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ABSTRACT

APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL WORSHIP PRINCIPLES IN
THE NEW LIFE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
IN NAIROBI, KENYA

by

Thomas Masimba

Adviser: Stanley E. Patterson

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL WORSHIP PRINCIPLES IN THE NEW LIFE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN NAIROBI, KENYA

Name of researcher: Thomas Masimba

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Stanley E. Patterson, Ph.D.

Date completed: September 2011

Problem

The New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church has practiced the traditional style of worship since its establishment in 1986. In this style of worship, reverence is expressed through silence, and both emotional expression and congregational response are discouraged. Neither clapping of hands nor applauding ministers is acceptable. Seemingly, the new generation of members has embraced the opposite. As a result, the church is experiencing a conflict as to which style of worship should be observed.

Methods

A literature review of contemporary authors, the Bible, historical Adventist writings, commentaries, and relevant articles concerning style of worship were examined.

A questionnaire was developed and administered to ascertain the attitude of members in the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church relative to traditional and contemporary worship, and to how the conflict could be resolved in a biblical way that would enhance church unity.

Results

The results gathered from the questionnaires that were administered in the New Life SDA Church indicated that there was general support for contemporary worship across age differences. Many who indicated strong or very strong support for contemporary worship also reported satisfaction with the traditional model. Overall, 66% of the church indicated support for the contemporary model, which leaves 34% either neutral or favoring the traditional model, thus revealing the possibility for significant conflict over the issue of worship style in the New Life SDA church.

Conclusions

For the New Life SDA Church to adhere to its missional purpose and maintain church unity while understanding what the Bible speaks about true worship, there is an urgent need for education and intervention by means of a seminar on the biblical worship principles to establish a theological foundation for the practice of worship.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN NAIROBI, KENYA

A Project Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Thomas Masimba
September 2011

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1. Worship Preference by Age 130

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| CAPS | Career Aptitude Preference System |
| CCD | Career Counseling Development |
| CCP | Career Counseling Program |
| CFI | Career Factor Inventory |
| COPS | Career Occupation Preference System |
| GC | General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists |
| GED | General Education Diploma |
| GNAAS | Ghana National Association of Adventist Students |
| GUC | Ghana Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| KNUST | Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology |
| MBTI | Myers-Briggs Type Indicator |
| NAD | North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists |
| OVIS | Ohio Vocational Interest Survey |
| PCP | Personal Centered Plan |
| RIASEC | Realistic, Investigation, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional |
| SCCT | Social Cognitive Career Theory |
| SDS | Self-Directed Search |
| SGC | South Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists |
| SHAPE | Spirits, Hearts, Abilities, Personality, and Experience |

| | |
|------|--|
| SII | Strong Interest Inventory |
| SOP | Spirit of Prophecy |
| SSI | Social Skill Inventory |
| VVU | Valley View University |
| WAD | West and Central Africa Division of Seventh-day Adventists |
| YMCA | Young Men's Christian Association |

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Personal Life History

In this chapter, I discuss my personal spiritual journey focusing on how God prepared me for ministry. Furthermore, this part will reveal my personal profile, culture, community, call, and temperaments. Besides that, in my spiritual journey, I have experienced worship conflicts and as result of the biblical findings that I have made, I have developed some competencies on how to solve the conflicts in the ministry. In addition, this project will not only help the New Life SDA Church to solve the similar problem, but also understand the biblical principles of worship. Above all, this project will hopefully assist the East African Union Mission leaders and ministers to solve the similar emerging conflicts in the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Kenya.

Life Journey

In fact, my personal conviction is that the Lord has led me through several good and bad incidents purposefully to mold and shape my life for the ministry, as he did to Moses in order to attain spiritual stamina (Exod 3:1). Guinness (1998/2003) points out that “slowly, incident by incident, test by test, Moses was shaped to be a man of God and a prophet, a hero of the moral word” (p. 76). Likewise, I am convinced that through my life journey, God has been fully involved to humble my life purposely to fit the ministry.

Culture

I was born over forty years ago at *Kericho*, Kenya. I am the fifth son of our family of ten children. From 1959, my father was recruited as an overseer at *Kericho* tea plantations owned by the British colonists. Much of my teenage years were spent at the same place. Besides being brought up in *Kericho*, it is also where I began my elementary school studies. At a tender age, I saw my parents were not attending the Church. My father was a hard-working person and ensured that each one of his children were educated. I believe that God used him to shape and mold my life for the future ministry, because he discouraged any undisciplined behavior amongst us.

However, one of my uncles, who was not only a staunch Pentecostal believer but also a church leader, introduced me not only to the Christian faith but also to his church at the age of nine. I believe that this was the first time and moment that the door of my heart was opened to receive Jesus. Greene commented (as cited by Guinness, 1998/2003) that “there is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in” (p. 44). Since then, my heart has been opened to receive the word of God, in addition to desiring to worship and serve Jesus as my Lord.

Among his Sunday school teachings, my uncle taught me the importance of communing with God in prayer, fasting, and worship. He always provided us with small booklets written in *Kiswahili* known as *Msaada kutoka Mbinguni* (help from above) to read and do recitation at every Sunday service. Seemingly, he had realized that I had some virtues and talents, which needed to be nurtured for my future ministry. Hence, McNeal (2000) observes, “Culture is the first major player in the leader’s heart development. It creates the backdrop for all the rest of the story lines” (p. xii). To put it

another way, culture is a tool that God employs to shape his people's hearts for his ministry.

Community

After my completion of the standard four, my father resigned from his work and we had to go back to our ancestral land in *Kisii*. I knew nothing about Adventism, and further, given that not all the employees of Kericho tea plantations where I was brought up worked on Sundays in order to worship, I was made to believe that all people worship on Sunday. But this proved untrue. While at our ancestral home, I realized that my elder brother was a staunch Adventist believer, as he introduced me unto his Church where I was registered as a baptismal candidate.

After two years of being in the baptismal class, my eyes were opened to many Scriptural teachings and finally I was convicted by the truth about Jesus. In addition, this was the time when I was introduced to the teaching about the biblical Sabbath among many other doctrines. Eventually, this became my turning point as I was baptized and became a full member of *Ogango* Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, I continued with my primary education and sat for the Kenya National Primary Examination.

After that, I joined the secondary school for four years. Immediately, after my completion of the same, I had secured a job for myself in Nairobi city with one of the pharmaceutical companies, as I became a member of *Kaloleni* New Life Seventh-day Advent Church. Both my church and Nairobi New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church were born at the same time as a result of the gospel campaign, which was conducted by an American evangelist, although located at different places in the city. Whereas, my church observed the traditional style of worship, Nairobi New Life Seventh-day

Adventist Church embraced the opposite. Even though, most of the new generation flocked into it because of her contemporary style of worship. Consequently, the two sister churches' opposite styles of worship caused more confusion in my mind as to which style was biblically acceptable.

Call to the Ministry

In 1992, I felt much pressure from within my heart to join the ministry; undoubtedly God was moving my heart to respond to the call in several ways. Moreover, McNeal (2000) insists that “basic heart-shaping occurs in six significant arenas. . . . These six major subplots are culture, call, community, communion, conflict, and the commonplace” (p. xii). In fact, I would affirm that McNeal rightly named the six subplots God uses to influence his people to enter the ministry, because, in my case at least, more than one way was employed. Furthermore, he argues that “culture will be broadly defined to include environmental influences that shape the leader’s life and ministry context. These include the historical period, political situation, societal mores, and traditions” (p. xii). On the other hand, God is not limited to accomplish his mission.

Whereas, inwardly God had exerted some pressure in my heart to respond to his will, outwardly he employed my close friends as a community and the environmental influences to encourage me to respond to the call after they realized that I had a talent to be shaped and molded for the future ministry. Guinness (1998/2003) affirms that “finding and fulfilling the purpose of our lives comes in myriad ways and in all seasons of our lives” (p. 2).

Final Decision

Eventually, in the same year, I decided to resign from my work and responded to God's call. McNeal (2000) confirms that "the call orders the leader's efforts, affecting decisions in every area of life" (p. xiii). Obviously, my life was drastically changed. And finally, I joined Tanzania Union College for my diploma in theology. Guinness (1998/2003) argues, "Answering the call of our Creator is 'the ultimate why' for living, the highest source of purpose in human existence" (p. 4). In other words, it was only through the response to God's call that I was able to realize and experience the true meaning and purpose of my life as it was originally intended by the creator.

After graduation in 1994, the *Nyamira* Seventh-day Adventist Conference employed me to serve at *Nyagesenda* district. This area was predominantly a Pentecostal zone wherein a congregational participatory style of worship was common. Because of that, some of our Adventist youths were impacted by the same. Eventually, this was confirmed during our annual camps meetings when the youths could repeatedly pose questions like, why don't we clap or express ourselves emotionally during our worship services as the other faiths do. So far, this question posed a great challenge to my understanding of the genuine Scriptural worship style.

In 1999, I joined *Bugema* University and graduated in 2001 with my Bachelor's degree in Theology without much light on the subject. I was posted to serve at *Nyamusi* district as district leader. Three years later, I was transferred to *Nyamira* Seventh-day Adventist Church, one of the largest Town Churches. Hence, before I joined Andrews University in the year 2007, I planned one of the major gospel campaigns where Dr. Mhando, the renowned African evangelist was the main speaker for six weeks. His

teachings, prayers, music, and worship style seemed to be more contemporary than traditional in view of the Adventist traditionalists.

Consequently, he received absolute opposition from some leaders, ministers, and some of the traditional laity. However 1,200 souls accepted Jesus as their personal savior and a new church was planted. Because of the leaders' opposition to Mhando, I was not only disturbed, but also became more anxious and determined to ascertain explicitly the genuine biblical style of worship. In fact, throughout my work experience, the issue of worship styles has been a great challenge. In conclusion, out of that experience, I was motivated to pursue the same in my dissertation.

Temperaments

God has created each one of us with different temperaments purposely to fit somewhere in life. More specifically, to those who received a call to serve in his vineyard, the temperaments are vital gifts. Hence, it is important for one to understand his temperament in order to serve both efficiently and effectively. Therefore, to attain that goal there is a need to study ourselves through the reliable and acceptable means. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a tool widely used to produce fair, accurate, and reliable results of our temperaments. More so, Oswald and Kroeger (1988) argue, "The MBTI categories offer clergy and other church professionals a valuable tool for understanding themselves, their role and those with whom they work and minister. First and foremost, the MBTI encourages deeper self-understanding" (p. 7).

By taking the MBTI test, I was able to understand both my gifts and liabilities, in addition to accepting tasks that I am good at and avoiding trying the jobs that I am limited at accomplishing effectively and efficiently. Although the temperament is a trait

that cannot be easily changed it can be influenced by God's power. Sward (as cited in Seamands, 1981) admits that "the new birth does not change your temperament" (p. 115).

Type of Characteristics

According to Oswald and Kroeger (1988), there are four categories of temperament types: **Extraversion vs. Introversion, Sensing vs. Intuition, Thinking vs. Feeling, and Judging vs. Perceiving** (p. 2). My personality type is **ESFP**:

As an **Extrovert**, I relate more with the outer world of people and things, or the environment. I am always energized by sharing with a large congregation of people beyond my own family. Oswald and Kroeger (1988) affirm that when fatigued, I am always revitalized by interaction with supportive friends and family members (pp. 29-30). In addition, I like preaching, visitation, and speaking to people, and more so, to know what is going on in the outside world through the internet network.

As a **Sensing** type, I love to work with people in dealing with facts and realities, besides perceiving God's immanence in all things apart from human beings who were made in his own image (Gen. 1:27). More so, I like to serve God in a practical way by leading others to appreciate his goodness. Hence, it is always easier for me to relate myself with other people's situations and in turn introduce to them Jesus the Savior of the world as a commission to all ministers and believers.

As a **Feeling** type, I am more interested in peace and harmony with people and appreciating their contributions. I often discourage conflicts in ministry. Moreover, Oswald and Kroeger (1988) comment that when solving human problems I weigh human values and motives and try to arrive at the best solutions for the church and individuals involved. Consequently, I easily "win them by persuasion" (p. 36).

As a **Perceiving** type, my interest is always centered in dealing with the outer world spontaneously. Besides understanding life and adopting it immediately, I plan how to do visitation and evangelism. I like to spend much of my time in gathering information and bringing new things in to the Church.

However, as result of my sensing type and relating with others well, besides using a persuasive gift to make others disciples of Jesus, more importantly for the sake of the gospel, as a leader I will introduce a spirit of teamwork for the success of the ministry. Further, I give the followers freedom to share their ideas as I accept their contributions. In addition, this helps develop trust me, which is the greatest and most fundamental quality of authentic leadership that leads to meaningful change and success.

Additionally, it will be very necessary for me to identify and address the mentoring cases so that each realizes his or her potential fully as it was purposed or intended by our God the Creator. In short, until transformational leadership—which only produces a true change in both the church and the society as opposed to a transactional model of leadership—is practiced or adhered to, the chances for both societies to develop spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially, and economically is too meager.

Leadership Challenge

In fact, some of the conflicts in the churches are not solved in a single day; rather, it happens gradually when appropriate mechanisms are put in place. More specifically, the conflict in the New Life SDA Church needs assessment or gradual monitoring by the church leadership. It has to ensure that the worship program is adjusted in a manner that both models of worship satisfy the spiritual needs of its members. Moreover, the worship committee is required not to maintain the status quo but rather to enhance the change in

the worship program to enable each member to realize meaningful and intended purpose of worship.

Statement of the Problem

The New Life Seventh-day Adventist church was planted in 1986 and since its inception; it has practiced the same style of worship that was handed down by the missionaries who brought the Adventist message to Kenya in 1906. In this style of worship, reverence is expressed through silence and congregational response and emotional expression is discouraged. However, pastoral observation suggests that a new emerging generation of church members have embraced the contemporary style of worship, which encourages participation and congregational response.

As a result, the church is seemingly experiencing a conflict regarding the style of worship that should be observed. Hence, the leaders' attention has been drawn to find out an amicable solution which will enhance the unity which the Lord Jesus had focused on in his final discourse in the world according to the apostle John (John 17:11-23). In other words, unless the Church had to practice unity, the world would not be convinced that Jesus was sent by God. In addition, the missional purpose which supports the existence of the New Life SDA Church according to Matthew are threatened (Matt 28:19-20).

Statement of the Task

The task of this project was to identify biblical worship principles and apply those principles to worship in the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in a culturally appropriate way. In addition, upon the theological findings and literature research that I have made, the worship seminar will be implemented at home church when I return to Kenya.

Justification of the Project

For some time, the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced conflict as to what model of worship should be practiced. As a result, both the relationships among church members and worship attitude are threatened. Further, a meaningful worship cannot be experienced without a positive and worshipful attitude realized. In fact, the Scriptural evidence shows several incidents whereby the same was significantly important and required. For instance, when God called Moses, he demanded the same in order for Moses to encounter, experience, and commune with him (Exod 3:14).

In addition, the new and emerging generation in urban churches is seemingly seeking a more contemporary and participatory style of worship. Unless the style of worship in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church is addressed in a way that is both culturally appropriate and biblically faithful, then there is a risk of losing the new emerging generation to other faiths with more contemporary worship experiences.

Furthermore, it is evidenced by the former world leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Elder Jan Paulsen, that unless the new strategies to arrest the rate or the trend by which the new generation is leaving the Church, this church has no future without them because the young people are the dynamic and vibrant leaders of tomorrow. Moreover, as a result of the negative impact experienced by the global church, he had initiated a global interactive program with the new generation through a Seventh-day Adventist Church television channel, purposely not only to retain them in Church, but also to have them know Jesus better and worship him in a more meaningful biblical way

as their only hope and destiny. Consequently, besides being entrusted with the task of spreading the gospel worldwide, they might be also prepared for the advent of Jesus.

Expectations from This Project

This project will hopefully transform New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members, and advance God's kingdom as their relationship and unity will be enhanced as a result. In addition, it will provide a possible solution to the conflict over worship style, which should be observed, based upon the Biblical findings. Furthermore, this project will hopefully help to reduce the loss of the new emerging generation by providing them with contextually appropriate consistent biblical worship principles. Actually, the intent of the Church is to seek, keep, and nurture, but not to lose God's children.

Consequently, this project will help me to develop leadership abilities and skills as a minister in the East African Union Mission. Additionally, it will be the first step for the researcher in becoming the first SDA theologian to apply a theology of worship ministry in the context of the East African Union. This project will potentially help the East African Union Mission church leaders, administrators, pastors, and laity to better understand the biblical principles of worship and their application in solving similar problems in other churches. Besides that, it will be an additional resource to the current literature relevant to worship.

Delimitations

The intent or purpose of this project is specifically intended to study the worship conflict in New Life SDA Church in Nairobi and possibly provide a biblically based solution to the same and more so, to be culturally appropriate and relevant to the church in question. Actually, the Church in question is the one of the major urban churches that

seemingly practices a contemporary style of worship contrary to the tenets, norms, and the tradition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the East African Union Mission.

Limitations

This dissertation is not an exhaustive study of all East African Union Mission Seventh-day Adventist Churches experiencing worship conflicts. Moreover, this study focuses specifically on New Life SDA Church members when most of the members are available, especially vacation seasons. In addition, one of the limitations of which I did not have control over was to conduct the survey when most of the new generation's church-members, who are students and schooling far from the location of the church in question, i.e., in Nairobi City, were available.

Methodology

The modern worship challenges facing the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Kenya today, especially in the urban areas, can only find their solutions from what God has communed with his people both in the past and present through Scripture. In fact, both the Old and the New Testaments have been held as the source and standard by which all authentic Christian practices, beliefs, and teachings are determined. Moreover, the purpose of this dissertation is to find out the biblically appropriate solution for the worship conflict in New Life SDA church. Hence, this will be only applicable through the implementation of biblical worship principles as they are reflected in both Old and New Testaments.

In addition, the writings of Ellen G. White, whose prophetic gift is regarded by most Adventist believers, has been examined specifically in the areas of worship practices. Furthermore, relevant literature, which includes books and articles that address

critical contextualization and cultural worship issues in Kenya, has been reviewed. Besides that, demographics, church growth, and financial data have been collected from the Central Kenya Conference in the East African Union Mission to show the church trends during the time of the conflict.

A questionnaire has been administered and the results contribute to the findings of an appropriate solution to the conflict. Additionally, recommendations have been made in view of the results. Also, a profile of cultural worship in Kenya has been developed. In addition, I have developed the strategy for taking the members of New Life SDA Church through the process of contextualization.

Finally, I had conducted an interview whereby 300 New Life Church members were involved. The data or information gathered has been of great significance to the formulation of a meaningful worship seminar for the same church. More so, its attribution has been used for the formation of the worship committee, which will be in charge of the worship program in the same church.

Definition of Terms

In this dissertation, a number of African cultural terms have been used. Hence, the following definitions will be helpful to the readers unfamiliar to the same:

Abagusii: Bantu-speaking people found in western Kenya, Nyanza province. I was born and brought up in the *Abagusii* culture. That is the reason as to why the *Abagusii* cultural worship is being discussed in this dissertation.

Ekegusii: Ethnic language spoken by *Abagusii* people.

Mogusii: Patrilineal ancestors of *Abagusii*.

Obokano ne chikonu: Traditional bowl lyre and drums.

Tradition: The teachings, practices, beliefs, and norms passed or inherited from one generation to another.

Ogosasima eberecha: Ancestral worship.

Ngoro ya Mwaga: A rock-shelter associated with ancestral worship by the *Abagusii* community.

Engoro: *Abagusii* cultural god.

Ebirecha: Ancestral spirits.

Omokorerani: A reconciliator.

Ogokorerana: Reconciliation.

Embugabobe or *enyakweumia:* The Owl.

Rirongo: Soil collected from the highway and used as a traditional medicine.

Iyanyagokwa etaberegeti egetondo: No death without cause

Abaragori: Cultural diviners.

Ababani: The prophets.

Ebirandi: Traditional calabashes used for divination purposes.

Chisembe: Small special stones used by cultural diviners to entice the dead spirits.

Chibangiri: Metal-traditional rings worn by the cultural diviners in both hands.

Koretwanyomba: Living with the dead.

Obarairebobe: The negative reaction of the dead person towards the living because of being mistreated or unattended.

To totige: The pleading of the living to be spared by the threatening ancestors.

Abanyamesira: The traditional medicine men.

Abanyibi: Cultural rainmakers.

Ribina: Purposed or intentional cultural dancing to appease Engoro (god).

Chingobo: Abagusii traditional clothes.

Ogotera kwa Nyasae: Church hymnal.

CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF WORSHIP

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the biblical principles of worship, worship principles in the New Testament, worship in E. G White's writings, theology of worship, and application of biblical worship principles. Worship is a focal point to a believer. It is only when biblical worship principles are observed that true worshipers will not only ascribe glory and honor to God, but much more experience authentic and meaningful worship. Wehmeier (2005) defines a principle as "a moral rule or a strong belief that influences your actions or a law, a rule or a theory that something is based on" (p. 1153). In other words, worship must be based on something in order to be authentic.

Worship in the Old Testament

Worship at the Beginning

Whenever you read the Scripture with understanding, you will realize that there was worship in the beginning. Moreover, Cherry (2010) believes that "worship grounded in God is an internal enterprise. Worship was occurring before God laid the foundation of the earth" (p. 4). The biblical accounts evidently verify that worship was observed from the beginning when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:6-7).

Besides God revealing Job's ignorance of who he is and his mighty works, he indicated that worship is the language by which the creatures express glory and honor unto God. Hence, the angelic hosts' singing and shouting was nothing but worship observed by the heavenly beings before human beings were created. On the other hand, ascribing glory unto God is one on the biblical worship principles, which was practiced before the foundation of the world was laid. Worship is incomplete without a response from God's creatures.

Henry (2005) claims that:

They were the sons of God who shouted for joy when they saw the foundations of the world laid because though it was not made for them, but for the children of men, and though it would increase their work and service, yet they knew that the eternal wisdom and word, whom they were to worship (Heb. 1:6) would rejoice in the habitable parts of the world and that much of his delight would be in the sons of men (Prov. 8:31). (p. 732)

Authentic worship flows spontaneously from the hearts of God's creation because of his mighty deeds. On the one hand, one of the major problems we experience in our worship today is not mainly the style, doctrine, and leadership, but rather it is about the ignorance of who God is and what He has done for us. So far, the worship today is not only dull and boring, but also lacking spiritual cheerfulness, which is initiated only by knowing God's redemptive act.

Worship in the Pre-patriarchal Period

The biblical account shows clearly that before sin entered into the world, the relationship between God and Adam was ever strong. Immediately after sin, Adam and his wife realized that they were naked and developed fear towards God. Moreover, the

Bible states that “and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Gen 3:7).

This implies to me that relationship between the first family and God was marred and as a result, there developed in their thinking a new idea of seeking and providing for themselves with aprons. Even though, the narration states that God took measures which were intended to restore worship relationship with his fallen family, because it pleases him to be worshiped (Ps 147:11). The Bible says that “unto Adam also and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them” (Gen 3:21). The slain lamb’s blood as a sacrifice was the basis or principle on which communication was restored. Nichol (1978) argues that:

Also the skins were a constant reminder of their lost innocence, of death as the wages of sin, and of the promised Lamb of God, who would by His own vicarious death take away the sins of the world. . . . The sacrificial service, though not specifically mentioned here, was instituted at this time. (p. 235)

Since, then sacrifices became a biblical worship principle or basis on which men could approach and commune with God.

Chances are that both Cain and Abel learned this practice from their parents. Moreover, the biblical account states, “And Abel, he also brought the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering” (Gen 4:4). I would suggest that God’s acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice was a genuine proof that God was given his due reverence and glorified in accordance with his principle of worship and without any barrier (1 Sam 2:30; Isa 59:2).

Another important biblical worship principle here is that Abel obeyed God’s instructions carefully, as opposed to Cain. In addition, another biblical worship principle,

which can be observed in the story of Abel, is that he did it faithfully, orderly, and decently. Faith, order, and decency are some of the biblical worship principles.

Evidently, this tradition was practiced down the age by those who feared and adored the Lord according to his biblical worship principles. Hence, the Scripture states that “and to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then begun men to call upon the name of the Lord” (Gen 4:26). Nevertheless, in every generation God has his remnants to call upon his name and uphold his worship principles. Therefore, in spite of secularism, materialism, corruption, advanced technological inventions, evolution theory, and atheism in the world today, yet there is one who calls God’s name in this generation.

Nichol (1978) comments,

In this time a more formal worship was begun. Man had of course called upon the Lord before Enos’ birth, but as time went on a more pronounced distinction arose between those who worshipped the Lord and those who defied Him. The expression “to call upon the name of the Lord” is used frequently in the Old Testament to indicate, as it does here, public worship” (Ps. 79:6; 116:17; Jer. 10:25; Zeph. 3:9). (p. 244)

This indicates to me that God’s plans cannot be thwarted by human weakness, incapability, and limitations. He has remnants in each generation to mention his name or worship. Besides Enos, the scripture shows that after the flood Noah observed the biblical worship principles by building an altar for worship unto the Lord immediately after he came out of the ark (Gen 8:20). Obviously, this indicates Noah’s piousness. In other words, the ungodly or secular environment should not be an excuse for not worshipping.

