

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

**TITLE: THE GROWTH OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
IN GISENYI CITY, NORTH WEST RWANDA FIELD**

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Gisenyi SDA Church was established in 1968 in the Northwestern part of Rwanda. Since then, this church experienced a very slow church growth to the point that the total gross of its membership went up to 3782 church members over the City population of 83,623 by 2015. That is to say a rate of 4.5 percent of SDA Church members of the total population of the City. Even though many evangelistic campaigns were done in Gisenyi City, the growth rate of church members is still very low compared to the population.

This being the case, focus is needed in evangelizing this City in more systematic and strategic way. The most promising methods to evangelize would be mobilizing pastors and laity, elders and church members at the same time as one man.

Since most of those who will be involved in reaching out to unreached people of Gisenyi City are uneducated church members without skills in matters concerning evangelism, the program of equipping them is an obvious necessity.

The researcher used the purposive method in sampling data. Both secondary and primary data were consulted during this research. Primary data was collected with the help of interview given to the church pastors, elders, and church members. The major findings revealed as shown in tables 7 and 8 that both four pastors and fifteen church elders agree that church growth is hindered by members being so busy and lacking training.

After a spiritual revival and training of Gisenyi SDA Church members, a remarkable change appeared. The mid-week prayer attendance rate increased from 55.8% to 75%. Following *oikos* and public evangelism, 267 people were baptized and integrated into small groups for retention.

Therefore the researcher concludes that without equipping the church members, growth will still remain low. It is recommended that more training should be carried out if the church is to realize the mission of the Master.

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A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

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by

Ferdinand Kamandi


February 2017

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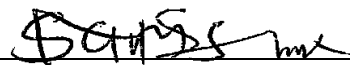
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To my God who chose me in His Ministry, strengthened me during my studies and sustained my family in all of its needs throughout the time of my absence.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUA	Adventist University of Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
MA	Master of Arts
NT	New Testament
NWRF	North West Rwanda Field
OT	Old Testament
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was born and organized in the USA in 1863.¹ After the First World War, it was established in Rwanda in 1921 by two missionaries, Elie Delhove and Henri Monnier. It started first in Gitwe the center of the country, then Rwankeri the north, and soon in other parts of the country as reported 1 by Ngabo Birikunzira Jerome in his Dissertation.² It took several years to reach the city of Gisenyi.

The Adventist Church in Gisenyi City started in 1968 due to evangelization campaign led by Pastor Eneas Karekezi which resulted in around 21 people being ready to be baptized. The above pastor mentioned was appointed as the first leader of Gisenyi Evangelical District.³ The Adventist Church in Gisenyi today has 3782 members,⁴ but the growth rate is not satisfactory in comparison to the growth of Gisenyi City which is very high. The obstacles to growth are common for all cities, such as divertissements, moving and multiple occupations.

¹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1999), xx.

² Jerome Ngabo Birikunzira, "Implantation and Growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Rwanda (1919-2000)" (MA thesis, University of South Africa, 2008).

³ Esri Hakuzimana, Head Master, Ecole Des Sciences de Gisenyi, interview by the author, December 18, 2015, Nairobi.

⁴ ASTR, "North West Rwanda Field Statistic Report," *ASTR (Office of Archives, Statistics and Research)*, last modified 2015, <http://www.adventistyearbook.org>.

Statement of the Problem

Many churches fail to grow. What are some of the ingredients or factors contributing to Church growth failure? What makes a church great in God's sight spiritually and numerically? Why are some churches so effective at reaching people and making disciples, while others remain stagnant year in year out?

Taking into account the population of Gisenyi city compared to the Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist growth rate, we note that the church growth is not satisfactory despite several evangelistic campaigns that have been carried out here. What were the possible causes of this slow growth? And what are the obstacles to faster growth? The Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Gisenyi City are only 3,782 while the population is 83,623. There is a need for strategies to reach the population with the Gospel in order to help the Gisenyi Adventist Church growth.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to find the possible causes that underlie the stunted growth for Gisenyi SDA Church in order to conduct a growth study of this church between 2011 and 2015, implement and evaluate a strategy to increase annual growth rate.

Justification of the Study

The research facilitated the Gisenyi SDA Church to have the missionary spirit, and other churches could also benefit. The strategic plan that we formulated will increase the knowledge of management so that Gisenyi Church members and others can occupy each its role for Gisenyi SDA Church growth.

This plan will also help to remove or reduce the barriers that may prevent the growth by using small groups, approach, personal and public evangelism as means nurturing and outreach. Finally, Church members will benefit from measures to be

recommended to leader toward number and spiritually growth. Every Seventh-day Adventist should remember that the Great Commission of Jesus concerns him.

Delimitation

This research deals only with the growth of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Gisenyi city from 2011 to 2015. It considers spiritual growth and the numerical increase in membership last five years according to sex and ages. About the spiritual maturity that is measured in acts, the study will consider how members are involved in evangelism and worship programs. According to their gifts and talents, regard is how tithes and offerings are given and how churches and schools are built during the five last years.

Methodology

The researcher used the descriptive method which describes one or more characteristics of the population with the objective to make reality known. This method enabled the researcher to explain the real causes of the stumpy growth of Gisenyi SDA Church. The researcher consulted certain documents concerning the arrival of the Adventist message in Rwanda and how this message reached the city of Gisenyi. He gathered information from former members of the Church of Gisenyi in order to know the progress of the Adventist message in this city. He then proceeded to interview specific people in order to gather details and different views about possible causes of the slow growth of Gisenyi SDA Church.

For better research and collect reliable and sufficient information, the researcher pursued the literary study of the Bible, the books of Ellen G. White, and those of other authors as well as a survey of Gisenyi church members. In doing so, the methodology is as follows:

1. Studying the biblical principles of natural church growth.
2. Studying the literature strategies for growth.
3. Obtaining permission of the Field and that of the church in which the research will be undertaken.
4. The study concerned the growth of the church during five years. Collect the information recorded by the church consultant's registers
5. Church members, file cabinets containing statistics, Sabbath school attendance files and the book of church board will be consulted.
6. Evaluate and interview fifteen church elders, five department Directors, ten church members under age lying between the age 20 and 30 years, four pastors who led Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church previously.
7. Analyze the community in which the church is located.
8. Find out who these people are: institutions, education, religion and the socio-economic life of Gisenyi inhabitants.
9. Designate an optimum program of Gisenyi church growth.
10. Application of the program.
11. Evaluate the program.

Definition of the Terms

Church: “The Greek word *Ekklesia* which is translated church means “the call out and originally signified a group of people assembled for a civil purpose Acts 19:32. This word was used in the New Testament to denote the body of the faithful in Christ. Those who have belief and obeyed the Gospel Acts 2:47.”⁵ Church of God defined in the New Testament and in Old Testament: “The meaning of the word would thus seem to be, in the N. T., the whole company of God’s elects, those whom he has called to be his people under the new dispensation as he did the Israelites under the Old. *Ekklesia* is the same word that is translated as “church” in the N.T. It is also

⁵ Charles F. Pfeiffer, *The New Combined Bible Dictionary and Concordance with Introduction on “How to Study the Bible”* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1961), 98.

the same word that is used to translate the Hebrew word “qahal.”⁶ Professor Carlos G Martin defines the church as “a local community of Christians voluntarily congregated, correctly baptized, and properly organized, which meets to worship God, observe the ordinances, and carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ everywhere.”⁷ The Westminster Confession of Faith states in Ch. 25.1: “The title of Church is given to believers from Genesis to Revelation. From beginning to end, there is only one “called-out” assembly. Simply stated, the Church consists of the saints in all ages.”⁸ From the Old Testament, the church of God was there, a Bible commentary says: “Church in the Old Testament corresponded to the people of Israel out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses recipient of unwavering Alliance of Jehovah. Even in the New Testament, Israel is spoken of as *ekklesia* or Church. Stephen speaks of the people of Israel in the wilderness as the assembly (*ekklesia*) in Acts 7:38. Deuteronomy 18: 16 ... in the day of the church.”⁹ The two testaments talk about the church as God’s chosen people as related in Exodus 19: 5, 6 and in 1 Peter 2: 9, 10.

From the New Combined Bible Dictionary and Concordance with Introduction on “How to Study the Bible” is mentioned another explanation: Under the Old Testament Israel was the church of God; in New Testament the church is constituted by all of the people who are in Christ as the spiritual seed of Abraham as related in Galatians 3: 29.

⁶ Admin, “Finding the Church in Old Testament,” *Riding the Beast.com*, last modified May 2004, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://www.ridingthebeast.com/articles/old-testament-church/>.

⁷ Carlos G. Martin, *Principles and Procedures of Adventist Church Growth* (Silang Cavita, Philippines: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, 1995), 24.

⁸ Joseph R. Nally Jr., “The Old/New Testament Church,” *Third Millennium Ministries*, last modified 2003, accessed March 10, 2016, <http://thirdmill.org/answers/answers.asp/file/40556>.

⁹ Admin, “Finding the Church in Old Testament,” *Riding the Beast.com*, last modified May 2004, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://www.ridingthebeast.com/articles/old-testament-church/>.

Growth: Growth refers to a positive change in size, often over a period of time. Growth can occur as a stage of maturation or a process toward fullness or fulfillment. It can also perpetuate endlessly, for example, as detailed by some theories of the ultimate fate of the universe. It can also refer to the mode of growth, i.e. numeric models for describing how much a particular quantity grows over time. It is the act or process, or a manner of growing; development; gradual increase.¹⁰

Growth is a “Development from a lower or simpler to a higher or more complex form; evolution.”¹¹ Growth in general, according to Derek, it is the process of becoming larger and more mature through natural development. It means an increase in number, size, power or intensity.¹²

Church Growth: According to Andrews Ewoo, Church growth is a process, whereby the membership of the Church is stable, and new members are added daily. The increase exceeds the decrease. The church expands by planting sister churches, and the membership grows daily. The members are spirit-filled and fully committed as the Disciples of Christ, and are mentally matured.¹³ The biblical description of a living and growing church is found in Acts 2: 42-47 where the believers devoted themselves to the apostle's teachings and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. They were serving one another and reached out to those who needed to know the Lord, for the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Church growth experiences spiritual growth and numerical increase.

¹⁰ Reference.com “Growth,” *Dictionary*, last modified 2002, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/growth>.

¹¹ Farlex, “Growth –definition,” *The Free Dictionary*, last modified 2006, accessed March 10, 2016, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/growth>.

¹² Derek M. Prime, *Growth: Sign of Healthy Church* (Takoradi, Ghana: Ntoaso Press, 1999), 8.

¹³ Andrews L. Ewoo, *Primitive Godliness* (Accra, Ghana: Legon University Press, 2002), 37.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CHURCH GROWTH

This part of the study explores the theological foundation of church growth. The concern is what the Bible says, Ellen G. White and other Christian authors, declare on the subject matter. At the concluding stage of the chapter is a brief summary and reflection are given by the researcher.

Biblical Foundation for Church Growth

In the Bible, Church growth is seen as being alive by knowing the Lord and growing in grace as well as growing in number. The church has its foundation in Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11), who said, that the gates of Hades would not overcome the church. The two Testaments talk about church growth in a different manner.

Church Growth According to the Old Testament

The Old Testament does not talk explicitly about numerical church growth as result of evangelism, but it talks about the mission assigned to some people to go out the polytheistic nation and spread monotheism. It is the New Testament that talks clearly about the great commission given to his people, church growth started with evangelism from the early church.

The human race multiplied and rebelled more and more against the law of God. The first generation was exterminated by the Great Flood; another generation later constructed the tower of Babel. Through history, God never lacked

representatives among humankind. That has been done through a special call out, or a church. Among people He chose the son of Terah, named Abram to be His ambassador; later He changed his name to be Abraham.

The Calling of Abraham. God called Abraham to be a missionary in the pagan country. God said: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:1-3). From *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* it is written: “To Abraham, God gave the rich promises through which this household of God gradually became a nation. Israel’s mission was simply an extension of that given Abraham: To be a blessing to all nations, showing God’s love for the world.”¹ In Chapter 17:2 of Genesis, precision is given: the numerical growth is connected to the observance of the covenant.

That is the reason to be for the church. The church God brought from Egypt was called “the church or congregation in wilderness” (Acts 7:38). Its members were considered as a kingdom of priest and a holy nation (Exod 19:6), God’s holy people (Deut 28:9) or His church.

