups. This seminar aimed at not only improving Sabbath attendance but also attendance in worship services in general. Eight fundamental elements were covered:

First, conduct felt need programming. It was emphasized that Sabbath School superintendent ought to carry a detailed investigation and analysis of the needs of his or her church family. Then create programs to address/meet those needs. Second, foster fellowship among Sabbath School members. It was articulated that every Sabbath School class teacher should design time for members of the class to share experiences from the past week with one another. Members may meet outside the church premises for times of fellowship and further study of the Word of God. Those fellowship programs may include: potlucks, retreats, birth days parties, etc.

³Terry Messenger, "Effective Sabbath School Teaching," accessed 28 August 2016, http://adventist.org.uk/__data/assets/powerpoint_doc/0003/37209/EFFECTIVE-SABBATH-SCHOOL-TEACHING.ppt.

Third, encourage memorization of Scriptures. Since Sabbath School is a time for enhancing discipleship process, the leader of the class should work toward encouraging members to learn the weeks' memory verse. This energizes the soul with spiritual safeguard to help meet the challenges of life.

Fourth, the ideal class size. Emphasis on the ideal class size of 6-8 should be maintained for sound management and effective participation of members. Large classes should be discouraged since they diminish meaningful participation of class members. Fifth, affirm Sabbath School class members. The class teacher should have a well-organized way to recognize and celebrate the presence of class members in the class. He or she should also have a sustaining method to acknowledge their absence and organize a follow-up immediately, where the missing member is visited and encouraged to attend the next Sabbath.

Sixth, encourage each Sabbath class member to be concerned about the needs and challenges of the other members of class. When one member gets into a problem, immediately the leader must organize a visit by the group and wherever possible the group ought to join hands together to assist their fellow member in need.

Seventh, focus on outreach program. The Sabbath School class leader's responsibility of encouraging each class member's involvement in outreach program was emphasized. This means that each member of the class is supposed to be motivated to share his or her faith through his or her talents and spiritual gifts.

Eighth, involvement of every member of the church in Sabbath School class. Through this active participation Sabbath School is built and the church as well. Every member on the church membership record should be involved in a Sabbath School class. Inactive members should be reclaimed and assigned classes.

Follow-up program. A dynamic follow-up program was conducted within two months of March and April, 2016. It was meant to enhance discipleship process of inactive members of Usa River SDA Church. The following activities were carried out.

First, inactive new members who were to be visited were identified. Then, a team for follow-up program was identified after which the team members for follow-up ministry were trained prior to their involvement in the ministry of visitation. After training team members, they were divided into two groups and assigned members to visit. They began by getting acquainted with the inactive new members. Thereafter, they built relationships with inactive new members. Finally, continued the discipling process through visiting the inactive new members, helping them overcome challenges that made them inactive and encouraging them to begin being active in church worship services and activities.

In accomplishing the follow-up program, the process began with identifying inactive new members to be reclaimed through visitation. Since church leaders did not have the list of members who were inactive, though they testify that there were quite a number, the researcher used church members. Church members were gathered on a Sabbath day afternoon and requested to mention members whom they knew were inactive. As a result 26 members were identified.

After having identified the inactive members to work upon, team members who would be involved in the program were identified. The criteria used to get the team members was total commitment and availability. As a result, five people volunteered for this ministry. Three days training was offered to these five volunteers

after which, they were divided into two groups ready to implement the program.⁴ Throughout two months of their ministry they were monitored by the researcher.

They began by acquainting themselves with the members who were to be visited. They exchanged contacts and agreed on the workable schedule for the whole program. The agreement was that they were to meet these members in their homes on Sundays. That consensus was met on the first day of visit which was a Sabbath afternoon.

The following week, that was the second visit, team members built relationship with the members to gain their confidence. This allowed openness and freedom for members to express themselves without reservations. Then the exercise continued as per the agreed schedule. Every Friday the researcher met team members for one hour assessing what had been done previous Sunday.

Together the group talked about the challenges experienced and how to address those challenges in the next visit. Thereafter, a program was laid down for the following Sunday. The group held a season of prayers thanking God for the achievement in the previous visit. In addition, challenges were brought before the throne of God. Subsequently, guidance of the Holy Spirit was sought for the following visit.

Challenges identified from the members visited that caused their inactiveness were mainly social. It was discovered that these members suffered from lack of fellowship and friendship in the church. They had never been visited by any church leader(s) leave alone their fellow church members. They therefore got discouraged and slowly drifted into inactiveness.

⁴See Appendix F for the material used in the training.

One couple after several visits disclosed that they had been having marital problem. Unfortunately, they had no one to run to for reconciliation or even just pray with them. Prior to their marriage the woman was a non-Adventist while the man was an Adventist. Their marriage led the man to be dropped out from church membership because it was not conducted through church or state regulations.

However, after sometime the husband was re-baptized and the wife baptized into the Adventist Church. Nevertheless, due to the challenges they were going through in their marriage, they both ceased attending church. By the grace of God, through prayers, this couple was reconciled.

On the other hand, during the visitation, four non-Adventists who were living with some of these inactive members were so moved by that ministry. They therefore requested for Bible studies to learn the Adventist faith. For that reason two Bible study classes were established.

The preceding section has described how the program was executed. The following section explains the outcome of the program.

Evaluation of the Program

This section narrates the outcome of the implemented program. It begins by highlighting the outcome that was realized after the seminar on Bible study presented to church members. It presents the number of members who began to spend quality time in studying their Bibles.

Then an evaluation following the seminar on devotional life presented to church members follows. Here again the number of church members who actively began to participate in personal and family devotionals is presented. The results following the training program that was done to ten Sabbath School class teachers are

highlighted. The section ends with the results following follow-up ministry to inactive church members.