Worship and the Patriarchs

Abraham and Worship

The Bible explicitly narrates how Abraham the patriarch interacted with God through an act of worship. Thus, the Scripture affirms that:

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation,... So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him;....” (Gen 12:1-2, 4)

Doubtlessly, Abraham experienced an intimate worship relationship with God from the day God called him and he responded (Gen 12:7). In other words, taking God by his word is nothing but worship. More so, it is one of the biblical worship principles. Furthermore, Abraham not only became a friend of God but also was counted a righteous man (Jas 2:23). He became a new creature in Christ and that is why he rejoiced when he saw his day (1 Cor 5:17; John 8:56). Actually, it is so much worrying that irrespective of the fact that many claim to be believers or worshipers, but it is explicitly clear that they do not respond to God's demands faithfully.

Due (2005) comments that:

In particular for our purposes, we note how God's dealings with Abraham have the universal restoration of true worship in view. We see this first in the case of Abraham himself, whose worship is reoriented away from idolatry towards the living God. Then through his seed, we see it in the restoration of true worship to the nations to the place of their own defiant idolatry. . . . Abraham, however, did not remain as such, for his life was transformed by God's choice of him as the one through whom his purpose would be fulfilled. (p. 62)

Whereas, Due claims that Abraham exercised true worship, to me Abraham had experienced a greater transformative God unlike his previous gods (Josh 24:2).

According to biblical worship principles, authentic worship is transformative because it is

initiated by God himself. Most of the churches today experience many problems because some of the worshipers have not experienced transformative worship.

When one becomes a friend of God he obviously develops a worshipful attitude besides an inbuilt instinct longing and claiming for worship.

Nichol (1978) believes that:

The soil hallowed by the presence of God, Abraham dedicated as a place of worship to him. The altar erected and sacrifices offered bore witness to the God of heaven, and silently protested against idolatry round about. Abram does publicly pledged allegiance to true God. . . . The sacrifice testified Abrahams' belief in the death of the Son of God as an atonement of sin. . . . Even more, he conducted public worship for the members of his house old and for pagans living nearby. (p. 297)

Abraham ascribed glory to God by building an altar as he observed worship principles in offering sacrifices. In fact, it is sad to say that today worship is being treated not only negligently but also as any other optional activity. The life of Abraham was worship-centered as God communed with him frequently (Gen 12:7-8; 13:4, 18; 22:9). To put it in another way, worship is fully expressed through an activity. Absolute participation is one of the major biblical worship principles. Whaley (2001) claims, "Abraham accepts a blessing from Melchizedek and worships by the giving of tithes (Gen 14:18-24) (p. 54).

Isaac and Worship

The biblical accounts show that Abraham practiced worship by giving sacrifices on an altar. It is rather assumable that his only son Isaac was well acquainted with that practice. The book of Genesis states that:

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. . . . And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife;

and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto to Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? (Gen. 22: 2, 6-7)

In the scripture this is the first time Isaac is identified with worship. Moreover, his first question suggests to me that he understood well the worship tradition practiced by their family. Some children today do not even know whom their parents worship because of their poor relationship as opposed to Abraham. Moreover, he recognized that something pertinent was lacking for worship to be complete according to God's worship principles. To put it more succinctly, he was aware that without the lamb sacrificed, God could not accept their worship.

Furthermore, he knew quite well the kind of God to whom his father was offering the sacrifices. Possibly, that is the reason as to why Abraham's response to his question that "God will provide" was not debated at all by the two. More so, when Abraham informed him that he was to substitute the lamb, Isaac did not argue or object according to the scripture. In my opinion, he did not only believe in God of his father but also was ready to offer his life as a sacrifice unto him. Worship is to offer our total beings unto God as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1-2). More so, he was willing to observe the fundamental biblical worship principle by sacrificing as required by God besides, participating willingly and knowledgeably.

Zucker (2005) believes, "That Isaac could go on and function in any significant way following the encounter in Genesis 22 is a testimony to the triumph of his personal will. It is also a testimony to his yet unspecified relationship with God... God kept faith with Isaac and his place in God's divine plan. (pp. 43-44)

Indeed, the biblical account shows that the relationship between God and Isaac became stronger. Thus, the scripture states, "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well of Lahairoi

(Gen 25:11). The text shows that Isaac's relationship with God continued and he blessed and encouraged him after his father's death. So far, worship is relationship between believers and their God. In conclusion, Isaac continued to worship God throughout his life by sacrificing on the altar consistently.

Jacob and Worship

Undeniably, in the scripture the story of Jacob is fascinating, particularly his worship life. McEntire (2008) believes that the story of Jacob may be understood in several segments. Even though "each of these segments of Jacobs's life was characterized by conflict, and important transitions are often marked by divine encounters" (p. 73). It is necessary for us to understand clearly our status with God because we might be fighting him in the name of our faith, affiliations, strategies, and good plans as did Jacob.

One of the occasions when Jacob experienced God was when he was going back to Haran and at night he had a dream. Moreover, the book of Genesis states that

And Jacob awaked out of sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. (28:16-17)

Whereas God appeared to Jacob to reaffirm his promises unto him and his offspring, in my view, Jacob encountered the faithful and promising God. He worshiped because worship is God meeting his people. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of the place that is the house of God, I suppose that it is in line with what Jesus said, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer" (Mark 11:15). Worship is to experience God in his fearful state. More so, observing fear in worship is one of the biblical worship principles (Gen 22:12; Exod 1:21, 20:20; Psa 96. 4-5; Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 1:17; Rev 14:6-7).

Wiersbe (2000) asserts that:

When Jacob met God at Bethel, he was running away from home and trying to run away from his problems. He certainly wasn't seeking God! Yet God came to him and revealed himself unto Jacob in a singular way. Worship must always be an experienced of God's grace. (p. 72)

Besides that, the meeting with Jacob was intended to ensure that the promises were not thwarted. Much more God by his grace led him to understand who he was and why he was chosen. In other words, you cannot know God without himself revealing and coming to your way asking where art thou. (Gen 3:8). Whenever we meet and commune with God, we are worshiping. Even though, Jacob was yet far from understanding absolutely the terms by which God relates to his people.

Transformational Worship

God intended to transform Jacob after a long struggle so that he might fit his intended divine plan. Hence, the Scripture affirms that:

And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacobs's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him... And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. (Gen 32:25, 30)

After a long struggle with God, Jacob the great schemer was transformed and claimed to have seen the face of God and more so his life was preserved. It is very important to note that in God's presence there are two things, death or life. (Deut 30:15, 19). I would think that after confession of our sins, God embraces or engulfs us with his grace as we are spared (Exod 33:20; Ps 32:1). Furthermore, there is no one who can meet with God and remain the same. He must experience brokenness and transformation or die (Luke 20:18). Fokkelman as cited in Amos (2004) argues,

In acknowledging that he is called Jacob, he is effectively making a confession of guilt, for he has named himself as 'fraud' the intrinsic meaning of the word Jacob" (Gen 27:26). It is only when this has been publicly stated that his healing and blessing

can begin.... Like Abraham Jacob's name is to be changed as sign of his new relationship with God (p. 204).

Wiersbe (2000) acknowledge that "the transforming power of worship is not experienced in its fullness immediately" (p. 73). In short, in some parts of the world the church has been unfair to expect the newly converted Christians to immediately after baptism to abstain absolutely from their former unchristian traits and threaten them with excommunication in case of failure to change. Obviously, to change the character is one of the painful experiences in many people's lives for it involves time and commitment. In short, McNeal (2000) concludes, "Worship also heals the fractures in our souls. The walls that divide us from our God are broken down in the presence of God. This work of God in worship anticipates a time when we are completely whole. True worship, then restores the soul because it rehearses eternity" (p. 142).

Worship in the Sanctuary

It always pleases God to be worshiped. In the book of Exodus, God told Moses that after the deliverance of the children of Israel they will serve or worship him at the mountain (Exod 3:12). Basically, the purpose of the deliverance of the children of Israel from the land of bondage was not only to abandon their polytheistic religious practices but much more to acknowledge and ascribe glory and honor to God as the only object of worship. Hence, this is the chief biblical principle of worship. Bruckner (2008) claims that:

Moses' personhood and the identity of Israel would be grounded in their worship of God. Even bringing the people out of Egypt would not be conclusive proof that God was with him. The proof of their success would be whether or not they worshipped God on this mountain. . . . Only a people who worshipped God could truly claim the deliverance by God. (p. 44)

It is only through the acknowledgment of God's redemptive act that the believers will have a basis or a cause to worship. Our worship today faces a lot of challenges because most Christians lack the experience of God's deeds, which fundamentally form a strong and solid ground for worship. As a result, our focus is changed from the true locus to our affiliations, positions, families, wealth, worship styles, music, and so forth.

God's ultimate goal was not that the Israelites to inherit the Promised Land and realize his promises to their ancestors (Gen 50:24; Heb 11:22). Mackay (2001) comments that:

However, when they travelled to their destination in the Promised Land, they would remain the Lord's covenant people and would take with them a visible reminder of their status and of the greatest privilege that they enjoyed the presence of God himself with them. This reminder was provided by the Sanctuary, which they were commanded to construct. It was to be at the center of their camp. It would have God's presence in it and over it. Wherever they went, they would know that they were not alone because the Lord was dwelling in their midst. (p. 429)

Actually, God knew that the children of Israel were so used to worshipping the external gods in the land of bondage. So, unless they would experience his presence constantly and consistently, the chances were that they would easily turn to their former polytheistic worship practices. Hence, God determined to dwell amidst them as the object of worship. Nevertheless, the Scripture declares, "And let them make me a Sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exod 25:8). On the other hand, that God might be the center or the locus of worship in the Israelite's community.

Sarna (as cited in Bailey et al., 2007) believes that:

Having been redeemed from slavery and bound to God in a new covenant, Israel needed intuitions and edifices that made possible the nation's worship of God in this new relationship. The Tabernacles "rites, ceremonies, practices, paraphernalia, symbols, institutions, and personnel" comprised "the formal, externalized aspects of religious life. (p. 273)

God Pre-planned Worships

God had clearly planned how the Sanctuary was to be built. Hence, he declares, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord” (Isa 55:8). Moses had no idea of what God’s intentions were in regard to the resources for the sanctuary construction. Hence, I suggest that even though we do not understand God’s plan, we have to move forward because “thus saith the Lord.” Sometimes God never reveals his entire mind, plan, or agenda unto us, not only because we might not only thwart his noble and redemptive plans, but also we might not understand them (John 16:12). So, God works with us at the base of our understanding to execute his noble plans.

Anders (2002) claims, “Worship always comes first. God did not wait until Israel was settled in the land to instruct them in proper worship. He saw it as a special priority and planned for it from the outset” (p. 112). On the other hand, God instructed the Israelite women through Moses to borrow of their neighbors jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment and put them upon their sons and daughters on their departure as part of worship (Exod 3:22; 12:35-36, 35:22-35). God has never asked us to give what he has not provided. So, all that we claim to be ours is for God (Ps 24:1).

Free Offering

Consequently, God revealed to Moses that the Sanctuary was to be financed by the Israelites through free offering of which each person was to give willingly with his heart. Basically, God emphasized another biblical worship principle or rule. This implies that each one has an opportunity to give and worship. And above all, God desired the

offering from the best and most valuable like gold, silver, and bronze not only because he is the source but also how important is worship (Exod 25:2-3).

Most of the worshipers today don't regard an offering as an act of worship but rather as the minister's remuneration. As a result, their offerings are just a financial support to the Church institutions. To put it more succinctly, worship through offerings is abandoned. On the other hand, one of the Biblical worship principles or rules is negligently ignored today. As a result, most of the sermons today are geared towards soliciting money not as an element of worship but for church financial support. Janzen (2000) argues that "God's instruction to Moses for implementing God's design for proper worship begins with a collection of tangible building materials, rather than with more 'spiritual' requirements, such as prayers, hymns or rituals" (p. 336).

Up to this point I have not observed God setting a goal. Hence, I would assume that with God it is the heart attitude, which determines the genuine giving. God intended worship to be an activity in which every individual must be involved. More so, in giving the offerings was an illustration of one's commitment to his God. God keenly observes each individual's willingness in participation in any worship because he is amongst two or three gathered in his name to worship him (Matt 18:20).

Mackay (2001) believes that "the use of the word 'offering' indicates that the materials are to be given as an act of worship. . . . (pp. 436-37). So far, it is evidently clear that what churches are doing currently is quite opposite to God's successful method of collecting offerings from the congregation. In fact, it is grievous mistake for any worshiper to avoid a worship service as a result of our unscriptural strategies of soliciting financial support from our members. More so, worship is an attitude as well as an act

(Mark 12:41-44). Janzen (2000) concludes that “God wants to be worshiped through the material means that sustain the people’s everyday life” (p. 336).

In short, I would suggest that unless we go back to God’s divine plan of giving willingly and freely, chances are that our offering in worship will be lacking. Actually, the same principle of voluntary, not forced, giving to God still holds true unto all (2 Cor 9:7). In other words, time and generation does not affect God’s principle of worship in giving. In short, according to God, worship begins at giving as long as it originates from the heart and is done willingly.

Worship and the Consecration of Priests

After the accomplishment of the construction of the Sanctuary or the Tabernacle, Moses commented that they have made it the way the Lord had commanded and blessed them (Exod 39:43, 40:16). It was time for the people to come and worship their God. God elected Aaron’s household to be consecrated as priests. (Exod 28:1). Hughes (2009) observes,

If the high priest were impure, then the sacrifices he offered and the altar where they would be presented would be contaminated by sin and rendered unacceptable. The result of purging ritual was “atonement” on behalf of Aaron and his priestly family. (p. 135)

It is God who needs to be served; not man nor the institution. He only works with fully committed people after dedication. In our context today, it is likely that some workers serve their leaders for personal gain. More so, the narration does not show that God has a problem being served by committed people from the same family, tribe, or race. But I believe that worship service today in some parts of the world is being

criticized because it is being conducted by people of the same tribe, ethnicity or race although they might not necessarily be wrong.

In his process of consecration of Aaron and his sons, Moses took a young bull and two rams without defect or blemish for sin and a burnt offering respectively. The sin offering was intended for making atonement for Aaron and his household according to God's instructions (Exod 29:1; Lev 16:6). Thus, Mackay (2001) submits, "The worshiper's devotion to the Lord was evidenced by the sacrificial animal being of the highest quality possible" (p. 488). In addition, apart from the animal sacrifices the cereal offering was also inclusive, i.e., fine with flour and without yeast, bread mixed with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil (Exod 29:3). And Moses presented them in one basket with the young bull and the two rams at the Tabernacle as it was required.

Washed with Water and Linen Coats

Moses presented Aaron and his sons at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation and washed them with water and provided them with fine linen coats. Besides that, also a robe, of ephod, the breastplate of judgment, and the thum'mim was given to Aaron besides the crown laid on his head (Exod 28:39, 28:30, 29:7). Moses typified Jesus who claimed that "I am the door by me if any man enter he shall be saved and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9; Rom 5:2). Furthermore, no person can enter in the presence of God without being ushered in by Jesus through faith (Rom 5:1-2). In addition, washing with water indeed symbolizes the baptism into newness of life in Christ by the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5, Eph 5:26). Finally, Moses took the other ram and killed it as Aaron his sons laid their hands on it (Exod 29:19-20).

Worship in the Holy Places

The Sanctuary was divided into two main sections, i.e., a daily and yearly service. The daily worship services were conducted in the Holy Place whereas the former in the Most Holy Place. Each apartment was furnished with different items according to God's plan given to Moses so that worship might not only be complete but also be acceptable. Whereas, the golden altar, golden altar of incense, Laver of brass, candle stick, and the burnt offering altar were located in the Holy Place, the Ark, Manna and Aarons rod were placed in the most Holy Place according to God's holy arrangement. All this furniture served as object lessons to the worshipers.

Morning and Evening Worship

It was God who desired the worship from his people according to his designed schedule. Worship begins with God and should be towards God, not the minister or church. Hence, the Scripture states that:

Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savor, and offering made by fire unto the Lord. (Exod 29:38-41)

Both daily sacrifices were of great significance to the children of Israel because it was one of the fundamental biblical worship principles. I would suggest that our worship becomes important when God's presence is experienced in our daily worship. Motyer (2005) claims,

We deeply and desperately need to practice the presence of God, to engage in, or to recover, if necessary, the all too often neglected 'quiet time', that early morning

meeting with God-not necessarily fanatically earlier, but ‘first thing’- so that we start the day with him as Jesus did (Isa 50:4; Mark 1:35). (p. 277)

It is not a surprise that many believers’ schedules in the busy world today do not include worship. Many often wait until on Sabbath or Sunday to be ministered upon. Hence, until we emulate our Lord Jesus’ model of worship before dawn, chances are that we will become malnourished spiritually and finally end up being big babies in our churches in need of milk instead of bones and meat (Mark 1:35, 1 Cor 3:1-2).

Burnt Offering Altar

In fact, the burnt offering altar was located in front of the veil which separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (Exod 27:1-8). This altar was different from the altar of incense upon which no animal sacrifices were offered. The priest ministered on this altar on a daily basis on behalf of the Israelites. Hughes (2005) believes, “What people need is a perfect sacrifice, one that does away with sin once and for all. And of course this is what Jesus offered on the cross: . . . one perfect sacrifice to atone for sin forever” (p. 865).

Worship and the Laver

Every object in the Holy Place was intended to necessitate worship according to God’s will. Hence, the laver was located at an appropriate place between the brazen altar and the Holy Place purposely to warn the priests that cleansing was mandatory for those serving in the Holy place otherwise they could meet God’s wrath. However, the act of cleansing could not meet its intended goal by God until each believer is cleansed from his or her sins by the blood of Jesus. Whereas, in the Old Testament, the priests were

cleansed by water in basin, in the New Testament the priests are washed through the Word and have an access to God (1 Pet 2:9; Eph 5:26-27; Heb 10:22).

Worship and the Table of Showbread

The table of showbread was made according to God's plan given to Moses. He said, "And thou shall set upon me the table of showbread before me always" (Exod 25:30). On the table of showbread were 12 breads representing 12 tribes of Israel. And they were replaced every Sabbath or after seven days. It was made explicitly clear that the table must not remain empty. It typifies Jesus who identified himself as the bread from heaven (John 6:35). So, the showbread necessarily indicated that God was the source of our daily bread and we need to depend on him (Matt 6:11).

Worship and the Golden Candlestick

It was God's demand that lights should be kept burning both day and night in the sanctuary, because it portrayed his character (Exod 27:20, 31, 37). Light is the source of life and hence was required all through for the existence of all creatures. Janzen (1997) argues that "we may then, take the lamp as standing for light, life, and presence" (p. 199). More so, keeping light burning was one of the major duties of the priests to enhance the worship service all through.

Thus, the Holy Place worship was not only to show God's desire of consistent and constant worship but also to reveal that it should be observed continuously because it is a lasting ordinance. It is unfortunate that some believers cease to worship either because of the life challenges or count it optional. Additionally, he submits, "The perpetual flame on the golden lampstand was a symbol of the heavenly worship that never ends. What God

deserves is nothing less than everlasting praise” (pp. 868-869). In short, worship has never ceased since before the creation of the world when the foundation of the world was laid and till eternity (Isa 9:2; Rev 13:8, John 1:4, 9; 9:5). According to Jesus’ command, each Christian must be the light to the world (Matt 5:13).

Worship and the Altar of Incense

The altar of incense was different from other altars because nothing else was burnt upon it except the incense (Exod 30:1, 7-8). The instruction given to Moses was quite clear that the priest was to burn the incense so that while serving he might not die in the presence of God. Bailey et al. (2007) believe, “The aroma produced by incense symbolized Yahweh’s invisible presence in a way similar to that of the cloud during Israel’s wanderings” (p. 320). It is only to Jesus God said, “This is my Son in whom, I am well pleased” (Matt 3:17).

Worship Beyond the Veil

In the Most Holy Place was located the Ark of the Tabernacle which symbolizes the presence of God, manna, and Aaron’s rod (Exod 26:33, 40:20-21). Actually, the Ark of God’s testimony was placed in the Most Holy Place as the center of worship. Furthermore, the Ten Commandments were placed in the Ark to show that God practices fairness and justice to all generations. (Exod 40:20-21). And upon the Ark was laid a mercy seat according to God’s demand from where he would speak to his people (Exod 25:22).

It is only in the Most Holy Place that the high priest was allowed to minister only once per year on the atonement day. (Lev 16:1). Moreover, the Day of Atonement or *Yom*

Kippur was scheduled on the tenth day on the seventh month as a holy convocation day (Lev 16:19, 30). It was mandatory for the chief priest to make atonement for himself and for his sons through the burnt sacrifice. In other words, the sanctity of worship before the presence of God has to be maintained by all. According to Bruckner (2008):

A burnt offering was a sign a voluntary sign of the worshipers' love, adoration, devotion, commitment, and surrender to the Lord. . . . The repetition in offering to the Lord, "a pleasing aroma" an offering made to the Lord reflects the voluntary surrender of the whole burnt offering and the Lord's pleasure in receiving it." (p. 265)

God had stipulated the procedure to be followed while serving in the Most Holy Place (Lev 16:12-14). In fact, death was assured in case these procedures were disobeyed.

In spite of his cleansing, the high priest yet needed to be covered by the cloud of incense in order to serve in the presence of the almighty God. This shows how sensitive it is for one to be in the presence of the almighty God.

Consequently, the high priest gave an offering on behalf the children of Israel. The two lambs were brought before Aaron purposely to determine which one was for the Lord and Azazel respectively through casting lots. Actually, the narrative clearly shows that the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell was offered as a sin offering and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat (Lev 16:7-10). According to Pfeiffer (as cited in Rooker, 2000):

The sacrifice of the sin offering on the Day of Atonement corresponds to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on a number of levels. Only the high priest could enter behind the veil on this special day (Lev 16:2, 29). He entered an earthly sanctuary annually, which indicated that the daily, weekly, monthly offerings outlined in Leviticus were not sufficient to remove sin. Jesus Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary, of which the tabernacle was a copy, once for all (Heb 9:23-24). . . . When Christ died on the cross, the veil of the temple that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place was torn into two" (Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45) (p. 225)

The most important thing is that our destiny is determined by the activities taking place on the atonement day in the heavenly sanctuary by the high priest as it was to the Israelites Day of Atonement. Similarly, the worshipers need to understand clearly the role of the chief priest in the heavenly Most Holy Place in regard to their sins and appropriately afflict their souls.

After the cleansing of both the Tabernacle and the altar, the high priest confessed the sins of the Israelites by laying his hands on the head of the scapegoat which was sent to the wilderness by a strong man (Lev 16:16-17, 20-21). So, it was held that the sins of the children of Israel were taken far away as from east to the west according to God's promise (Ps 103:12) Actually, this corresponds with Jesus who was made sin and became a curse for us and suffered outside the gate and sanctified his people with his own blood (Isa 53:6; Heb 13:12). Boyce (2008) submits, "For the Christians, the Day of Atonement becomes linked, step by step, with the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ" (p. 57). In short, Hughes (2009) concludes that "we might say, that the Old Testament's Day of Atonement provided the sketch and the New Testament filled in the color" (p. 139). In other words, the type met the antitype in the New Testament.

Worship Principles in the New Testament

Worship in the Synagogue

Worship is a focal point in the life of a sincere Jew. However, it is assumed that after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, worship was observed in the synagogues.

According to Gutmann (as cited in Kee & Cohick, 1999):

The synagogue has been a central institution in Jewish life for nearly two millennia. Thus the question of its origin is of considerable importance, both for Judaism and for that of Christianity, which is understood as emerging from Judaism. The extreme

paucity of evidence for synagogue buildings in the land of Israel until late antiquity, however, has made the issue a poignant one in research and interpretation of Jewish and Christian origins. (p. 46)

The synagogue became more central than any other institution in the Jewish community because of its spiritual role and impact in the society. Levine (2000) argues that:

However, synagogues primary importance, throughout the antiquity lay in its role as a community center. By the first century C.E., the synagogue had become dominant institution on the local Jewish scene with the Diaspora and Judea, with the sole of pre-70 Jerusalem. No other communal institution that might conceivably have competed with the synagogue for communal prominence is ever mentioned in our sources. Within the confines of the synagogue the Jewish community seems to have not only worship regularly, but also studied, held court, administered punishment, organized secret meals, collected charitable donations housed the communal archives and library, and assembled for political and social purposes. (p. 3)

It is clearly pointed out that the synagogue was a multipurpose or holistic center for human needs in the period following the Babylonian captivity. The synagogue was a place where the community could gather for worship, address administrative or legal issues besides collecting charitable donations for the poor and other daily necessities.

Additionally, she believes that

The most distinct aspect of the synagogue, however, was that it provided a context in which a form of worship alternative to that of the Jerusalem temple developed. The synagogue eventually came to embrace a wide range of religious activities. (p. 2)

In short, it is the relationship between God and the Jewish community that made the synagogues not only important but also a more solemn place than other societal entities.

Order of Worship in the Synagogue

For worship to be relevant, meaningful and acceptable there must be an order.