Israelites as God’s Church. God did not choose Israel the posterity of Abraham by favoritism. He wanted Israel to be a canal of blessing for all human races. Ellen G. White comments: “God placed them in Palestine, the center of major civilizations of the world. Three great continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa—met in Palestine. Here, the Jews were to be servants to other nations, to extend the invitation

¹ General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1999), 54.

to others to join them as God's people. In short, God called them out in order to call the nations in. He desired, through Israel, to create the large church on earth. A church where representatives of all nations of the world would come to worship, learn of the true God, and return to their own people with the message of salvation."² It was the Lord's plan that Israel would act as a mission agency to spread the good news. Bible says: "The Lord will have compassion on Jacob; once again He will choose Israel and will settle them in their own land. Aliens will join them and unite with the house of Jacob" (Isa 14: 1). In this context, Aliens represent all Gentile nations. In this situation, Gentiles would join Israel for numerical growth of God's people.

In the Old Testament, God used the centripetal method to promote church growth among His people. This system of outreach means that you stand in one place and people come to you. For instance, Isaiah wrote: "The Mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains, and all nations will stream to it" (Isa 2: 2).

His plan was that Israel had to live according to His holy Law and received rich blessings as a result. Thus the Gentiles would be attracted to these blessings and adhere to God's people. The Bible says: "And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be His servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant, these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa 56: 6, 7).

² Ellen G. White, *The Acts of Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 29.

Jerusalem, the Lord's dwelling place and the home of His people, becomes the birthplace, the native city as it were, of all humanity. From the Lord's perspective, even nations like Egypt, Babylon, and Philistia are actually "born in Zion" (Ps. 87: 4). The verse says: "I will include Egypt and Babylonia when I list the nations that obey me; I will number among the inhabitants of Jerusalem the people of Philistia, Tyr, and Ethiopia." This truth is confirmed by the visit of the queen of Sheba to King Salomon related in 1 Kings 10. From that time, the contact of Ethiopia and Israel influenced an African country to abandon idolatry and worship the true God. Centuries later, one of her countrymen would discover the connection between the Jewish religion and Christianity through a missionary the Lord sent to meet him on a desert road as it is related to Acts 8: 26-40. During the dark period of the Middle Age, Ethiopia continued to be a monotheist country and to keep holy the Sabbath day.

Church Growth According to New Testament

The alliance contracted between Israel and God to be His holy people, was not honored by Israel. The holy nation became involved in idolatry, isolationism and failed to accomplish his mission. To Israel, God said: "Yet I planted you as a choice vine from the purest stock. How then did you turn to degenerate and become a wild vine?" (Jer 2:21). Jesus' words to the chief priests and elders of the people in Matthew 21: 43 confirm the apostasy and the rejection of the chosen nation. "Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."

Israel failed its mission, but God's plan of salvation to all people of the earth cannot fail. The Bible says: "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son" (Gal 4: 4). A key Messianic passage indicates that the coming

Messiah would be sent to all nations: “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations” (Isa 42: 1, Matt 12: 18). Jesus came at the suitable time. Before His ascension, He chose His representative among the common people to extend his church.

Jesus Chose the Twelve. During his stay on the earth, Jesus called to Himself twelve disciples and formed them for His mission. He appeared to them after His resurrection and gave them the Great Commission. He promised His eternal presence among them through the Holy Spirit. On the Pentecost, with the power of the Spirit, disciples started the great mission that the Master confided to them.

In Matthew 10:1- 4, it is written that Jesus gave to His Apostles the authority over unclean spirits and to cure every disease. He chose them to be His companions in Ministry and His ambassadors after His ascension. From Bible info.com, it is written: “The 12 disciples/apostles of Jesus were the foundation stones of His church, several even wrote portions of the Bible. In Revelation 21:14, we are told that the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem will have in them the names of the twelve disciples/apostles. It is evident, therefore, that God attaches great importance to these 12 men.”³ They were the ones who started the Christian Church.

In the New Testament, Jesus took a different method to Old Testament. He advocated a “sending message.” The Bible says: “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John: 20: 21). It was now centrifugal that is, it flew out from a center. It no longer sucked people in; it shot them out to find other people to bring in. Ellen White writes: “The Gospel commission is the great missionary character of the

³ Bible Info.com, “Who Were the 12 Disciples,” *Bible Info.com*, last modified 2013, <http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/who-were-twelve-disciples>.

Christ's kingdom. The disciples were to work earnestly for souls, giving all the invitation of mercy. They were not to wait for the people to come to them; they were to go to the people with their message."⁴ The plan of God never fails because Jesus promised to build his church on the Rock of Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. (Matt16:16-18).

Jesus Christ came to build His Church that was not a new entity, but He gathered His Church composed of all those who recognize His Messiah and believed in His Word. The reality is that nations are built into the people of God by faith in His name. There is continuity between the two alliances, Old Testament and New Testament. God had one people from the loins of Abraham. With the coming of His Anointed, He has still one people characterized by a faith similar to that of Abraham. The breaking point is marked by the full recognition of the work of the Messiah propitiatory to the Cross of Golgotha. Those who do not accept the centrality of the Cross in the redemptive work of Christ cannot claim to belong to God's covenant.

Jesus preached the Gospel based on that covenant which required faith and obedience participants. It is rooted in the promises made to the fathers of Israel, and it is accomplished in Jesus as Abraham's seed, and it is manifested itself in baptism. The Church emphasizes the reality that God calls people to be His possession (1 Pet 2:9).

Church Growth in the Time of Jesus. Sometimes Jesus used personal contact with people to win their heart. The chapter four of John is a typical example. In this chapter, John relates Jesus' meet with a Samaritan woman. The woman had no connection with Jesus or religion experience regardless her background as a

⁴ White, *The Acts of Apostles*, 28.

Samaritan. After her encounter with Jesus, she led to Him the entire city in just a moment of time, saying: “Come, see a man who told me everything that I did” (John 4:29). Her simple statement of faith brought the whole city to Jesus and believed to Him as related on verses 41 and 42.

After His baptism, Jesus chose disciples from the common people. They had to learn from Him, but they were slow to understand. Their misunderstanding was caused by temporary logic. Following His resurrection, Jesus spent some time with His apostles in training them for the Great Commission. The Bible says: “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt 28:16-20).

Concerning the Great Commission, Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia says: “In Christianity, the Great Commission is the instruction of the resurrected Jesus Christ to his disciples that they spread his teachings to all the nations of the world. The most famous version of the Great Commission is in Matthew 28:18–20, where on a mountain in Galilee Jesus calls on his followers to baptize all nations of the earth. It has become a tenet in Christian theology emphasizing ministry, missionary work, evangelism, and baptism. The Apostles are said to have dispersed from Jerusalem and founded the Apostolic Sees.”⁵ The dispersion of Apostles occurred after the

⁵ Wikipedia, “Great Commission,” *Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia*, last modified 2004, accessed April 19, 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Commission.

martyrdom of Stephen, and it became the manner of reaching the Gentiles and expanded the church.

Jesus Sent out the Seventy. The Seventy disciples were early students of Jesus mentioned in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus appointed them and sent them in pairs on a specific mission which is detailed in the text related in Luke 10: 1-24. “Like the apostles, the seventy had received supernatural endowments as a seal of their mission. When their work was completed, they returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name.’ Jesus answered, ‘I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.’”⁶ Their ministry is proclamation and service. They are to heal the sick in the village and proclaim the nearness of God’s kingdom. The ministry of healing includes both the disciples’ service and the true healing that comes through their preaching of the message of God’s deliverance.

Concerning the seventy disciples Jehovah Witnesses Website says: “To start this campaign, Jesus chooses seventy disciples and sends them out by twos. Thus, there are 35 teams of Kingdom preachers in the territory, where “the harvest is great, but the workers are few” (Luke 10:2). They are to go in advance into places where Jesus might follow. The 70 are to cure the sick and spread the same message that Jesus has been proclaiming. These disciples are not to focus on teaching in synagogues. Jesus tells them to go to people’s homes. “‘Wherever you enter a house,’ he instructs, says first: ‘May this house have peace.’ And if a friend of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. What is to be their message? Jesus says: “Tell them: ‘The Kingdom of God has come near to you’” Luke 10:5-9.⁷

⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1898), 490.

⁷ Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, “Jesus the Way and the Truth,” *JW.ORG*, last modified 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/jesus/ministry-in-judea/sends-out-70/>.

When the seventy disciples returned from their ministry trip, they reported to Jesus what had happened to them. They felt elated at the power that flowed through them and with the fruit they bore. Jesus helped them to look at the true results. Disciples increased in number, so they reached many people and church growth occurred as result of that encounter.

Church Growth in the Time of Jesus' Disciples

Jesus commanded to disciples to start the proclamation of the Gospel from Jerusalem and then to reach all nations on the earth. Bible says: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Church growth experts suggest that Jesus' command to start witnessing from Jerusalem may refer to its internal growth particularly the church's own progress, improvement in the quality spiritual life, and growing in grace and Christlikeness.

The first promulgation of the Gospel among Gentiles began at Jerusalem, on the Pentecost. Parthians, Medes, Elamites and resident of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia; people from Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs, all heard from the Apostles about God's deeds and power in their own languages as related in Acts chapter 2, verses nine to eleven. First converts were committed to God and lived attached to one another in fellowship. Thus spiritual church growth precedes numerical growth. From Jerusalem, new converts returned to their respective countries with the Good News of salvation.

The Mission of Apostles in the Book of Acts. God's plan is for the church to grow. During the first century AD, the number of believers increased considerably.

The book of Acts contains several accounts of the birth and expansion of the Christian Church. In Acts 2: 41 it is written: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” And in Acts 2: 47, The Bible says: “Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Every day the Lord by his Spirit saved some, incorporating them into their number. The risen Lord continued to work with them, and people continued to be saved. The Word of God was at Work. The New Testament says on this subject about the experience of the Church in the book of Acts and beyond.

In the days, immediately after the coming of the Holy Spirit upon 120 believers in Jerusalem at Pentecost, when they began to preach the Gospel, it is written: “Many of those who heard the Word believed, and the number of the men came to be about five thousand” (Acts 4:4).

Just a short time later, the Bible says that the Word of God spread, and as a result the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the Jewish priests, men who had been the enemies of Christ during His earthly ministry, became obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7). Concerning the numerical growth, in Acts 11:21 it is written: “And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.”

Soon after, the church at Jerusalem was being scattered because of persecution. They were fleeing to other parts of the Roman world because of that persecution. Despite the persecution, “those who were scattered went everywhere, preaching the Word” (Acts 8:4).

And then, it finds that “the Word of God grew and multiplied” (Acts 12:24).

The Church grew and multiplied because the Word of God grew and multiplied; the seed of the Word was sown, and it bore fruit. In Bible hub, it is written: “Historically, it has always been the case that in God’s Church seasons of expansion have followed upon seasons of deepened spiritual life on the part of His people. And the only kind of growth which is wholesome, and to be desired in a Christian community, is growth as a consequence of the revived religiousness of the individuals who make up the community.”⁸ The numerical growth went hand in hand with spiritual growth.

Church Growth in the Time of Paul

Paul was not among the Twelve, but he had chosen when he went to Damascus to persecute the disciples. His conversion is related in Acts chapter nine. From Damascus, he became a great preacher of Jesus’ word among Gentiles.

And then sometime later, it comes to the account of Paul’s journey to Ephesus as related in Acts chapter 19. In verse 8 it is written that Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. Paul was ready to give an answer for the hope that was within him. And then a few verses later it is written that there was a hold toward God among those in Ephesus who had made their living by practicing spiritism, the black arts.

Spiritual growth begins with repentance and abandonment of old practices. This is what has happened in the city of Ephesus. On verse 18, the Bible says about confession: “And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic that is spiritism brought their books

⁸ Charles John Ellicott, “Acts 2:47 Commentaries,” in *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), accessed April 19, 2016, <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/acts/2-47.htm>.

together, and they burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver.” Through the new birth, believers abandon the ancient illegal habits, and the growth ensues. Acts 19: 9-41 describes

Evangelism in Ephesus:

The story of the evangelization of Ephesus does not begin in chapter 19, or even in chapter 18 of the Book of Acts. It started with the ministry of John the Baptist, whose teaching had produced a number of “converts,” men and women who looked for the Messiah, promised by the Old Testament prophets, who was His forerunner. Apollos (Acts 18:24-28) and the “12 disciples” (Acts 19:1-7) were among those who believed in the Savior to come, and who must have spoken to others of their (Old Testament) faith. Paul came to Asia on his second missionary journey (so called), but the Holy Spirit forbade them from proclaiming the gospel (Acts 16:6). Paul finally came to Ephesus, but he was intent on reaching Syria (Acts 18:18-21), and so he spent only a short time there. He did, however, leave Priscilla and Aquila behind (18:19), and they must have played a significant part in “plowing the soil” in preparation for Paul’s lengthy stay as recorded in our text.⁹

The book of Acts 19: 10 says: “This continued for two years, so that the residents of Asia, both Jews, and Greek, heard the word of God.” It was God’s time for the evangelization of Asia, and it all seems to have started from the city of Ephesus.