The instrument that was used for evaluation is questionnaire. 100 members were given questionnaires on Sabbath evening to fill and return them the following Sabbath. Those who were able to fill and return their questionnaires were only 50. This was 50% of the targeted population.

The results are presented in the tables below. Thereafter they are analyzed. Table 4 presents the results of the evaluation concerning personal information following the seminar. It involves three items: studying the Bible; family devotion; and tithing.

Table 4. Discipleship Process: Personal Information Evaluation

	Bible Study		Family Devotion			Tithing		
Continue always	13	26%	Continue always	20	40%	Continue always	23	46%
Always after	23	46%	Always after	19	38%	Always after	5	10%
Less often	10	20%	Less often	6	12%	Less often	20	40%
No study	4	8%	No dev	4	8%	No tithing	2	4%
No time			No time	1	2%			
Total	50			50			50	

Analysis. The data above showed that, 26% of members who filled the questionnaire continued to study their Bibles. This was reflected in family devotions and tithing where 40% and 46% respectively continued to participate in family devotions and tithing. The data also showed that after giving seminar 46% of the members began to vigorously partake in family devotions. At the same time, 38% of the members after the seminar carried out family devotions always. Besides, five percent began returning tithe after the seminar. Moreover, the data showed that, 40% of the members who filled the questionnaires began to return tithe though not regularly

as they got income. In addition, twelve percent began family devotionals though not on a regular basis.

On the other hand, only eight percent did not dedicate their time for studying the Bible. This was also replicated in the small number of people who did not have family devotionals after the seminar. Only eight percent was identified.

As was already noted above, involvement in Bible study and family devotions have a bearing on tithing. Since there were few people who did not study their Bibles as well as having family devotions, also those who were not returning tithe were few. They were only four percent.

In sum, it can be concluded that, after the seminar they were more church members who devoted quality time studying their Bibles. Furthermore, there were more members who were actively conducting family devotions. Likewise, the number of those who were returning tithe after the seminar was also considerably high.

Table 5 below presents worship attendance of members who filled the questionnaires. It shows attendance in mid-week prayer meetings, opening and closing the Sabbath, and Sabbath School.

Table 5. Discipleship Process: Worship Attendance Evaluation

Mid-week Prayer Meeting			Opening/closing Sabbath			Sabbath School		
Continue always	15	30%	Continue always	18	36%	Continue always	18	36%
Always after	18	36%	Always after	20	40%	Always after	25	50%
Less often	13	26%	Less often	10	20%	Less often	4	8%
Don't attend	4	8%	Don't attend	2	4%	Don't attend	3	6%
Total	50		Total	50		Total	50	

Analysis. From the previous data it was established that, there were more church members who dedicated quality time with God. There were many members studying their Bibles and having family devotions. Studying the Bible and having family devotions have direct impact to worship attendance.

Since there were many members who were studying the Bible and holding family devotions, worship attendance also increased significantly. The data showed that church members who continued to attend mid-week prayer meetings were 30%. At the same time, those who began attending frequently as a result of the seminar were 36%. Those who were not attending regularly were 26%, while those who were not attending mid-week prayer meetings were only eight percent.

Concerning the attendance of the opening/closing Sabbath worships, the data revealed that, there was significant attendance. 36% among the members who answered the questionnaires continued attending vespers following the seminar. Additionally, 40% of the members began attending Friday and Sabbath vespers habitually. Members who were attending occasionally were 20%. However, those who were not attending were only four percent among the members who answered the questionnaires.

From the data it was discovered that, many people were attending Sabbath School after the seminar. The data showed that 36% of the members who answered the questionnaires continued to attend Sabbath School. Moreover, those who began to attend regularly were 50%. Among the respondents only eight percent were rarely attending. In addition, only six percent were completely not attending.

In short, it can be highlighted that worship attendance increased following the seminar that was conducted on Bible study and devotional life. More church members

attended mid-week prayer meetings, opening/closing Sabbath worships and Sabbath School. While very few people did not attend.

Below is a table showing involvement in church ministries. The data shows how church members participated in small groups and witnessing following the training that was offered to the Sabbath School teachers.

Table 6. Discipleship Process: Church Ministries

	Small Groups		Witnessing		
Continue always	18	36%	Continue always	7	14%
Always after	25	50%	Always after	11	22%
Less often	4	8%	Less often	27	54%
Don't participate	3	6%	Don't Witness	5	10%
Total	50			50	

Analysis. The previous data showed more members attending worship services after the seminar that was conducted. It should be understood that attendance in Sabbath School affects participation in small groups. By small groups the researcher refers to Sabbath School classes.

Since more members attended Sabbath School likewise involvement in Sabbath School classes also increased. From the data above, 36% of the respondents continued to participate in small groups. More so among members who responded to the questionnaires, 50% began to participate in small groups after the training that was conducted to the five Sabbath School teachers and their five assistants. This shows that more members were recruited into the small groups.

On the other hand, only eight percent after the training were not regular attendees in the Sabbath School classes. While only six percent did not participate at all. It is anticipated that when more members get involved in Sabbath School classes,

there will be more involvement in witnessing. Nevertheless, that appears to be not the case. This is because the data showed low involvement in witnessing.

From the respondents, those who continued to do witnessing were fourteen percent. While those who began to share good news regularly after the training of Sabbath School class teachers were only 22%. Besides, those who participated in witnessing less often were the majority. Notwithstanding, 10% did not participate in evangelism.

In summary, it can be noted that, while more church members were involved in small groups, those who participated in witnessing were few. It is anticipated that when Sabbath School classes are run efficiently many members of those classes would use their spiritual gifts to share God's Word. However, that was not the case, showing that still there is a work that ought to be done in strengthening Sabbath School classes. The next section describes the evaluation of the training program that was conducted to five Sabbath School class teachers and their five assistants.