The Jewish order of worship was to start with praising God. According to Bruce (2010):

The typical synagogue order of worship begun with the reciting of the *Shema*, (“The Lord your God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God. . .”); followed by

prayers, two Scriptural lessons, one from the Torah, the other from the prophets; then an exposition of one of these passages, which might on occasion be a message of encouragement from any appropriate visitor present; and then a concluding blessing. (p. 289)

The order begins with praising God as the object of worship and reading of the Torah. Immediately following was an invitation to all to worship holistically (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13). It seems that worship in the synagogue was not restricted to a particular group but yet was led by experienced people and without remuneration as opposed to what is practiced in our religious institutions today.

Bookman and Kahn (2006) observe, “Thus, three distinctive times were observed: morning/*shacharit*, midday/*mincha*, and evening/*ma’ariv*, as well as Shabbat and holy days. . . . These services were led by someone well versed in liturgy, someone with a pleasing voice” (pp. 4-5). In short, the worship in the synagogue was very vital in the life of the Israelites because it connected them to their only one God. There were several synagogues in every village. According to Bateman (2002), “Only ten Jewish males were required to form a synagogue” (p. 205). It also was the smallest division with an appointed leader under Moses’ plan suggested by Jethro (Exod 19:21). Actually, that implies to me how devoted the Jewish society was in religious matters.

Jesus’ Worship in the Synagogue

Both Jesus and Christianity originated from Judaism. Hence, as a Jew, Jesus was a pious and diligent student of the Scripture in Nazareth. According to the *Shema* (Deut 6:4-9), each Jewish parent was solemnly responsible to teach his children about the God of the Jews. Moreover, the parents of Jesus being pious exercised their duty faithfully. As a result, after dedication in Jerusalem Jesus remained in the temple sitting

among the Hebrew scholars and asking them questions and all who heard him were astonished (Luke 2:46-47). Comfort (2006) observes, “Synagogue worship practices allowed any person whom the local authorities invited to read the Scripture lesson to do so. Also, if there was any suitable teacher present, this person could be given an opportunity to speak” (pp. 80-81).

Although, the Scripture does not mention any occasion where Jesus took any formal learning, rather, it reveals that he grew up in the home school in wisdom and pleased both God and man (Luke 2:52). As a result, Jesus was named rabbi or a good teacher (John 3:1-3). More so, he used that advantage to preach and teach in several synagogues besides ushering in a new kingdom of grace (John 3:2; Luke 18:19; Matt: 4:23; 9:35; 13:35; Mark 1:21-22; 3:1, 6:2; Luke 6:6, 13:10).

Additionally, the biblical account shows several occasions in which Jesus was invited to lead worship in the synagogue (Luke 4:15-16). Luke verifies that Jesus had a tendency to regularly worship in the synagogue. Equally, he observed one of the biblical worship principles.

The Apostles' Worship in the Synagogue

Besides Jesus Christ worshipping in the synagogue, his disciples followed his footsteps. For instance, in the book of Acts you will find that it was Paul's custom or manner to worship in the synagogue and reason with the Jews in regard to the scripture (Acts 17:1-2, 3:1 8:4, 9:20, 13:15). According to Barrett (2002), the word “argument or reason consisted of expounding and submitting, affirming. Expounding is literally ‘opening’, a Greek word to which there is this sense no parallel” (p. 260).

Paul made it explicitly clear for both the Jewish and Gentile worshipers to understand and be convinced that Jesus who suffered was the Messiah and resurrected. And he deserved to be worshiped as God (Phil 2:1-9). Paul used the Scripture to defend what he believed as the basis of his arguments or convictions as opposite to what we practice. Unfortunately, mostly our arguments are based on our norms, traditions, beliefs and affiliations. Hence, he verified that the word has power to change sincere truth seeking hearts to accept and adore him as the only object of worship (Acts 17:4, 9:20). Paul hardly used his scholarly arguments as opposite to the current ministers.

There is nothing as satisfying to most ministers as preaching the gospel and more so, when several converts join the faith. However, a great challenge the ministry is facing the temptation to assume that the number of converts is taken by the leaders as a standard of measuring one's success. Actually, it is a great failure in the side of church leaders to ignore the biblical fact that we are talented differently by the same Spirit (1 Cor 12 1-14).

MacArthur (1996) submits that "a spiritual gift is not a natural human ability or talent but a bestowment by the grace of God on believers that provide a channel through which the Holy Sprit's power flows in the ministry" (1Cor 12:14) (p. 43). Hence, each has to minister to one another by the unique gift granted by the Spirit (1 Pet 4:10). In short, there is no evidence in the Scripture showing that a small number of converts is a sign of a failure.

All Nations Worship in the Synagogue

Undoubtedly, the message about the crucified and resurrected Messiah presented by Paul and other apostles in the synagogues evidently impacted many people in various places and cities (Acts 13:42-44, 18:1-4, 17:17. Both the Jews and Gentles regularly

attended the synagogues to worship as they demanded the continuation of the message. In fact, the gospel of Jesus Christ does not know a specific tribe, race, caste, color, gender, class, or people but rather, it is inclusive and forms joy in the hearts of those who need salvation (Gal 3:28-29).

It is unfortunate that in most of our worship activities you can easily note that it is either conducted on tribal or racial basis in many parts of the world. To put it more succinctly, even those who proclaim it yet have not been affected by the same. Evidently, many times our institutions have experienced critical wrangles even involving physical violence as a result tribalism, ethnicity or racism. I would like to suggest that, unless we accept the truth as it was in the early church, chances are that we cannot experience authentic worship especially in multicultural places or communities.

Worship in the Sanctuary

It is not only easy to explain about the sanctuary in the New Testament but also unfair without going back to its origin in the Old Testament. In God's perfect plan of redeeming the human race worship became central throughout all generations. More so, this was manifested in the Old Testament sanctuary as his presence was felt through the Ark of the covenant as he was being worshiped. Hughes (2005) argues,

Remember that we have two strategies for interpreting the tabernacle. One is to study Exodus to learn what the tabernacle meant in its original context. The other is to see what the New Testament teaches about the tabernacle, especially as it relates to the person and work of Christ. (p. 852)

On the other hand, it is impossible to explicitly understand the sanctuary exclusively of the Old Testament terms without relating it fully with the person and work of Jesus Christ. I would suggest that Jesus was the central figure in the Old Testament

sanctuary and likewise to the New Testament. Moreover, all activities in the Old Testament sanctuary were only types pointing to Christ.

The word sanctuary can be traced back to the history of the deliverance of the children of Israel from the land of bondage in Egypt. First and foremost, this word was used by God who identified himself as “I am that I am” to Moses (Exod 3:14). Immediately, after deliverance of the children of Israel he demanded to live amidst his people in the sanctuary, which was to be made according to the heavenly pattern given to Moses. Above all, his presence was felt through the Ark of covenant.

I am That I Am

In the New Testament the term “I am that I am” was not common. More so, it was only used once for the identification of Jesus not as a mere man, but as the eternal God who lived before Abraham the patriarch, who was highly esteemed as the father of the Jews. In his response to the Jews, Jesus said that:

Your father rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews, unto him you are not even fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you before I Abraham I am. (John 8:56-58)

In their arguments Jesus identified himself with the Old Testament “I am that I am” who delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Moreover, John the Baptist claims that the same ‘I am’ was the word in the beginning and the word was made flesh, and dwelled among us, (and we beheld his glory, and the glory as the begotten of the father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14). Hughes (2005) argues,

This verse is important because the word translated “dwelling”- the Greek word *eskenosen*-comes from Greek word tabernacle (*skene*). So the verse means this: “The word became flesh and tabernacled among us.” God the Son became man so he would come down to dwell with us. This is the interpretation of the incarnation: Jesus Christ is the tabernacle of God. (p. 852)

The incarnated God lives amongst his people in the New Testament as he did in the old times. Mackay (2001) affirms that:

The presence of the sanctuary in the midst was an instance of Immanuel principle, God dwelling with his people, and foreshowed the incarnation when “the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14), where “made his dwelling among us” is literally “tented” or ‘tabernacle’. The Old Testament sanctuary also looked forward for to the New Testament church, to the risen Christ has send his Holy Spirit like a cloud of fire to make his people the tabernacle of God. (p. 429)

The “I am” of the New Testament which was made flesh or incarnated was known as Immanuel meaning God with us (Matt 1:23). To put it more succinctly, God decided to live in man through incarnation so that the human race might experience authentic worship and true intimacy with God. In addition, Gundry (2010) claims that:

In the word incarnate, God speaks the language of humanity, which we as human beings can understand. The word’s tenting “amongst us” indicates a communication at a close range-open, immediate, accessible. . . . So the believers met God when the incarnate word, who was God, tented among them. (p. 350)

Basically, “I am that I am” in the New Testament resides in our bodies presented as a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which will be our reasonable service. (Rom 12:1-3). And this is one of the biblical worship principles.

Bateman (2002) believes, “It would be too easy to merely ascribe worth to God in focusing on his nature or works cognitively and thereby fall short of biblical worship. Just as God calls his people to love him with all their being, so also worship entails coming to God holistically” (Col 3:23) (p. 182). On the other hand, worship is not passive but active participation. Paul believes that we are Gods habitation through the Holy Spirit (Eph 2:21-22; 1 Cor 6:19-20).

Absolute worship is observed when God dwells in a person who has accepted him as his savior. Biblically, whenever he resides or abides in us we do not only become a

holy ground but also makes us more fruitful (Exod 3:5; John 15:5). Bateman (2002)

claims that:

The principle of worship in “spirit” has two sides: the human side (the human spirit) and the divine side) (the nature of God as “spirit) and the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit gives us new birth in our human spirit and from that point forward stimulates us to worship God in spirit since God is spirit. The direct correspondence and functional connection between the divine Spirit and the human spirit is of the outmost importance in worship. (p. 102)

Unless, God dwells in us by his Holy Ghost it is quite impossible for one to worship God. In other words, the Spirit stimulates our spirits or awakens and energizes them so that they might be able to respond God. So, until we become a sanctuary where God resides and directs worship, our worship will be nothing but an adulterous activity.

Worship in the Early Church

Undoubtedly, the early church was born in an environment in which Christianity was regarded as an illegitimate movement. More so, the believers were fearful to conduct public evangelist meetings. As a result their first worship meetings were held in their homes. Arnold (2002) comments, “Private homes were principle meeting places of earlier Christians for the first three centuries of the church’s existence” (p. 238).

Order of Worship

With that joy of praising and celebrating their resurrected Messiah, the early church does not seem to have any particular order of worship. According to Harrison (as cited in Fernando, 1998):

Nowhere in Acts, are we given a clear description of what was taught to the new believers. From the gospel and Acts one can say that it likely included explanations of the nature of salvation, the person and work of Christ, the commands of Christ and other features of Christian life, and the message of the kingdom. (p. 120)

In other words, their focus of worship was centered on Jesus' life. So far, in spite of the hostility they were not distracted from their fundamental locus. However, in the book of Acts, Dr. Luke describes some of the pertinent activities in which the church was involved as part of worship. Moreover, the Scripture states that:

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, had all things in common; sold their possession and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness with singleness in heart. Praising God, and having favour with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2:42-46)

Naturally, the early Church had to die because of the strong environmental hostility against her but rather, the opposite is true. As you look at this Church closely you will realize that there are some factors, which made it not only to survive but also grow rapidly. One of them was that they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine. The apostle's doctrine was about the risen Messiah. In fact, it is very rare to hear such a message from our pulpit today. As a result, the church has become dry of the Holy Spirit who convicts the sinners of their sins (John 16:8).

The church needs nothing but to refocus on Jesus and his work in relation to sinners. Hence, it will then be empowered to accomplish her commission of making disciples (Matt 28:19-20). Until, the Holy Spirit leads, the church is in a danger of decaying spiritually and risking losing Jesus as focus of worship (Zach 4:6).

Koinonia

Williams (1990) believes, "The word thus translated (Gk. *Koinonia*) means 'sharing in' or 'causing to share in' something or someone, and in this context we should

understand the implied object to be God. God was present and the whole community shared in his Spirit....” (p. 59). The early church had all things in common such that all who were in need were provided for as sign of being united by faith in the Messiah as opposite to individualism culture practiced in some communities today. It is my conviction that if, the church could go back to the apostle’s doctrine and pray, there will be no circumstance that will stop it from accomplishing her commission in the world and more especially in the “10/40 window. Stott (as cited in Gallagher & Hertig (2004) believes,

The believers are also committed to *te koinonia* (“the fellowship”) through which they participate in the liturgical life and sharing of common goods. The *koinonia* is the venue where the believers express their communion with apostles in worship and their unity with another in Christian service. (p. 31)

The willingness and free sharing is one the biblical worship principles that was observed in the early church and as a result it grew rapidly.

Basically, the joy of knowing Jesus transcends regional, territorial and national boundaries besides ethnicities. Jesus is a magnet that unites all people to get to worship and celebrate their newfound faith. To put it more succinctly, the current disunity among racial, ethnic, and tribal believers implies that we are not yet one in faith although, baptized and belonging to the same church or affiliation (1 Cor 3:3).

Breaking of Bread

The early church participated in the breaking of bread as a means of demonstrating their love for one another where the provision of food was made available for those who were in need (Luke 2:42, 4:35-37). Cabanis (as cited in Gonzalez, 2001) believes, “‘The breaking of bread’ does not mean only they ate together. It refers to the

celebration of communion, which from the beginning and from many centuries has been the center of Christian worship” (p. 51). On the other hand, bread breaking would remind them of the body of Christ crucified because their sins.

According to Luke, the breaking bread was also regarded as bond of unity for the new believers. Parsons (2008) argues, “Breaking... bread (Acts 2:46) is Lukan shorthand for the Lord’s Supper and refers to one aspect of the corporate worship of the early church (Luke 22:14-20)” (p. 49). In other words, it should not be limited to the liturgical settings or service only but for the communal believers as well.

Prayers in Worship

Besides fellowshiping together, the believers in the earlier church prayed consistently not only because they lived in antagonist community but also, that more converts might join the new faith and celebrate their resurrected Messiah. Arnold (2002) claims that:

The first Christians spent much time before the Lord in prayer. They prayed privately, but they often prayed together as a group. It appears that many maintained the Jewish pattern of setting aside three times a day for focusing on prayer. Some continued to go to the temple and pray at the customary Jewish hours of prayer. The prayers probably centered on blessing and praising God as well as asking him for guidance and for boldness in proclaiming the gospel. (p. 237)

In my observation, in their worship much time was spent in prayers as compared to our practice today. Actually, some of the Christians have not only abandoned prayers and Scripture reading but also, they have turned the entire worship service into music. As a result, a new breed of Christian has emerged, which does not only abide in the word as the Lord cautioned, but also lacks gospel proclaiming power.

Parsons (2008) posits, “The believers devoted themselves to prayer (Acts 2:42d) is given content here: They praised God and had favor” (2:47). Their prayer has a vertical dimension in the community praising God (Luke 24:53), and a horizontal dimension in prayer directed outward to all the people” (p. 49). It is evidently clear from the early church that authentic worship must be infectious. Therefore, whereas in the biblical worship God is adored and praised, the horizontal line or aspect definitely realizes the divine and saving impact. Genuine worship is both vertical and horizontal in nature. I am afraid that much of our gospel preaching is more horizontal than vertical and infectious.

In short, I would suggest that the ineffectiveness among the believers to proclaim Jesus the resurrected Messiah today is because of not worshiping God according to his worship principles. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that the church can effectively do its missional work. Gallagher and Hertig (2004) argue,

The Holy Spirit dynamically empowers the early church in its infant stages in Jerusalem, then matures it and transforms it to a missionary force that extends to the ends to the earth, incorporating Jews and Gentles into a universal and multicultural community. (p. 9)

The Holy Ghost became the force of success in worship and spreading the gospel in the early church. In other words, the church can be only missional minded if it prays and connects with the vertical line which obviously affects the horizontal one. In my view, whatever the earlier church did was not only in regard to the joy of being saved but also with eagerness that they may have others experience the same.

Finally, Parsons (2008) correctly concludes, “That the inward experience of prayer is confirmed to the community by their dealings with outsiders is the common theme in these opening chapters of Acts” (p. 49). In summary, it is important to note that

both private and corporate prayers were offered in the early church and were a critical aspect of worship (Matt 18:19-20; Acts 12:5).

Music in Worship

Singing of hymns and psalms was also incorporated in the early church worship. Smith (as cited in Martens and Swartley, 1993) argues, “It is very difficult to conceive of the life and worship in the earlier church in which the Lord Jesus Christ occupied such as the central place and suppose that the first Christians did not sing about His person and his work using words which they had composed just for that purpose” (p. 176). Moreover, Matthew observes, “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the mount of Olives (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26).

I would like to suggest that this song possibly was about whom and what Jesus did for them, especially his humility as a servant leader in washing his disciple’s feet, as opposite to the Jewish culture. In other words, the hymn was likely about their experience with Jesus. In short, unless the hymn or a song is centered on Christ, the chances are that it will be lacking spiritually.

It is rather unfortunate that some of the songs composed in our churches today are focused either to emotionalize the worshipers or satisfy their worship curiosity more especially when accompanied with instruments. However, Snodgrass (1996) claims, “Surely no one should expect that emotions are always on the same level. While emotions are always involved in spirituality, being spiritual does not depend on a level of emotional feeling” (p. 310). He warns of the danger of equating the feelings with spirituality. It is unfortunate that some of the singers today unknowingly make this

grievous mistake. Until the difference is made between the two, then feelings will be treated as being spiritual, which is not the case.

Additionally, the songs might be composed by those who have not personally encountered with Christ. Out of my personal experience as a minister, such kind of singers or choirs does not only last for short period but also, becomes more problematic to both the Church leadership and the entire congregation. And finally, most likely they become independent of the constituted church leadership. So, until true spirituality is experienced in our singing, chances are that our music will not edify the church nor give glory and praise to Christ.

The Purpose Music

According to Paul, singing is one of the ways of praising God in the context of worship. He states, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col 3:16). Garland (1998) submits, “In Colossians 3:16, he identifies two key elements of worship: teaching and admonishing that centers on the word of Christ, and singing praise. He couples that with two norms for worship: wisdom and thanks giving” (p. 235). In short, the fundamental purpose of music is twofold i.e. to edify congregation and offer praises to God. Until, the singers in our worship services explicitly understand Paul’s concept of music in the context of worship, our worship will be a mere entertainment and unspiritual.

Additionally, Snodgrass (1996) believes, “True spirituality is focused on the gift of life in Christ, is shaped by Christ, and overflows with songs that both explain to other people the reason for joy and give thanks to God. Such spirituality goes to the core of our

being and cannot be produced by spiritual exercises, valuable though they be” (p. 310). On the other hand, music in worship is a means to express our joyful experience with Jesus as our savior and king and ascribe glory unto Him.

I would like to believe that had that been the goal of every believer and singer in our Church worship today, much could have been accomplished in the spread of the gospel. If singing could be performed according to its intended holy purpose, the accomplishment of the commission by Jesus to his Church could have been realized. Therefore, singing is a spiritual vehicle of evangelization and not a means to please fellow human beings.

Effective Spiritual Singing

It is not a surprise that probably most of our singing today is unspiritual. Paul observes how the acceptable singing is done in the authentic worship. He states, “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph 5:19-20).

The spiritual music must come from one’s heart, not mere feelings or emotions. Acknowledging what God in Christ has done for you. In other words, spiritual music is based and generated in the heart that has accepted Jesus. In addition, spiritual music originates from what Jesus has done in your heart for you and flows spontaneous with praises and thanksgiving. The fact that some of the music does not make much impact in the believers and no-believers lives today, is an indication that it is lacking.

Neufeld (2002) argues, “Singing and psalming, virtual synonyms, create the sense of worshipful music-making. Heart does not refer to silent inner singing, but singing from

the very depth of one's being, where Christ has taken the residence (Eph 1:18; 3:13)" (p. 242). In addition, Snodgrass (1996) believes, "That people are to sing in their hearts is not a request that people sing with feeling or emotion. Rather "heart" refers to the controlling center of one's being: Sing with all being (which certainly includes the emotions). The issue is the integrity with which one sings, not the feelings. Words are not merely sung, they express the reality of the life in the Spirit (p. 291). Spiritual singing is not accidental but rather intentional because it must be done with sincerity.

Music Enrichment

Patzia (1990) submits, music can "help one to appreciate both the richness of the Christian hymnody even at this early stage of the church's life and the function of music within the context of worship. When such music is grounded in the word of God (i.e., doctrinally in content), it definitely serves a teaching and instructional function within the body" (pp. 81-2). Additionally, he believes, "Singing is to be expressed in spirit of gratitude. Music may edify the members of a congregation, but its primary function is to render thanks to God" (p. 82). On the other hand, music is multipurpose gift to the church not only for missional purposes but also, for enrichment of the body of believers spiritually.

Whereas, the scripture evidently shows individual singers like King David and Paul (Ps 101: 1; Heb 2:12; Jas 5:13), this does not dismiss the congregational singing. In most of our churches today, the praise choir or a few elected singers has unfortunately usurped the role of the congregational singing as opposite to biblical worship principles. It is necessary for each worshiper to participate in singing, because, fundamentally, singing is performed as a result of human redemption by Jesus. More so, we have to

cheerfully and joyfully ascribe glory unto Him from the depth of our hearts as both individuals and congregations. In other words, the cause of singing purely depends on a personal experience with Jesus, according to Paul, besides being grounded in the word. Although, choirs are involved in singing, it is the individual singing, which matters most.

In summary, music is a means of expressing praises to God for what he has accomplished for us in Christ Jesus. Authentic and spiritual music in the context of worship spontaneously flows from the hearts of those who have fully experienced Jesus in their lives either as individuals or as congregations. Moreover, the music, which does not originate from one's heart grounded on the word as one of the biblical principle of worship and involves both feelings and emotions will not bear much fruit. Additionally, the total being must be controlled by Jesus in order for the music to achieve its goal of enriching the believers and ascribing honor and glory to God. Above all, music must focus on nothing else apart from Jesus Christ and his redemptive act. Music is an eternal enterprise, which will continue in the new heaven and new earth forever and ever (Rev 5:9-14).

Worship in the Writings of Ellen White

Grounds for Worship

Undeniably, in her writings Ellen White explicitly explains the grounds of worship. More especially, she exhorts the worshipers to adore God for he is the creator and the locus of our worship. Hence, in her book, *The Great Controversy*, White (1888) states that:

The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of the creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God-because He is the creator, and we are his creatures. The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship;

for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten. (pp. 437-438)

White points out plainly the inseparableness of the Sabbath and authentic worship. Although, in my view, it seems that the fallen race has a tendency of forgetting even the most important things, which not only determine its destiny but also justifies the purpose of its existence. As a result of his unconditional love unto the fallen human race, God resolved to provide the Sabbath as a permanent reminder to all creatures that the purpose of their existence was to worship him as our creator. Besides that, it is one of the biblical worship principles.

Moreover, I would suggest that worship was not intended by God to be observed by a particular people, race, gender or nationality, but rather all creatures in all nations in the universe. Hence, according to the book of Revelation, John claims, "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water" (Rev 14:7). In short, the Sabbath was initiated to be the permanent reminder of what God did for us and deserves a response.

Furthermore, White (1888) argues that it is our divine and only solemn duty to worship God. In other words, the major fundamental reason for our existence is to do obeisance to God. Anything less than worshiping God is rebellion because it goes contrary to our creator's rightful purpose of creation. Moreover, she states that:

By the first angel, men are called upon to "fear God, and give glory to him," and to worship him," as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey his law. Says the wise man, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for

this is the whole duty of man. Without obedience to his commandments, no worship can be pleasing to God. (p. 436)

It is quite unfortunate that this great, inspired truth has received critical challenges from the so-called evolutionists and atheists besides the modern scientists. Even though, the biblical records reveal that since the history of humankind there have been those who are willingly determined to oppose the truth by not acknowledging God as the creator.

In addition, White (1888) argues that:

All gods of the heathen nations are mere idols and there is none equal with God both in heaven and earth even beneath. Hence, he is the Lord our creator and he deserves honor, glory and power forever and ever. And above all he is worthy (Psa 96:5, 100:3; Isa 40:25, 6; 45:18; Rev 4:11). (p. 437)

In spite of the fact that many a time many people worship their own man made gods as a result of perversion from the reality but still, the Biblical history testify that it is only the God of the Israelites that deserves worship because none is equal unto him in the entire universe (Exod 3:4; John 8:58; Acts 2:24; Rev 5:9-14) (p. 436).

Focus of Worship

Throughout human history, no subject has so far received more objections, contradictions, insult, and confusion as the object of worship. In spite of God declaring explicitly through his word and nature that he should be worshiped because he is our creator, yet sadly to say that many a people regard many things as their object of worship including fellow human beings dead or living. Nevertheless, accordingly White (1990) correctly and strongly emphasizes that:

That God who made the world is the only object of worship and to whom human beings should bow. God has not given to any human being the power to claim homage to themselves. He has given to none the power to become an object of worship. (p. 102). In short, anyone claiming to be the object of worship intends to dethrone God the creator from his rightful position. Nevertheless, it is not a strange

thing that even in this generation there are similar people to whom their wealth, affiliations, faith or religion, education, name, popularity and even their spiritual leaders unfortunately have become their object of worship. In addition, she argues that, in his response to Satan, Jesus confirmed that God is the only focus of our worship. Moreover she quotes Jesus that, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve” (p. 102).