Church Growth with Paul and Barnabas

Other evangelists like Apollo and Barnabas collaborated with Paul to plant and to water the seed of the Good News and contribute to bringing the Gospel to the countries of Europe. In Acts 13:4-12, it is written that Paul and Barnabas preached the word of God in Cyprus and the proconsul believed. They continued to Antioch of Pisidia; Jews opposed them, but the Gentiles became believers (verses 13-52).

⁹ Bob Deffinbaugh, “The Evangelization of Ephesus (Acts 19: 8-41),” *Bible.org*, last modified August 13, 2004, accessed April 12, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/30-evangelization-ephesus-acts-198-41>.

The book of Acts contains many useful examples of issues and stumbling blocks topped by the first apostles to fulfill their mission of bringing the Gospel to the entire world. They did much under the Holy Spirit guidance. The deeds of the Holy Spirit were not only strengthening and made decisions, but also visible through the event of new conversions. The risen Lord continued to work with them, and people continued to be saved. Spiritual and numerical growths were evident.

Theological Foundation of Church Growth

Many theologians have been interested in writing on the church growth. Among them are Ellen G. White and Russell Burrill as SDA authors; Thomas S. Rainer, William R. Read, Johannes Blauw, Donald McGavran, and Donahue Bill as other Christian authors. Their views on church growth are related in the following pages.

Church Growth According to Adventist Authors

Seventh-day Adventist authors put attention on church growth. Their analyses are important to be taken into consideration.

Church Growth According to Ellen G. White. Ellen G. White (1827-1915) was one of the most committed early Adventist believers who played a major role in the development of Adventism. She wrote many books to support the Bible truth and other books on different subjects. She had interested on church and her growth.

She wrote concerning the mission of the church in the book of Acts of Apostles: “The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning, it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the

world His fullness and His sufficiency.”¹⁰ She wrote concerning the role of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised and sent to empower the Christian church for the numerical and spiritual growth.

The Holy Spirit is necessary for the growth of the Church. Where the Holy Spirit is lacking, any spiritual maturity cannot be expected from the church. Ellen G. White wrote: “Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension, and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.”¹¹

It was clear that after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, in the early church was a vibrant relationship with Christ. This is expressed in so many ways, including in worship, in prayer, in giving and in community involvement. This was the former rain. From Jerusalem where the disciples were assembled, the action of the Holy Spirit continued to move His first disciples. When Paul entered the scene of the Gospel, he carried the Gospel very far toward pagan countries until reaching the city of Corinth.

After the birth of Christian church, it was seen that organization was necessary. The same Spirit guided the disciples to organize the church. “It was Paul who had first preached the gospel in Corinth, and who had organized the church there. This was the work that the Lord had assigned him. Later, by God’s direction, other workers were brought in, to stand in their lot and place. The seed sown must be watered, and this Apollos was to do. He followed Paul in his work, to give further

¹⁰ White, *The Acts of Apostles*, 6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 50.

instruction, and to help the seed sown to develop. He won his way to the hearts of the people, but it was God who gave the increase. It is not human, but the divine power that works a transformation of character. Those who plant and those who water do not cause the growth of the seed; they work under God, as His appointed agencies, cooperating with Him in His work. To the Master Worker belongs the honor and glory that comes with success.”¹²

Gospel progressed more to other parts of the world, and the church was increasing in number, the Holy Spirit guiding the followers to resort to the organization of the church to maintain order. The spiritual care of the new converts proved to be necessary.

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts, the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.”¹³

The same Spirit which empowered the early church is the described in Zechariah 10:1 and Joel 2:23 as the latter rain. Ellen G. White comments: “But near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain, and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest "in the time of the latter rain." In response, "the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain." "He will cause to come down ... the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.”¹⁴

¹² White, *The Acts of Apostles*, 274.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 185.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 55.

Concerning personal evangelism, Ellen G. White advises coming close to individuals as Christ did because winning souls requires a won heart. She said: “In Christlike sympathy, the minister should come close to men individually, and seek to awaken their interest in the great things of eternal life. Their hearts may be as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it may be a useless effort to present the Savior to them; but while logic may fail to move, and argument be powerless to convince, the love of Christ, revealed in personal ministry, may soften the stony heart, so that the seed of truth can take root.”¹⁵

Church Growth According to Russell Burrill. Russell Burrill is another Adventist author who gave his view on church growth, and the methods to achieve that growth. He says that growth is possible in case all members respond to the Great Commission. He argues that all members should know that the Master has distributed at least one spiritual gift to everyone for using in His work. He said:

The Master, as a distributor of the gifts, has given some five, some two and some one. But each servant received at least one gift. The unequal distribution of the talents indicates that each person received what he could use no more, no less. Therefore there no such thing as a Christian who does not have at least one gift to use in the Master’s service. No one can claim that there is nothing for him or her to do. That’s why all members are called into ministry and gifted by God to do something.¹⁶

The same author argues that success in growing a church is possible through small groups. He said: “As church members carried on their life in small groups, they would build a community that would keep them strong in the faith. They would not need a preacher to sustain their spiritual life because that spiritual life would be strengthened in the community. Thus he invited them to beseech their pastor to go

¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1915), 185.

¹⁶ Russell C. Burrill, *Revolution in the Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1993), 64-65.

work for others. Note that the reason she gave as to why they did not need a settled pastor was the formation of the small companies or groups.”¹⁷

Through small groups members are very close and can use their spiritual gifts; the newly baptized are integrated as in a family. Russell talks about social meetings of the first Adventist pioneers that took place in nature for testimony and Bible study: “These early meetings were relational in nature. Little, if any, Bible study occurred there. The believers did not neglect personal Bible study but would follow it up with a social meeting where they could share together their life in Christ. The social meeting took the form of testimonies, as believers shared with each other their struggle and victories in the Christian life and held each other accountable for their life in Christ.”¹⁸

Church Growth and Other Christian Authors

A Christian author emphasizes that church growth is a Christ-centric case. Jesus Himself would state explicitly that no one could come to the Father except through Him (Christ) (John 14:6). The author says: “Because of the clear, biblical claims of the exclusiveness of salvation through Christ, church growth must not be tempted to open the door of salvation any wider than through the Person of Jesus Christ. . . . Many in our society today are offended by such a narrow-minded religion, but any growth that does not come through the narrow of Christ is not true church growth.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Russell C. Burrill, *Recovering an Adventist Approach to the Life and Mission of the Local Church* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Books, 1998), 195.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹⁹ Thomas S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth History, Theology, and Principles* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993), 101, 102.

Every true disciple of Christ is a missionary. The receiver of God's grace must be a giver. All new converts should, in turn, convert others. William R. Read says: "Each member is taught to feel his missionary responsibility. As new members are baptized, they begin to learn what their new relationship is to God and to their fellow man. Every fifty days they have special services at which they tarry for the promise of the Holy Spirit. All yearn for this experience with Holy Spirit. In the process, new members are integrated into the missionary community and activity of the congregation. ... The new members pray, work, testify, sing, have fellowship, and evangelize with their fiery zeal."²⁰ The Holy Spirit has played an important role in the growth of the church from apostolic times until today. The Holy Spirit is essential to the growth process. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts" (Zech 4:6).

Jesus said, "I am going to send you what my Father has promised, but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49. The church needs to grow in the Spirit, and this means understanding that the Holy Spirit's role is to reach the lost. As Christians reach outward, it is the Holy Spirit who enables and empowers them. Disciples could not dare preach the gospel until the Holy Spirit has come upon them. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he

²⁰ William R. Read, *New Patterns of the Church Growth in Brazil* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1965), 40-43.

who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:4-8).

The Holy Spirit gives abilities to believers for cooperation in God’s work. “In Romans 12 Paul stresses the importance of working together for the benefit of the whole church according to our natural talents and abilities. He includes the gifts of prophecy, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving and leading. Whether you’re good at administration, media, design, counseling, getting a group of people together, music, welcoming, whatever you’re good at God has given you these abilities to serve the church, each one of us complementing the other. As leaders, it’s our job to recognize the gifting God has put into our church and help our people to develop and enhance these skills.”²¹

Johannes Brauw says: “The Holy Spirit guarantees the power of life in the church, the presence of God in the world, and the publicizing of the gospel. Nothing is left to men not even to the apostles; that, however, is why everything can be delegated to the church, and the Holy Spirit and the apostles can be drawn as close together as possible.”²² The preaching of the Gospel is a way to provide opportunities and environments for people to meet God.

Salvation is a work of God, and it is one that regenerates the sinful old man, replaces the stone heart with a heart of flesh and leads the new believer closer to Christ. According to McGavran, anyone who is converted should also testify his faith; each church should be an evangelization center. “Every convert must become a Christian witness. Every church should be a center of evangelism. Every church must

²¹ Simon, “How to Grow Your Church in the Spirit,” *Grow Church*, last modified 2005, accessed April 12, 2016, <http://growchurch.net/8-growing-in-the-spirit>.

²² Johannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 90.

be considered itself responsible for all the surrounding territory at least halfway to the next church. The local church may send out its runners in the form of outstations and local workers. Outstations are established throughout the area whenever openings are fund.”²³

About using small groups for effective evangelism Bill Donahue says:

Putting people in connection in groups of 4 to 10 individuals in order to become more Christlike, to love each other and contribute to the Church's mission to glorify God and to make all nations followers.²⁴

The success of any evangelistic thrust depends upon committed individuals in every stratum of church organization.

Conclusion

The Bible shows the origin of the church. The Old Testament attests that God was the founder of the church when He created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. When the people of God degenerated, God called Abram and entrusted him with a special mission to go and preach absolute monotheism. This indicates that Israel as the posterity of Abraham and the chosen people was the church in OT. He called them out in order to call the nations in or centripetal method. He desired, through Israel to create the large church on earth.

In the New Testament, Jesus advocated a “sending message” that was centrifugal; it flew out from a center. Adventist and non-Adventist authors and other specialist writers tell about church growth. The Bible and these authors all point to an effective method of evangelism that is personal witnessing, small group evangelism,

²³ Donald McGavran, *Church Growth and Christian Mission* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1960), 120.

²⁴ Bill Donahue, *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 21.

and evangelism through living cells or action cells as well as through public evangelism.

CHAPTER 3

DESCRIPTION OF GISENYI SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

This chapter presents the description and the history of Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church, the geographic location of the church, the socio-economic status, Research Methodology and Data collection with Analysis.

Historical Background of SDA Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is distinguished from other Protestant Christian denominations by the observance of the Sabbath and worships on Saturday, the 7th day of the week and emphasizes preparation for the second coming of Jesus.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was born from the movement led by William Miller an American who proclaimed the imminent return of Jesus. The SDA Church grew out of the Millerite movement in the United States during the mid-19th and was formally established in 1863 in Battle Creek, Michigan. Among its founders was Ellen G. White, whose extensive writings are still held in high regard by the church.¹

SDA Church in Rwanda

The movement began as a sect based in America and grew to become a global church:

Starting from America, the Adventists reached Europe and from there to Rwanda by two missionaries a Belgian David Elie Delhove and a Swiss Henri Monier in 1919. In spite of various difficulties, they founded three mission

¹ *Adventist.org*, last modified 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/>.

stations, Gitwe in Central Rwanda, Mugonero in the South and Rwankeri in the North. When the Seventh-day Adventist Church reached Rwanda, it was able to develop through evangelism, church planting, schools, health centers, and distribution of Adventist literature.²

In fulfilling this mission, the church has faced both internal and external problems. The very early implantation of Roman Catholicism, the Rwandan traditional religious system, and sometimes the dissident movements from the misinterpretations of Ellen G. White's writings were obstacles to the progress of Adventism in Rwanda, but God provided for his church growth.

The three Evangelical missions namely Gitwe, Mugonero, and Rwankeri, were a base of church development in Rwanda. From Rwankeri, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been able to grow considerably in the former prefectures of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi toward the Eastern and Southern parts of the DRC.

SDA Church in Gisenyi

In 1965, the SDA Church believers of the former region of Bugoyi that includes Gisenyi were members of the Rwerere Evangelical District that were led by Pastor Simeon Barame. In 1965, Pastor Japhet Kanyamihigo asked from the government on behalf of the church to be granted a plot where the church would be constructed in Gisenyi town. He asked for 3 hectares but received half a hectare that is 5424 square meters. The official reply letter for admission to the request of the plot came on January, 18th 1968 from the Rwandan government. During that year Pastor Eneas Karekezi took the initiative for leading the first evangelistic campaign in collaboration with Pastor Kouky, a white missionary who was in charge of stewardship at the Division level. After another Evangelistic campaign had been led

² Jerome Ngabo Birikunzira, "Implantation and Growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Rwanda (1919-2000)" (MA thesis, University of South Africa, 2008).

by Pastor Eliel Gatonorano, 21 people were baptized. Pastor Eneas Karekezi was appointed as the first church pastor. Gisenyi church was organized in 1968 and became the district headquarters to lead other churches as Kanembwe, Budaha, and Rugerero church. In 1988, ADRA built a new church, a pastor's house, and two classrooms.³

During the genocide when Rwanda was desolate and in ruins, churches were not spared. Throughout the transition period, the laity played an important role; it held various responsibilities in the church administration because the church lacked pastors.