Evaluation of the training program. In evaluating the outcomes of the training program of the five class teachers and their assistants, the researcher used observation method. The researcher moved from one class to the other among the five classes that were being led by the trainees to see how the classes were being handled. This evaluation was done in the month of May every Sabbath and the first Sabbath of June, 2016.

It was discovered that among the five classes, two classes did well in implementing what was shared during the training. By observation and interaction with class teachers about 90% of what was shared in the training program was put into practice. The rest of the classes did not do so well, though about 40% of what was

shared in the training was incorporated in the handling of the class. Other aspects were still done traditionally; the way they used to do them before.

The two classes that did well implemented the following. First, the size of the class members was maintained to eight. Second, in addition to the two leaders each class, they elected one per a class among the members who was to coordinate evangelistic activities. Fourth, they shared their contacts among themselves.

Fifth, they had a well-organized schedule of activities that were planned to be done together as a class. Those activities included: visiting one another every week, fellowship activities like potlucks, picnics, retreats, and birthday parties. Sixth, they planned one day in the week when they could come together to study the study guide. Seventh, they had a well stipulated program for outreach and community services.

Eighth, they grouped themselves in pairs and passed by the homes of each other on Sabbath morning for the purpose of going together in the church. Ninth, they had an effective follow-up program to any of their members who missed church attendance for any reason. Tenth, they prayed for each other daily during their family devotions.

In short these two classes were well organized to ensure that they helped each other grow in discipleship process. They were a better model for other classes. By their well-organized plan it was difficult for any of them to go missing. Thus, they contributed to what was expected to be done at Usa River SDA Church to enhance church membership retention and minimize church membership loss. The next section relates the evaluation of the follow-up ministry that was done by a team of five people under the supervision of the researcher.

Evaluation of the follow-up ministry. As noted above the follow-up ministry was done by five members who dedicated every Sunday for two months for this

ministry. The fellowship and friendship they built with 26 inactive members were remarkable. It was this fellowship and friendship that these inactive members lacked in the church. They were the main reasons for their inactiveness. When this group offered that ministry to fill in the vacuum, the members visited were so delighted.

Few of the inactive members had marital problems. And what they needed was comfort, counsel, and encouragement to overcome their challenges. Following the ministry that was offered on these areas to those passive members, the concerned members were revived. As already been mentioned above, some of the members just needed some people who could visit them and pray with them. And the group addressed that need.

Church members who were inert were so thrilled with this ministry. They were motivated to continue in their walk with the Lord. They found friends whom they could be open to and share their burdens. They found spiritual encouragement that could keep them going. They were directed to God who is able to meet their needs.

Few of these inactive new members confessed that their problem was just spiritual laziness. With the visit and support of the team members, they woke up from their spiritual slumber. They earnestly sought the help of the Holy Spirit to begin afresh their Christian journey.

Not only were those visited benefited from the ministry but also to the team members it was so enriching. The blessing of conducting this pastoral visit surpassed those visited. It proved a blessing even to team members. Together with the training they received, when they were in the real field, their understanding on personal evangelism was advanced. In addition, as the saying goes, ‘when you minister to others you too grow,’ they grew in their spiritual endeavors.

Moreover, they were able to have a network of friends. Through this ministry of visitation, their relationships with the members they visited were cemented. This bonding therefore did not go without significant results.

Team members were blessed to see people making decisions to revive their relationship with God. As they dealt with others' challenges and difficulties they were able to get encouragement in facing their own challenges. Visitations encouraged them to look beyond their problems. They learnt the power of working together and the power of prayer.

One couple mentioned above that had marital problems had their problems solved and were reconciled through prayers. When this case was brought up following the request from the couple that they be visited and reconciled, the issue was put under prayers. Two days later when the couple was contacted to arrange the visit, they said that the Lord had already done a miracle. During the time when the group was praying the Holy Spirit was working within this couple. They were able to resolve their differences and reconciled. They then promised to begin attending the church since they had no any other hindrances.

This ministry as already been pointed out, attracted four non-Adventists. These non-Adventists requested for Bible study. Bible studies were conducted to them as a result they not only understood the Adventist faith but also were drawn to join the remnant church. Two of these non-Adventists began to attend church services.

As a result of this follow-up program seven inactive church members began to attend church regularly. A special program was organized to celebrate their reinstatement to church turnout. This program was done on a Sabbath day. It was so colorful. Every inactive member present and the two non-Adventists were given gifts of flowers and encouraged to continue steadfastly in their walk with the Lord.

White says that the work of pastors do not end with their ministry of sharing the Word of God from the church's pulpit. They need to go into the members' homes talking with them and praying for them in sincerity and humility. They need to acknowledge that there are individuals who are not going to receive good news until that good news finds them in their places of dwelling.⁵

She continues to affirm Luke 14:23 that says "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled." Ministers should go into the homes and teach people the truth. As they come closer to those they minister, co-operating with God, He will empower them. Christ will lead them, providing words to them to utter that will pierce the hearts of the recipients.⁶

White observes that the Redeemer labored "from house to house, healing the sick, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the disconsolate."⁷ Likewise, ministers of the gospel ought to go house to house ministering to people, addressing their various needs.

Through their personal labor, they should meet the people where they are. They should get familiarized with them. They should teach Scripture in homes. If they neglect this work, their preaching will be counted a great failure.⁸

This section has exemplified how follow-up ministry is significant. Those 26 inactive members who were visited were delighted with the ministry. Hope was kindled in their lives. They were blessed. As a result, they realized that they still had a chance to amend their relationship with their Lord. Not only the visited were blessed,

⁵White, *Gospel Workers*, 187.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 188.

⁸Ibid.

but the ministry ignited fire and blessings to the five individuals who dedicated their time to the visitation ministry. As a result of the follow-up program seven believers rekindled their attendance to church services. Two non-Adventists visited also began attending church services.