However, history shows that in his tireless efforts Satan through the church systems managed to direct the worshiper’s attentions to another focus of worship. White (1947) submits that “to afford converts from heathenism a substitute for the worship of idols, and thus to promote their nominal acceptance of Christianity, the adoration of images and relics was gradually introduced to the Christian worship” (p. 328). In other words, the true focus was substituted by images and relics as the object of worship in some of the church systems in the world. She adds that “Satan strives to turn men from their allegiance to God and from rendering obedience to his law; therefore he directs his efforts especially against that commandment which points God as the creator” (p. 330).

White (1976) yet warns the true worshipers that before the end of the age, history will repeat itself. More so, the earthly governments will finally be used by Satan to enforce worship on Sunday, which will pose more difficulties or challenges for the true Sabbath keepers. White (1976) admonishes,

The seasons of distress before God’s people will call for a faith that will not falter. His children must make it make manifest that He is the only object of their worship, and that no consideration, not even that of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to false worship. (p. 196)

Satan is against the worship of God as the only object of worship. Also, this is the chief biblical worship principle.

True Worshipers

Worship continued to degenerate immediately after Cain's offering was rejected by God. God had made it clear that it was through the blood of the lamb that every sinner would not only approach God but also receive forgiveness (Gen 3:21). Since then, all worshipers in the world have been characterized by the two brother's attitudes in offering sacrifices.

Cain offered a sacrifice or worshiped but it was not according to God's biblical principles of worship. God's principle of worship stated that the offering was to denounce one's efforts to receive favor with God and claim the merits of Jesus Christ who was symbolized by the slain lamb. However, Cain's tendency has taken much root in the hearts of many of the believers today. More so, some might be so much proud of their experience of many years in the church or their traditions if not their theology.

The trend of not abiding with God's biblical worship principles continued down the ages. Thus, Cain's attitude towards worship was manifested in the Jewish worship service. Consequently, in the *Periodicals S/SSW* (December 1), White (1894) claims that:

Their worship had degenerated from a spiritual worship to a mere external service. Of their religious teachers Jesus had said, "In vain to they worship me, teaching for the doctrines commandments of men." Christ did not expect that his words will return unto him void, but they were as enduring as eternity (par 1).

The worship becomes empty and in vain when it is offered without observing the divine worship principles. In fact, to some believers today, worship has become a tradition. More so, it does not connect them with God.

However, because the focus of worship was lost, then there was a need not only for a spiritual worship but also for sincere and true worshipers. Actually, I would like to suggest that it is when the church loses the focus and true worshipers that the formality

takes place and precedence. More so, it is when the spiritual reformation is required.

Thus, White (1894) asserts that:

In answer to the statement of the woman in Samaria that her father had worshiped in this mountain, . . . Jesus said, but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the father in spirit and truth; for the father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and truth (December, 1 par. 1)

Jesus defined exactly what, where, and how authentic worship was to be observed. In his new teaching contrary to both the Jewish and Samaritan practices and beliefs, Jesus explicitly made clear that worship has nothing to do with a particular place. It was about who worships according to the biblical worship principles, i.e., in the spirit and truth and more so where God is the focus. On the other hand, God was looking for such worshipers (John 4:23). Unless, worship is practiced according to God's will, then it will remain idolatrous and be rejected by God.

Similarly, there is likelihood that our worship today is more focused on programs and developments besides style of worship. I believe strongly that unless we heed God's call of seeking true worshipers who will worship in spirit and truth, our worship service will be just dry bones in the valley (Ezek 37:1-2). Much more, God is not interested in the formality but humble, broken and contrite hearts (Isa 57:15).

Additionally, it has been clearly pointed out that authentic worship is not much about the place but about the individual's relationship with the Spirit of God. On the other hand, worship must be directed by God who is the Spirit. More so, it must be offered in faith and hope by a total being. In fact, God must be worshiped holistically and by a total being (Mark 12:30).

Place of Worship

The biblical account shows that there was no any other place earth where God had given strict instruction as the worship place because of this sanctity. White (1948) argues that:

There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habit and customs of people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred, things that connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and our hearts, and are being brought down to a level of the common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they made with God in sacred service has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God himself gave the order of his service, exalting high above everything of a temporal nature. (p. 491)

Basically, she warns that the current worshipers are not well connected with God because they have not only abandoned the sacred things but made the worship service to be at the level with the common things. On the other hand, the reverence that is due to God and serves as a primary basis of our worship is gone. More so, acknowledging God as the object of worship in our worship places as the fundamental Biblical worship principle is not practiced any more. Consequently, the worshipers and their worship service are exactly opposite of what was intended by God. Worship loses its meaning when God is not honored.

The Worshiper's Conduct

More specifically, White (1948) points out the issues that have widely not only affected the current church but also hinders the worshipers from communing with God. So far, the manner in which the worshipers conduct themselves is lacking dignity and reverence to God. Hence, she states that

When the worshiper enters into the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. . . . Common talking, whispering, and laughing should

not be permitted in the house of worship either before or after service. Ardent, active piety should, characterize the worshipers. (p. 492)

Whereas, I agree with her in that regard, I could like to suggest that the new generation needs to be taught clearly who is God and why we worship him. In fact, through my experience as a minister, most of the new generation members don't seem to take worship responsibly or appear interested in it. So, until worshipers have correct information about the mighty God we worship, then there is a danger of being untruthful worshipers.

Also, White (1948) points out that God has abandoned our worship meetings because of our unspiritual practices. She comments, "Because of the irreverence in attitude, dress and deportment, and lack worshipful frame of mind, God has often turned his face away from those assembled for his worship" (p. 499). Whereas, none can dispute the fact that there is no universal garments to be worn by all worshipers but that does not allow someone's mind not to be controlled by the Spirit of God and dress moderately according to the Scripture.

Family Worship

It is an indisputable fact that one of the challenges that Christian families are facing today is lack of the family worship. Worship should not be observed or conducted just for the sake of formality. White (1954) argues, "If there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now" (p. 517) I think that the results of the parent's failure in observing worship at their homes are being experienced in our churches today. Most of the children seem not to know God as they revere not the place of worship. To

put it in another way, they are ignorant of God's principles of worship, which actually should be taught at home during the worship hour.

Furthermore, she points out that the father who acts as the priest of the family should not only be responsible for worship but also make them more interesting to the children. White (1954) claims, "The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the evening and morning worship...Let the seasons of family worship be short and spirited" (p. 521). In my observation, we are living in societies wherein the greatest challenge is the broken families and more so, where parentless children are brought up in unchristian and secular institutions. Therefore, the church leaders need to be more careful in regard to children's conduct in places of worship.

Music in Worship

Besides in heaven, songs have been used in various occasions in honor of God.

White (1946) asserts that:

Music forms part of worship in the courts above. We should endeavor in our songs of praise to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. I have often been pained to hear untrained voices, pitched to the highest key, literally shrieking the sacred words of some hymn of praise. (p. 507)

The purpose of songs is to help us to join the heavenly choirs to give God praises because he is worthy. They are a vehicle by which to ascribe glory to God. Further, White (1995) admonishes, "Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voices can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued" (p. 178). Undoubtedly, most of our singing is greatly characterized by uncheerful singers besides irrelevant songs to the occasion. More so, not many are willing to participate in

singing. Therefore, I would suggest that until we understand why we worship, chances are that our singing will be mere entertainment.

The Theme of Singing

White (1946) advocates that the singing should not be done without a purpose or theme. More so, she claims, “The science of salvation is to be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication” (p. 502). In my observation several instances in our worship services songs have been composed and sung with intent to praise our ministers or our leaders for what they have done for us. Therefore, I am strongly in agreement with White that the reason as to why we sing in worship is the acknowledgement of the redemptive act of God in his son Jesus that is one of biblical worship principles. It is not for competition, commercial purposes, nor for fame.

Also, in worship music instruments are used in praising God. Moreover, White (1946) submits, “Musical instruments were used in religious services in the ancient times. The worshipers praised God upon the harp and cymbal, and music should have its place in our services” (p. 501). In fact, this is one of the aspects in worship, which has led to many disagreements in different settings of worship in some areas. It is not a surprise that even some of the Church leaders have so much opposed the traditional music instruments without understanding that each culture has its own instruments for worship and acceptable to God.

Theology of Worship

Definition of Worship

It is impossible to get the true definition from elsewhere apart from the records of those who genuinely worshipped and experienced God according to the Scripture. Owen and McMurray(1999) correctly ask, “So what does God have to say about worship in the scriptures? How does he define the word, and what does he require (p. 5)?

The Hebrew and Greek Meaning of Worship

The first time the word “worship” was mentioned in the Bible was during the time of Abraham. Moreover, the Scripture states, “And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I with the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you” (Gen 22:5).

The Hebrew word used for worship in this particular verse is *saha*. According to Botterweck et al. (2004), the word *saha* means: prostrate oneself, throw oneself down, and bow down (pp. 558-9). However, according to Arndt and Gingrich (1957), the same word in Greek is *prokoneu*, which also means used to designate the custom of prostrating oneself before a person and kissing his feet, the hem of his garment, the ground, and fall down and worship, do, obeisance, prostrate oneself before, do reverence to, and welcome respectively (p. 723).

In essence, both definitions have the same meaning i.e., to give reverence due to one being superior. So, basically, worship is an acceptable way or means in a particular society whereby one could express or does obeisance to his superior. It is the way you live in relation to your God and give him his due respect. Best (2003) correctly submits that “worship is at once about who you are, about whom or what our god is and about

how we choose to live” (p. 17). For example, when the children of Israel heard that God visited them, they believed and worshiped. The Bible states:

And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and he had looked upon their affliction, they bowed their heads and worship. (Exod 4:30-31; 12:27; 34:8; 2 Chro 7:3)

Worship is not about your affiliations, canons, or doctrinal practices and norms. Worship is a response towards God’s action or deed. Worship is about your response towards what you have heard from God. So, this implies to me that the first biblical principle or rule in worship is that God must be the initiator of the authentic worship. Secondly, any response must be based on his deeds and worthiness.

Wiersbe (2000) states that “worship is a response of all that we are to all that God is and does” (p. 21). To put it another way, worship is the acknowledgement of what God is and of his redemptive plans towards the fallen race. Hence, Harper and Metzger (2009) affirm that “worship is not about a search for meaning and experience, but an acknowledgement that meaning and salvation are found in God’s incomparable act of redemption in Christ” (p. 34).

In addition, Segler and Bradley (1996) submit that “the English word worship is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *weorthscipe*—‘worth’ and ‘ship’—meaning one ‘worthy of reverence and honor.’ When we worship, we are declaring God’s worth. . . .Worship is both revelation and mystery” (pp. 6-7). In short, unless worthiness is ascribed to God, then worship will obviously be unscriptural and idolatrous.

The Psalmist declares, “Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come unto his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness: fear before him, all the earth” (Ps 96:8-9). Hence, the psalmist points out explicitly three

important biblical worship principles of which without them, any kind of worship practiced will not only be unacceptable but also unbiblical. First, he invites all nations to ascribe glory to God. According to King David, worship begins, is centered, and ends in proclaiming glory to God. It is important to note that giving God glory is one of the biblical worship principles, which makes worship acceptable in his presence.

Secondly, he advocates that authentic worship must involve offerings. To put in another way, worship is not an activity or event you get involved in without a cost or a sacrifice (1 Chro 21:22-24). It needs you to abandon or surrender some of your likes and also it consumes your time besides participating thoughtfully. Above all, God the great giver intends to teach all believers that giving is accompanied by blessings (John 3:16). To put it more succinctly, to give offerings in worship is a means to receive blessings (Acts 20:35). Therefore worship is about blessings if only conducted biblically. In addition, another biblical worship principle he has mentioned is that all creatures must observe fear or tremble in his presence if only their worship could be acceptable.

The Object of Worship

Whereas, the Church activities are necessary, it is quite unfortunate that many of the Christians today equate them with the object of worship. As a result, they distract the worshipers from recognizing the authentic object of worship and more so, as the chief principle of worship.

In his book, *A Call to Worship* Hodges (1996) argues that:

The only legitimate focus of worship is God himself. God declares, "I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols" (Isa 42:8). It is too easier for the functions of the Church life to become the focus of the church. Machinery becomes the end. Activities substitute for real life. Busyness becomes the pattern that quickly justifies itself, and we don't even discern God as departed from

our midst. When God is dethroned and we idolatrously worship the programs we have created rather than the creator himself, our churches dies. But when God remains the central focus, when we come together for the sole purpose of glorifying him all the other activities assume their rightful places. The pieces fit when God is worshiped. (p. 23)

On the other hand, until God becomes the object of our worship then, worship becomes unspiritual. So, unless the Church leaders makes a distinctive demarcation line between the object of worship and Church activities, the likelihood is that we are bound to confine God in our programs besides our feelings. As a result, our worship will be nothing but a curse. Patton (2005) argues that:

Developing a capacity or making a room for God is not simple or easy nor does it occur on demand basis. The object of worship is God, not the feeling or human experience of God's presence. Sometimes we make these feelings or experiential components "god" and forget totally about God. . . . The religious people have this great tendency to make experience more important than the God who gave the experience. (p. 47)

Whereas we are thinking that we are worshiping God, there is a danger of assuming or identifying our experiential feelings with him. Evidently, most of the believers today are driven by the feelings to an extent that they are made to believe that there is no need of reading the word or to pray except music. So, it is important, for the objective of worship to be clearly understood by the worshipers if only worship should be genuine and scriptural.

The first lesson God taught Israel before their deliverance was about the object of worship which was the fundamental biblical worship principle. Moreover, the Bible states, "And he said, certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain" (Exod 3:12, 34:14). In fact, what can be observed in this particular verse is not

only God's promise to his people but much more how important and central was the object of worship which was none other God himself. Hence, Anders (2002) claims that:

Worship always comes first. God did not wait until Israel was settled in the land to instruct them in proper worship. He saw it as a special priority and planned for it from the onset. This taught Israelites always to place God first in their lives and that no inconvenience should ever bar them from honoring God. The purpose for them "plundering" the Egyptians their goods was not for personal or enrichment but to provide for the worship of the living God. (p 112)

Indeed, the redemption of the Israelites was not only from physical Egypt but much more from serving many gods. And above all, from many focuses to one focus which was the living God. Cherry (2010) insists, "Worship always begins with and focuses on what God has done to save his people in Jesus Christ" (p. 6).

The Scripture positively identifies God as the object of worship in many ways. He is as *Alfa* and *Omega*, and there are no other God besides him, he is the creator of the heaven and earth, and the redeemer of the children of Israel (Gen 1:1; Isa 44:6, 45:22; 43:10; Exod 20:1-7, Matt 4:4; Luke 4:4). Additionally, Ngien (2007) claims, "God is both the subject and object of worship" (p. 1). In short, true worship can never take place without God being the focus. So, the object of worship is the primary Biblical worship principle which determines the authenticity of the genuine worship.

Jesus as the Object of Worship

It has been clearly established from both the Old and the New Testaments that God is the Object of worship. In other words, if Jesus claims to be worshipped, then it implies that he is God and the object of worship. So, it is quite necessary for us to verify his Biblical legitimacy as an object of worship. In fact, according to VanGemeren (1997),

the word used for God is *elohiym* (*el-o-heem*) meaning plural-intensive-singular meaning (p. 405).

The word God is used in Hebrew as plural and used with singular verbs. For instance, God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us” (Gen 3:22). Obviously, the statement implies that God is more than one, i.e., the trinity. Davidson (2011, March) claims, “God refers to Himself both as ‘He’ and ‘Us.’” In the Old Testament, the plural form of one of the nouns for god (*elohim*) is quantitative (Gen 1:26, 11:7, Isa 6:8) (p. 28). In short, it is necessary to know when God speaks as “him” and as “us”. Additionally, Gunn (1982) argues, “God is pictured in the plural intimates that He is trinity. The Holy Trinity” (p. 25).

In short, the point is that there is a time that the word ‘God’ is in plural or in singular. In essence, the whole idea is that God is a trinity. Moreover, Cherry (2010) submits, “The Christ event now drives worship, for the object of our worship is Jesus Christ, the content of our worship is the story of Jesus Christ, the word proclaimed in Christian worship is the gospel of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. . . .” (p. 8). It is as the result of what Jesus did that qualifies him to be the focus of worship.

In addition, Bauckham (as cited in Gethercole, 2006) insist that:

Paul does not identify Jesus purely as an eschatological figure, but also as a protological figure, involved in the very act of creation, with God the Father. This places him at the beginning in Genesis 1, indeed before the beginning. The roles of God and Christ in creation are not the identical: creation is through Christ, and from the father (p. 27). Furthermore, he adds, “First, Jesus Christ is presented at the outset as a co-agent in creation with God: he is the son whom God appointed heir of all things, “through whom he also made ages” (Heb 1:2). (p. 33)

If Jesus were co-agent in creation as the author claims then, I would assume that as a creator he is also the object of worship as God. Lee (2004) submits that “the

Johannine Jesus through the Holy Spirit becomes a locus and object of worship, the source of worship, as well as the true worshiper” (pp. 277-297). The biblical worship principle here is that he is the creator or the focus of our worship (Ps 95:6).

The New Testament begins by identifying Jesus not only as Immanuel which means God with us, but also he was at the beginning as the word and created heaven and the earth (Matt 1:23; John 1:1-3). He was I am that I am who delivered the children of Israel from bondage (John 8:58). Furthermore he was equal with God and many people worshiped him because of his supernatural healing power (Phil 2:6-7; Mark 1:40-45, 2:1-12; Luke 24:52; John 9:38; Mark 2-10). Above all, for eternity thousands and thousands will worship him because he is worthy (Rev 4:11, 5:9-14; Phil 2:10-11).

Stott (2001) argues, “The creator assumed the human frailty of his creatures. The eternal one entered time. The all-powerful made himself vulnerable. The all-holy exposed himself to temptation. And in the end the immortal died” (pp. 36-37). Actually, what has been ascertained is that Jesus is God and the object of worship forever and ever.

The Holy Spirit as the Object of Worship

The Holy Spirit is also the object of worship equally with the Father and the Son. Davidson (2011, March) claims, “The three divine persons are equal but not identical” (p. 29). Hence, the Scripture account shows the Holy Spirit right from the beginning of the creation as moving on the face of the earth (Gen 1:2). The Bible witnesses the presence and the role of the Holy Spirit from the start of creation as the co-agent of creation. Nevertheless, according to Kim (2007):

The Spirit was fully involved in the creation right from the beginning. In addition, he submits that, “Reading the bible from the “orthodox” perspective, beginning with the Spirit moving over the waters at creation (Gen 1:2), adds a material and creative

dimension to the Spirit's work, and broadens its scope to include the whole created order." (p. 10)

Actually, the argument is that the Spirit was not only involved in creation but also his pre-existence as God. More so, it is ascertained that the breath of God is creative of life (Ps 33:6, 42:8; Job 33:4). Hence, he is the object of worship because he is God. He possesses the nature of deity and he is eternal as God himself (Heb 1:6). Davidson (2011, March) believes, "The Holy Spirit is identified as God, the member of the godhead, with the title 'holy' regularly attached" (p. 29). Besides that, Paul claims that Jesus as a sacrifice was offered to the father by Spirit. In fact, this implies to me that the Spirit has intimate relationship with God and he is omniscient, i.e., he knows everything and works with God concerning human redemption (Heb 9:14).

The Holy Spirit is omnipresent as God the Father and Son. Ambrose (as cited in Stanton et al., 2004) submits, the Holy Spirit knows God's things not by searching nor by accident but by nature (p. 226). And he works all in all (1 Cor 12:6). So, he is the object of worship because he is omnipresent as God the Father and has divine ability to search God's mysteries. Consequently, Feinberg (as cited in Cole, 2007) contends that:

As to the Holy Spirit, if he is not fully God, the implications for salvation are again serious. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit regenerates believers and indwells and fills them, but if the Holy Spirit is a lesser God or no God at all, how can we be sure that he did any of these things? Moreover, unless is co-equal in being and purpose with the father and the Son, what guarantee that even if he tried to do such things, the father and the Son would recognize his actions as appropriate and relate to us accordingly? (p. 69)

Coralie (2011, March) comments, "True worship is ultimately to the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit" (p. 19). As one of the triune by nature he deserves our worship according to the biblical worship principles as God. Additionally, Augustine (as cited in Cole, 2007) argues that:

The Spirit is certainly not a creature, for worship is offered unto him by all the saints; as the Apostle [Paul] says, ‘We are the circumcision, serving the Spirit {pneumatic} of God’, where the Greek word *latreuontes* means ‘worshiping’. . . . If then the ‘members of Christ’ are the ‘temple of the Holy Spirit’, the Holy Spirit is not a creature. . . we must owe him the service which is due to God alone, which in Greek is called *latreia*. (p. 72)

Baptism was administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And even Peter identifies him as God (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 5:1-4). So, the Holy Ghost is the object of worship too.

Grounds of Worship

Besides giving a call to worship, the psalmist explicitly lays a foundation as to why God deserves our worship. He states, “O come, let us worship and bow down: kneel before the Lord our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand” (Ps 95:6-7). King David points out clearly four major grounds or reasons as to why God is worthy to be worshiped. First and foremost, we came out of his hands as creatures. Therefore our existence purely depends on God’s existence, sustenance, protection, and direction. More so, God is his maker and the creator.

Also, David acknowledged God as his God. In spite of the existence of other gods he identifies himself with God who creates and brings creation into existence from nowhere and out of nothing (Heb 11:3). Moreover, he is not equal with any god (Ps 40:25). David recognizes his God because of his worthiness, majesty, and mighty deeds besides his infiniteness and transcendence.

Further, we belong unto him by both creation and redemption (1 Pet 1:18-19). Our belongingness to God also is another major ground for worshiping him. Hence, King Solomon declares the fundamental ground for worshiping God is that it is our divine duty

(Eccl 12:13). If you fail to worship God then, you are rebelling against the divine fundamental principle of your existence as a human being. He is our deliverer (Ps 50:15). Also, there is no king in the entire universe which can withstand him. He does what he pleases (Exod 12:12; Isa 37:36). In other words, nothing he has purposed to do can be delayed by any power or circumstance both in heaven and earth even beneath the earth (Isa 46:10). So he deserves our worship.

Application of Biblical Worship Principles

The first and foremost biblical worship principle is to heed to the word of God. For the Scripture states, “All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and it profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction for righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished into good works” (2 Tim 3:16).

Word of God the Standard of True Worship

The Scripture is the rule or standard by which all styles of worship must be measured, because it is inspired by God. God is interested in his people to be perfect in all things and more so, in worship. In regard to the conflict about the worship style in New Life SDA Church, the Bible does not provide any specific style of worship. Although, every generation right from the beginning developed its own style of worship, God’s principles of worship were strictly observed. In addition, worship principles determine the authentic worship.

True Worship Engages the Emotions as Well as the Intellect

More so, specifically, the core of the problem in New Life Church is the emotional expression in worship. The word clearly speaks about how we should worship.

In the Book of Mark, Jesus describes how we should worship God. He states, “And thou shalt love the Lord their God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy entire mind, and with all thy strength: (Mark 12:30). In fact, he needs us to serve him as total beings. In other words, emotions are part of us. To put it another way, in our worship it is scripturally acceptable when we express ourselves emotionally and temperately for worship is spontaneous and demands total participation.

Worship Originates With God

The next biblical worship principle observed in the Scriptures is that worship must originate with God. In other words, the New Life SDA Church must explicitly understand that the biblical worship starts with God. And this is only ascertained by his word. On the other hand, the church will have the spiritual discernment to know exactly what God needs in regard to worship. Hence, this will solve the emerging issues in regard to worship styles. Moreover, Matthew states, “That for the good tree bringeth forth not forth corrupt fruit; neither the corrupt tree bringeth forth good fruit” (Luke 6:43, Matt 7:18). Whatever that has been initiated by God will not contradict the word. In short, the New Life SDA Church has full to identify herself with the source or origin of worship which is none other than God for her to understand the style of worship God requires in relation to each culture.

Worship a Result of God’s Action

Also, the next biblical worship principle is that the basis of worship must be as result of God’s action. In fact, worship does not only begin with God, but also caused by his actions. Moreover, with this understanding the worshipers in New Life SDA Church

will not only ascribe glory and give honor unto him but also be in a position to detect the insincere worship. More so, there is no any other deed rather than the act of redemption of the human race through his son. Sometimes, it happens that some members of this Church assume that the basis of their worship is because they are Adventists. Actually, this is far from the reality although it is necessary. In fact, the worshipers should adore God because they are saved. When the church is knowledgeable of this solemn truth emerging issues in worship do not threaten the Church because it grounded in God who is the origin or source of worship.

God is the Object of True Worship

In addition, the Object of worship is the chief fundamental Biblical worship principle. Any worship without a focus fails to achieve its divine intended goal of ascribing glory and praises to God. Hence, there is no doubt that yet there are many worshipers in New Life SDA Church who either were born in the Adventist families and worship to them has become a formality or a tradition. Or it might be that some are newly converted without a strong foundation on worship and its focus. Unfortunately they might be focusing on church activities, choirs, ministers, church development, but the actual object of worship is God. Moreover, there will be no any meaningful worship until New Life SDA Church focuses on only God as the object of worship. Consequently, much of the church conflicts arise most immediately as a result of the worshiper's loss of the locus (Deut 6:4; Isa 43:3).