After the genocide, the new government re-established security and churches were reorganized. The different churches are particularly trying to renew the steps of the gospel that have not been applied, such as love and unity. The SDA Church reorganized its mission stations while evangelizing in order to correct the mistakes that had been committed. To address the wounds that remain open, to bring hearts closer and to maintain unity was a challenge that all Rwandans, Christians or non-Christians had to face.⁴

From 1995 to 2001, the church was again populated by returnees; a new church was built to replace the old one which was too small. It was at this time, under Pastor Kagimba Safu's tenure that Gisenyi SDA Church gave birth to other two churches, Makoro and Mbugangari and a primary school near the church was built. In 2010, a secondary school named GASS (Gisenyi Adventist Secondary School) was

³ Esri Hakuzimana, Head Master, Ecole Des Sciences de Gisenyi, interview by the author, December 18, 2015, Nairobi.

⁴ Ibid.

founded. Today (2015) Gisenyi church has five sister churches: Makoro, Mbugangari, Byahi, Gate of Hope, and the church of GASS (Gisenyi Adventist Secondary School).

In 2011, a new field emerged, detached from North Rwanda Field and took as name North West Rwanda Field. Gisenyi SDA members increased significantly; another new larger church was built to put back the existing one. The new and larger church was inaugurated on September 4, 2012, by the General Conference president Pr Ted Wilson. Over the years, Gisenyi SDA Church was led by the following pastors.

The table one shows the different pastors who led Gisenyi SDA Church from her birth to the present time. Among them was one layman named Ezekiel Kanyabigogwe who led the church after the genocide.

Table 1. Leaders of Gisenyi SDA Church

YEARS	LEADER
1968-1970	Pr Eneas Karekezi
1970-1978	Pr Japhet Kanyamihigo
1978-1982	Pr Thomas Kamanutsi
1982	Pr Mattias Tutsi
1982-1984	Pr Justin Mbizi
1985	Pr Antoine Sebikenyeri
1985-1988	Pr Samuel Nayigiziki
1988-1991	Pr Mattias Semisabike
1991-1994	Pr Marc Sebigunda
1994-1995	Mr. Ezekiel Kanyabigogwe
1995-2001	Pr Kagimba Safu
2001-2006	Pr Eliel Gaferege
2006-2011	Pr Enok Nganizi
2011-2013	Pr Gaspard Munyampeta
2013-2015	Pr Edson Nsanzimana
2016-now	Pr Christophe Kagofero

Geographical Location of the Church

Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church is located in Gisenyi city, Gisenyi Administrative Sector, and the headquarters of Rubavu Administrative District in Western Rwanda Province. Gisenyi church is built on the left-hand side of the road that leads to “Petite barrière” (the name was given to the customs office) where Rwanda borders with the DRC. Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church is part of Gisenyi Ecclesial District. It is known as “Eglise Mère” or mother Church to four sister churches for a total five local churches in the Ecclesial District. The Gisenyi District is also in North West Rwanda Field in Rwanda Union Mission.

Gisenyi City and its Population

Gisenyi is a city found in Western Province, Rwanda. It is located -1.70 latitude and 29.26 longitudes and it is situated at elevation 1461 meters above sea level.

Gisenyi has a population of 83,623 making it the biggest city in Western Province.⁵ Gisenyi has two borders with Goma, the "Petite Barrière" and the "Grande Barrière." These names are a little misleading because the Petite Barrière is physically larger and features much higher traffic volumes. About 6,000 people crossed the Petite Barrière daily during 2011. On the Gisenyi side, a large customs and immigration office was built with a large capacity, not yet matched by the Congolese facilities. Similarly, the road to the Petite Barrière is paved on the Rwandan side, but not on the Congolese side. The Grande Barrière is paved on both sides and receives more of the heavy truck traffic. It is also a diplomatic border.⁶

⁵ Wikipedia, “Gisenyi,” *Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia*, last modified 2007, accessed March 19, 2015, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gisenyi>.

⁶ Ibid.

The population is made up of people living in Rwanda before 1994 and those repatriated. The majority of people in Rwanda including Gisenyi city are Christians; these can include those who are no longer regular members but are still called by that name.

Socio-Economic Status of Gisenyi City

Gisenyi is a small town compared to neighboring Goma in the DRC, though Gisenyi is growing quickly. In 2011, a new multistory shopping mall began construction over an old bus station. As of 2011, the main roads of the town are paved, and sidewalks are nearing completion for most of them as well. The city of Gisenyi has the unique brewery in Rwanda: “Gisenyi is also home to Bralirwa, the only brewery in Rwanda, which manufactures various local beer, Primus, Mützig, Amstel, and Guinness as well as a range of Coca-Cola branded soft drinks.”⁷

The Gisenyi campus of Kigali Independent University had an enrollment of 3413 students in the 2012-2013 academic years. The students were pursuing programs in the faculties of Economics and Business Studies, Social Sciences, and Law.⁸ There are other institutions in Gisenyi city: “Rwanda Tourism University College (RTUC) also has a Gisenyi campus. The town has about 30 public and private schools, including nursery, primary and secondary schools.”⁹

The population of Gisenyi city is composed of local residents, the exodus of people from rural areas around the city searching for employment or manual works,

⁷ “National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (web),” accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.citypopulation.de/Rwanda-Cities.html>.

⁸ Sekibibi Ezechiel, *Seventeenth Year Book 2013* (Kigali, Rwanda, 2014), 7, 10.

⁹ Church Plant Media, “Gisenyi,” *Harvest East Valley*, last modified 2012, accessed March 19, 2016, <http://www.harvesthandler.org/gisenyi>.

businessmen from all over the country, and people who were repatriated that came from neighboring countries like DRC, Uganda, Kenya, and Burundi.

Peoples' Activities

The people's activities are subsistence agriculture and livestock as the main source of income for the households. The main crops grown are beans, maize, bananas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and green vegetables. People practice some commercial activities in local markets in the town; others cross the border to Congo and spend the whole day there to come back in the evening. Being near Lake Kivu, some individuals practice frequently fishing to supplement agricultural produce in order to have a balanced diet. There are also means of transport such motorcycles, taxi, bicycles, and flights from Gisenyi to Kigali, and finally water transportation in Lake Kivu.

There are bank facilities, and people organize themselves in small societies of tens or twenty to contribute some money and give it to one person to promote interdependence. Everybody awaits his turn and respects the rules to sustain the cooperative which is locally called “Ikimina.”

Main Religions in Gisenyi City

Gisenyi city is composed of people of different religions. The Christian denominations found in the locality are Roman Catholics, Protestants, Adventists, Muslims, Methodist Church, Restoration Church, and Friends Church.¹⁰

¹⁰ Religion Gisenyi, “Western Province, Rwanda,” last modified 2012, <https://yellowpages.ybo.com/RW/gisenyi/religion/>.

Problems Faced by the Church

Gisenyi SDA Church lost many church members in the genocide which took place in Rwanda in 1994. Others took the way of exile to neighboring, and until today, the church does not know if they died or still alive. Among the members of the church, some people come in Gisenyi looking for work and leave so quickly after baptism perhaps due to lack or change of employment; the church ignores their destination. From the year 2011 to 2015, Gisenyi SDA Mother Church members increased in membership during five years as indicates in the table below.

Table two mentions the Gisenyi mother church membership during the five years. According to Gisenyi church statistical report, from 2011 to 2015, members augmented from 728 to 1263.

Table 2. Gisenyi Mother Church Members over Five Years

YEAR	NUMBER OF MEMBERS
2011	728
2012	849
2013	978
2014	1002
2015	1263

Note. From North West Rwanda Field Quarterly Statistical Report from 2011-2015

Outreach Activities

From the year 1979, and through different stages, Gisenyi SDA Mother Church started an outreach program in order to reach some inhabitants surrounding the church. As stated by Carlyle B. Haynes, every member of the church is to become a convert maker. He has a responsibility to carry to every man and everywhere the light and glory of the Gospel of Christ so that it may illuminate and vivify all who

hear and receive it.¹¹ This was done by home visitation and by public evangelization. As a result, some people responded to the Gospel, plots were bought, and the Church gave birth to other sister churches over the years as shown in the following table.

Table three mentions the sister churches born from Gisenyi mother church.

Table 3. Sister Churches

Churches/Sub-Church	Date Creation	Members on Creation	Membership in 2015
Rushubi	1979	35	285
Byahi	1988	32	441
Mutembe	1999	35	208
Gate of Hope	1999	36	304
Mbugangari	2005	50	903
Makoro	2009	240	668
GASS	2010	56	203
Gisenyi (Eglise Mère)	1965	21	1263
Gisenyi District	2015		3782

Today, these churches are elements of Gisenyi District except Rushubi and Mutembe that are not in Gisenyi District but were attached to Nyamyumba district born from Gisenyi church. The churches of Byahi, Mbugangari, Makoro, Gate of Hope and the school church of GASS are in Gisenyi district. The number of members increased but not enough compared to the population. There is a need for new strategies to augment member numbers.

Gisenyi Church Activities

From its birth till now, Gisenyi SDA Church has several activities in evangelism for church growth. The next section shows how the various departments

¹¹ Carlyle B. Haynes, *Living Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1937), 184.

of Youth, Women Ministry, and Laymen Activities were involved in the evangelical domain during the last five years.

Prayer Meetings

From 1995, Gisenyi SDA Church started the habit of meeting every morning for prayer. But the official meeting takes place every Sunday and Wednesday from 5.00 to 6.00. It includes doctrinal instruction, and the Spirit of Prophecy teaching followed by the Sabbath School Lesson discussion. Sometimes they have special meeting such as ten days of prayers. The attendance in the week is very low compared to church members.

Sabbath School

Every Sabbath, the worship program is the follows: From 8. 30- 10: 30 Sabbath School and small groups Bible study and sharing the experiences of the week with each other. The Main Church Service: 11.00- 12. 30 God is praised through song, prayer, tithe, and offerings, then the uplifting message. From 9. 30- 10. 30, Children's Sabbath School gathers separately to adult's groups. The kids are kept busy with songs, crafts, quizzes, games, and Bible stories. The youth also has their Sabbath School distant from the parent's groups.

After the Sabbath School program, adult youth from 16 years to 25 join the adults and attend the divine service together while the youngest and children remain in their class and an appropriate teacher is sent to help for the same service.

Youth

Adventist Youth of Gisenyi church contributes significantly to church activities. Evangelistic campaigns are organized for their benefit during special youth

Sabbath, the main purpose being to go from house to house inviting people to come and attend the meetings.

When there is no church building on the site, they help make bricks and build the church. Blood donation during the campaign influences many people to attend the meetings considering the great sacrifice. Towards the end of the youth crusade, a community work known as “Umuganda” is organized to clear bushes or remove dirt and rubbish around public places. Their contribution in social activities has created a good image of Christianity. Gisenyi church Youth built new churches at Muhira in Kanama District and Byahi Companies in 2014.

Lay Activities

The participation of the laity in evangelization played a major role in the growth of the church. The methods adopted are the “house to house evangelism” which served as preparation of the neighborhood for public evangelism.

Usually, when the church wants to organize a public evangelistic campaign, the church committee prepares a preacher either from among its members or evangelical representatives group operating in NWRF, and all church members contribute money to buy food and other needs for supporting the preacher as well as buying books to visitors in the meetings and those who will be baptized. During the year 2015, Gisenyi SDA Church distributed 1,400 Great Controversy books to people especially to newly baptized members as indicated in Evangelism District Report 2015.

Women Ministries

Women Ministry has been involved in evangelical activities in preaching and in deeds during the last five years. Among preachers who led evangelistic campaigns, last year is women such as Ndayisenga Florida, Mukarwego Agnes; some are church

elders, deaconesses, some teach music and songs, and others lead different departments in the church. The table below shows Gisenyi SDA activities of the Women Ministry during the past five years as reported by Domitille Nyiramahirwe Women Department Director NWRP. These activities are evaluated in Rwanda Francs.

Table 4. Gisenyi Church Women Ministry Activities

Activities	Cost of Activity
Mutual Health	212,600
Supporting the needy	303,720
Sheep	595,455
Supporting for Widows	143,000
Breeding Cows	300,000
Purchasing hoes	311,000
Purchasing mattress	1,008,125
Purchasing for Furnaces	225,150
Comfortably Residence	578,910

During the five years, the Gisenyi church Women Ministry has done remarkable social activities as reported by Women Ministry director. The table four above mentions the contribution of Gisenyi SDA Women Ministry to support the needed persons.