Chronological schedule of the implemented program. This part highlights the chronological schedule of the execution of the project. It shows the activity and the date when the activity was done. It begins with the commencement of the program and ends with the evaluation.

Table 7. Chronological schedule of the implemented program

Activity	Date
Introducing the Program	10.10.2015
Administering questionnaire	10.10.2015 to 24.10.2015
Focus group interview	24.10.2015
Individuals interview	26.10.2015; 28.10.2015
Sensitization of the program	14.11.2015
Seminar on Bible study	22.11.2015 to 28.11.2015
Seminar on devotional life	06.12.2015 to 12.12.2015
Training Sabbath School teachers	08.01.2016 to 10.01.2016
Identifying inactive members	06.02.2016
Selecting follow-up team	13.02.2016
Training follow-up team	19.02.2016 to 21.02.2016
Follow-up ministry	March and April, 2016
Follow-up assessment	April 02, 09, 16, 23, 30, 2016
General evaluation	May 07, 14, 21, 28, June 04, 2016

Summary

It is significant to create awareness to church members concerning the program to be undertaken to address a problem in their church in order to maximize their involvement. When members are informed on the project and their role clearly stipulated, they are likely to provide support and actively get involved for its success.

Like Paul's admonition to Timothy (2 Tim 2:2), a researcher need to select few dedicated members for training then these would help to minister to others. It may be not easy to convert the whole church at once, but through this process of replication the whole church may be saturated with the program.

Pastoral visitation should be an on-going program to enhance the discipleship process among members. It must not be just for a season. Members need regular follow-up, comfort, and encouragement as they sail in their spiritual endeavors.

Good and healthy relationship among members is significant for church membership retention. Members' love and care for each other are indispensable. Variety of programs should be created to enhance relationship among members. Respect to leaders should be promoted and leaders should as well love and respect members. Some Sabbath afternoon programs may be dedicated for members' interaction.

Creativity of different kinds of social programs in the Sabbath School classes is rewarding. Such programs connect members. They are catalysts for the enhancement of discipleship process among members and in turn help to reduce church membership loss.

While individual prayer is important, group prayer is also indispensable. As people come together to seek the Lord in prayer, God intervenes in a special way. When the team and the researcher were busy praying for the couple that had marital problems, the Holy Spirit was working in the hearts of the couple. As a result the couple was able to resolve their differences and decided to resume church attendance.

God knows better the needs of His people and through prayers He works out His will to His people sometimes without the involvement of people in providing counsel. Leaders' prayers to the members will not only be enriching but also

challenges and troubles among members are solved in accordance to God's will. The result is the enhancement of the discipleship process.

This chapter has articulated how the intervention was executed to improve discipleship process at the Usa River SDA Church. The next chapter presents a summary of the project. Final evaluation comparing the evaluations noted in chapter four and chapter five is presented then analyzed. Outcomes are examined. Thereafter, lesson learnt and a list of recommendations is given for further actions or research.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Ministry at the Usa River SDA Church suffered a setback. The church had increased through baptism of 116 members in the year 2012 and 2013. Unfortunately church membership retention was not efficient. As a result the church lost 576 members during the same period of time.

This therefore called for an effective program to be developed and implemented to counteract this situation in order to enhance membership retention at the Usa River SDA Church. The program entailed an effectual follow-up (pastoral visitation) ministry; seminars; and training.

Five members formed the follow-up team and ministered to the inactive church members. Church members received from the researcher presentations on enriching their spiritual growth. Ten Sabbath School class teachers were trained on how to promote the objectives of the Sabbath School. An evaluation of the program was done.

Summary

The study unfolded the problem of church membership retention at the Usa River SDA Church. Theological foundation established the enhancement of discipleship process, in turn promote church membership retention at the Usa River SDA Church. Literature review has been presented to complement the theological basis of the study for the same.

Macro and micro contexts have been explored to discover challenges and opportunities to enhance membership retention at the Usa River SDA Church. Based

on these, the intervention was developed and implemented to address the main challenges identified. After the implementation of the program an evaluation based on the outcome is presented. The lessons learnt from the project are dispensed and recommendations for further research are highlighted.

Discipleship is a process that entails both the quantity and quality of the followers of Jesus. For that reason, all who are won to the faith should be nurtured until they grow to maturity in Christ. The habit that seems to be permeating the Adventist Church, whereby pastors and leaders appear to be just interested in numbers and not quality should be discouraged. If the church fails to take measures, loss of members will be unavoidable. In addition, there will be many members in church records who are not dedicated to God who cannot be useful for the growth of the church.

Discipleship has been identified as the process of being like Jesus. Disciples are expected to be like Jesus, talk like Him, walk like Him, and minister like He did for and them to be exemplified. Disciples are expected to grow and be able to make other disciples. Multiplication of disciples is the process that Jesus advocated for and commanded of His true followers to adopt for the building of His Kingdom.

The command that Jesus gave to His disciples as stipulated in Matthew 28:19-20 is to make disciples. This passage provides desired clarity to the rest of the four Great Commission passages (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47-48; John 20:21; and Acts 1:8). In order to accomplish that command, there are three activities that Christ said are indispensable. These include going, baptizing, and teaching new converts to observe what Jesus had commanded.

Christians are expected to go and meet people where they are. They are not supposed to wait for the people to come by themselves. Once the disciples have found non-believers, they have to make them disciples.

Christ by the third activity meant that new converts should be taught to internalize all that Christ had commanded. Thus, the third activity does not mean teaching new believers what Jesus had commanded but teaching them to keep all that He had commanded. To the recipients of the gospel of Matthew, this entailed what the author had written from chapter one to the last chapter. This therefore means that there must be some basics that new converts need to be given prior to baptism. After baptism they are to be taught how to live according to those teachings.