True Worship is Freely Expressed

More so, worship must flow spontaneously and without coercion or being over emotionalized. Much of the worship at New Life SDA Church is as a result emotions being stimulated by music or sermons but not based on God's act of redemption in his son for us. Hence, it has become a tradition or a tendency that without the choir performing unfortunately many worshipers complain that worship becomes dull and boring. Simply, this implies to me that most of the worshipers in this church are lacking the fundamental reason as to why they worship. In fact, since and before creation genuine worship has never and will never be dull or boring because it is initiated by God who is also its focus besides being full of goodness when tested (Ps 34 8; Exod 33:19). In short, as a result of acknowledging what he did for us, worship will frequently flow spontaneously without us being over emotionalized by the songs, sermons, or speeches.

True Worship May Happen Anywhere

In addition, worship is first about the heart attitude then other activities follow. On the other hand, one can worship spontaneously in a secret place, on the mountain, in a cave, in prison and so forth without a mass choir but with a singly choir like Joseph, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, Paul, Peter and John in the prison (Gen 39:1-20, Dan 3:17-18; Acts 16:18: Acts 4:3-20). In short, worship is not only an attitude but also it can be observed anywhere singly or corporately as long as it is based on what God has done for you in his son. In other words, any worship must be spontaneous.

True Worship Includes Spiritual Sacrifice

Equally, offering sacrifice is another biblical worship principle or basis by which God is approached. Even though, the sacrifice in the Old Testament was antitype that was to meet the type in the New Testament. In fact, it is not the sacrifice that made the difference but rather what it symbolized. Simply, all sacrifices offered symbolized how Jesus as a lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. So, in the New Testament according to Paul, the worshipers have to give their bodies a living as sacrifice as the reasonable and acceptable service unto God (Rom 12:1-2). So, the New Life SDA Church worshipers must present themselves unto God as living sacrifices. Biblical worship includes our lives, families besides our possessions (Jos 24:15; Exod 10:9).

Furthermore, another biblical worship principle is that the offering must be freely and voluntary given from in our hearts. Actually, most of the worshipers in New Life SDA Church do not give their offerings as an act of worship but rather as financial support to the Church. Actually, the giving of offerings is very important because it is an activity in which each individual has to participate. To put in another way, when offering is done freely and willingly from the heart, it shows one's acknowledgement of the activity as worship. In other words, any event or activity involved in worship has to be voluntary (1 Cor 16:1-3). In addition, I will assist the ministers to prepare their sermons not frequently geared towards financial support for the church, but much more on what God has done for us in his son.

True Worship Emanates from an Obedient Heart

Also, obeying God is another important biblical worship principle. In New Life Church it happens that there are common gossiping, unnecessary laughter, besides

members being not careful in keeping time for worship. Actually, it is dangerous to disobey God's instructions because he always expresses his wrath (Lev 10:1-2). For instance, the Bible does not deny that Cain did not offer the sacrifice but rather it reveals that his sacrifice was rejected by God. On the other hand, the issue was not the sacrifice but rather he did not obey God's instructions in regard to the type of sacrifice that was required. Moreover, it is for the same reason Abel's sacrifice was accepted or honored by God. Actually, the New Life Church conduct worship services every Sabbath. Nevertheless, the question is whether the church obeys God in all matters concerning worship service. In fact, what I need to put a cross is that every activity must be regarded as a part of worship and done faithfully.

Every Believer Called to Worship God

Another biblical worship principle New Life SDA Church to fully adhere to is that worship is a divine duty unto all human beings. On the other hand, it is that every worshiper has to worship God, not because of the Sabbath resting, as many think, but because it is his or her divine duty. Obviously, this is an important biblical rule because some abandon the church worship as a result of conflicts among themselves, which implies to me that they are not knowledgeable as to why they worship. Hence, King Solomon summarizes the human duty by stating, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl 12:13).

The New Life SDA Church must adore and revere God not because of our affiliations, status, or where we come from, but because we were created to worship or ascribe glory to God. To put it in another way, it is against nature to fail or rebel against

worship. Worship fundamentally, has nothing to do with our affiliations, status, color, tribe, or race. The New Life SDA Church has to worship God because that is the purpose of her existence.

True Worship Balances Spirit and Truth

More so, worshipping God in the Spirit and truth is also a biblical worship principle. In New Life SDA Church there is the assumption that each member is a true worshiper. For one to be a true worshiper, he or she must be led by God's Spirit and truth. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts people of their sins and helps them to plead for forgiveness and receive God's righteousness (John 16:8-11).

Worship is Missional

Furthermore, another biblical worship principle is that worship is missional in nature. For instance, the early church took much time to pray not only that God may protect them from the hostile community but much more that many converts might join the Church and celebrate their risen Messiah. Besides that, if you closely look at the disciples much of their work was spent in spreading the word according to the commission they were given by their master Jesus Christ (Matt 28:19-20). By that I mean, the New Life Church, with being located in the city center, needs to be creative in planning how to evangelize the city suburbs or estates through establishing schools, an orphanage home for HIV infected children, hospitals, community assisting centers, and above all through the gospel campaign. Unless this church is engaged in this missional work, its purpose of existence will diminish.

Worship Honors Biblical Order and Decency

Equally, decency and order are biblical worship principles observed in true worship. In New Life Church, often we have several things to do before the divine hour worship. And one of them is too many announcements are made before the sermon is delivery, which almost distract the worshipers from the object of worship. Actually, it is very necessary for the church leaders to understand that even though the announcements are necessary, they should be done in an orderly manner and decently. Above all, God is a God of order and peace (1 Cor 14:40).

CHAPTER III
CULTURAL WORSHIP IN KENYA AND
CRITICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

Cultural Worship in Kenya

Introduction

Worship is one of the solemn activities practiced in Kenya. More so, it is observed differently in different cultures and for different reasons at different places or shrines. This diverse worship background of the Kenyan people influences worship practice and perceptions as some move away from the staid European model of worship imposed by missionaries that evangelized Africa toward a more expressive contemporary model. Actually, the *Abagusii* cultural worship was highly esteemed, because it was held that the ancestral spirits were in control of every event and more so they determined the societal destiny.

Abagusii Cultural Worship

Historical Background

It is being told in history that the *Abagusii* people were among the Bantu-speaking people who migrated from Egypt through the Nile River. Moreover, Ochieng (1990) claims that:

The *Abagusii*, in particular, originally migrated into Nyanza from a home land they identify as *Misri* (to the north of Mount Elgon) at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Originally a cattle keeping- community, *Gusii* economic and social institutions underwent fundamental transformation in the period between 1520 and 1755 as they established themselves in the lake region. Their first settlement in *Nyanza* was made at *Yimbo*, at the head of *Goye* Bay, but after prolonged cattle-rustling conflict between them and the *Luo Abagusii* eventually migrated to Kano plains, where they settled between 1620 and 1775. It was during this period that *Abagusii* developed most of their institutions, such as sectional totems and clan sub-national structures. It was also at the lake region *Abagusii* appear to have acquired and perfected skills of iron technology. (p. 5)

In addition, they had developed a common language known as '*Ekegusii*'. Hence, Silbershmidt (as cited in Garine and Garine, 2001) claims, "*Ekegusii*, is the language spoken by *Abagusii*, A Bantu community in western Kenya, *Nyanza* province" (p. 205).

Geographical Place

Kenya is one of the countries in East Africa that forms the African continent. Kenya as a nation is composed of 42 tribes or ethnic communities. Each tribe has its own way of worship and practices. Furthermore, there is likelihood that these tribes don't share the religious norms or tenets. The *Abagusii* community maintains their norms in regard to administration, and religious affiliations. The *Abagusii* people are found in the western part of Kenya. According to UNESCO in Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) (as cited in Ogechi and Ruto, 2002) observe, "The *Abagusii* are *Bantu* speaking people close to 1.9 million and are the sixth most populous community in Kenya. They are settled in the fertile highlands of *Kisii*, *Guucha*, and *Nyamira* district of *Nyanza Province*" (p. 66).

Economically they significantly contribute to food production because their major activity is agriculture. LeVine et al. (1996) observe that "one way which *Gusii* differed from their neighbors was in their greater reliance on agriculture less dependence

on cattle for substance (p. 59). Additionally, Varnum (1971) affirms, “The *Gusii* are essentially an agricultural people who are fortunate to live in one of the more mild climated, fertile areas of Kenya” (pp. 242-48).

Cultural Political, Judicial, and Religious Systems

According to the *Abagusii* people, there was an established political, judicial, and religious system in that community. In addition, the cultural judicial was administered by highly esteemed elders in the community. Hence, Akama and Ondimu (2000) claims that:

Cultural judicial, represents the traditional forms of justice of which ancestral spirits were invoked in cases of arbitration. This form of justice is based on selection respected clan- elder who are deemed to be wise and impartial to arbitrate clan-based disputes with emphasis on customary law. It is useful as it minimizes the number of regal cases in the civil courts. (p. 72)

Besides that, it was held that some of cultural sites were greatly associated with the *Abagusii* worship practices. For instance, Bogonko (as cited in Akama and Ondimu, 2000), suggests that:

Religious and/historic nature-based cultural site is associated with *Abagusii* religious beliefs and historic heritage. The factor represents a rockshelter to the Northern part of the *Abagusii* community area referred to as *Nyakomerere*, near *Nyaramba* market. Whenever, one visits the site there is a cultural practice of collecting firewood and throwing it into the rockshelter at the same time uttering’ *Nagotenyere*’ translated meaning ‘ Here is firewood, do not haunt me’ phrases to appease the spirits believed to dwelling inside the rockshelter. (p. 72)

Definition of Ancestral Worship

According to Mbiti (1991) ancestral worship is defined as “a means of renewing contact between people and God, or between people and the invisible world. African people are very much aware of the existence of the invisible world, which they real see

real part of the universe” (p. 60). Triebel (1980) defines ancestral worship as, “Living together with ancestors. That means the ancestors are here, they influence our lives, and we depend on them. Fear and hope are like two poles that characterize the dependence on the ancestors” (p. 189). On the other hand, cultural worship was a pertinent event to be observed in the *Abagusii* society if only they were to exist.

The *Abagusii* people seem to adhere to their cultural ancestral worship norms and practices which were different from other societies individually or communally. Mbiti (1969) affirms that:

In many and various ways, African peoples respond to their spiritual world of which they are sharply aware. This response generally takes on a form of worship which is eternalized in different acts and sayings. These acts may be formal or informal, regular or extempore, communal or individual, ritual or unceremonial, through word or deed. They may vary from one society to another, and from one area to another. (p. 58)

Many places in the *Abagusii* society were identified with their cultural worship. One of the places was *Ngoro ya Mwaga* which is associated with *Abagusii* ancestral worship. In fact, the community holds *Ngoro ya Mwaga* as one of the places in which ancestral and supernatural spirits are believed to dwell.

Akama and Ondimu (2000) claims that:

The second most predominate factor, religious/ nature- based cultural heritage, is *Ngoro ya Mwaga* which is associated with *Gusii* ancestral and supernatural worship....Whenever one passes a long or visits *Ngoro ya Mwaga* he/ she has to collect fire wood and throw them inside the hole, at the same time uttering “standardized” words aimed at appeasing the spirits. One is also required to tie a knot of the grass in the surroundings of the hole or else the spirits will haunt him or her. People who are the victims of these spirits perform sacrifice on the site. The fire wood is believed to serve as sacrificial tool to the spirits, as they are believed to have human needs such as feeding and warming themselves. (pp. 71-73)

Engoro (god) of the *Abagusii* Community

According to Johnson Agoki, a senior retired pastor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church who currently resides in Michigan, USA, and whom I interviewed in person on June 11, 2010 commented, “As any other tribe in Kenya, the *Abagusii* people also practiced a cultural ancestral worship in different ways, for different reasons, and at different occasions.” He mentioned that the worship of the ancestral spirits in the *Abagusii* community was one of the kinds of worship that has been practiced before the western or Christian type of worship was introduced. He pointed out that the “*Abagusii* god was known as *Engoro* or *ebirecha*” (ancestral spirits).

Hence, Were and Nyamweya (as cited in Ontita, 2007), assert that:

In terms of religion, *Abagusii* believed in the supreme entity, *Engoro*, who guided and assisted them, especially in their migrations, saving them from their enemies and calamities. *Engoro* was original progenitor and source of prosperity and life who sent rain or drought, plenty or famine, health or disease, peace or war. In this sense, *Engoro* was all powerful and ever present everywhere, but they also attributed to him purity, impartiality, love and generosity. (p. 22)

Thus, Ochieng (as cited in Ogechi and Ruto, 2002), argues, “For the *Abagusii* the hand of *Engoro* was always present to ensure to the observance of the horizontal relationships. Unpleasant behavior such as inter-clan homicide, adultery, incest, or such related wrongs could invite a penalty from intermediary spirits” (p. 71).

It was generally believed among the *Abagusii* people that their lives or daily activities were greatly influenced and controlled by their dead ancestors. Moreover, Triebel (1980) claims that:

Only the ancestors can guarantee that life will continue that the stream of life cannot be interrupted. Therefore the relationship with ancestors is very important. Without the ancestors there is no life. Without the ancestors I would not exist; I would be nothing. Therefore, the dead are part of the family. Indeed, they are the foundation, the reason for our being. Only in our relation to them will I be able to understand the

present time. The relationship with the ancestors therefore influences the thinking, the life, and the behavior of the living. (p. 189)

In other words, unless the '*ebirecha*' or (the ancestral spirits) was continuously appeased or his demands were attended to, the chances were that the living people would experience much trouble or a calamity or even death. In addition, Ochieng (1974), comments that:

Unpleasant behavior such as inter-clan homicide, adultery, incest or such a related wrong could invite a penalty from intermediary spirits. The spirit could kill the member's home stead through disease, make them insane, sterile and even cause them to bring children with impairments. (p. 71)

The Reasons for Worship

In case a family member developed a unique disease-like madness, and especially given that in their genealogical line or history nothing has been witnessed as such, then obviously the *Abagusii* people could turn to the ancestors for the solution. Mbiti (1991) believes that

When people face sickness and misfortune in the family, the cause may be attributed to the living dead, unless magic or sorcery and witchcraft are held responsible. In this case, the spirits serve as an explanation of what has caused things to go wrong. (p. 78)

Ogembo (2001) suggests, "Other afflictions like temporary insanity or sudden hemorrhage come about because of spiritual obligation to the spirits of one's departed elders (*ebirecha*) in one's lineage" (p. 16).

Another reason was that if the conduct of the living was not according to their demands, as a result the ancestors were angered or provoked. Obviously, unless they were appeased the consequences would be serious. Albrecht, (as cited in Ogechi and Ruto, 2002) argues that:

Ancestors' anger is seen as being provoked by the living relatives either by not behaving properly while the person was not a live (For instance, for not proving for aging relative) or by not nourishing the relationship after death through proper offering and rituals. The belief in the retributive power of the ancestors/God to the present and the future generation is strong. Subsequently, when a phenomenon such as disability occurs, there has to be a reason. That is, the impairment, which anyone is susceptible to, is a sign that, the ancestors and/ creator are/ is not happy. It is therefore crucial to establish the reason, and pacify the creator and/or the ancestors, rather than focus on the disabled person. (p. 70)

Also, another major reason for worship was when the family experienced regular deaths of her members for unknown reasons or causes. It was also assumed that their ancestors were calling or inviting some members of the family whom they loved most to join them, or it was a way for the ancestors to express their anger towards the misconduct in the society.

Besides that, if it happened that a thunderbolt had stricken and killed a person, cattle, goats, lambs, destroyed houses, the presence of the drought, insect pests, and destructive floods, it was held that this was super natural events that can only be understood and interpreted by the ancestors. More so, no one could safely take the dead body without encountering the second thunderbolt unless *ogokorerana* (reconciliation) was made between the ancestors and the living. In short, a sacrifice was offered as an act of worship. Moreover, Mbiti (1991) believes, "In African society life is closely related with blood. When blood is shed in making a sacrifice, it means that human or animal life is being given back to God who is in fact the ultimate source of all life" (p. 63).

Agoki commented, "If someone encountered a certain bird known as *embuga bobe* or *enyakweumia* the (owl), generally it was a communal belief that the bird was a sign of unexpected evil or something bad will sooner or later take place. In the *Abagusii* community this bird was counted as a bad omen especially, if it stepped and sung on the

top of someone's house...either someone will die or a natural calamity will befall that particular family or the surrounding community as an expression of the ancestral feelings or anger.”

Mbiti (1991) claims, “In many parts of Africa, the sound of the owl is a symbol of a bad omen or death” (p. 25). In addition, Kosomo (2010) affirms, “Also an innocent bird like owl coming to sing near your home is an indication somebody of your family will meet death” (p. 025). More so, if someone willingly or unintentionally, commits suicide or kills someone, it was held that obviously the ancestors had to be offended. Hence, Kosomo (2010) claims that:

Any bad experience such as killing or pouring of Kin's blood in a conflict demanded a sacrifice to propitiate the angry ancestors; otherwise a calamity would befall the wrong doer. When the ancestors are unhappy about the attitude of their descendants, they make this known and employ painful means against those who misbehave. (p. 025)

In case of a tribal conflict it was necessary to consult the ancestors for either victory or reconciliation purposes. It was held that any innocent blood shed meaninglessly would anger the ancestors and they would administer justice to whoever was involved or the clan that he belongs to. Thus, Shenk (as cited in Kosomo, 2010) observes that:

In case of the conflict among the *Abagusii*, the covenant of peace between them and their antagonists entailed the pouring of libation by the elders of both sides. This happened after a prolonged conflict between two groups. Sacrifice of the white goat, a bull and a black cock was made. The blood of the sacrificial animal was allowed to spill into the earth. The flesh of the animal was eaten and later a ceremonial beer was drunk from the same calabash by both sides. The pouring of the libations and the blood was a way of placating the aggrieved ancestors so that they may accept the covenant. (026)

In addition, if it happens that either intentionally or unintentionally one was involved in someone's death publicly or privately, it was held that the spirit of the deceased will haunt the killer all throughout his or her life.

Intermediaries

According to Agoki, the cultural worship was not officiated by any other ordinary person in the community other than by a special agent known as *omoragori* or a diviner, because of the sensitivity of their god *Engoro*. More so, he had the ability to communicate with the spirits of our ancestors. He mentioned that most of the worship leaders or agents attained this position after they had experienced problems with their ancestors or directly called through the dreams to serve in this sacred ministry. More so, Mbiti (1991) suggests that:

People feel themselves to be very small in the sight of God, In approaching him they sometimes need the help of sometimes else, just as in social life it is often the custom to approach someone of a high status through someone else. For that reason, some African peoples make use of helpers in approaching God although they also approach him directly. These helpers may be called intermediaries. Some are human beings, while others are spiritual beings. The human beings include priests, kings, medicine men, seers oracles, diviners and rainmakers and ritual elders. These are the ones who conduct acts of worship, whether formal or informal, and attend the needs of their community. People go to them and tell them their needs, and it is then their duty to approach God through prayer, sacrifice offering and the interpretation of visions or dreams...The intermediaries are a link between God and creator and human beings. (p. 68)

Additionally, it was the responsibility of the intermediaries or religious leaders to ensure that the relationship between the ancestors was sound and health through offering of sacrifices. Moreover, Kosomo (2010) asserts, "Religious leaders ensured that peace existed between the visible and the invisible world. This was done by offering sacrifices

and pouring liberation to the ancestors. Peace was restored through prayers, sacrifices and offerings and solemn oaths” (p. 025).

Instruments of Worship

Different kinds of instruments were used in the ancestral worship. More so, they were collected from various places, especially from the rivers, lakes, or from other tribe’s repertoire. Even though, they were quite uncommon from those being used in the community regularly. And some of them were *ebirandi or* (cultural calabashes) and were well decorated with tiny white, red, and blue devices known as *chisonoi* or (beads). Mbiti (1991) asserts, “Often African art expresses religious ideas. We find it on wood, stools, Calabashes, stones sticks, pots, handicrafts domestic animals, and human bodies. It is also expressed in the form of masks and carvings on wood, ivory and stone. There are many kinds of symbols” (p. 24).

In the Calabashes were inserted the small pieces of stones known as *chinsembe*. Mostly, they would be of different colors and sizes. Into both hands of *omoragori* or a diviner were inserted particular rings called *chibangiri*. These rings could increase depending on what level of experience one has attained in leading people to worship and their problems solved. Actually, as a result of the uncommonness or strangeness of these instruments at the scene or place of worship, reverence and awe were commanded from the worshipers. More so, each worshiper believed that he or she is the presence of their *Engoro* (god).

The local cultural drinks were pertinent in the ancestral worship among the *Abagusii* people. Both *changaa* and *busaa* are the common traditional beer or alcoholic beverages especially used during the cultural religious services or worship since time

immemorial. Hence, Garine and Garine (2001) observe, “Traditional beer enables people to identify themselves as members of the *Abagusii* community. They say that busaa is the drink of their ancestors; it should be therefore, be drunk when the people are giving sacrifices to their ancestors” (p. 209).

Actual Worship

According to Agoki, whenever the worshiper approached the intermediary or *omoragori*, he or she *has* to bring some cultural offering or gifts such like *engoko* or hen as opposite to the current worshipers who exchange the service with the Kenya shillings. Outside the intermediary’s house was small traditional seats known as *ebiteni* for one to sit before the service starts. They were located strategically such that the unexpected worshipers might not interrupt someone’s worship service without his or her consent.

Immediately, one was ushered in the *omoragori*’s or diviner’s house; she or he was made to seat down on a cultural worship mat known as *egesero* according to *Agoki*. Then the intermediary made some inquiry about the worshiper’s problems before the proceedings began. Moreover, Smelser and Erikson (1980) comment that:

The diviner diagnosis the specific spiritual urgent to which the destructive intent can be attributed, invoking non afflictive omens (such as seeing a bird with a white chest, a rat with its tail excised, or snakes wrapped round around one another) to establish a coherent account of how the spiritual relationship was ruptured... (p. 96)

Then diviner or the intermediaries would spread *chinsembe* or the small stones on a special cultural worship mat known as *egesero* as they run in different directions. After that the diviner would then give the meaning or an interpretation in regard to the direction, closeness or distance between the small stones or *chinsembe* as inspired by *ebirecha* the *Abagusii* deity. The diviner might say that it is your grand mum who needs

to live with you or *koretwa nyomba*. So, she needs you to attend to that immediately by offering a white she-goat sacrifice. More so, it might be that the dead husband or wife is against you or *obarareire bobo*. So, he needs to be appeased through a sacrifice of a black he-goat bought from a particular market from other tribes surrounding them.

However, the tribes surrounded the *Abagusii* community are the *Luo*, *Kipsigis* and *Maasai* according to UNNESCO in Webb and Kembo-Sure 2000(as cited in Ogechi and Ruto, 2002). From the *Kalenjins* goats were imported whereas, from the *Luo* tribe fish and water from the lake were imported for sacrifice giving. During the offering or sacrifice, most women would be required to offer a she-goat whereas, men would offer the he-goat. Additionally, Akama and Ondimu (2000) confirm, “A he goat was also required for sacrifice with sanctions against adultery” (p. 73).

Circumstantial Worship

According to elder *Nyabera* whom I interviewed on 06-12-2010, there are some kinds of worship that were conducted in different places and in different forms for different reasons compelled by the circumstances. Mbiti (1991) affirms some ceremonies of worship involve moving from one place to another (p. 67). For instance, *Nyabera* mentioned that according to the *Abagusii* community, when a child was born, it was first committed to the *Engoro*. Earlier in the morning outside the house the mother and her baby would face the sun and say *rioba nderere* or, “The Sun take care of my child.” According to *Nyabera*, the mother was supposed to spill some milk directly from her breasts towards the Sun. And by doing so, it was held that the Sun through *engoro* would take care and protect the child from any kind of evil or diseases.

Were and Nyamweya (as cited in Ontita, 2007) confirm, “When the child is born, the Sun was beseeched to take care of it saying *rioba nderere*, and prayers were directed to engoro through the sun” (p. 22). In addition, *Nyabera* asserted that in the morning the *Abagusii* requested the sun to come along with good news and set with bad omen. So, in this society, each event dictated the type of worship, where to be conducted, how, and when it was appropriate.

Elder Nyabera also explained another form of worship which was observed as result of a natural calamity. For instance, he said that as result of severe and threatening drought facing the *Abagusii* people they would assemble at an open ground and the worship known as *ribina*. Both *Obokano* (Bowl lyle) and *Chikonu* (drums) were being used in this kind of worship. All women and men would wear special clothes or dresses known as *chingobo* or *ebisena* for that particular worship. All women were involved in dancing and singing to appease the ancestors through the utterance of the following words *twagosabire embura etwe* or we plead with you that the rain might fall. And this kind worship began in the morning and lasted the whole day.

Moreover, Mbiti (1991) admits that:

When there was a communal act of worship in which prayers are offered, or sacrifices and offerings are made this is often an occasion for singing and dancing. Africans enjoy celebrating life. Therefore when people meet together for public worship they like to sing, dance, and clap their hands and express their rejoicing. (p. 67)

However, worship service was led by *abanyibi* or rain makers. They would determine when it was appropriate to worship at an open ground after the careful study of the weather. They were experts in tracing the movement of the clouds which shows the possibility of the fall of rain.