Returning Tithe

To support the material needs of church evangelism, members regularly give the tithe. Concerning tithe returning, Pastor Gaspard Harerimana gave the follow report. Table 5 shows how tithe has been given during a period of five years as reported by Gaspard Harerimana the NWRP Stewardship department director. There is a need of encouraging all members in returning of the tithe.

Table 5. Tithing of Gisenyi Mother Church from 2011 to 2015

Year	Members	Goal	Tithe Income	% Goal	% Tithe Givers
2011	728	5,455, 200	6,947,577	127.3	39
2012	849	10,897,765	15,965,366	146.5	42
2013	978	14,768,450	20,965,366	141.9	44.1
2014	1002	15,882,210	25,754,632	162.1	43.6
2015	1263	21,923,500	34,409,619	156.9	44.5

Tithe is given by a minority of members although it is often sufficient to meet goals. The rate of tithe returning is one of the challenges that face Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Education

The Seventh-day Adventist educational system is the second-largest Christian school system in the world, after the Roman Catholic system, as reported in an Article "Is the end near? A look at Seventh-day Adventists" an SDA Education cite-note-2.

The church supports holistic education: Mental, physical, social, and spiritual health, intellectual growth, and service to humanity form the core values that are essential aspects of the Adventist education philosophy.

Gisenyi SDA Church has one primary school named "Kivumu Primary School" and one secondary school abbreviated to GASS "Gisenyi Adventist Secondary School." Kivumu Primary School baptized 11 people in 2011, 10 in 2012, 15 in 2013, 9 in 2014 and 14 in 2015. The number of people baptized during the five last years in Kivumu Primary School is 59. The baptismal class is still active every year.

During 5 years, GASS promoted Evangelism in School every quarter and below are the results for every year from 2011 to 2015. The report below is from NWRP Education Department, Year-End Report 2015. Table 6 shows people baptized every year from 2011 to 2015. During five years, GASS baptized 210 persons.

Table 6. GASS Summary of Baptism for Five Years

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of Students	613	723	662	656	639
Number of Baptized	50	55	30	40	35

Different departments have been interested in church activities concerning the evangelical field as stated here above. However, we find that the numerical growth of members has not been satisfactory. The spiritual growth that is measured in action has not been satisfactory because the people who return the tithe are only 44% of the members of the Church.

After receiving ample information on Gisenyi Church growth from different church departments at Field and local church levels, there is need to make use of a descriptive method and administer questionnaires to pastors and lay members to analyze and know more about the real situation of Gisenyi SDA Church.

Research Methodology

The part of the research was the meeting with church leaders, the interview followed by the questionnaire, the data collection, and analysis.

Survey before the Program and Interview

A meeting of sensitization about the program was reserved for all members of Gisenyi SDA Church before developing the program. Following this, a procedure was

to interview aged church members as well as some people who know the history of the church from her birth till now. Next, the researcher began the distribution of questionnaires: A total of 20 questionnaires were distributed and were successfully completed. The questionnaires were given to four pastors, who succeeded in leading the church in Gisenyi and to fifty church elders taken as sample concerning lay people participation in personal and public evangelism.

The submitted questionnaires concerned the causes that obstruct the laity from participating in evangelism both personal and public evangelism and were prepared with the aim of identifying the possible barriers to the low growth of Gisenyi SDA Church. This was done from 15 to 18 September 2015.

Questionnaire Distributed to Church Pastors and to Church Elders

The tables below mention how different groups, pastors, and laity took part in evangelism for the growth of Gisenyi SDA Church. Lay participation in public and personal evangelism is a subject taken into account for the growth of the church. It was necessary to ask the following questions to pastors and to ten lay people chosen as sample. Four pastors who succeeded in leading the church in Gisenyi were consulted. The questions submitted to the ministers concerned the causes that obstruct the laity from participating in evangelism both personal and public evangelism.

Table number 7 shows the answers from four pastors.

Table 7. Difficulties Evaluation according to Four Pastors

Difficulties Evaluation	Much agree	Agree	Disagree
Members of the Church Gisenyi showed interest in public evangelism.		4	
Gisenyi Church members manifest interested in personal evangelism.		4	
The living conditions in the city were a serious obstacle to public evangelism in Gisenyi Church	4		
The members of Gisenyi SDA Church were not informed on how to organize public evangelism.	1	3	
Gisenyi church members were not informed of how to do personal evangelism.	3	1	
The lack of sound equipment has prevented church members from Gisenyi from taking part in public evangelism.			4
Gisenyi church had no budget for organizing an evangelistic campaign.	1	3	
Gisenyi SDA Church was not large enough to accommodate the new converts.			4
Members of Gisenyi church were very concerned about different activities to earn a living, so they had no time to be part of the action cells.	4		
Gisenyi church members were very busy with different activities to earn a living, so they had no time to do personal evangelism.	2	2	
It is difficult for church members to do personal evangelism or share action cells with people who do not share the same ethnicity as them.			4

Questionnaires to Gisenyi SDA Church elders gave the following report

Table 8. Evaluation of Difficulties according to 15 Church Elders

Difficulties Evaluation	Much Agree	Agree	Disagree
The church members show no interest in public evangelism.	2	9	4
The church members show no interest in personal evangelism.	13	2	
The church members have an interest in being part of the prayer group.	11	4	
The members are not trained on how to organize the evangelical campaign.	10	3	2
The members are not trained on how to organize public evangelism.	11	4	
The members have no skills on how to do personal evangelism.	14	1	
The members believe that the pastor alone should carry out evangelism.	2	9	3
The church's finance is not enough for evangelism.	14	1	
Gisenyi SDA Church is not large enough to accommodate the new converts.	2	3	10
Members cannot devote their time to evangelization outside the hours of the Sabbath because they must worry about survival.	14	1	
The church members are not trained on the theme of evangelization.	13	2	
Is it that a prayer group in the church testifies a spiritual growth?	15		
Ethnic conflict can delay church growth.	15		

Data Collection and Analysis

The city of Gisenyi has 83,623 inhabitants; among them are other Christian church members while SDA Church members are only 3, 782. This represents a rate of 4.5. As is shown in the table below, there appeared to be some obstacles to church growth in Gisenyi city. According to the survey, below are some of the barriers identified:

Barriers to Growth of Gisenyi SDA Church

The follow information came from this survey:

1. The most common reason advanced by pastors is that the laity has no time to take care of evangelism.
2. Church members have a very little interest to prayer groups.
3. Church members are so busy over the week with their own works to satisfy their material needs.
4. Church members are not sufficiently trained to be able to accomplish personal and public evangelism.
5. The members believe that the pastor alone should carry out evangelism.
6. There is an insufficiency of money to sustain evangelism activities.

After a survey of pastors and church elders, it was found that the church in Gisenyi increase in membership from birth and especially these last five years but there are some challenges for normal growth.

From questions to pastors and to laymen it is clear that church members are not trained in personal and public evangelization. They are not interested in prayer groups as such small groups are not stable. The majority of church members only worship on Sabbath; all other days of the week they are so busy that they do not have time for morning worship and evangelistic activities. Members who return tithe are a minority. Insufficiency of money to sustain evangelism activities is another cause put toward. The church leaders and the members have not opted efficient methods for the growth of the church. The various departments have little interest in training members in evangelism. It was especially noted that the progress is not nearly enough.

Faced with the difficult situation of church members, the growth of the church could not normally take place. No church can reach maturity and spiritual radiance unless its members are united to reach people through the gospel. It is true that without the participation of all members of the church acting in concert for

evangelization, no growth can be expected. “In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members for acceptable co-operation. Let him labor for them individually, endeavors to arouse them to seek for a deeper experience themselves, and to work for others. When they are prepared to sustain the minister by their prayers and labors, greater success will attend his efforts.”¹² It would require new strategies and training members in evangelism methods. The following chapter will deal with this subject.

¹² White, *Gospel Workers*, 196.

CHAPTER 4

STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Gisenyi SDA Church growth needs to be promoted, and new methods are considered to be necessary. Concerning new methods, Ellen G. White says:

New methods must be introduced. God's people must awake to the necessities of the time in which they are living. God has men whom He will call into His service, men who will not carry forward the work in the lifeless way in which it has been carried forward in the past.¹

This will be done through training of church leaders and church members so that they can act together for the growth of their church. Based on the responses to the questionnaires distributed, to the interviews and different reports, the following interventions were implemented to solve the problem of Gisenyi low level of church growth.

Strategic Objectives

The following list of objectives is drawn up for the purpose of being achieved at the end of the program:

1. Revival and reformation for Gisenyi church members.
2. Training church leaders who in turn can teach the other members.
3. Training of members regarding personal evangelism and how to distribute Discover tracts.
4. Training church elders regarding public evangelism methods.
5. Budgeting for evangelism.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946), 70.

6. Training of small groups.
7. Encouraging all the church departments to take an interest in evangelism.
8. Partition members into small groups to help them get to know each another and to mentor the newly baptized.

In her book *Evangelism*, Ellen G. White states:

Our people make a great mistake when, after holding a camp meeting and gathering a few souls, they take down the tents and feel that their duty is done. Their work had only just begun. They have preached doctrines that are new and strange to the people who heard them, and then left the seed sown to be picked up by the birds, or else to wither away for want of moisture.²

This training shall be a tool of Gisenyi SDA Church growth in the collaboration between pastors and laity to make the outreach system based on social networks and sphere of influence, including extended families, friends, work associates and other contacts can promote evangelization.

For retention of new members, I have carried out a seminar on how to integrate them in the small group families. All church activities have been done through small groups.

The small groups were trained on evangelism methods, integration of new baptized in the church through small group families. About small groups, Ellen G. White says “Not only is the truth to be presented in public assemblies; house-to-house work is to be done. Let this work go forward in the name of the Lord.”³

The distribution of Adventist literature formed an important factor in the growth of the church. Lay people distributed books and tracts door to door because the Adventists considered books to be silent preachers.

² White, *Evangelism*, 431.

³ Ibid.

Program Design

First, I suggested the program to the North-West Rwanda Field President for asking permission through an official letter for implementation. Then I invited the Gisenyi church Evangelism board composed of the Gisenyi district pastor, all church elders and selected members gifted in promoting evangelism. The meeting took place on 20/9/2015 in Gisenyi church. The agenda was about how to promote the church growth in Gisenyi city.

Based on the barriers given by the survey conducted among church pastors and church elders, the next plan was established to overcome these barriers.

1. To renew the hearts close to Jesus, a revival and reformation were voted.
2. Equipping for trainers in evangelism.
3. Training church members on personal evangelism.
4. Training small groups on evangelism methods.
5. Budgeting for evangelism.

Implementation of the Program

The follow is the implementation of the program by renewing the hearts and engaging church leaders and members in church growth activities.

Program Preparation

The program was put to take measurements of overcome barriers to church growth. Before his ascension, Jesus entrusted his disciples the Gospel mandate, but He told them to stay first in Jerusalem to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual revival is dependent on how members understand the power of God for the growth of the church.

I suggested that I needed to evangelize Gisenyi SDA Church, first door-to-door, second in public evangelism. My suggestion was agreed to by the members.

Revival and Reformation

First, I led a revival to renew the heart to be close to Christ before being engaged in His work. In Luke 4: 49, Jesus recommended His disciples to stay in the city of Jerusalem until they are endowed with the power from above, the Promised Holy Spirit then they would be true witnesses. The book for guidance in prayer entitled *Ububyutse*, meaning *Revival*, Vol. 7 was studied in ten days from 5 to 14 September 2015. “Revival leads us from heartfelt prayer to passionate mission.”

From the SDA Website <http://www.revivalandreformation.org/>, it is mentioned: “The New Testament Church powerfully impacted the world with the good news of the gospel in a single generation. Filled with the Holy Spirit, these New Testament believers shared the present truth message of a crucified and resurrected Lord with hundreds of thousands. In the face of overwhelming obstacles, these praying believers proclaimed the gospel to the ends of the earth. It will happen again, and in some places, it is happening now. You can be part of something great for God. Revival is about a new experience with Jesus. It is about what He can do in personal lives, in our marriages, and with our children.”

Training

Before putting into practice the personal and public evangelism, the training was very necessary to prepare Gisenyi church members about evangelism methods. Classes are good, but the most effective training is putting into practice.

There are some reasons for training a church pastor and elders. Church pastor and church elders are partners in ministry; they can help to train the congregation to be more effective members of the local church. The Church pastor and church elders

are a resource for ideas and help in implementing strategies to reach the community and grow their church family to save time, money and effort in the development and planning of outreach events.

Equipping Trainers

There is a need to train leaders how to lead. Based on 2 Timothy 2: 2, I preceded to interest the church pastor and church elders on 10/10/2015, the Sabbath afternoon. “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” A seminar for church the pastor and church elders started from 11/10/2015 and ended on 15/10/2015.