Jesus, who is the example to Christians, provides an example of how to nurture disciples. He affirms that those who were entrusted to Him, He took care of them and He lost none except the man of perdition. Likewise, His disciples are expected to keep those whom the Lord has entrusted under their care, nurture them to maturity, letting none get lost. Leaders at the Usa River Seventh-day Adventist Church need to embrace this responsibility with earnestness in order that through their ministry church membership retention be enhanced.

Discipleship is a call whereby disciples are called by Jesus Himself. It follows therefore that true disciples should have faith in Him as their Lord and Savior. For Christians to be authentic disciples they need to have genuine love to their Lord and their fellow humans. After He has trained them, the disciples are sent out to go and witness on His behalf. As they witness He does not leave them alone, for He promises to be with them to the end of the age.

The mission which Jesus sends His disciples to embrace is not human's mission but Christ's mission. As disciples take this mission they ought to keep in mind

the fact that Christ expects His church to continue being militant and evangelistically dynamic. They need to learn the lesson of activeness in spreading the gospel from the early Christian church.

The early Christian church stands to be a model of discipleship for disciples today. Her members continued in the preaching of the Word of God, fellowship of the saints, attending worships in the temple and sharing God's word daily in the homes. Not only that but also, they were concerned about each other daily.

Furthermore, they brought souls to Christ daily, meditated upon the Scriptures daily, and experienced growth daily. They were a prayerful community praying regularly. Daily they lived Christian faith. They celebrated Lord's Supper often to identify themselves with the sacrifice and resurrection of their Lord. It has been ascertained that if disciples of today need to be true to their Lord, imitating the apostolic church is indispensable.

For a believer to grow to maturity he or she has to be part of the community of the followers of Jesus. In that community an individual is nurtured and cared for like a nursing mother does to her baby. Like a father who is always concerned for the welfare of his children, the community is where such tender care is provided.

The call to discipleship demands cost that a believer has to meet if he or she wants to become true disciple. Jesus said that the person who wants to follow Him must take up his or her cross and follow Him. An individual needs to deny himself or herself and be ready for Christ to use him or her as He wishes. A disciple is willing to put Christ to be his or her priority over self, his or her family, or wealth. Discipleship concerns lifelong learning, lifelong following Christ, whole-life discipleship, and life elevating.

Ellen White asserts that, an individual who wants to be Christ's disciple has to show genuineness rather than bearing the name Adventist. Such a person should be a steward of the grace of Christ. He or she should not just claim to believe; living the truth should be part of the life of such believer.

A disciple should be willing to serve other human beings. In other words, the call to discipleship is the call to service. A disciple should be ready to share God's blessings and love with others. Furthermore, a disciple should be willing to submit to those in the leadership position in the Lord. A disciple is expected to put away envy and genuinely rejoice when others experience success.

For a disciple to be able to grow to maturity, he or she must abide in Jesus Christ. Christ said that a believer is able to produce more fruits only when he or she continues to be attached to Him. This attachment should be through meditation of the Scriptures and prayer.

In making disciples, it is advisable to begin with a small group. Christ knew this secret, and so He appointed twelve to form His team. He went as far as appointing three among the twelve. These three became so close to Him and were present by His side during critical moments in His ministry.

Evaluation

In order to present the final outcome of the project, the researcher has chosen to use quantitative comparative research methodology. In this ultimate evaluation, the two evaluations noted above are compared then conclusions drawn.

At the beginning of the program it was discovered that members who were involved in studying the Bible regularly were ten out of thirty nine. However, at the end of the program the members who were studying the Bible regularly were thirty six

out of fifty. This therefore implies that there was an increase of 46% of members who were studying the Bible regularly.¹

Results from the initial evaluation revealed that church members who were conducting regular family devotions were sixteen out of thirty nine. Comparatively, in the later evaluation there were thirty nine out of fifty who were having regular family devotions. This shows that, involvement in family devotions had increased by 37%.

Before administering the intervention the data showed that twelve church members out of thirty nine were returning tithe regularly. After the intervention twenty eight out of fifty were returning tithe regularly. This means that there was an increase of 25% of members who were returning tithe regularly.

Studying the Bible and having family worships have a bearing to attending church worship services. Since those who were studying their Bibles and conducting devotionals were few as was noted above, likewise attendance in worship services was low. Only ten church members out of thirty nine were attending mid-week prayer meetings.

However, after the program it was observed that thirty three out of fifty were attending worship services. This indicates that there was an increase in church worship services attendance. By comparison the increase in mid-week prayer meetings was 40%, opening/closing the Sabbath was 45%, and Sabbath School was 47.5% members who were attending often.

Attendance in Sabbath School has a direct pertinence to the involvement in small groups (Sabbath School classes). Since it was observed above that there was an increase in members who attended Sabbath School, also the participation in small

¹This figure and other successive figures have been arrived at through mathematical calculation whereby a common denominator of 39 and 50 (1950) was applied.

groups also increased. Whereas only nine members out of thirty nine participated fully in small groups, after the intervention there were forty three out of fifty. This means that there was an increase of 63% in the participation of Sabbath School classes.

An effective Sabbath School class has a positive effect on witnessing. This is because one of the objectives of Sabbath School class is to involve class members in sharing their faith according to the abilities that God has granted them. Nevertheless, as it was noted that was not the case. This is because only one person out of thirty nine was involved in witnessing.

On the other hand, though the number of those who were involved in witnessing did not reflect the number of those who participated in Sabbath School, still it was significant. This is seen in eighteen members out of fifty witnessing on regular basis. For that reason, compared with the involvement in witnessing prior to the intervention, there was an increase of about 33% in witnessing.

In summary, it can be stated that the intervention was successful. This is because there was considerable involvement in personal spiritual uplifting programs, church worship services, and church ministries. The following part of the conclusion highlights lessons learnt from the project process and recommendations.

