

Dissertation Abstracts

Andrews University, Seventh-day
Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: Cultural Practices Chal-
lenging the Adventist Church:
A Case Study on Polygamy in
Ghana

Name of researcher: Kwame
Annor-Boahen

Advisers: Bruce L. Bauer,
D.Miss., and Rudolf Maier, Ph.D.

Date completed: March 2010

Polygamists are not accepted into fellowship through baptism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana. They do not enjoy the privilege of belonging to the Adventist Church, neither do they have the chance to participate in the rituals of the church, or do ministry or mission in the church.

Current literature on polygamy—books, articles, newspapers, internet sources, and the works of Adventist and non-Adventist scholars were reviewed. Questionnaires and interviews were administered to solicit feelings, opinions, and suggestions from people impacted by polygamy. Polygamists in the Bible and

how they were treated were also analyzed.

A Logical Framework and Gantt Chart were developed and used to plan a strategy to integrate polygamous men into the Adventist Church.

The effects regarding the existing policy on polygamists have been reiterated. Its effects on the Adventist Church's ministry and mission in society, and its rippling effects on the victim's physical and spiritual well being have been pointed out. Experiences from other denominations, especially on how they treat converted polygamists have been presented as lessons for the Adventist Church.

The Adventist Church needs to accept polygamists into the church either through baptism or give them the sense of belonging for it is vital for both their physical as well as spiritual growth.

Andrews University, Seventh-day
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Title: Improving the Economic
Life of Adventists and Motivating
Them to Increase Their Financial
Support of the Church: A Case
Study from the Mid-West Ghana
Conference

Name of researcher: James Kwaku Badu

Advisers: Bruce L. Bauer, D.Miss., and Rudolf Maier, Ph.D.

Date completed: March 2010

The Adventist Church has made significant inroads in the rural areas and the membership has more than doubled in the last ten years. However, increase in church membership does not commensurate to church funds that come from those areas in the Mid-West Ghana Conference.

Consequently, the Mid-West Ghana Conference is not able to reach their budgeted incomes and cannot employ more ministers to reduce the pastor-membership ratio which affect the nurture and retention of new members and creates the inability to carry out both human and physical development. Due to low income and general economic hardship, most rural members have lost sight of the biblical principle of giving.

A questionnaire was developed for obtaining data about the farmers and a survey was conducted using the interview guide. The purposive sampling method was then used to select ten farmers.

A Logical Framework and a Gantt Chart showed the scheme and method the project followed. The project began from January 2007 and ran until December 2009 for the first phase. The second phase will end in 2012.

During the implementation of the strategy, systematic stewardship methods were used to educate and encourage participant farmers to be faithful to God.

The report of the year-end assessment in February 2009 showed that all the participant farmers achieved the yearly goal except one who had a technical problem. The tithe and offerings assessment indicated that the participant farmers' support in tithe and offerings improved over the previous year. The seedlings transplanted had a survival rate of 90 percent; only a few were replaced. The report indicated that the project achieved its yearly goal.

It is anticipated that farmers will be able to realize maximum harvests that will consequently increase their income and living standards and also the support of the church through their tithe and offerings.

Successful mission and ministry strategies within the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to be in line with Christ's methods when He lived here on earth. Therefore, the ministry of the church should not be merely philosophical or theoretical. It must touch the lives of people in all aspects of their being. Again, ministry and mission are not limited to evangelistic and church planting tasks but also include addressing the social needs of the evangelized—holistic ministry or mission.