Training Church Members

A Seminar to Gisenyi church members was on *oikos* evangelism and Public evangelism. *Oikos* evangelism is the outreach system based on social networks and sphere of influence. The public evangelism is a biblical method. The example is from Jesus as is related in Luke 8:1 and in Luke 9: 6.

A seminar for church members started to 25/10/2015 and ended on 28/10/2015. Evangelism refers to the entire process of winning converts and incorporating them into the life of the congregation. In this study, it concerns both personal evangelism and public evangelism.

Training Small Groups

Training of small groups for evangelism is recommended. Ellen G. White says:

The blessing of the Lord will come to the church members who thus participate in the work, gathering in small groups daily to pray for its success.

Thus the believers will obtain grace for themselves, and the work of the Lord will be advanced.⁴

Seven Ways to Nurture Your Small Group Leaders (Eastman)

1. Make them feel loved
2. Include them in something weekly
3. Insist on praying at the moment
4. Share your hurts and hopes
5. Thank them for serving
6. Envision them in some small way
7. Remind them of their value.

Individuals must feel that the work should be given estimated to ensure each part fits together. From now all activities of the church will be through small groups: Collecting the necessary funds for evangelism, returning tithe, minister to needs, distribution of tasks according to the spiritual gifts and prayer groups. Through groups, a goal to all activities is given.

Persons are led to conversion through personal evangelism and public evangelism. Sharing of responsibility within the group must be the distribution of responsibilities. Ones should be in charge of Prayer, Publicity, Counseling and Follow-up. Another should be in charge of Finance, Speakers and Outreach.

The church atmosphere must be more attractive, visible and welcoming to newcomers. Because a little time after baptism, a small number remains in the church; the emphasis is that after winning people, the process is to commit them and engage them in the ministry so that they become soul winners for Christ.

⁴ White, *Evangelism*, 111.

Newcomers are integrated into small groups, and then the individual must never be lost in the crowd. Supporting a new believer, I proposed to retain new members by assigning those spiritual guardians; thus, the two people who are connected feel practically forced to be friends. Through friendship, the church member helps the new baptized to feel at home. He introduces him to his own group and can train him in fellowship by giving a simple responsibility. The process of discipleship simply continues after their baptism. In this way, members of the church are held.

Budgeting for Evangelism

All valuable projects demand money; evangelization and church growth are not exceptions. “Church growth costs money,” “Yes, but the Lord will provide.” Both statements are true, but both are complementary. In Luke 14:28-29, it is written: “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay, the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you.”

Budgeting for church growth must become a greater priority in Adventist Churches today. Investing funds in reaching and developing people is always the best use of money. Evangelism and discipleship ministries must both be strongly funded. It is essential to encourage faithful financial stewardship to ensure that the local church can operate strong programs for both outreach and spiritual growth. Pastors need to lead their congregations to understand that financing church planting should be one of the highest priorities in the management of God’s money.

A fundraising process for evangelism campaign have been made by the first church elder, a fourth of the offerings was scheduled for church growth.

A Sabbath on October 10, 2015, was intended for the promotion of offerings reserved to evangelism. These offerings put together were reserved for evangelism. From the church funds and the contribution of members, a budget of 3,005,650 Frw was planned to finance these activities.

The GC 2015 Annual EXCOM Appeal says: “In light of the urgency of our time and rapidly fulfilling Bible prophecies, we invite all entities and church members to join us in a continuing commitment to Christ-like relationships, mutual respect, faithfulness to Scripture, and a single-minded focus on the completion of His prophetic mission entrusted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

The appeal is to all members abbreviated as TMI (Total Members Involvement); each member of the church is equally responsible to get involved in evangelism work to fulfill Jesus’ ministry to save mankind from the clutches of sin and prepare them for God's everlasting Kingdom. “Total Member Involvement is among three major initiatives that Wilson unveiled after being elected last July at the General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas, to a second five-year term. The program envisages that every Adventist believer will find ways to bring friends, neighbors, and strangers to Jesus actively. The other two initiatives emphasize the themes of Christ and His righteousness and faithfulness to God. “Every pastor, every teacher, every member is to participate in helping all to become ardent students of the Word of God and then to share it.”⁵

Execution of the Program by Church Department Directors

All of the church departments have been involved in personal evangelism as well as public evangelism.

Lay Activities

As a prelude to public evangelism, there was *oikos* evangelism (*oikos* means a household in Greek) or door-to-door evangelism. Personal evangelism started on

⁵ Andrew McChesney, “Wilson Urges Every Church Member to Become a Sower,” *Adventist Review*, October 10, 2015.

8/11/2015 and ended on 29/11/2015.

Youth Ministries

In collaboration with the district leader, we have interested young people has more to do evangelism they had already started. Youth activities in Evangelism will be:

1. Blood donation to sick persons
2. Construction houses for needy persons
3. Training for choirs among adolescents and adult youth.

Women's Ministries

Women's Ministry has already done some remarkable activities in evangelism, but not enough. We promoted other actions as:

1. Hospital visiting
2. Prison visiting
3. Giving clothes, foods and other needs.

Evangelism in Schools

In collaboration with Youth Department Director, a seminar took place on Dec. 24, 2015, with head-teachers to promote Youth progressing class. The baptismal class in primary schools (Gisenyi Kivumu Primary School) will be among pupils of 5th and 6th classes.

Every Wednesday is worship program and baptism is planned every quarter.

GASS: Every quarter, an evangelism campaign took place, Religion teaching in classroom, Baptismal class, and baptism is done every quarter

Personal Evangelism by Church Members:

The program began from 8 to 29/11/2015. I gave to church members the opportunity to detect the Gisenyi church pathology; that means discerning the spiritual church weakness.

Bible Studies that will help them to gain knowledge and confidence in using God's Word to win the non-members. Public evangelism was preceded by "Oikos" evangelism which means evangelization house to house or personal evangelism.

The advice given before personal evangelism was:

1. Knowing SDA Doctrines
2. Maintain good behavior.
3. Being civil in dialogue.
4. Being discreet.

Materials needed for personal evangelism were:

1. Visitation cards mentioning the names of persons to visit.
2. Discover Tracts to be distributed after dialogue.

Purpose of Door-to-door Visitation

Coming close to individuals and sympathizing with them is the way that Christ used to reach out to people.

Door to door evangelism is a great way to break down barriers of communication and get to know the people in your neighborhood.

Being effective at the door to door evangelism or any other ministry method for that matter, Christians must adopt the attitude of a servant because they are serving the community with a message of life and hope through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Here is the three-point outline for reaching our communities one household at a time. Our volunteers are trained to achieve these three goals to each house that is visited.

1. Delivering a gift from the local church. This gift includes a Bible, Discoveries tracts, and Great Controversy books, a Gospel tract and information about the ministries offered by our church or the local church that we are partnering with. (We show them each part of the gift packet as we explain what it is.)
2. Find out if there are any prayer requests that we can pray over, then pray with the family members.
3. Gather information about how we might be of service to them and invite them to a Sabbath service, a Bible study or upcoming event.

The Prayer groups have formed to engage members to spiritual growth. They help members in establishing a close relationship and inviting people to know Christ.

Oikos Method

To interest members in door to door evangelism there are effective methods such:

1. Establishing of Small Groups for ten people as one family. From the Bible, small groups are endorsed: Hebrews 10:24, 25; Acts 5:42.
 - a. Putting people in connection in groups of 4 to 10 individuals should help members to become more like Christ. Thus they can love each other and contribute to the Church's mission to glorify God and to make all nations followers.
2. Visit church members and non-members.
 - a. Choice of individuals for whom everyone will pray.
 - b. Establishing a friendship with them.
 - c. Each group must know and visit the people for whom it prays.
 - d. Satisfying their needs if possible, individually or in the small group.
3. Distribution of Discover Tracts” containing SDA doctrines to these new friends.

Gisenyi church mother has been taken as a sample. It has 1263 members. It was divided into small groups of 126 groups or multiple cells processes.

Every group gathered to become one family. Every member of the group chose one or two non-Christian people. He prayed for him and especially for his conversion.

Christian visited him or her and established a close relationship with him or her. That is Friendship evangelism. He introduced the person into his group. The Christian group can visit the people together.

If the Christian and non-Christian are in need, the individual or the group can help him. Concerning carrying the Gospel to the poor, Ellen G. White argues:

The poverty of the people to whom we are sent is not to prevent us from working for them. Christ came to this earth to walk and work among the poor and suffering. They received the greatest share of His attention. And today, in the person of His children, He visits the poor and needy, relieving woe and alleviating suffering.⁶

After establishing a close relationship, the Christian member gave the tract 'Discover' N° 1, 2 ... 26 to his new friend and answered questions mentioned on the last page. Christian gave marks to his friend and then gave the next tract. There are 26 are in the Kinyarwanda language.

The process is completed; members of the same group have met with all the friends who follow the Bible course. The group shared a meal giving certificates of success to the new members. This ceremony has been in the church; all church members were gathered for the distribution of certificates.

Public Evangelism

The following step was to invite the friend in Public evangelism. Public evangelism is a powerful and effective outreach activity responsible for bringing

⁶ Ellen G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern, 1933), 23.

many people to a decision for Christ and into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Possibly because of its effectiveness, public evangelism seems to have been the primary outreach activity sponsored by Adventists.

The following commissions that will be used in Public evangelism should be elected:

1. Prayer commission
2. Communication commission
3. Health commission
4. Social commission
5. Invitation commission
6. Baptism commission
7. Choirs commission

The public evangelism took place on December 6- 20, 2015. All commissions acted in concert.

1. The prayer commission gathered every time before meeting to pray for evangelism campaign success.
2. Choir commission invited choirs and did choirs timetable.
3. The communication commission used banners provides ads to radio and passed in Gisenyi city on 15: 00 to remember people for the Evangelism campaign on 17: 00 to 19.30 at Gisenyi Eglise Mère Church. Guests are welcomed by the Protocol Commission and deacons and deaconess.
4. The baptism commission provided books for the day of baptism, mentoring of new converts.
5. Health commission has been responsible for selecting teaching subjects concerning health, healing through food, herbal, and temperance. The commission also gave primary care.
6. Social commission was responsible for knowing the needy to meet the most urgent needs: Distribution of clothes, soaps, pay health insurance scheme, visiting the sick

From the beginning of Adventism, public evangelism has been an effective outreach activity responsible for bringing many people to a decision for Christ.

Materials used for the public evangelism included sound systems, projector, laptop, Bibles, Great Controversy books, doctrinal books, tracts “Discover” and others books kept for donation to visitors.

Elders elaborated the program in establishing people to accompany the preacher. They elaborated the choirs in their succession. They reserved special seats for visitors.

Two days before public evangelism, the *oikos* visits started in passing through Gisenyi city; the sound, announcement to radio to remember people. A formal letter was written to prevent local authorities.

Table 9. Timetable of Public Evangelism

TIME	EVENT	OBSERVATION
17.30-17.45	Choir songs	Well done
17.45-18.00	Health teaching	Well done
18.00-18.45	Preaching	Well done
18.45-19.00	Interaction with visitors	Well done

Program Evaluation

The implementation of the program was followed by the evaluation that helped to determine if the objectives stated were achieved. Results: There was a positive change. The rate of church attendance increased. The number of newly baptized has increased considerably and newly baptized retention because of follow-up unlike in the past time. Church attendance during the week and on Sabbath goes from 55.8 % to 75% .

Personal Evangelism Results

At the end of Oikos evangelism:

1. 997 members were interested in personal evangelism, that is 78% of members.
2. In the early visits, 527 people agreed to be visited.
3. During site visits, 162 people have not been traced.
4. At the end of the visits, 365 people met to answer questions after reading the leaflets “Discoveries” as 69%.

Table 10 shows church members interested in Oikos evangelism and interested visitors. Some visitors abandoned to attend the meeting while others continued and received the certificates of Discover reading.

Table 10. Church Members Involved in Door-To-Door Evangelism

Attendance	Number	%
Church members interested in visiting door-to-door	997	78
Interested visitors	527	
Visitor people who abandoned	162	
Visitors who have received certificates at the end of visits	365	69

Public Evangelism Result

After the public evangelism:

1. Persons who attend the prayer meeting have increased.
2. People interests in Evangelism are 1002
3. The people who return tithe went from 44.5% to 65%
4. Persons visited are 876
5. Persons baptized are 267.

Conclusion

After a spiritual revival and reformation of Gisenyi SDA Church members, a remarkable change appeared. The mid-week prayer attendance rate increased from 55.8% to 75%. The rate of those who give the tithe goes up from 44.5% to 65%. After Oikos and public evangelism, 267 people were baptized and integrated into small group for retention. They attended regularly prayer groups and became interested in salvation of their fellows. This is what characterizes a spiritual revival.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a general survey of this study; succeeding to this a conclusion will be given based upon the materials data that the research has gathered. In conclusion, some recommendations will be given to NWRF Administration, district leaders, church leaders and members in general.