Lessons Learnt

When the researcher began this dissertation his presupposition was that many people leave the church because of shallowness in doctrines. Nevertheless, when questionnaires were administered and interviews conducted it was observed that that is not the case. The researcher was perplexed to find out that it is poor follow-up and poor relationships among believers that make significant reasons for church members' loss.

It was learnt that follow-up ministry is supposed to be a continuous-everyday ministry upon an individual member unlike once a year the way some leaders do. It was clearly understood that Matthew 28:20 first part where Christ says, “teaching them to *observe*.” Here Christ was not saying teaching them all that He had commanded them. Rather teach them to internalize all that He had commanded. This therefore enhanced the researcher’s understanding on discipleship.

It was also discovered that the ministry of church membership retention requires the involvement of all church members. The researcher learnt that when an individual’s devotional life as well as family devotions is weak, other areas of a Christian life are likely to be affected. In the long run a believer fails to reach maturity in discipleship process.

Recommendations

First, seminar on responsibilities of different church leadership positions should be conducted prior to the elections of local church leaders. This will enable a person who accepts a certain responsibility to know in advance what is expected in that particular position.

Second, district pastors should be released from collecting reports, hence dedicate their time to nurturing church members.

Third, the conference strategic plan that is sustainable should be put in place for reducing the territories for the pastors for sufficient care of believers.

Fourth, the Faculty of Theology of the University of Arusha should come up with a curriculum on church membership reclamation, nurture, and retention.

Fifth, each church should have a special committee concerned with reclamation, nurturing, and retention of church members.

Sixth, opportunities should be provided for this project to be exposed to other churches in camp meetings, conferences, and seminars. This is necessary in that it will allow this knowledge be shared to different churches since the issue under discussion is a deadly disease that is consuming the church.

Conclusion

The study established that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is losing many members. The major causes identified included: low follow-up/pastoral visitation; poor relationships among church members; and low involvement in devotional life. The trend is reflected at Usa River Church whereby in the year 2012 and 2013, she lost 576 members, about 500% of church members compared to the 116 members who were baptized within that period of time.

Thus, the project developed, implemented and evaluated a discipleship program to enhance church membership retention at Usa River Church. The program entailed giving seminars on how to effectively have devotional life. A training program was conducted to selected Sabbath School teachers on how to reinforce Sabbath School classes or small groups. The objectives of the Sabbath School had been emphasized. In addition, a follow-up program was developed and implemented to reclaim identified 26 inactive church members. As a result of this program seven inactive church members were reclaimed.

The overall goal was met considerably. According to the Usa River church clerk's statistical report of the year 2017, only 167 members were lost. This was about 204% compared to 82 members who were baptized the same year. This implied that the retention of members was significantly improved.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRES

Personal Information

1. My age in church membership Over 10 years
 Between 6-10 years
 Between 3-5 years
 2 years and below

2. Bible possession I have a Bible
 I don't have a Bible

3. Studying the Bible I always study my Bible
 I study less often
 I don't study my Bible

4. Family Devotion I have every day family devotion
 Less often
 I don't have family devotion

5. Baptism Through baptismal class
 Through public evangelism
 Through satellite evangelism
 Through personal evangelism

6. Tithing I return tithe always I get income
 I don't return always I get income
 I don't return tithe
 I don't know how to return tithe

7. Spiritual Gifts I know my spiritual gifts
 I don't know my spiritual gifts
 I don't know the teaching about
 spiritual gifts

Worship Services Attendance

1. Mid-week prayer meeting I always attend
 I attend less often
 I don't attend

2. Opening/Closing the Sabbath I always attend

- I attend less often
 I don't attend
 I always attend
 I attend less often
 I don't attend
- 3. Week of prayer
- I always attend
 I attend less often
 I attend only on Sabbaths
 I don't attend
- 4. Camp meeting
- I always attend
 I come late more often
 I come late always
 I don't attend
- 5. Sabbath School
- I always attend
 I attend less often
 I don't attend
- 6. Sabbath Divine Service

Church Ministries

- I do witness always
 I do witness less often
 I don't witness
 I don't know how to do witnessing
- 1. Witnessing
- I participate fully in small groups
 I don't participate fully
 I don't participate
 There are no small groups in the church
- 2. Small groups
- I participate fully
 I participate less often
 I don't participate
 I don't know which departments or clubs I belong
- 3. Departments and clubs
- Church elder visits me every quarter
 Church elder visits me once in a year
 Church elder has never visited me
 Church deacon/deaconess visits me every quarter
 Church deacon/deaconess visits me once in a year
 I have never been visited by a deacon/deaconess
- 4. Pastoral visitation
- 5. Preparation to baptismal candidates

- () There is a baptismal class
- () Every candidate go through that class
- () Baptismal class is weak
- () Study guide for baptismal class is used

6. Special class for newly baptized
- () There is a class for the newly baptized
 - () There is no such a class
 - () Such a class is not needed
 - () There is such a class for the baptized through public evangelism or satellite evangelism

6. Interviewing baptismal candidates before baptism
- () Baptismal candidates are thoroughly interviewed
 - () Baptismal candidates not thoroughly interviewed
 - () Baptismal candidates are not interviewed

Membership Retention

1. Why does the church lose many members?
- () Lack of knowledge on fundamental teachings
 - () Weak follow-up/pastoral visitation
 - () Apostasy
 - () Poor relationship between believers
 - () Less participation in witnessing
 - () Others.....
-
-

2. What can the church do to enhance church membership retention? (Open-ended question)
-
-
-
-

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What strategy do you have in place for identifying church members who do not attend in church? Do you know members who do not attend church?
2. What program do you have for follow-up/visiting church members?
3. How do you nurture new members following their baptism?
4. Which fellowship programs do you have that foster good relationship among church members?
5. Do you interview baptismal candidates prior to baptism? If yes how do you do the interview?
6. Why does the church lose many members?
7. What should the church leadership do to enhance new church membership retention?