Were and Nyamweya (as cited in Ontita, 2007) point out, “Another aspect of *Abagusii* religion related to supernatural ancestor spirits which were regarded as immortal beings that were always in touch with the living. They were agents of *engoro* who acted on the behalf of the Supreme Being. There were also *ababani* (prophets), *abanyibi* (rainmakers) *abanyamesira* (medicine men), and *abaragori* (diviners) who mediated in less subtle with *engoro*” (p. 23).

In addition, these rainmakers were so feared in the *Abagusii* community, because it was generally held that they were working on behalf of *engoro*. And in case they were provoked, they could express their anger towards the community and the rain could not fall. And as a result the existence of the *Abagusii* community could be threatened.

Foreigners at Worship

Sometimes it happened that visitors would visit during the offering of the sacrifice. According to elder Nyabera, none of the foreigners was allowed to participate in worship unless he or she was a close relative. Even though, the relatives would only participate by taking or touching a small portion of the sacrifice offered. And this occasion was known as *ogotuna*. In other words, it is just a mere touch or partial involvement. Furthermore, he explained that the visitors were at liberty not to participate in this type of worship.

Finally, the drinking of traditional bear *ebusaa* or *echanga*, the white bitter water-like drink was also administered in that kind of worship. Garine and Garine (2001) affirm, “The drink of their ancestors should be drunk when people are giving sacrifices to their ancestors” (p. 210). In short, the *Abagusii* people worshipped culturally, differently,

for different reasons, and in different places before the Christian worship style was introduced in the 20th century.

Critical Contextualization

Introduction

Contextualization is an important process in communicating a message more clearly in a given context or culture. According to Rogers (2003), contextualization means “telling the authentic story of Jesus in a way that will be clear and understandable, culturally appropriate and accessible to the people of a given culture” (p. 58).

Worship

What is Worship

Many a time worshipers are inclined to think that worship mainly pertains to their regular practices in particular designed places; rather, the opposite is true. According to Berkley (1992), worship is an encounter with God in His holy character, transcending the dynamics of ordinary meetings, whether at the Church building, or not...And we must also recognize that such encounter may very well be painful, entailing a call to sacrifice, self-examination, repentance, and amendment of life (p. 139).

Whereas in cultural worship, it is a means of renewing contact between people and God, or between people and the invisible world. African people are very much aware of the existence of the invisible world, which they see as a part of the universe (Mbiti, 1991). Additionally, Triebel (1980) states that ancestral worship is “living together with ancestors. That means the ancestors are here, they influence our lives, and we depend on

them. Fear and hope are like two poles that characterize the dependence on the ancestors” (p. 189).

When you compare the two definitions you will find that there are some similarities. One, in both types of worship there is an encounter, contact, or a meeting between the human beings and the supernatural beings. In other words, worship is not just a mere imagination or myth but rather an activity taking place between the finite and the infinite beings. In both Christian and cultural worship, God’s transcendence is acknowledged. On the other hand, God is in control of the human lives. He determines and influences their lives either positively or negatively. More so, it is clear in both definitions that the deities cannot be confined in a specific or particular place. They transcendences all issues pertains to nature. So, worship is the relationship between the deities in their transcendental character and the finite human beings.

Liesch (2001) has a different experience in regard to worship. He claims, “Worship is to seek God with one’s whole heart , to inquire (darash), to come and enter (bo), to approach (nagash), to draw near (qarab), and to offer a sacrifice” (p. 152).

If you could make a comparison between the Christian and cultural worship, you will note that there is a similarity. In both worship, it is implied as an activity, which creates an environment in which relationship with God is fully realized. For instance, culturally worship is defined as living together with the ancestors. In other words, worship cannot exist or be realized without close intimacy between the deities and the human beings. More so, this intimacy cannot be formed unless there exists a good relationship. In addition, he attributes worship with service or work besides being visual, gestural, and attitudinal (p. 153). In other words, worship must affect our attitudes, and it

demands service. Therefore, worship is the cultivated intimacy between us as finite human beings and God in his transcendental nature.

Sacrifices and Commitment Involved in Worship

Worship is not an event or meeting without a cost, i.e., it takes your time, and it needs your total royalty and obedience, besides full participation. In both worship, sacrifices are involved. Goats, lambs, and cattle are some of the animals offered to the super natural beings. Sometimes the deities express anger and administer a punishment or pronounce blessings. Also, both definitions indicate that whereas, the supernatural beings transcendences don't change, but with human beings, there must be a change or transformation. Whereas, the Christian God is approached in his holy character, the Cultural God also is worshiped in his unholy state. In short, worship is an event in which you must meet a cost in order to realize its spiritual intended purpose. Basically, that is what God did when He gave his Son a sacrifice, so in turn we might give ourselves unto Him.

Worship Can Be Observed Anywhere

Worship is an activity that cannot be observed only in buildings, but can happen anywhere as long it focuses on God's worthiness. On the other hand, worship is experienced wherever and whenever the presence of God is not only felt, but also acknowledged by his creatures may it be on the mountains, fields, or in buildings (Berkley, 1992).

Likewise, in the cultural worship when the people were seriously affected by the drought they worshiped on the mountain as God responded to their needs. Also, when a

new baby was born, the dedication was done outside their house by its own mother facing the Sun in a particular morning. In both worship, sacrifices are involved, especially goats, lambs, and cattle, offered to the super natural beings. In short, worship is not only what we practice in our churches on Sabbath, but can be observed anywhere as long we meet, encounter, communicate, or dialogue with God.

Triune is the Locus of Worship

It is believed that God, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost, are the ultimate and legitimate focus of our worship. Johnson et al. (2005) submits,

First, our worship must be God centered not man centered... If we are to come to his special presence with the service of our worship, if we are to fasten attention on him, to adore and praise him, and to commune with him, then worship must be God centered. (p. 60)

In addition, he believes that “the word of God suggests that people will be saved as we focus on God in our worship” (p. 61).

According to Hoon (1980), the core of worship is God, acting to give his life to man and to bring man to partake of that life (p. 137). Whereas, Lee believes, “The Johannine Jesus is the locus of worship, the ‘sacred site’ whose flesh by radiating glory makes possible genuine worship of the father” (pp. 277-297). Additionally, Augustine (as cited in Core, 2007) argues that:

The Spirit is not certainly a creature, for worship is offered unto him by all the saints; as the Apostle [Paul] says, we are the circumcision, serving the Spirit {pneumatic} of God’, where the Greek word *latreuontes* means ‘worshiping’... If the members of Christ’ are the ‘temple of the Holy Spirit’, the Holy Spirit is not a creature.... We must owe him the service which is due to God alone, which in Greek is called *latreia*. (p. 72).

In this aspect, there is a difference between the Christian and the cultural worship locus. God the father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the true locus in the Christian

worship as opposite to the cultural worship locus *Engoro* or *Ebirecha*. Fundamentally, the Christian focus claims to come from heaven, whereas the cultural locus (*Engoro*) is the spirit of the dead ancestors. The Christian object argues that he has no origin or beginning, nor an end, and more so, there is no one equal unto him, but with the cultural worship any beloved dead adult person finally is transformed into an *Ebirecha* (ancestral spirit). In other words, the cultural worship locus is death human beings.

It is illogical to think that if I die, I will turn out to be a god irrespective of how much the people love me, as it is being held in the cultural worship. In conclusion, our worship should be directed to the God who is without the beginning or the end or changes his transcendence depending on circumstances. Besides that, He has revealed himself through his Son by the Spirit in their supernatural nature unto the human beings so that we may adore them in trinity.

Authentic Worship Addresses a Total Person

Unfortunately, many of the worshipers are made to believe that worship is an art in which only our intellectual part is being engaged. Wiersbe (2000) suggests that worship is much more than that. He argues:

Worship involves both attitudes (awe, reverence, respect) and actions (bowing down, praising, and serving). It is both a subjective experience and an objective activity. Worship is not unexpressed feeling, nor is it an empty formality. True worship is balanced and involves the mind, the emotions, and the will. It must be intelligent; it must reach deep within and be motivated by love; and it must lead to obedient actions that glorify God. (pp. 20-21)

On the other hand, he states that authentic worship goes beyond intellect. It is an event in which one can express himself emotionally. It is a service or reverence offered to

God by a total being. Actually, worship is nothing but absolute sacrifice of all that we are to all that God is and has done for us in his Son on the cross.

Biblical worship must address a total person, not only our minds. It also involves physical expression and touches the senses. Thus, the text in Isaiah 6 involves the four senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, and touching (Doukhan (2003). In fact, true worship is also presented as a holistic activity. Authentic worship addresses the total person. It seems that both Doukhan and Wisebe believe that unless worship involves and touches all the five human senses, it will be lacking.

But when you compare both views with the cultural worship in regard to what extent a worshiper was involved in worship, you will realize that there is some similarity. For instance, in the cultural worship, when a family worshiped through the giving of a sacrifice and one of the members was absent, and then a portion of sacrificial meat known as *ekengwanso gia ogotuna* was preserved for the absentee to just touch. Symbolically he was reckoned fully involved or engaged as a person. In short, in both culture, the importance of involving a total person is fully observed. To conclude, worship is realized per se, when we are involved both emotionally and intellectually in worshipping the God who gave a sacrifice for us so that we might participate fully in adoring Him (John 3:16).

Worship is Communication

Worship essentially, is a communication between the creator and his creatures.

Torrance (as cited in Anderson, 2000) suggests that:

Worship is essentially a dialogical activity in which we stand over against God even when we draw near to Him, distinguishing His transcendent nature from ourselves, while relating ourselves appropriately to His holiness and majesty and responding

thankfully to the mercy He extends towards us by meeting us and entering with dialogue with us through his word and transcendent God creates space for 'transcendence' over against Him the rational continuity in which reciprocity and communion can take place. (p. 128)

Doubtlessly, dialogue is an important aspect if only one could experience real worship. Even though in both types of worship dialogue is done differently and through different means. In the Christian worship, God communicates through the Holy Spirit unto his people whereas, in the cultural worship, *Engoro* (god) makes formal dialogue through the spirits of the dead ancestors or the intermediaries.

More so, in the Christian worship anybody has access to communicate with God through the study of the word as opposite to the cultural worship. Since, only the special agents understand the ancestral spirits language or communication, it is impossible to worship culturally without a mediator. Therefore, it is recommendable that since we have a free access to dialogue or communicate with God of heaven through his inspired word, it important to do so.

Worship as Result of God's Action

Whereas, Torrance acknowledges that worship is dialogical, Ngien (2007) believes, "Worship then, is a performative action in which God is both subjective and object. As subject, God initiates the encounter, by graciously revealing himself and his will so as to draw us unto communion with him; as the object, he is the recipient of our praise" (p. 3). On the other hand, worship is not an activity or art which can begin from anyone else apart from God. More so, the basis of worship originates from what God did for us in his Son. To put it in another way, worship springs from God and is towards him alone, not only because of his redemptive act, but because He is the object of worship.

Additionally, Webber (2004) supports Ngien's idea. He points out clearly, "Worship is not about me, it is about Gods' might deeds of salvation, those deeds by which God reclaims the whole world for his glory" (p. vii). Basically, worship is centered in redemption. In other words, true worship is based on Gods deeds which in turn cause the believers to ascribe glory unto the might God. So whenever true worship is observed, glory is attributed to God. So, it is unbiblical when our worship service does not specifically, declare glory to God because of His might deeds. In other words, worship is not more about a style but how God is lifted up because of the redemption of the lost human kind.

Also, Harper and Metzger (2009) seem to support strongly Webber's sentiments. From their point of view, "Worship is not about search for meaning or experience, but an acknowledgement that meaning and salvation are found in God's incomparable act of redemption in Christ" (p. 34).

When you compare the three definitions with cultural worship, you find that there are some similarities. First, in regard to the Christian worship, the reason as to why we worship God is because of what He did in his Son for the human race. However, in the cultural worship, the reason for worship is that the ancestors claim to be the progenitors of our lives. Besides that, worship is practiced not because of redemption, but because the ancestors are the source of life. In other words, in the cultural worship there is nothing like redemption. In brief, until we understand the cause of our redemption, our worship will not be only a mere social gathering, but much more it will be un-theological. In conclusion, the Christian God is both the progenitor of life and redeemer who deserves our worship as opposite to *Engoro* (god) who will never redeem anyone.

Worship is a Human Response to God's Deeds

Worship is not a one sided phenomena. According to Hustad (1998), worship is “a full self-revelation of God and a full response to God by the human person-in the heart but also with our knowing faculties, which are centered in the brain” (p. 59). God had no other more appropriate way to reveal himself than through the death of his Son unto the human race. Hence, as a result of that great redemptive act, we respond by ascribing glory unto God. To put it in another way, worship from a godly point of view means to express himself to the lost man and from man's point of view, worship is to adore and give God praise because of what he is and what he has done for us.

Doukhan (2003) correctly states that “worship is not something we do for ourselves. Worship is meant to be done for God and to God. It is a God centered activity, entirely focused on Him (Ps 9:1-2)... It is partnership experience: On one hand is God, who both initiates and call for worship. On the other is the worshiper, who responds to this call” (p. 24). Unless there is a response, worship will not serve its original purpose of giving God honor and glory.

Worship fundamentally cannot survive outside God's relationship with his creatures because there must be a response. Moreover, Wainwright (1980) correctly defines worship as:

A relationship between creature and creator. Outside this relationship, humanity would cease to be. God himself transcends his creation and therefore, also transcends this relationship. The proper relationship between creature and creator is, in Christian eyes, the relationship of worship. (p. 16)

Also, in this aspect, there is a similarity between the Christian worship and cultural worship. In both worship, a response is demanded for the communication to be complete. In both worship a response is given in different ways. In Christian worship the

response comes out of honest and faithful believers through prayers, reading of the word and more through offerings. Similarly, in the cultural worship the response was done through offerings of sacrifices like fire, woods, and animals.

On the other hand, none will claim to be a worshiper if he does not maintain the relationship, contact, or respond through his faculties to his deity as a result of what He has done for him. In a true worship there must be partisanship. Both deities and human beings must play their role for worship to be meaningful. Worship is to acknowledge or praise to God because of what He is. Blackaby and King (1998) assert, “To worship is to reverence and honor God, to acknowledge Him as worthy of your praise” (p. 12). Consequently, because God has revealed himself unto us, we need to respond with all our soul, mind, heart, and strength to what did for us on the cross.

Worship is Missional

As matter of fact, worship proceeds from redemption act and forms throughout history a missional community. Dawn (1999) believes “that worship form the congregation to be a genuine, inclusive Christian community linked to all God’s people throughout time and space in worship, doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayers, signs and wonders, communal, care band social involved (Acts 2:42-47)” (pp. 139-152).

When you make a comparison between the two practices of worship, you find that they are not similar. It is a result of worship that the early church became missional. But culturally, worship is absolutely personal. Sometimes a close relative can be invited to a worship service. But most of the worshipers visit the intermediary secretly and alone unless the worship was communally arranged, you are not allowed to join them. In short,

we need to join the worship which is not only missional and inclusive but also in which the object is God of heaven. God of heaven is not only personal and communal but also he has invited all people to worship.

Whereas, there is a clear distinction between the indigenous worship and New Life Seventh day Adventist Church manner of worship none can dispute the fact that some of the said church members were formerly worshipping *Engoro* (god) of the *Abagusii*. Even though, it is assumed that after conversion they were convicted to worship the eternal and living God. So far, the New Life SDA Church, does not only lead worshipers from tribal worship to the universal worship freely and meaningfully, but also each member has an access directly through the reading of the scripture and prayer as opposed to the indigenous model worship where by each worshipers must go through specific intermediaries.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEXTUALIZING THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN KENYA

Traditional Seventh-day Adventist Worship in Kenya

Kenya is one of the East African countries in which various Christian missionaries from European countries were involved in introducing Christian worship. Besides other religious organizations, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was first introduced in Kenya in 1906 by a Canadian missionary. According to the SDA Encyclopedia (1976):

The first SDA missionary to Kenya was Canadian-born A. A. Carscallen, who arrived from Britain in 1906. With assistance of E. C. Enns, a German missionary from Pare in Tanganyika, he chose as the site for the first mission station a five-acre plot at Gendia Hill, about two miles inland from Kendu Bay of Lake Victoria. This site was among the Luo people in what is now South Nyanza. (p. 731)

Immediately after the establishment of the mission, the missionaries strategized about how to spread the gospel to the neighboring tribes in Kenya after establishing the Adventist presence by receiving first new converts. Then, “From *Gendia* the work spread to *Gusii* land after the first ten *Luo* believers were baptized. Yakobo Olwa was among those who were baptized and who assisted the missionaries to open a new station at *Nyanchwa in Kisii*” (SDA Encyclopedia 1976, p. 861).

Challenges that Faced Adventism in *Gusii*

In 1907, a new mission station was opened at *Nyanchwa* by I. R. Evanson.

However, the missionaries were received with a lot of hostility by the locals. Some of the reasons attributed to that kind of treatment were a result of the invasion of the *Abagusii* land by the British colonists. More so, Christianity was regarded as a foreign culture imposed on the natives by the white people. Also, Mr. Olwa, who was in the company of the missionaries, came from a community which often experienced wars with the *Abagusii* people as the result of cattle rustling (Nyaundi, 1997).

The environmental resistance towards the missionaries posed crucial challenges towards the evangelization of the *Abagusii* community. Nyaundi (1997) claims, “With these facts taken into consideration about the *Abagusii*, anybody would have had a fairly hard time to win converts. At the time the white man was increasingly being seen as a symbol of suffering and possible death. Anything which would be associated with *Mzungu* (white man) was readily and involuntarily repudiated among a majority of *Abagusii*” (p. 36).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church Encyclopedia affirms that “the work was so difficult that no real impact had been made by the time World War 1 closed the station” (p. 861). In other words, the spread of Christian worship in *Gusii* was received with a lot of negativity as a result of the negative impression which had been created immediately when the White man invaded and had begun controlling the locals, generating hatred among them.

New Approach and Purpose

The missionaries realized that the *Abagusii* were strongly tied to their culture and lifestyle and it was not easy to convert them. So, a new approach was necessary.

A. Beavon, the first full time missionary, observed that it was necessary to have a different approach in order to achieve their goal of spreading the gospel in such a complicated culture. Nyaundi (1997) claims, “He realized that it was futile to hurry the people into mission-following. It took from 1912, when the station was opened until 1922 before the mission could baptize anybody” (p. 43). It was evident that change is always resisted, although eventually adopted.

Moreover, the missionaries started schools as a new approach to entering the strongly cultured society of *Abagusii*. Carscaren, as cited in Nyaundi (1997) submitted, “We have just started schools, and we are planning to open two more in a short time in connection with the *Gendia* mission. . . . We also hope it may be possible to begin work for the *Kisii* people by starting out schools among them.” More so, “Missions used this strategy of offering knowledge in order to capture their attention” (pp. 26-27).

The mission schools were established with a single purpose or goal. Schlehuber (as cited in Nyaundi, 1997) argues that “the purpose of the mission school system was to educate and ‘civilize’ the converts. After selecting the students to the best of our ability, one of the first steps in African education is to elevate the standard of living” (p. 106). In those schools, reading and writing, besides evangelism, were taught. Prayers and worship were also included.

Baptismal Candidates

The terms and conditions of becoming a Seventh-day Adventist member through baptism were set. But not many were ready to part with their polygamist practices. It was an honor to practice such things in the *Abagusii* society. Moreover, from the native's perspective, it was a strategy for the white men to destroy their large families and weaken their security. Campell (as cited in Nyaundi, 1997) argues:

The workers set a high standard for church membership, feeling that it is better to have a sifting come before admission to the church rather than afterwards. Candidates are not admitted to the baptismal unless they have reduced the number of their wives to one, have given proof to their industry and pay tithe Before baptism, they must show clear evidence of a change of heart and be able to quote at least two texts in support of the essential doctrines. (p. 107)

This describes how hard it was for one to attain church membership during the planting of the SDA Church in *Gusii*.

In addition, W. T. Bartlet (as cited in Nyaundi, 1997), the then-director of Adventist work in Kenya claimed, "We do not consider candidates for baptism unless they bring a record of Christian character and consistent living for months or years. They must have attended school, they must have shown themselves industrious, they must be paying tithe, they must have parted with their heathen customs, and be ready for baptism before we receive them for this ordinance" (pp. 107-108). Definitely, the terms of becoming an Adventist were directly conflicting with the *Abagusii* culture and greatly contributed to evangelization of the gospel besides enhancing the hostility between the white man and the natives.

Converts and Missionary Villages

In order to keep the converts from evils and give easier spiritual assistance, the missionaries encouraged them to build their new mission villages near their school. Howel (as cited in Nyaundi, 1997) states, “What is called ‘mission village’ is developed on or near the school land, where those seriously interested with school may settle with their families, or when single or in groups, building their own huts, raising their own stuffs....” (p. 95). In these villages, much of the Bible discussions were done after retirement from work. In addition, they were required to change from their traditional attires to clothes similar to those worn by the missionaries.

So, the believers were taught right from the onset of their conversion that they should maintain an atmosphere of total separation between themselves and non-believers, even if the latter were the former’s nearest of kin. According to Nyaundi (1997), the missionaries required the converts to wear black suits, which finally became the tradition among the Adventist pastors in the ministry. Men were also taught how to cut their hair short, besides shaving their beards. Female converts were discouraged from wearing *Ebitinge* (ankle bands), because they were part of the heathen culture (p. 116). In hygiene, the use of blood was equally forbidden.

Even though the approach which was used by the missionaries to make the new proselytes especially in the *Gusii* land, presented Adventism as practice with intent totally opposed to the natives cultural values. Nyaundi (1997) observes that:

When Adventism came, it sought to be different. . . . And so, converts were asked to forsake their traditional attire and change to clothes such as were worn by the missionaries. Converts readily accepted the change. But not their kinsmen. To the latter, the change was something near the borders of desecrating the tribal values. It was denial of one’s personal worth, respect, and manhood, to say the least. What was

even offensive to the spectating village folk, was the result of the converts' washing off the red ochre and fat. (p. 104)

It was quite unfortunate that the missionaries did not understand that a dress in some cultures identifies one's position and earns him or her credit. The *Abagusii* dressing was treated as an icon that revealed their identity apart from their moral values. For instance, after marriage, the bride and the groom in the *Abagusii* community changed their dress to imply that they had been promoted to another rank, and more so, were eligible to attend the elder's council.

The natives did not understand what the missionaries' dress meant or signified. Obviously, no one could like losing his or her values at the expense of a new culture. The fact that the missionaries were introducing Christian worship or practice did not warrant them denouncing others culture as a whole, because each culture contains both positive and negative forces. It is sad that the missionaries did not see anything good in the *Abagusii* culture. Nevertheless, God uses some cultures as tools to mold his people besides spreading the gospel.

Sabbath Worship

Normally, the work began Sunday and ended at noon on Friday as they prepared for the Sabbath worship. Wednesday prayer meetings were observed as part of spiritual nurture. On Sabbath day, programs were made available to enable the converts to worship in a holistic way. Nyaundi (1997) observes,

In the morning, a day begun after a drummer's call to the place of worship. At the place of worship, hymns were sung, a passage of scripture was read and the session ended with prayer. Morning worship was followed by a heavy breakfast which sustained the individual throughout the day until the evening meal which usually fell between 5 o'clock and 8 p.m. (p. 108)

The new converts used mainly the new translation of the book of Matthew and memorized various Bible sections for recitation during the worship meetings. Therefore, Bible recitals became a favorite part of worship to many (Nyaundi, 1997).

Current Seventh-day Adventist Traditional Worship

The current traditional worship is greatly influenced by the traditions laid down by the missionaries. According to Pastor Charles Kerosi, the steward department director of the *Nyamira* Conference with whom I communicated on October 15, 2010, the worship service begins at 8:30 a.m. on Sabbath with a song service until 9:00 a.m. Those who lead on Sabbath are required to wear suits and ties, or be dressed smartly if they are female. Mainly, *Ogotera kwa Nyasae* (Church hymnals) are used in this service, as they make use of pianos or keyboards, instead of the traditional music instruments such as *Obokano* (bowl lyre) or *Chikonu* (drums) which were identified with the heathen culture. However, he submits that the church or youth choir presents one song in addition to the congregational singing. Pastor Kerosi submitted that the contemporary style of worship is not encouraged because many of the local churches practice the traditional style of worship, especially in regard to the music. In addition, Pastor Agoki also commented that in those days of the missionaries, the converts were more committed to religious or worship matters more as opposite to what is happening today. He submitted that the church is so much influenced by politics besides adopting new styles of worship. And as a result, the church unity has disappeared and the true gospel diluted.