Summary

Christian authors, SDA, and non-Adventists declare that church growth is a major theme of Christianity. From the Bible, Ellen G. White writings and from other Christian authors church growth has two aspects: spiritual increasing maturity and growth in the number of people active in the church.

The survey conducted for Gisenyi SDA Church among pastors and church elders revealed some barriers which needed to be addressed in order to resolve the problem of low rate church growth in Gisenyi city.

1. Church members are so busy with their personal occupations for survival rather than being involved in evangelism.
2. There is a lack of training in evangelism.
3. Church members think that the pastor can do evangelism alone because he is paid by the church.
4. Insufficient money is another obstacle to evangelization.
5. There is a lack of follow-up for new members' retention after baptism

All these obstacles are generally linked to ignorance of evangelism methods and to the lack of training. Church members do not experience the Christian

fellowship of working together as a team to solicit money for evangelism campaign.

In addition, these barriers are based on the lack of members' involvement in evangelism to win souls for Christ through the small group.

Conclusion

The research aim was to discover reasons for the low rate growth of Gisenyi Church during five years from 2011 to 2015. It was seen that the church growth rate has been slow because church members are not sufficiently interested in evangelism. The purpose was to develop effective strategies for Gisenyi Church growth and enhance collaboration among church pastor and lay people that shall be a good result to win souls for Jesus. After having taken the initiative to study Gisenyi growth, the following are some conclusions drawn, based on the study and the analysis of the data:

1. Gisenyi Church members do not know the methods on how to do evangelism. The role of the pastor is to train lay people to accomplish this noble task. "Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preach."
2. It was found that Gisenyi Church members are very busy to satisfy material needs rather than to win souls for Christ, it is important to let them know that the spiritual is superior to material things and that there will be a reward in heaven for those who consecrated their time for Christ's mission.
3. There is a lack of collaboration among church members and that way among unreached people. Witnessing and friendship evangelism are the effective methods of evangelism.
4. Church members don't have any approaches for forecast budgeting for evangelism. No work can be done without money.

In this project, new approaches have been the teaching and training for Gisenyi church leaders and church members about the task entrusted by Jesus to all Christians to accomplish the Great Commission. This should be achieved if every church department is acting in concert through a good plan organized by the higher organization for the church.

Serious decisions have to be taken for to continue the training about the Christ mandate and imploring the Holy Spirit to empower the Church for collaboration between the pastor and church members for experiencing a healthy growth.

Recommendations

The following are some recommendations that can be applied by anyone who aspires to see the growth of his church.

1. Organizing training for Church elders and members on involving all church members on personal and public evangelism.
2. Training all church members for the distribution of tracts “Discovers” in the Kinyarwanda language.
3. Inviting all church members to become integrated into small groups to orient their church towards the spiritual and numerical growth.
4. Promoting all church departments to be involved in evangelism, sometimes using charitable deeds.
5. Planning a budget to use in different evangelism activities for church growth.
6. Integrate new members in small groups to fill at home and assign them some responsibility for retention.

We have used our time to the study of the growth of Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church, but time was not enough. We expect that this work remains unfinished. Thus we recommend to future researchers on church growth, the following: Have sufficient time for research would be recommendable for those who want to perform a good study for any church growth.

Finally, I recommend to all pastors at all levels of the church to initiate the Christians under their responsibilities to personal and public evangelism for church growth.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE

Pr Kamandi Ferdinand
NWRP Department Director
P.O Box 106 Gisenyi
July 17, 2015

President of NWRP
P.O Box 106 Gisenyi, Rwanda

Dear Sir,

This is an application to undertake a period of implementation of my Master's Project in Gisenyi Seventh-day Adventist Church. So, I would like to ask you the permission to implement my project as it is the requirements for every student who does the Masters Theology program. I have finished my first session and I would like to use the period from July to 14, 2015 to December 30, 2015 for the implementation on Gisenyi church growth.

May you respond favorably to my request and allow me the possibility to do that implementation?

Kindly regard,
Pastor Kamandi Ferdinand





Seventh-Day Adventist Church

North-West Rwanda Field

Po Box 106 Rubavu

Pastor **Ferdinand KAMANDI**
North-West Rwanda Field
PO Box 106 Rubavu

June 6, 2015

Object: Response to your request

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of May 17, 2015 in which you ask the permission for implementing your project of the growth of Gisenyi local Church of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It is my pleasure to inform you that North-West Rwanda Field Executive committee has agreed to your request.

We hope that your work will not only be useful for the Church but also the entire community around Gisenyi and assure you our very best support.

May God bless you.

Pastor **SETAKO Sophonie**
NWRP President

Cc:

NWRP Officers



APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Questionnaire to 4 Last Pastors Who Led Gisenyi SDA Church.

Dear Pastor,

As part of our study on the growth of the Adventist Church in Gisenyi and the involvement of members of the Church, we would ask you to do us a service by answering the questions below. Your service will be a great contribution to the success of our research.

Kindly fill here below tables for the years when you were pastor at the Church of Gisenyi.

We guarantee confidentiality for freedom of expression. We sincerely appreciate your contribution.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What preparation do you have for the pastorate? _____

After starting your job as a pastor,

How many seminars (workshops) on personal evangelism did you? _____

How many seminars (workshops) on public evangelism did you do? _____

During what years were you a pastor at the church in Gisenyi? _____

In your time, do-that the church was it divided into shares cells? _____

If so, how many action cells she had? _____

What percentage of Gisenyi Church members has involved in evangelism during your time as a pastor? _____

personal Evangelism _____

public evangelism _____

EVALUATION OF DIFFICULTIES

Evaluate those challenges to evangelization by putting a cross (X) the level of importance that you find in your church.

1. a. Members of SDA Gisenyi church showed interest in the Public evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

b. The Church members Gisenyi showed interest in personal evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

2. The living conditions in the city were a serious blockage in public evangelism in Gisenyi Church. _____

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

3. Church members Gisenyi were not informed on how to organize public evangelism

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

4. My members were not informed how to do personal evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

5. Lack of sound equipment has prevented church members from Gisenyi to public evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

6. My annual budget did not allow organizing a crusade.

- Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
7. Gisenyi Church was not large enough to accommodate the new converts.
 Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
8. Members of the Church Gisenyi were very concerned about different activities to earn a living, so they had no time to be part of the action cells.
 Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
9. Members of the Church Gisenyi were very concerned about different activities to earn a living, so they had no time to do personal evangelism.
 Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
10. It is difficult for church members to do personal evangelism or share action cells with people who do not share the same ethnicity.
 Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
- 10 of these difficulties, from the most serious, give ascending order by writing the numbers _____

RESEARCH SURVEY ADDRESSED TO CHURCH ELDERS, DEACONS AND DEPARTMENTS DIRECTORS OF THE CHURCH OF GISENYI, 2011-2015.

In the context of our study on the involvement of members of the church in evangelism, we have the honor to ask you a favor by helping us to answer the questions below.

By doing so, you will have contributed to the success of our research. We guarantee confidentiality for freedom of expression. We sincerely appreciate your contribution.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What position do you hold in Gisenyi Church? _____

How many years have you held this position? _____

For the following questions, put a cross (X) to the assertion corresponding to the answer of your choice.

Example: Is poverty the main cause of non-enrollment of children?

Yes X No _____ Maybe _____

QUESTIONS

1. Are you satisfied with the knowledge that you have on public evangelism?

Yes _____ No _____ I'm not sure _____

2. Do you feel comfortable with the knowledge you have on evangelism personal in your church?

Yes _____ No _____ I'm not sure _____

3. If there was a seminar for evangelization, what topics would you like more information?

4. At what level do you feel the support of your pastor in evangelistic efforts?

Many _____ Some _____ Not at all _____

5. How much time per week do you put in personal evangelism outside the hours of the Sabbath?

More than 10 hours _____ Between 5 and 9:00 _____ Less than 5 hours _____ No _____

6. What percentage of members Gisenyi church has participating in evangelism

The public evangelism? _____

Personal evangelism? _____

7. Is Gisenyi Church doing a house to house visits organization?

Many _____ Some _____ Not at all _____

8. Who visitation?

Pastor _____ Church elders _____ Deacons _____ Deaconesses _____
other _____

9. The members of your church are they part of the action cells?

If so, how percentage _____

10. Do you feel that it's worth your church has a prayer group?

Many _____ Some _____ Not at all _____

11. Are there any ethnic conflicts in your church?

Yes _____ No _____ I'm not sure _____

EVALUATION OF DIFFICULTIES

Evaluate those challenges to evangelization by putting a cross (X) the level of importance that you find in your district

1. a. Church members show no interest in public evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

b. Church members show no interest in personal evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

2. Church members express interest in joining the prayer group.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

3.a. The members are not informed about how to organize evangelization.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

b. Gisenyi church members are not informed about how to organize public evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Not important at all _____

c. The members are not informed about how to do personal evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

4. The members believe that the pastor should do evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

5. The church's finances do not allow evangelism.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

6. Gisenyi Church is not large enough to accommodate the new converts.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

7. Members cannot devote their time to evangelization outside the hours of the Sabbath because they must fend for survival.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

8. The church members are not trained on the subject of evangelization.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

9. A prayer group in the church is that it has a spiritual growth.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

10. Ethnic conflict can hinder church growth.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

10 of these difficulties, from the most serious, give ascending order by writing the numbers.

1. Visits to the pastor and church elders can promote evangelization.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

2. A seminar for all church members on evangelism may allow church growth.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

3. The organization of the church members in action cells plays an important role in evangelization.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____
4. The various activities including church members occupy themselves can hinder active participation in evangelization.

Much Agree _____ Agree _____ Disagree _____

APPENDIX C

SEMINAR TOPICS

Discover Bible Guides in Kinyarwanda.

<http://languages.bibleschools.com/rwanda/>

We can believe in God: Gn1 :1 ; 26, 27. Ps19 :1-5 ; Col1 :17 ; 1Jn 4 :8. Mt 2 :10.

We can believe in the Bible: Gn3 :8, Am3 :7. 2 P 1:20, 21; 2 Tm3:16, 17. 1;

Jn16:13-14; Rm1:16; Lc24:27. Ps119:130; Jn20:31.

My life really does account: Ps 33:6-9 ; Ex 20 :11 ; Gn1 :27-31, 2 :8; Ap12 :7-9, 15 :3-4 ; Jn8 :44 ; Ez28 :14-15, 28 :17 ; Is14 :12-14; Jos 24 :15 ; Hb2 :14, 15

A plan for your life to God!Jn1 :11,45 ; 14 :7-9 ; 10 :30 ; 8 :28,29 ; 20 :25 ; Mi 5 :1 ; Mt1:20-23, 2 :1; 4:15; Is7 :14,53 :3 ; Jn 1 :11. Ps16 :10 ; 22 :16,41 :9 ; 119 :99,105 ; Za11 :12 ; Lk 23 :33; - Ac 2 :31, 32 ; Rm12 :2 ; Ep1 :18 ; Pr16 :25.5.

The bridge that lead to a satisfying life: Is 59 :2 ; Gn3 ; Rm3 :23 ; 5 :12 ; 6 :23 ; Ps 16 :11 ; Jn3 :16, 17 ; 8 :58. Matt.1:21; Heb 4 :14, 15 ; Jn1 :29 ; 14 :1-3. Heb 2 :17-18.

A second chance to life: Is26 :3 ; 59 :2 ; Ep2 :1, 2, 12,13; 1Jn3 :4 ; 5 :17 ; Rm2 :4 ; 5 :8,12. Mt1 :21 Ac3 :19 ; 5 :31 ; 2 Co7 :9 ; 1 Jn1 :9 ; Mi7 :18, 19.

About your future: Dn2 :31-35,36, 39, 41-44 ; 14 :27; Jn14 :1-3 ; Mt24 :25-27, 39,36 ; Ac1 :10-11 ; Ap1 :7,25 :31 ; 1 Th 4 :16 ; 1 Co5 :51-53 ; Hb9 :28

When Jesus come to pick you: Jn14 :1-3 ; Ap21 :1-3. ; Ac1 :10-11 ; Mt24 :25-27, 30, 31, 36,44 ; 25 :31 ; Ap1 :7 ; Co15 :51-53 ; Hb9 :28.

Your home in heaven: Jn14 :1-3 ; Ap21 :1-3 ; Mt5 :5; Lc24 :39 ; P3 :20, 21 ; 1 Co13 :12 ; Is35:5,10; 65:1:3; 65 :17-22; 66:23, Ap21 :3 21 :27. 1 P1:8, 9; 22.

Jesus will return here very soon!:Mt24 :3 ; Lc21 : 25-28 ; Jc5 :34,8 ; 2 Tm 3 :1-5, 13 ; Mt24 :14, 24,44 ; Jl3 :9-13 ; Dn12 :4 ; Rm8 :26, 27.