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why does the church lose many members?
2. What should the church leadership do to enhance new church membership retention?

APPENDIX D

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR A BELIEVER TO STUDY THE BIBLE

The Bible is the source of the revelation of God and His power that can sustain a believer in his or her relationship with God. It is the source of the following:

- Truth (John 17:17)
- God's blessing (Luke 11:28)
- Victory (Ephesians 6:17)
- Growth (1 Peter 2:2)
- Power (Romans 1:16)
- Guidance (Psalm 119: 105; 2 Timothy 3:15-17)

THE QUALITIES OF THE SCRIPTURES

- The Bible is infallible revelation of God's will (it is unfailing in its purpose) (Proverbs 30:5-6)
- The Bible is inerrant in all it affirms
- The Bible is complete (it contains all needed information for Christian living) (Revelation 22:18-19)
- The Bible is the authoritative will of God (it carries the right to prescribe beliefs and actions) (Psalms 119:89)
- The Bible is totally sufficient to believers' needs (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- The Bible accomplishes what it promises (Isaiah 55:11)
- The Bible provides assurance of salvation (1 Timothy 4:16)

TEN THINGS THAT THE BIBLE CAN DO TO A BELIEVER

- The Bible awakens faith, the source of all obedience (Romans 10:17)
- The Bible frees from sin (John 8:32)
- The Bible frees from Satan (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
- The Bible sanctifies (John 17:17)
- The Bible frees from corruption and empowers godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4)
- The Bible serves love (Philippians 1:9; 1 Timothy 1:5)
- The Bible saves (1 Timothy 4:16; Acts 20:26)
- The Bible gives joy (John 15:11)
- The Bible reveals the Lord (1 Samuel 3:21)
- The Bible is the foundation of a believer's happy home and life and ministry and hope of eternity with God.

TEN HOPES AND DREAMS FROM THE BIBLE TO A BELIEVER

- Hope for God's promise fulfilled, against all logic (Genesis 12:1-2; Romans 4:18)
- Hope to endure suffering (Romans 5:3-4)
- A dream to build something great for God (1 Chronicles 28:2)
- Hope for a better future (Jeremiah 29:11)
- Hope to reach the Promised Land (Joshua 1:9-11)
- A dream for freedom (Genesis 40:14)
- Hope to finish God's assignment (Acts 20:24)
- Hope for Christ's return (John 14:1-3)
- Hope for eternal life (Titus 1:2)
- Hope in God alone (Psalms 39:7; 71:5)

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

- The appropriate time to conduct Bible study. What procedure should be followed in studying the Bible in such a way that the study may enrich a person?
- Start with prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to help you understand the Scriptures
- Approach the Bible with open heart ready to accept the message that the Scriptures will reveal to you
- Select your suitable Bible version
- Choose a definite plan of study
- Seek to grasp the simple, most obvious meaning of the biblical passage being studied
- Seek to discover the underlying major themes of Scripture as found in individual texts, passages, and books
- Recognize that the Bible is its own interpreter and that the meaning of words, texts, and passages is best determined by diligently comparing Scripture with Scripture
- Study the context of the passage under the consideration by relating it to the sentences and paragraphs immediately preceding and following it. Try to relate the ideas of the passage to the line of thought of the entire Bible book.

APPENDIX E

SIX SIGNIFICANCE OF DAILY DEVOTIONS

- Soul Exercise (1 Corinthians 9:24; Romans 15:4): Devotions enhance spiritual strength, health, and endurance. They force our attention off of self-indulgent distractions and pursuits and on to God's purposes and promises. If it is neglected a believer is prone to dysfunction of the soul.
- Soul Shaping (Romans 12:2): The soul conforms to how we exercise (or don't exercise) it. This is why changing your exercise routine can be helpful. Read through the Bible one year, camp in a book and memorize it another year, take a few months to meditate on and pray through texts related to an area of special concern, etc.
- Bible Knowledge (Psalm 119:11; Psalm 119:97; Proverbs 23:12): A thorough, repeated, soaking in the Bible over the course of years increases believer's overall Biblical knowledge, providing fuel for the fire of worship and increasing our ability to draw from all parts of the Bible in applying God's wisdom to life.
- Fight Training (Ephesians 6:10-17): Daily handling and using the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) makes us more skilled spiritual warriors.
- Sight Training (2 Corinthians 5:7; 2 Corinthians 4:18): Daily devotions are an important way to train our faith-eyes to see the glory of Jesus in his word and training our emotions to respond to what our faith-eyes see.
- Delight Cultivation (Psalm 37:3-4; James 4:8; Psalm 130:5): Devotions are one of the ways we cultivate delight in God. Many days it may seem mundane. But we will be surprised at the cumulative power they have to deepen our love for and awareness of him.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

- Devotion for Spiritual Growth
 - Daily disciples devotional (Scripturally based readings with practical life application)
 - Daily in Christ (Discovering freedom through Jesus)
 - Daily new life (Daily inspiration to help on your healing journey)
 - Daily devotional life (The varieties of ways God shows His love for us through the gift of Jesus)

- Time with God (The most important part of your day is your time with God)
- Bible Reading Plan
 - Bible pathway (Through the Bible in one year in 15 minutes daily)
- Family Devotionals
 - The appropriate time to conduct family worship, morning and evening. Who should lead the family worships?
 - How well should family worship be organized to motivate high participation of members of the family?
 - Suggestions provided include: encouraging children to memorize Bible texts; each member given an opportunity to mention his or prayer requests; awesome music; Christian stories; delegating each member to lead worship; discussing Bible texts; and dramatizing Bible stories.
 - Also the duration of family worship, i.e. be short enough to let children enjoy the worship. Some valuable gifts would be given to a child who does well in any of the above programs.
- Lifestyle Devotionals
 - Daily living (Strength for daily unique challenges; devotional for health)
 - A study on stewardship (Discover God's design for life, the environment, wealth, generosity, etc.
- Classic Devotions
 - Daily strength for daily needs
- Devotional for Thanksgiving
 - Devotional about thankfulness, gratitude, and thanksgiving

APPENDIX F

MANUAL FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Personal Evangelism

Working on the salvation of individuals is the successful means that Jesus used. Remember how He dealt with Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, Matthew, Tax collector, and the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob.