Afterwards, the key text from the quarterly is read and prayer is offered by one of the Sabbath School leaders. Then an anthem is presented by any church group, such as the women ministry, youth, or any other group, and the Sabbath School superintendent

disperses the congregation according to their age and status for the Bible study guide discussion. The Bible study guide discussion program ceases at 10:30 a.m. From 10:30 to 11:00 a.m., various Church departments do their announcements. At 11:00 a.m., the choir leader prepares the congregation for the divine as the minister comes to the podium. The introduction of those who will minister is made by one of the leaders who isn't a visitor. Immediately after, the key text is read as the congregation is requested to stand and sing a song selected from the *Ogotera kwa Nyasae* (Church hymnal). The pastoral prayer is offered by one designated, and the entire congregation responds with an amen at the end of the prayer session, as opposed to contemporary worship style.

Immediately after that, either the church choir or another group presents a song as the deacons collect the tithe and offering. Then, the preacher stands up to deliver the message. In this worship, according to Pastor Kerosi, mostly silence is observed as a sign of reverence to God. Applauding, congregational response, or any sort of hand clapping is not part of their worship practice. Emotional expression is always considered not only unChristian but also not according to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and practices. In short, throughout the sermon, mostly silence is maintained.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the minister might invite those willing to offer their lives to Jesus to either rise up their hands or come forward for special prayers. After this, the benediction is offered by the same minister or anyone appointed to do so. According to Pastor Kerosi, the sermon is expected to come to an end by 12:30 p.m. and the congregation is dispersed for lunch until 1:50 p.m.

According to Pastor Birai, a former pastor of the Central Kenya Conference whom I interviewed on June 16, 2011, although the program is supposed to come to the

end by 12:30, the traditional tendency is that it depends on how much the minister had prepared for the congregation. In other words, the time factor is not strictly adhered to in our traditional worship in Kenya. More often, especially given that the preaching is done by visitors and the sermon is more appealing then, it takes longer than the usual time.

The second program begins at 2:00 p.m. and goes until 3:00 p.m. Then various groups in the church present songs for an hour. Bible study is conducted between 3:00 p.m. and 4: 00 p.m. by one designated by the church. Not all church members attend the evening services even though they are so important for the spiritual growth of the church members. According to Pastor Birai, the Church elder always encourages the congregation to visit the fellow members who were not privileged to attend the worship service, and pray with them. In other words, the traditional Church is not only a caring Church, but also highly regards the spiritual welfare of its members.

Whereas, the traditional worship model has been observed for over a century now, it is also true that transformation is taking place in our worship services. This is as a result of not only exposure, but more so as a result of the research conducted on the true biblical model of worship. This implies that some of the practices which were discouraged in our indigenous model of worship but were established or proved to be theologically sound might be embraced by the new generation. Moreover, New Life SDA Church is the first church to embrace the new model of worship in the East African Union Mission as opposed to traditional model of worship. Hence, it is necessary to explore the ways and new features which have been embraced in the new worship style in the said church as opposed to the indigenous model of worship.

Worship at New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church

Nairobi New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church was established in 1987, along with her sister Church known as *Kaloleni* New Life SDA Church, as a result of the gospel campaign conducted by Dr. Calvin Rock, the former General Conference vice-president. However, the churches are distinctive in many ways, though both are located in the city of Nairobi. The Nairobi New Life SDA Church uses the English language as a medium of communication whereas the latter conducts her services in the national language *Kiswahili*. Besides that, the former embraced the contemporary style of worship as opposed to the latter.

According to Pastor Timothy Guto, the Nairobi Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor who I communicated with in person on December 18, 2010, as a result of the two styles of worship embraced by this church, it was necessary to have both of them accommodated in the worship program every Sabbath. In addition, the order of worship was adjusted and the worship service begins at 7:00 am as opposite to 8:30 am according to the program of worship for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya. He also mentioned that for the sake of the unity of the church, the church leaders were not ready to adopt two sessions of worship in its initial stages.

He submitted that the program begins at exactly 7:00 a.m. on Sabbath after prayer. Then, the contemporary style of worship begins with praise and worship songs led by the praise team. In this worship, they express themselves both emotionally and intelligently, besides clapping their hands as they worship. Those who feel spiritually comfortable with the contemporary worship style are encouraged join them and worship. Pastor Guto commented that a good number of the young generation besides the adults

like to join them to worship. They claim to experience spiritual satisfaction that they need. More so, this is the time when they share their testimonies and praise God.

Immediately after that, they join the rest for the Sabbath School program. Sabbath School begins at 9:30 a.m. with prayer by those who are scheduled to lead the program. Then one of those in charge of the program welcomes the regular members and also recognizes visitors as they are made to stand and introduce themselves and where they come from. Whereas the rest of congregation responds by uttering the word “amen,” the contemporary-style worshipers clap their hands as a sign of appreciation and welcome.

Mr. Mosomi, one of the staunch traditionalists in New Life SDA Church whom I communicated with in person on the Sabbath of December 18, 2010, expressed that the clapping of hands makes them feel unconformable in their worship service. In addition, he commented, besides the practice being spiritual perversion from the acceptable way of worship in the Adventist communities in Kenya, it was also a culture adopted from other faiths. However, Rachel, a student of *Kenyatta* University and a regular member of New Life SDA Church who also I talked to in person on the same Sabbath, claimed that worship becomes more meaningful to her when emotions, intelligence, and the clapping of hands are involved. She claimed that it is important for her to not only enjoy worship but also participate fully in celebrating God. She always gets bored when the worship is conducted in a traditional way.

After that, Pastor Guto observed that the scripture reading is made from our quarterly studies by one of the Sabbath school leaders and the church is invited to stand and sing the opening song. Then an invitation is made for a special song or number by an individual, the youth choir, or the praise team to sing. Finally, at 10:00 a.m. the Sabbath

School superintendent disperses the Sabbath School members to their various classes for the quarterly discussion. In case of visitors, one of the leaders is assigned to take care of them. The quarterly discussion teachers take care of Sabbath School offerings at their various classes.

At 10:45 a.m., the last prayer is made as the congregation gets into order. The church pastor or head elder immediately makes some announcements. In my own observation on the Sabbath when I attended, seemingly as result of the large population of this church, much time is consumed making announcements pertaining to either the Church development or reports about lost members and burial plans which involve the church or reports from various committees.

Immediately before the divine worship hour, the praise and worship team comes to the stage and sings a few choruses as the congregation joins them. In my observation, some of those who seem to be traditionalists remain in their seats when they are asked to stand and sing as an indication of their dissatisfaction and their discomfort with the choruses, as they are accompanied by the clapping of hands. Pastor Guto claimed that, according to the church calendar, there are special Sabbaths quarterly for each group to perform, besides blending them together every Sabbath.

A Call to Worship

As the worship hour approaches, the minister moves to the platform with his team. After silent prayer, the church chorister invites the church to stand and sing the doxology anthem as the preacher makes the invocation prayer. Immediately, the program leader welcomes the entire congregation. According to my observation on the Sabbath when I was there, the visitors are received in two ways, reflecting the two styles of

worship embraced by this church: The traditionalists respond by uttering the word “amen,” whereas the non-traditional worshipers clap their hands joyfully as a sign of appreciation and welcome.

The introduction of those who will minister unto the congregation follows as the scripture reading is done. A musical number is sung by the entire congregation specifically from the Church hymnal, according to Pastor Guto. After that, tithes and offerings are collected after a specific verse is read as the church choir praises God with song.

Pastoral Prayer

During the pastoral prayer, an invitation is made for those in need to move forward as the chorus is being sung. Then the prayer is offered. There are several “amens” uttered as response during prayer session if prayers are made by a contemporary-style worshiper and in a powerful way. But with the traditional style of worshipers, you will only hear an “amen” at the end of prayer session. Immediately, the minister stands behind the podium to preach, according to Pastor Guto.

In my personal observation, the congregational response often identifies which type of worship style the minister is inclined to. In the case of a contemporary worship style, you will hear the preacher applauded with words like “amen” and “praise God” repeatedly, whereas mostly silence will be observed if the preacher is a traditionalist.

After the preaching, according to Pastor Guto, either a song from the church hymnal is sung by the entire congregation or the church choir presents something. Finally, the minister offers the benediction as the church deacons strategically take their positions to disperse the congregation in an orderly manner. Meanwhile, the church choir

presents a song as the congregation is dispersed. Traditionally, outside the church, some members hug each other while others shake hands.

Most likely, the hugging is done by contemporary-style worshipers. The hugging between the opposite sexes is not encouraged by the traditional Adventists, nor is it part of their culture. Furthermore, Christianity is not practiced in a vacuum, but rather in a given cultural setting. However, it is necessary for the church members to embrace the culture that does not go against the moral cultural values of any given particular community.

In the afternoon program, two activities are performed, although the majority of the members of the New Life SDA Church do not attend, in my observation. From 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., the praise team begins with songs and choruses as they clap their hands. Next follows a bible study conducted for one hour by a church elder or someone appointed by the church, according to Pastor Guto. Eventually, the last prayers are offered and everyone is dispersed as they are encouraged by the church minister or elder to visit the unprivileged ones, the sick, and the members who for one reason or another did not attend the service.

Contemporary Worship in Kenya

The traditional worship style has been practiced since 1906 when the Seventh-day Adventist Church was introduced in Kenya. Nothing was known about the contemporary worship style in the same church until almost two and half decades ago. Most of the Adventists began to notice a new style of worship in the urban churches. More precisely, it was noticed immediately after the New Life SDA Church was established in Nairobi

city as a result of the gospel campaign which was conducted by the former General Conference vice-president Dr. Calvin Rock.

Historical Background

The executive secretary of the Central Kenya Conference, Pastor Maiywa, who I talked to on June 16, 2011, and whose territory covers the major towns of Kenya besides the Nairobi city, submitted that the words “contemporary worship” were not known in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya both in the rural and urban churches until the New Life SDA Church came into existence over two decades ago. According to his understanding, it was in New Life SDA Church that the new style of worship was first noticed within his Conference territory.

New Features in Worship

One of the unique characteristics observed in worship in the New Life SDA Church and identified with contemporary worship is the clapping of hands. He observed that the clapping of hands was practiced during the worship service as opposed to the usual tenets or norms of the traditional Seventh-day Adventist church in Kenya. It is being held that this practice started immediately after the inception of this church over two and half decades ago.

Pastor Maiywa explained that the clapping of hands is understood as a way of expressing appreciation by the contemporary style of worshipers. When either a song or a sermon is presented and appeals to the congregation, it responds by the clapping of hands. Also, the clapping of hands is observed when visitors are welcomed during the worship service. He mentioned that in this kind of worship, a degree of freedom is

allowed in their praise and worship by way of clapping hands and hugging during welcoming time. However, culturally, it is not proper to hug someone's wife if you are of different gender and possibly not closely related. This conduct receives strong opposition from those who maintain the traditional style of worship as it was handed down by the first missionaries to Kenya.

Another unique characteristic identified with contemporary worship is the manner in which prayers are offered. Pastor Maiywa observes that prayers would be offered in the powerful Pentecostal type of rhythmic sound. Such kinds of prayers make the traditionalists feel uncomfortable and out of place. Another tendency in regard to contemporary worship style is that the worshipers have developed a habit of applauding the ministers, especially those who preach powerfully and loudly.

In the contemporary style of worship, a new singing group has emerged known as a praise team. In the usual traditional worship service in any Adventist church, there is no such group of singers. The praise team sings mostly the choruses, and these choruses are sung in a manner that stimulates the congregation emotionally. Pastor Maiywa argues that this is one of the characteristics that make most of the traditionalists feel uncomfortable, besides thinking that the new trend of worship is likely to have been imported from other Pentecostal or charismatic faiths and needs to cease. More so, it is their mindset that body movement and feelings or emotions should not be engaged in the authentic worship service.

Besides Pastor Maiywa, Pastor Guto affirmed that contemporary worship is a strange practice embraced by some of the Adventist in the New Life SDA Church as opposed to the ordinary style of worship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. More so,

the New Life SDA Church can be labeled as the pioneer of the contemporary worship not only in the Central Kenya Conference but also in the entire Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya.

According to Pastor Guto, giving testimonies is one of the new characteristics of the contemporary style of worship. It is being held amongst contemporary-style worshipers that giving testimonies is a powerful means of strengthening the believer's faith and also to witness how God is working amidst his people, besides taking care of them. More so, it is a powerful and convincing means for witnessing for Jesus.

Another factor in this worship—which seems unique to the ordinary traditional Adventist believer—is that in this kind of worship, there is a tendency of applauding ministers during the divine hour or any other speech-giving time. He stated that words like “praise God” or “amen” are loudly and repeatedly asserted throughout the worship service. In fact, some of these words make the traditionalist feel that worship is not observed in a right and meaningful way, especially given that they are used to observing silence as a sign of reverence to God.

Most Influenced Worshipers

The general assumption is that it is mostly the new generation or youth who are influenced by the contemporary style of worship, but the opposite is true. Both Pastors Maiywa and Guto are in agreement that both young and old have embraced the contemporary style of worship, except the younger generation expresses itself more freely than the adults, particularly emotionally as they celebrate God. According to Pastor Maiywa, “The truth is that it is not entirely a youth people thing. Some old people were very endeared to it, while some are very traditional in their mindset. The young however,

are more than the old.” On the other hand, he confirms that contemporary worship is rather slowly being embraced not only by the young people, but other generations, especially in urban church areas.

Most Influenced Churches

According to the Executive Secretary of the Central Kenya Conference Pastor *Maiywa*, the issue of contemporary worship has spread to several churches, particularly in the city of Nairobi, in spite of strong opposition from the traditionalists. For instance, he mentioned Nairobi East, *Karengeta*, *Zimmerman*, and New Life Satellite SDA Church as some of the churches who have embraced the contemporary style of worship.

What has also surprised Pastor Maiywa is that the most traditional Church, Nairobi Central SDA Church (Maxwell), the mother of New Life SDA Church and all the Nairobi Churches, is likely to have also been influenced by the same kind of worship. In one of his responses, Pastor Maiywa observes that “about a month ago, I conducted a week of family life revival at our main City church at Nairobi Central Church. I was surprised to notice traces of what I used to see in the New Life SDA Church. Before the divine service kicks off, a special service is conducted for those in need of prayers. A thought is shared by the minister, and then folks walk in front led by elders of the church, and after a “praise and worship” kind of a song, prayers are offered in the powerful Pentecostal type of rhythmic sound.

In addition, Pastor Maiywa claims that the most conservative church, Nairobi Central Church, has some tendencies moving toward free movement worship. In conclusion, the contemporary worship style is widely spreading amongst Seventh-day

Adventist churches in urban areas in Kenya, in spite of the strong opposition from conservatism.

Contextualization of Biblical Worship Principles

True Worship Emanates from the Obedient Heart

As matter of fact, not all things which were taught by the missionaries concerning worship were according to biblical worship principles. One of them which has been practiced and believed to be part of the biblical teaching was that *Abagusii* culture is heathen. Christianity does not advocate any particular and specific universal culture. While God accepts people in their moral culture, each culture has both negative and positive things. As a result, true worship does not emanate from our culture but from an obedient heart in any given culture. In short, there are true worshipers in every culture as long as they obey God from their hearts and practice biblical worship principles fully.

True Worship Honors Decency and Order

Although the missionary's missional purpose was to educate and civilize the converts, their civilization should not have undermined even the valuable things enshrined in the *Abagusii* culture. For instance, they stressed that each convert was to wear clothes like those the missionaries were wearing, i.e., suits and ties. Biblical worship principles do not specify any particular cultural dress to be worn during the worship service, but rather, scripture is clear that everything should be done moderately for the glory of God (1 Cor 9:25, 1:31). In other words, God accepts our worship if only it is conducted temperately, decently, with honor, and in an orderly manner in our

cultural adornments. So the wearing of suits and ties is not a biblical worship principle to be adhered to in order to be acceptable in God's presence. God transcends all cultures.

True Worship Balances Spirit and Truth

Another thing which needs to be viewed from the perspective of biblical worship principles is the wearing of *Ebitinge* (ankles bands), which was absolutely denounced and banned by the missionaries. The wearing of the ankle bands was a sign of the permanent contract between a husband and a wife in regard to marriage.

In other words, it was similar to the wedding ring in the Western culture. It was one of the valuable cultural elements in the *Abagusii* society which discouraged immorality, besides maintaining morality and decency among married couples. Although, unbelievers morally, they practiced the biblical teaching in regard to sanctity in marriage. In short, God accepts our worship as we worship in spirit and truth in our cultural adornment. Above all, Christianity is almost cultureless. Therefore, what the missionaries advocated in regard to cultural articles was unbiblical.

True Worship Engages Emotions and Intelligence

In our former and current Seventh-day Adventist traditional worship, body movement and emotional expression in worship is not allowed or encouraged. The missionaries taught the converts to worship without involving the feelings. But according to the scriptures, we are required to worship God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). In other words, worship addresses a total person, not just some parts. Therefore, it is biblical to engage our emotions and intelligence in worship.

Also, the missionaries encouraged only pianos and keyboards at the expense of cultural instruments. In their worship, the *Abagusii* people used *chikonu* (drums) or *Obokano* (bowl lyre) before the Western instruments were introduced, and God accepted their prayers because worship emanates from the obedient heart. Unfortunately, the missionaries declared that the *abagusii* culture was related to heathenism, and as result, the drums and *Obokano* (bowl lyre) were banned or discouraged from being used in worship. God respect worship offered in various cultures as long as they are biblically sound.

The biblical fact is that God accepts those who worship him in spirit and truth, besides worship emanating from the obedient hearts. Additionally, he is praised when we worship Him with our local drums or *Chikonu* and *Obokano* (bowl lyre). God accepts all cultural worship instruments if they are only played according to his biblical worship principles. In addition, He uses the good culture to enhance his kingdom. So the missionary perception that the natives' culture was entirely heathen was not according to the word of God.

The Word of God is the Standard

According to the Word of God, whoever believed the teaching of Jesus Christ was baptized (Mark 16:16). So for the missionaries to require a complete change of lifestyle for new converts as a condition of baptism was probably not scriptural. In fact, it is almost impossible for someone to live a Christian life before he becomes a Christian or is baptized, because baptism means the old man is crucified (Rom 6:6). Every worship activity has to be tested by the word, which is the standard of all Church activities. In short, the word is profitable for doctrine, for reprove, for correction, and for instruction in

righteousness, that a man of God might be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (1 Tim 3:16-17). Christianity is a life process. Therefore, missionaries' demands were not only unscriptural, but also concentrated the outward appearance of the converts rather than their hearts.

Worship is Missional

Evangelization in *Gusii* became more complicated because the missionaries did not understand that worship is missional. They encouraged new converts to fully separate themselves from non-believers, even their nearest kinsmen. Worship forms a caring, praying, and supportive community, and above all it prepares people for eternity. Therefore, unless this biblical worship principle is adhered to, the furtherance of the gospel will meet several hindrances similar to those the missionaries experienced in *Gusii* land.

CHAPTER V

IMPLEMENTATION, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this project dissertation was to investigate the cause of the worship conflict in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nairobi, Kenya, and hopefully give an appropriate solution through the application of biblical worship principles. Whereas it is true that the Holy Ghost guides God's work, He also involves people, methods, plans and, systems to impress the truth in their hearts.

The leadership challenge of this intervention goes beyond issues of worship style and engages the skill and character of the leader. Guiding the members through this change process requires more than educating the people via a series of seminar meetings and requires attention to the issues of change management and conflict management. This success of the leadership element will determine whether the church emerges as a healthy congregation subsequent to the change.

More especially, authentic leadership approaches different situations differently. Whereas, the New Life SDA Church congregation is one of the Adventist congregations, which has more informed people in Nairobi city, this does not deny the fact that there are some in the said church who need mentoring and skills in order to achieve the purpose of their lives. Hence, it will be only possible when the leadership goes beyond spiritual

matters and supports the ways of true management to achieve their goals as they make decisions that will affect the church positively.

Strategy

The Bible reveals God as the universal planner who had sent his son who was slain before the foundation of the world to save the lost humanity (John 3:16; Rev. 13:8). Dayton and Fraser (1980) suggest, “A strategy is an overall approach, plan, or way of describing how we will go about reaching our goal or solving our problem.”

Additionally, they argue, “In one sense everyone and every organization has a strategy, a way of approaching problems or achieving a goal” (pp. 15-16).

Implementation Details

Step One: For the effectiveness and success of my strategy, I will request the church pastor to prepare the church by preaching a series of sermons for three Sabbaths during the month just prior to initiation of the seminars. The topics of the sermons will be as follows:

1. The importance of unity of the church to its successful accomplishment of the mission and relational goals.
2. Biblical method of conflict resolution according to Matthew Chapter 18.
This will be vital because the spiritual conflicts have to be solved amicably and scripturally.
3. The primacy of the law of love as described in Matthew 22. Adherence to this law is essential to the health functioning of the church.

Step Two: I will request the church pastor to allow me to preach on worship prior to the biblical worship seminar in New Life SDA Church as part of the strategy.

Step Three: Secure a pledge of support from the Central Kenya Conference that will be communicated by them to the church.

Step Four: Work with the Conference communication department in the development of advertising brochures that can be send to New Life SDA church and the surrounding congregations two weeks prior to the first seminar.

Step Five: Implementation of the eight weeks of the biblical principles of worship seminar.

Step Six: Provide time for individual biblical conflict counseling for members who strongly oppose the principles being implemented in the New Life Church.

Step Seven: Plan and set dates for two follow-up meetings to assist with the conflict that will likely follow implementation of the biblical principles of worship.

Survey

The purpose of the survey was to understand the backgrounds, attitudes, and behavior of the New Life SDA Church members. A simple random sampling method was used although, the participant age was considered in this survey. The age groups were between 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, and 51-60, respectively. Also, it was to ascertain the number of those in support of traditional and contemporary styles of worship. According to the survey, 300 members were invited to participate and, 205 responded. It was revealed that about 170 participants were born in Adventist families.

The survey results indicated that the New Life SDA Church is likely to have embraced the contemporary worship and abandoned the traditional style of worship. And

according to the data analysis, the hypothesis is confirmed as it is exhibited in Table 1. It exhibits the number of supporters, their ages, and the style of worship they support to the conclusion that the majority prefer the contemporary model.

Table 1

Worship Preference by Age

| Age | 18-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51-60+ | Total |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>n</i> | 104 | 60 | 29 | 12 | 205 |
| Contemporary | 70 | 40 | 16 | 10 | 136 |
| Traditional | 34 | 20 | 13 | 2 | 69 |

Seventy respondents of the 18-30 age group sample support the contemporary worship style, 40 were between 31-40, 16 were between 41-50, and ten were between 51-60. Thirty-four members between the ages 18-30 support the traditional worship style as did 20 members between the ages 31-40, 13 members between the ages 41-50, and two members between the ages of 51-60. Overall, 66% of the church indicated support for the contemporary model which leaves 34% either neutral or favoring the traditional model, thus revealing the possibility for significant conflict over the issue of worship style. These findings recommend a proactive education and dialogue intervention via the worship seminar developed in this project.

Worship Seminar Intervention

The goal of the intervention is to resolve the worship conflict in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church through the application of Biblical worship principles to

be presented during the worship seminar. The seminar will be conducted for two and half hours for eight Sabbaths from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm in the evenings in the New Life Church. In addition, the participants will not only be involved in discussion groups after the presentation and give their response.

Seminar Contents

1. The Word of God is the Standard of Worship
2. The Object of Worship
3. Worship Originates from and Is as a Result of God's Action which Can Happen Anywhere
4. True Worship is Freely Expressed
5. Worshipers Are Called to Worship God and True Worship Balances the Spirit and Truth
6. True Worship Engages Emotions and Intellect
7. True Worship Emanates from an Obedient Heart
8. Worship is Missional, Honors Biblical Order and Decency, and Demands Spiritual Sacrifice. See Appendix B for outline details.

Summary

This project dissertation addressed the fact that the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Nairobi, Kenya has experienced conflict over which style of worship should be practiced: the traditional or contemporary style. The data collected from the church revealed that there is a difference of opinion regarding the use of a contemporary

worship model (66% for the contemporary model and 34% opposed or neutral) that might benefit from a proactive worship seminar intervention on biblical worship principles.

In Chapter II of this study, from both the Old and the New Testament, several worship principles have been explored and considered as to how they should be applied to the current situation in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Scripture is the standard by which all religious matters should be tested, including the issue of worship. As the worshipers in New Life SDA Church adhere to the biblical worship principles as expressed in this study, they will not only experience a meaningful and authentic worship but will also accomplish the missional commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Chapter III, worship definitions taken from current literature were presented. Worship is a dialogue with God in His transcendence and holy character. Authentic worship must address the total person including the five senses of the human being. It must not only emanate from an obedient heart, expressed freely, but it also must be God-centered.

In Chapter IV, the critical contextualization of biblical worship principles is presented. Also, the elements of traditional Seventh-day Adventist worship in Kenya were addressed. God accepts worship in our cultural setting as long as the worship principles are observed. The current worship in the New Life Church was examined with a view of contextualizing the biblical worship principles. The contemporary style of worship was also examined.

In Chapter V, the worship seminar on how the biblical worship principles should be applied in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kenya was presented. These principles will guide the church in the worship matters.

Recommendations

The recommendations are as a result of the research conducted for the accomplishment of this study.

1. The New Life SDA Church needs to understand how to safeguard the young generation from both the secular influence and impact of the other faiths by providing them with relevant and meaningful biblical worship. This will only be possible by understanding God's will through the application of the biblical worship principles as outlined in this work.