A mysterious force in my life: Gn1 :1, 2 ; Jean 3 :5 ; Jn16 :8 ; Is30 :21 ; Ga5 :22, 23 ; Acts 1 :4, 5,8; 2 :38 ; Is3 :16, 17, 20.

An ever-present Savior: Mt 28 :20 ; Hb2 :17 ; 7 :25 ; 12 :124 :14-16 ; Ex25 :8 ; Dn9 :25.

From guilty sinner to forgiven saint: Jn1 :9 ; 5 :2 ; Rm3 :2, 22-25 ; Mt 3 :16, 17. John1 :41 ; Dn8 :13, 14,9 :26,27 ; Ac3 :19). 1 Jn 1:9.

The secret of the fulfillment of our prayers: Jr29 :12, 13 ; Lc11: 9 ; Ap3: 20 ; 34 :4-7 ; 40 :1 ; 66 :18,104: 34 ; Jc4: 8 ; Mt5 :6 ; 6 :6,9-13,18 ; 18 :10 ; 18: 20 ; 21 :22 ; 1 P5: 17 ; Jn14: 14 ; 15 :7 ; Mc 9: 24 ; 1jn 5 :14 ; 4: 3 ; Pr28: 9 ; Lc18 :5-7 ; Ph 4 :5-7. Ép2:9; 4:22-24.

The secret of happiness: Ps 119:105; Jn14:15, 21; 15: 1, 10, 11; 16: 33; Qo12:8, 15; Pr29: 18; Jc2:10-12; Rm3:20; 5:5; 8:7.

The secret of divine rest: He4:4-11; 9: 26; 10: 22, 23; Gn1:31-2:3; Ex20:8-11; Lk 4: 16; Mc 2: 27, 28; Is66: 22, 23.

The Secret of Growth through the Bias of Sharing: Ép2:4-7; 1 P2: 12, 21; Pr23: 7; Ph4:4-9; 1 Jn2:15-17; Mt 6:19-21

The secret to a healthy life: Pr17: 22; 3 Jn2; 1c6:10; 10:31; Gn1:29; 3:18; Pr 20: 1; 1; Ps 103: 2 – 4.

Enter the Christian life: Rm6: 6; Ga2: 20; 2 Co5: 17,21; Mt 3: 13, 15; 2; Jn3: 5; Mc 16: 16;

The secret of growth through fellowship : 1 Jn1: 3, 4 ; Mt8 :15-18 ;16: 18 ; 1 Co12: 13 ; Ac2: 47 ; Ep2: 20 ; Ps95 :6 ; 96 :8-9 ;; Ep5 :25-27; Ep4: 4, 5 ; Jn7: 17 ; 8: 31, 32.

The majority could it be wrong?Ex20 :8-11 ; 31: 18 ; Deut 4: 2 ; Mt5: 17, 18 ; Jc2: 10, 11 ; Ac16: 13; 20 :29-31 ; Ap1: 10 ; Mt 12: 8.

Is God just? Ap20:1-12; 1 Th4 :16, 17. – 1 ; 1 Co6: 2, 3 ; Rm14 :10-11 ; Ph 2 :5-11 ; Ap21 :1-5.

Where is hell?: Ez33:11; 2 P 3: 7; Mt13:40-42; 25: 41; 2 Th1: 8, 9; 1 Jn1: 9; Is 65:12.

What will happen when a person dies? Gn2: 7; Eccl 9:5, 6; John 11:1-14; Jn11: 25; 14:27; 1 Th4: 13, 16-18; 16; Is 8: 19; He2: 14, 15.

Can I Find God's Church Today? 2 Co11: 2; Ap12: 1; 7-17; Jn 14: 15.

God has a special message for our time! Ap14:9-20; 1 Jn 1: 3, 4.

The topics for Public Evangelism were:

1. All that has been designed has a designer (Creator).
2. An effective guide to the road to heaven (Bible).
3. United in creating and united to save (Trinity).
4. The bridge that leads to a satisfying life (Jesus).
5. An ever-present Adviser (Holy-Spirit).
6. From guilty sinner to forgiven saint (Repentance).
7. The grave dug in water (Baptism).
8. The secret of healthy life.
9. Do not miss this project (Tithe and offerings).
10. The precursors of the morning (Signs of last days).
11. Is God just?
12. What will happen after death?
13. The human well-being in ten steps (Ten Commandments).
14. An everlasting institution (Sabbath).
15. Does God have a special message for our time?

Seminar Topics on Evangelism

A seminar took 4 days: The first day was for the revival.

Important Dates: Prayer, Bible Study, and Witnessing.

REVIVAL: Freely ye have received, freely give. Matthew 10:8.

The blessed Redeemer has set us an example in living out the precepts of the law. He says to His followers, "Freely ye have received, freely give." We are to have an open heart to receive the rich treasures of heaven, and our hearts are to be opened to let those rich treasures out to others. Oh, we need to abide in Christ, then we will be a constant channel through which God will communicate to our brethren and to the world His own gracious Spirit.

When we have an assurance which is bright and clear of our own salvation, we shall exhibit cheerfulness and joyfulness, which becomes every follower of Jesus Christ. The softening, subduing influence of the love of God, brought into practical life, will make impressions upon minds that will be a savor of life unto life. But a harsh, denunciatory spirit, if manifested, will turn many souls away from the truth into the ranks of the enemy. Solemn thought! To deal patiently with the tempted requires us to battle with self. But God has given Jesus to us, and believing in Him as our personal Savior, all heaven is at our command. The purchased possession of Christ is around us on every hand. There is want; there are wretchedness and sin on every side.

This text is taken from the devotional book Posts by Ellen G. White.

http://www.revivalandreformation.org/content_series/1/entries/the-greatest-teacher#.VOVoUCEyqTU

What are revival and reformation?

From the SDA Website, it is mentioned: "The New Testament Church powerfully impacted the world with the good news of the gospel in a single generation. Filled with the Holy Spirit, these New Testament believers shared the present truth message of a crucified and resurrected Lord with hundreds of thousands. In the face of overwhelming obstacles, these praying believers proclaimed the gospel to the ends of the earth. It will happen again, and in some places, it is happening now. You can be part of something great for God. Revival is about a new experience with Jesus. It is about what He can do in our personal lives, in our marriages, and with our children. Revival leads us from heartfelt prayer to passionate mission".

<http://www.revivalandreformation.org/revival-and-reformation>

PETER'S FIRST SERMON

A PURE CHURCH AN INCREASING CHURCH

Acts 2:47. I ask you to notice here, first, the profound conception which the writer had of the present action of the ascended Christ. 'The Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.'

Let us go to the second part of this text, and see if we can find an answer. Notice how emphatically there is brought out here the attractive power of an earnest and pure Church.

TOTAL MEMBERS INVOLVEMENT

How Church Members Can Participate

Ted Wilson suggested that church members get involved in soul winning through personal witnessing, small group evangelism, or public evangelism. Members can come up with their own methods to share Jesus or reach out to their pastors, local churches, and conference offices for more ideas, he said. "Evangelism is the lifeblood of the church. All of us are to be involved in it," Wilson said.

Total Member Involvement is understood through the parable of the sower in Mark 4:3-9.

“Matthew 13:37 indicates that the Sower of good seed was the Son of Man, Jesus Christ,” he said. A little later, he said, “Luke 8:11 says the seed to be sown is the Word of God.”

“Evangelism is the lifeblood of the church. All of us are to be involved in it,” Wilson said.

This plan includes strategies such as constant prayer and using Christ’s method of ministry, Adventist radio and television support, health ministry outreach, investments in Pathfinder and youth programs, Christ-centered evangelistic efforts and more.

<http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story3337-wilson-urges-every-church-member-to-become-a-sower>

WITNESSING

This term refers to the responsibility of every Christian to relate to others what the Lord has done in his or her life and appeal to people to accept the plan of salvation. In the early church, disciples were a witness and the church had a vital growth. Bible says: “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people, and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2; 46, 47.

OIKOS EVANGELISM

Oikos, a Greek word means “household.” It is an “outreach system based on social networks and sphere of influence, including extended families, friends, work associates and another contact”¹. It is also friendship evangelism.

The New Testament contains several *Oikos* methods.

In Acts 16, we find the story of Paul’s establishing the church at Philippi. On Sabbath, he goes to the riverside, where he meets Lydia and shares the Good News of Jesus with her. However, Paul does not just baptize Lydia. The Bible says that he baptized her and her household (Oikos). Later on the Chapter, Paul and Barnabas witness the miraculous conversion of the Philippian jailer. After the jailer invites Paul and Barnabas to spend the night at his home, the next morning Paul baptizes not just the jailer but his Oikos.

In Luke 19, the physician tells the story of the conversion of Zacchaeus. No sooner does the tax collector come down from the sycamore tree than Jesus informs him that salvation has come to his Oikos. Not only was Zacchaeus converted but his conversion provided entry to the rest of his Oikos. If Zacchaeus had not come to Christ, he would not bring with them an Oikos that can now be reached because of the new convert.

In Mark 5, the healed demoniac has recommended by Jesus to return to his Oikos to share the good news of what Jesus has done for him. Taking other examples and witnesses in our common life will be the emphasis on this method.

DISTRIBUTION OF ADVENTIST LITERATURE AND DISCOVERIES TRACTS

The local church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a whole possess a very great potential in evangelism through the circulation of our literature.

Ellen G. White further said that every Seventh-day Adventist believer is called upon to scatter and broadcast tracts, leaflets, and books containing the message for this time (see *Review and Herald*, November 5, 1914).

She says: Churches in every place should feel the deepest interest in the tract and missionary work” (Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 390).

¹ James W. Zackrison, “From Spectators to Disciples A Biblical Strategy for Church Growth How to Run a Great Commission Adventist Church,” *Advent Source*, www.adventsource.org.

PUBLIC EVANGELISM

Jesus uses

The Bible contains many examples of public evangelism. The day of Pentecost, Luke 8:1 After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, Luke 9:6 So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.

Luke 16:16 "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

Luke 20:1 One day as he was teaching the people in the temple courts and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him.

<http://transformingteachers.org/en/articles/teaching-as-ministry/71-jesus-the-evangelist>

SMALL GROUPS

Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministries

“Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer.” (Hebrews 10:24, 25, GNB)

Four Ways to Make Your Small Group Evangelistic

Thom S. Rainer

1. Be aware of indicators that an open group is losing its evangelistic focus.
2. Choose the right small group leaders.
3. Continually challenge small group members to think about non-believers.
4. Celebrate when group members become believers.

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/01/four-ways-to-make-your-small-group-evangelistic/>

Leadership in Small Groups

Seven Ways to Nurture Your Small Group Leaders (Eastman)

Make them feel loved b) Include them in something weekly c) Insist on praying in the moment d) Share your hurts and hopes e) Thank them for serving f) Envision them in some small way g) Remind them of their value.

Nine Principles of Relational Evangelism

1. Focus on Building Deep Friendships
2. Be the Kind of Christian Unchurched People Have Never Met Before
3. Cross-Pollinate Your Unchurched Friends with Your Fellow Group Members
4. Avoid Duplicity
5. Give *and* Take Refrigerator Rights with Unchurched Friends
6. Pray for Yourself
7. Refuse to Engage in Gossip
8. Share a Relevant Message
9. Invite, Invite, Invite!

<http://www.smallgroups.com/articles/2011/nine-principles-of-relational-evangelism.html?paging=off>

NEW MEMBERS RETENTION

About supporting a new believer, Christopher C. Thompson says: “I have worked with churches that have attempted to retain new members by assigning to them "spiritual guardians." This process often falters because the two people who are thus connected often have had no prior connection and feel practically forced to be friends.

Just think how much easier spiritual guardianship becomes when you serve to "guard" the one whom you have won to the kingdom. It's not a burden that has been forced on you, but rather a responsibility that you had already shouldered when you first introduced them to Christ. The process of discipleship simply continues after their baptism".

Give Grace to People First

Apart from embracing suffering so that others can be saved (for example in fasting), there is the order in which Jesus did things in reaching out to people. Again we are often guilty of adopting a methodology which serves our own convenience more than the purposes of God. For example, in evangelism, we might begin with giving people a message, inviting them to repent and believe. We then may pray for their healing or other needs. After that, if we are spiritual we may take them out for lunch – finally, we might even bless them in some way! Jesus instructed his 70 disciples in Luke 10 to do things in exactly the reverse order to what we normally do them! Here are those things:

1. Whatever house you enter, bless it with peace.
 2. Eat such things as are put before you (fellowship)
 3. Heal the sick that are there (meet needs, demonstrate the power)
 4. Say the Kingdom of Heaven has come near you.
- <http://www.christian-faith.com/doing-evangelism-like-jesus-christ/>

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