Seven Simple Ways of Personal Evangelism

- Be a person of prayer, always praying with a burden that the Lord helps you to be soul winner.
- Use any chance for the open door for winning soul. Recognize immediately the door that has been opened.
- Begin with simple people: those in baptismal class who have not decided to be baptized; those who are living in the families of believers; backsliders, those who have attended our meetings, etc.
- Be a friend of all people don't have enemies since we usually win friends.
- Be a hero in visitation helping people to make decisions and to pray in their houses.
- Ask people to make decisions don't fear to ask people to make decisions!
- Don't fear to tell your personal life story or personal experience.

Every Christian an Evangelist

- The latter rain will not be poured until a big number of church members work together with Christ in winning souls.
- The Holy Spirit shall not be poured upon lazy church members who don't care, who have no passion for winning souls.
- Every church is supposed to be a school for training God's workers how to win souls.
- People ought to be trained and given areas/places to work upon.
- The time is too short and our armies—all church members of every church should be organized so that they may do this great work.
- Soon the truth is going to triumph with great victory of glory together and those who choose to be God's workmen will triumph together with the truth.
- If all church members will have unity and continue together in unity, under the leadership of one authority so as to accomplish one goal of winning souls, they will turn the world upside down.
- **THUS**

All departmental leaders of every church should be involved in winning souls. They should be given goals of winning souls and baptizing every month and to remit reports. The aim of every church should be to win souls, then keep those who are won to Christ.

Qualities of an Evangelist

A soul winner, who will be successful and celebrate in the Lord's vineyard, and be satisfied, realizing many souls being saved every year as a result of his or her ministry, whether he or she is a pastor or a common church member, has to seek to possess the following qualities.

- He should have genuine conversion experience. You cannot win others to Christ if you yourself have not been saved by Christ.
- He should consecrate himself. Allow Christ to use your knowledge, education, wealth, talents, and everything that you have as He wishes
- Know and understand the Scriptures. He should clearly know how to answer any person who asks him about fundamental teachings about salvation: how to receive Christ as one's personal Savior, assurance of salvation and forgiveness, the true Sabbath, the true Baptism, Commandments of God, Second Coming of Jesus, etc. using the Bible alone.
- Should have assurance of being called to the ministry. If you do not have assurance that Jesus has called you to work for Him, your effort in the ministry will be weak. This assurance of being called is what will motivate you to go on with the ministry even during difficult times of disappointments.
- Should have time with Jesus, about three hours each day, reading the Scriptures and praying, witnessing for Christ. A long time spent contemplating about Christ every day will enable you to know Him hence you shall represent Him well to others.
- Should have genuine love to God and to human beings. A person who harbors enemies, who does not have good relationship with others, cannot win souls. A person who does not have genuine love cannot have a burden to win souls.
- Should be clean and smart and joyous. A dirty careless person in clothing will be a stumbling block to other and hence will waste precious opportunities to win souls.
- Should have goals. Establish big goals of soul winning. Remember that the work that we fail to do during peaceful times, we will be forced to do it during difficult times full of troubles and discouragements.
- Should be creative, a hero in the ministry. A person who has thirst and hunger of learning various ways of winning souls. The Devil learns new ways every day thus we too ought to learn new ways of winning souls every day.
- Should be humble toward God and fellow human beings. When we are humble before God and all people, polite, and respectful toward all people we shall win hundred souls where we are now winning only one soul.

Precautions for a successful personal evangelist

- Avoid controversies on religious issues
- Don't speak against other peoples' faith. Tell the truth wisely without being offensive to others.
- Avoid backbiting neighbors.
- When you pray don't say "help these people to accept the truth" but say "help us to accept and receive the whole truth."
- Avoid the habit of eating in peoples' homes.

- Don't embarrass people nor be a stumbling block to them by your words.
- After prayer leaved at once, don't stay behind saying other stories.
- Don't accept to be escorted beyond the door.
- Try to say, "I will come so that we learn together" not "I will come to teach you."
- Avoid jokes and unnecessary things to make people laugh (amusements)
- Consider the context.
- Avoid doing visitation alone or to walk with a wife/husband of another person unless you are more than two.
- Don't be quick to respond. Pray silently before you answer any question from your client.

APPENDIX G

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal Information

1. Studying the Bible after the seminar () I continue always studying my Bible
() I began always studying my Bible
() I study my Bible less often
() I don't study my Bible
() I have no time to study my Bible

2. Family Devotions after the seminar () I continue always having family devotions
() I began always having family devotions
() I have family devotions less often
() I don't have family devotions
() I have no time for family devotions

3. Tithing after the seminar () I continue always to return tithe
() I began always returning tithe
() I return tithe less often
() I don't return tithe

Worship Services Attendance after the seminar

1. Mid-week Prayer Meeting () I continue always attending
() I began always attending
() I attend less often
() I don't attend

2. Opening/Closing Sabbath () I continue always attending
() I began always attending
() I attend less often
() I don't attend

3. Sabbath School () I continue always attending
() I began always attending
() I attend less often
() I don't attend

Church Ministries

1. Small Groups

- I continue always participating
- I began always participating
- I participate less often
- I don't participate

2. Witnessing

- I continue always witnessing
- I began always witnessing
- I witness less often
- I don't witness

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