2. According to the data collected as a result of the survey conducted in the same church, it was revealed that most of the worshipers are of the Adventist background. As a result, there is an assumption among the leaders that every believer understands biblical worship principles. It is possible that the opposite is true. Church leaders need to conduct frequent worship seminars for both the new and old believers to avoid the influence from emerging styles of worship and take steps to encourage adherence to biblical worship principles.

3. There is a possibility that those who have practiced the traditional worship style, since the inception of the Adventist church in Kenya will not easily adopt the new style of worship that adheres to these biblical principles. I recommend that no one should either force a change on them or humiliate their traditional style of worship.

4. Most of the East African Union Mission pastors are not aware of the contemporary worship style, especially in the rural areas. As a result, they are naturally or traditionally ready to suppress the new generation whenever they express themselves both emotionally and intellectually without knowing that they are risking losing them to

other faiths which practice the same worship style. Therefore, there is a serious need to have all pastors educated and sensitized about the biblical contemporary style of worship.

5. Additionally, this project will serve as one of the resource tools to enable the pastors to be well equipped with the biblical worship principles as it is outlined in this project in order to give a biblically informed response when the need arises.

Conclusion

Worship is the most important activity in every church. The New Life SDA Church can experience a meaningful and relevant worship only when it understands God's will in regard to worship. And God's will is expressed fully in his biblical worship principles. And as a result, the worshipers will not only understand how to relate with those of different views on worship, but also maintain the church unity besides accomplishing its goal of spreading the gospel.

Worship originates from God and must be directed towards him only as the object. Fundamentally, it was observed before the foundation of the world by the heavenly creatures (Job 38:6-7). In the beginning, the first parents began their first day with worship and rest. After the flood, worship was practiced by the believers. Evidently the patriarchs had built altars wherever they stayed as a symbol of their relationship with God through worship.

Further, the Israelites were redeemed from their captivity in order to serve or worship God at the mountain (Exo 12:3). Also, the early church was united because they often worshiped. And all the saints will worship the Lamb day and night in the new heaven (Rev 5:9-14). In short, worship is the eternal enterprise in which every worshiper will participate for eternity.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Survey Instrument

Mark 'X' the response that you feel is most appropriate:

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral or Unsure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|-------------------|-------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|
| 1. Worship is important to me. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 2. Traditional worship style always meets my spiritual needs. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 3. Contemporary worship style always meets my spiritual needs. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 4. Authentic worship always includes body movement and emotional expression. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 5. The traditional style of worship is unbiblical because it lacks congregational participation. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 6. The contemporary style of worship is unbiblical. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 7. There is an urgent need for two worship sessions in New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church, one traditional and one contemporary | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 8. The most urgent need of the New Life SDA Church is Biblical teaching about worship | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 9. My attitude towards those who prefer different style of worship from mine is not positive | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 10. My attitude towards those who prefer the style of worship different from mine is positive | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 11. My Church needs both traditional and contemporary ministers. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |

A Few Questions about Yourself

(Please Circle the appropriate answers)

1. I am a member of New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Yes No

2. I have been a member of the Advent Church for **(fill in number)** -----Years.

3. I was born and raised in an Adventist home.

Yes No

4. Age:

18- 30 61-70

31-40 71-80

41- 50 81+

51-60

5. Highest level of education

Std. 8

Form. 4

College

Bachelor degree

Masters Degree

Doctoral degree

Appendix B: Worship Seminar Outlines

Day One

Topic: The Word of God is the Standard of True Worship.

Goal: Is to assist the church to understand that the word of God is the measuring scale of all worship activities.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. God did not allow the human beings to guess on how to solve the emerging problems in regard to worship but rather, he provided a standard by which each activity in worship has to be measured. So, our subject this evening is entitled, the word of God is the standard of true worship.

2. To start with we shall closely examine how the word of God is the scale by which every conduct in regard to worship is determined. Our first text comes from the second letter to Timothy chapter 3:16-17. I am reading from King James Version in your hearing. "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction for righteousness. That the man of God might be perfect in all good works."

3. The Scripture begins by not only introducing the origin and divine authority of the word but also verifies its authenticity and perfection. Paul, states that the word is not an ordinary word but rather it is inspired by God. Actually, we have to observe that because God is holy and whatever proceeds from his mouth is not only a creative power, active, shaper, it is a discerner of thoughts and intents of the heart but also it makes things (Heb 4:12).

4. Also, he clearly states the purpose of the word. He states that one of the purposes of the word is that it is profitable for the doctrine. In other words, the word can be used for teaching or instructing Gods people in all matters pertaining to their relationship with Him besides worship. Additionally, it can be used for reproof. On the other hand, all religious activities can only be authenticated or tested by the word. More so, even our worship practices or styles must be tested by the word.

5. The word is used for correction. To put it in another way, it is a means of restoration for those who have either erred or fallen out from the truth. The word is a campus which shows the road map for the Christians follow in order to achieve their goal which is nothing but salvation besides worshipping God meaningfully. More so, it protects them from erring or doing anything against the will of God.

6. Finally, the word is for training the children of God not only how to become righteous before God but also how to be thoroughly furnished with all good works. The word is informal in nature. It is sufficient to enrich Gods children with his goodness besides correcting them in case of any sin committed against his will. More so, that they might worship him in spirit and truth and above all attain the perfection.

Summary

1. We have observed that it is important to acknowledge that the word of God is not only inspired but also a standard by which all worship activities must be measured.

2. The word is intended for a reproof, correction, training, teaching, and training for righteousness so that Gods be people might be furnished thoroughly with good works. It is sure in molding and shaping Gods people unto Gods image or perfection.

3. God's concern is that his people might be perfect as their father is and worship him meaningfully and truthfully (Matt 5:48).

Conclusion

1. In case of any worship issue or conflict the word of God is the only standard by which all matters must be tested and determined.

2. The purpose of the word of God is to furnish Gods people with good works and make them perfect in all matters even in worship according to God's will.

3. As New Life SDA Church we need not only to acknowledge the effectiveness of the word but also allow it to work in us in order to realize its positive impact in our worship service as a standard of God. In other words, the more the word dwells in our hearts, the more we shall be empowered to face the emerging worship challenges and have them solved amicably without threatening the Church unity or losing any believer (Col 3:16).

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.

2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.

3. The discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

4. The item for discussion is that how is the word God is the standard of worship?

Day Two

Topic: God is the Object of True Worship.

Goal: To help the members to understand that authentic worship always is focused on God and not anything else.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. Whereas, you have learned the word of God as the standard of worship, it is also very important to clearly understand the object of worship if only your service will be biblical and meaningful. What does the Scripture say about the object of worship? Let us turn to the book of Deuteronomy chapter 6:4-5 and I will read from the King James Version in your hearing. “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thine soul, and with all thy might.”

2. In this particular verse, we find that Moses clearly points out that the God of Israelites is one as opposed to the many gods they served in Egypt. More so, he is the only object of worship and according to his commandments they should serve him with all their hearts, souls and might. The promise to Moses was that after deliverance they Israelites would serve or worship God at the mountain (Exod 3:12).

3. Also, evidently God specifically declares that he is the only object of worship. More so, he declares that he is first and last and besides him there is no one like him (Exod 20: 1-5; Isa.44:6, 8; 45:22, 49:6; 43:10).

4. More so, in the New Testament, God is identified as the only object of worship. For instance, if you read in book of (Matt 4:9-10), Jesus sharply rebuked Satan when he claimed to be worshipped. On the other hand, Jesus said that God the creator is the only object of worship. More so, Paul made the same remarks to the Athenians who did not know the true object of worship. For example, if you read in the book of Acts Paul identifies the unknown God as the God who created both the earth and heavens and who is none other than Jesus the object of worship (Acts 17:23-25), John.1:1-3; 8:58).

5. Therefore, every believer is called to worship God not only because he is worthy but also fundamental we were created to adore him as the only object of worship (Eccl 12:13).

6. Also Jesus is the locus of worship. I invite you to turn with me to the book of Philippians chapter 2:10 and I will read in your hearing from King James Version. The Bible states, “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things of heaven, and things in earth, and things under heart;...” It is evidently clear that in a near future the

entire universe will worship Jesus the slain lamb (Rev 5: 9-14). Also, the Holy Ghost is the locus of worship because he is omnipresent as God (Ps. 139:7, Acts 5:1-4).

Summary

1. In regard to our topic about the object of worship, I would like to point out a few things in my summary. First, we have found that God declares to children of Israel after deliverance that they will serve him as the only object of worship contrary to many gods they served in Egypt.

2. In addition, God says there is no any other God like him. In other words, he is omnipresent, omniscience, and omnipotent and our worship as a church should be directed unto him as the only object of worship.

3. Furthermore, we have learned that even Jesus himself identifies God as the only object of worship and worth our worship as our creator (Luke 4:8; Rom 12:1-2).

4. Also, Paul identifies God as the only object of worship because he is the creator of both earth and heaven (Acts 17:22-24). Further, he also identifies the Jesus and the Holy Ghost as the locus of worship. In other words, our worship should be directed to the trinity.

Conclusion

1. Both in the Old and the New Testament, we have learned that God has manifested himself as the only God who redeems and creates and there is none like him either before him or formed after him. He is Alpha and Omega, the only object of worship.

2. God is the only object of worship and should not be equated with any religious activity or anything else in our worship. To put it another way is that, any other object or activity that will distract our worship focus from God as the object worship may it be the magnificent worship buildings, systems, leadership or position, education, styles of worship or sermons will be idols and our worship will be unacceptable to God who is a jealous God. Similarly, we shall be offering a strange fire as did Nadab and Abihu and experience God's wrath (Lev 10:3).

3. We have also learned that as church our fundamental purpose of existence is to worship God as the only object of worship.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.
2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.
3. Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

4. The item for discussion is that, what do you understand about object of worship?

Day Three

Topic: Worship Originates from God, is a result of his Action, and can Happen Anywhere.

Goal: Is to assist church members to understand that worship does to originate from our organizations or anyone else except from God and can be observed anywhere.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. Today our study will be about the three related subjects namely worship originates from God, worship is as result of Gods action, and can happen anywhere. In my teaching I will ensure that these three topics are clearly distinctive for clarity purposes although closely related. Hence, I invite you to turn with me to the book of Exodus chapter 4:31 and I will read from the King James Version in your hearing “And the people believed: when they heard the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.” Also the gospel according to Matthew states that, “a good tree cannot not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit (Matt 7:18).”

2. When you closely look at the book of Exodus you will observe that what prompted worship amongst the children of Israel in captivity was the information about Gods visiting. In other words, everything started or originated from God. It was according to Gods own decisions or ideas which came out of his thoughts which are not like ours and even his ways (Isa 55:8).

3. God looked unto their afflictions. On the other hand, God was concern on his children’s problems and he made the plan how to deliver them. All this plans of deliverance was done in their exclusiveness. The source of all events was God himself.

4. Then children of Israel responded. When they heard the information about Gods visitation and they believed in him besides his plan of redemption and bowed their heads and worshipped. They worshipped in affliction while in captivity. They worshipped amidst their polytheistic gods. To put in another way, worship originates from Gods action of redemption and can be observed anywhere. For instance, all the following people worship Jesus at different places from the temple or synagogue. The wise men from east worshipped Jesus in the house, his disciples worshipped him in the ship, also they worshipped him on the mountain, and the blind man worshipped him by the way (Matt 2:2, 11, 14:33, 28:17: John 9:38; Luke 24:52). In other words, worship is more about communing with God wherever you might be or in any situation you find yourself and can happen anywhere besides in the church.

5. Matthew affirms that, it is only the good tree that bares good fruits as opposed to the veil true. On the other hand, it is only God who bares or initiates anything good because that is his nature. The plan of redemption is a result of Gods thoughts (Matt 7:18).

Summary

1. We have observed that worship springs and is initiated or originates with God. Therefore, unless we properly understand the source of our worship, chances are that our worship will not be authentic and biblical.

2. Worship must be absolutely grounded in Gods action or deed. Basically, worship must proceed our redemption from the ungodly situation to the state where God alone shall be worshipped as the object of worship and more so, from unfaithfulness to faithfulness in his actions.

3. Also we have noted that worship is indispensable or inseparable from the redemptive act because worship often flows spontaneously from our hearts after acknowledgement of redemption. Hence, a believer's worship activity will never cease because the object of worship is eternal. Worship is an eternal business.

4. Equally, we have learned that worship is incomplete until we respond by faith. In fact, before the children of Israel worshiped they believed in the message from God. Moreover, Paul correctly stated that, "faith only comes by hearing the word of God" (Rom 10:17). Faith is a pertinent aspect in authentic worship.

5. More so, we have discovered that, worship is an activity that can be observed anywhere as long you are in communion with God. It can be observed in the house as did the wise men, on the way as did the blind man, in ship as did the disciples, on the mountain as did Moses, it can be observed in a foreign land as did Daniel or Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, it can be practiced in the Church, temple or a synagogue as did Peter and John besides Jesus, or it can be practiced a Whale's bell as did Jonah or at the point of death as did Stephen (Matt 2:2, 11, 14:33, 28:17; John 9:38; Luke 24:52; Exod 3:3-5; Dan 2: 17-22; 3:16-17; Acts 3;1-10; Jonah 2:16-17; Acts 7:60).

Conclusion

1. Any worship that does not originate from God is unauthentic because God is not its object of worship or the locus. Unless, as a church we understand so, there is a likelihood of our worship becoming a formality or a tradition or worshipping in exclusive of God.

2. The fundamental basis of worship is Gods redemptive act in his Son for us. On the other hand, redemption is the source of worship. Worship flows spontaneously from the worshiper's hearts as result of Gods action of salvation. In other words, coerced worship is not authentic.

3. It is our response in faith that makes worship complete.
4. Always our response must be by faith because without faith none can see nor commune with God (Heb 1:6).
5. Until as a church we clearly comprehend that worship originates from God's act of redemption, then chances are that our worship will not only be full of conflicts but also will be unbiblical.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.
2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.
3. The discussion will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.
4. The item for discussion is that, in your own understanding what are the origin and the basis of worship and is possible to worship to happen anywhere?

Day Four

Topic: True Worship is Freely Expressed.

Goal: The church should know that true worship is spontaneous in nature.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

Venue New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. Also today we are going to handle a very critical but biblical subject. It one of the subjects that has caused some tensions or disagreements among ourselves in regard to our worship services. Besides that, it is more related or identified with contemporary worship in view of the traditionalists in our churches today. I understand each one of us has his or her own view in regard to this subject. But the question is what is the biblical view or what does the Scripture say about this topic?

2. I invite you all to turn with me to the book of Psalms chapter 47:1-2. I will read from the King James Version in your hearing. "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth." Until we go back to the context in which this word was being used, we might not explicitly understand its meaning and purpose. In other words, let us first understand its definition from the Hebrew dictionary. According to the Theological dictionaries of the Old Testament (Botterweck et al., 1974, 1998, 2006), the word clapping has more different meanings.

3. The first one is *Taqa*: which means hammer a nail, drive, give hand shake, to strike, clap hands, to blow, blast (horn). The expression '*taqa*' *kap* refers to clapping one's hand as an expression of joy and loud rejoicing. For instance, King David invites all people to praise and worship because the Lord is declared the king on earth, the creation claps hands because the Lord will come as king and judge the earth, because Gods people have been saved, and during the ascension king Joash the clapping of hands was observed (Psalms 47:1-2, 98:8; Isa 55:12; 1 Kings 11:12).

4. The second word for clapping hands in Hebrew is *nkh* or *nakeh* which means to smite, strike, usually with negative aspect of harming or injuring, to strike fatally, unjustified endangerment or injury (Exod 2:13, 21:12).

5. The third word used for clapping of hands in Hebrew is *Sapaq* or *Sepeq* which means strike or clap ones hands. Also, clapping of hands was used as an expression malicious pleasure or derision, anger or hostility (Job 27:23, 34:37; Lam 2:15; Zeph 2:15; Num 24:10; Jer 31:19).

6. The final word for clapping hands is *makka* (maw-khaw) which means strike. In short, the clapping of hands was used to express joy or praises, exaltation, misfortune, and hostility depending on the user and the circumstances.

7. Also, it is evidently clear that there is no any congregational worship in which clapping of hands was involved in both Old and the New Testament. However, it is also, undisputable fact that the individuals like David observed the clapping of hands and invited other people to do the same in exalting the Lord. More so, the Bible does not show whether God disputed such kind of worship.

Summary

1. We have noted that the clapping of hands was used in the biblical times to express exaltation, praises, and even joy for what God deed for his people.

2. Also, the clapping of hands was used to express misfortune, and discouragement or anger. Even though, we have realized that the Scripture does not show enough evidence that clapping of hands was being used in any congregational worship service. Equally, neither does it reveal whether God condemned it too.

3. More so the New Testament speaks nothing about clapping of hands.

Conclusion

1. The clapping of hands was used in the Bible to signify or express different reactions.

2. The clapping of hands was being used in both religious and social meetings.

3. God did not condemn King David's expression of joy and praise through the clapping of hands.

4. The New Testament is quite silent in regard to this subject.

5. Therefore, it is more appropriate for us as a church to embrace or practice what the Bible is quite clear.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.

2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.

3. The discussion will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively for discussion and response.

4. The item for discussion is that in your own understanding is it biblical for you to clap your hands in worship?

Day Five

Topic: Worshipers are called to Worship God and True Worship Balances the Spirit and Truth.

Goal: To teach the church that true worship involves the spirit and truth as the true worshipers worship God.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer and the introduction of the topic.

1. To be more specific is to say that, not all worship services that we have been involved or participated in are genuine. Total worship is much more than our church programs, ministers, or our meeting on every Sabbath. Our subject today is entitled worshipers are called to worship God and true worship balances the spirit and truth. However, there are a few questions that we need to ask ourselves. What is the role of the spirit and truth in our worship? Who are the true worshipers? What does the bible say about them?

2. Please, turn with me to the book of John chapter 4:22-23 and I am reading from the King James Version in your hearing. “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for the salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the father in spirit and truth: for the father seeketh such to worship him. God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.” Now, let us closely examine these verses.

3. In his response to the Samaritan woman, Jesus introduces not only the true worship and worshipers but also declared that worship can be observed elsewhere apart from the mountains as claimed by the Samaritan woman and Jerusalem for the Jews.

4. Jesus describes the true worshipers as those who worship God in spirit and truth. To worship in spirit means to worship from our hearts or sincerely. More so, it must be dictated by the truth of Jesus (John 17:17, 18; Heb 1:1-9; Col 1:19). Our fundamental purpose of existence is to worship God and it needs to be meaningful worship (Eccl 12:13).

5. Furthermore, Jesus argues that it is the father God who is seeking for the true worshipers and not the ministers, the churches, or the religious organizations. The true worshipers must bear the character of God as they will be led by the Spirit and abiding in the truth (John 15:5). God is the Spirit and we must approach him through the spirit.

Summary

1. We have realized that worship is not more about the place of worship but about the communion with God the omnipresent. In other words, wherever you can commune with God in spirit and truth is an appropriate place of worship besides in the buildings.

2. Also, we have learned that God is the Spirit and whoever worships Him must be endowed with the same Spirit. This is very important because it is the Spirit who energizes our spirits or hearts to offer relevant, acceptable, and meaningful worship unto God.

3. It is the worship in the spirit and truth that identifies the true worshipers. In other words, true worshipers biblically are not identified by their doctrines or affiliations as it is mostly assumed by many believers or worshipers.

4. More so, in our study, we have observed that, it is only God who is seeking for the true worshipers not our religious organizations or fellow believers. In short, worship is not about anything else but God himself.

Conclusion

1. We have learned that, a true worshiper must be led by the spirit and truth in order to worship genuinely and meaningfully.

2. As worshipers we should understand that our spirit and the truth must be engaged or must be in touch with the Holy Spirit in order to practice biblical worship.

3. It is only God who is seeking for true worshipers not our organizations or anyone else.

4. Therefore, as a church our worship is observed throughout our lives as believers not only on Sabbath. More so, genuine worship can happen anywhere besides being a life journey event to all believers.

5. Worship basically, is not about a place but interaction with God.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.

2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.

3. The discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

4. The item for discussion is it that what identifies true worshipers and who why God is seeking true worshipers?

Day Six

Topic: True Worship Engages Emotions and Intellect.

Goal: To educate the church members that true worship involves both emotions and Intellect.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer and introduction of the topic.

1. I believe that our subject today is one of the subjects that most of us are more interested in because of its sensitivity. Hence, the title of our subject is that the true worship engages both emotions and intellects. Whereas, it is true that mostly traditionally we don't often express ourselves emotionally in our worship services, but that does not denounce the fact that we are emotional beings and more so, emotions are vocal in our well-being. Now, we need to ask ourselves a few questions. Is it biblically acceptable to participate or express ourselves both emotionally and intellectually in any given worship service? What does the Bible say about them?

2. To begin with, I invite you to turn with me to the book of Mark chapter 12:30 and I will read from King James Version in your hearing. The Scripture states that, "And thou shalt love thy Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy mind, and with all thy strength: and this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Now, let us look at these verses more closely.

3. Jesus was responding to one of the scribes as to which commandment is the greatest of all. To Jesus, the greatest commandment is to love your God. In fact, there is no authentic love without service. Paul states that, I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom 12:1-2).

4. More so, Jesus described how we should love God or which kind of love is acceptable in serving God. He stated that with all our hearts, with all our soul, with our all mind, and with all our strength. To put in another way, authentic worship addresses a total person or worship is an event that has to involve our whole selves and engaging our full participation. So, as a church we need to have our emotions and intellect involved or fully engaged so that our worship might not be only complete but also acceptable.

5. Actually, when Jesus said we love God as total beings the faculty of our mind must be inclusive. By that I mean our emotional part has to be involved in worship because emotions are a vital part of the personality. In other words, worship will never be absolute until we acknowledge the fact that it involves whole the person- body intellect,

and emotions. In short, thinking and feelings must be involved in any authentic or biblical worship.

6. Jesus shows that true worship must not only be vertical but also must affect the horizontal line too. In other words, worship cannot be authentic if it does not influence, impact or have concern of others. On the other hand, if you love God genuinely, then obviously you will love others (John 14:21).

Summary

1. We have learned that according to Jesus absolute worship is to love God with all you heart, soul, mind, and strength. In other words, worship is absolute when a total person is addressed or is involved. For our worship to be genuine both our emotions, feelings, and the intellect must be fully engaged.

2. Also, we have realized that true worship affects both the horizontal and vertical lines. By that I mean, it starts with God and horizontally impact the fellow human beings. In other words, worship is not basically a secret practice but rather affects others positively.

3. Finally, we have observed that both our emotions and intellect are very vital and needs to fully engaged in our worship practices.

Conclusion

1. It is biblical and acceptable to express yourself emotionally, and intellectually in any worship service with dignity, temperately, peacefully, decently, and in order (1 Cor 9:25, 14:33).

2. Also, we have observed that worship without emotional and intellectual engagement then it is lacking.

3. Our worship as a church must be both vertical and horizontal for it to be biblical and meaningful besides being missional. In other words, worship is not single-sided event.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.
2. The secretary will give the response of each group of ten people.
3. The discussion will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.
4. The item for discussion is it biblical to express ourselves both emotionally and intellectually in a worship service?

Day Seven

Topic: True Worship Emanates from an Obedient Heart.

Goal: To sensitize the church members that true worship emanates from the heart.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. Once again I invite you all to our discussion in regard to true worship. I hope that yesterday you were greatly blessed. Our topic today is entitled worship emanates from the obedient heart. To begin with please, turn with me to the book of Genesis chapter 4:4-7 and I will read from King James Version in your hearing, “And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But to Cain and his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell . . . if thy doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?”

2. As we look closely at these verses we learn that God does not accept anything initiated from human thoughts except what originates from himself. Immediately, after sin, he made it very clear that he had to be approached only through animal sacrifices. So, Cain determined to worship in his own way or style as opposed to Gods way. In other words, he disobeyed Gods word or instructions. God is not a respecter of persons but honors those who obey him (Acts 10:33; 1 Sam 2:30). So, worship is not more about the activity but rather what is emanating from your heart. More so, God is not interested in our formal worship but what is our worshipful attitude. Is it according to his will? Are we true worshipers who worship in spirit and truth? Does our worship represent Jesus’s blood by which it will be acceptable (Heb 10:6)?

3. Abel’s sacrifice was acceptable unto God because he obeyed his instructions. In other words, whenever we obey Gods voice we enhance our relationship with him because he accepts us through his own designed means. He is more interested in a contrite and broken heart (Ps 51:16-17; Matt 9:13). Worship fundamental is not about the sacrifice but God desires obedient and remorseful heart. To Abel worship was not more about only formal sacrifice but the response of the heart or attitudinal influence. In other words, his worship became genuine because his spirit and heart were fully engaged. So, he became a true worshiper according to Jesus (John 4:22-23).

4. Obviously, to disobey God is sin. Moreover, God warns Cain that because he did not do well sin lied at his door.

5. Finally, sin led to wroth and Abel’s death and worship was not acceptable. In short, our sins can be a hindrance to our worship (1 Chro 10:13).

Summary

1. We have discovered that, God accepts worship which only emanates from our obedient, broken and contrite hearts. Whatever we practice in worship must reflect obedient hearts or worshipful attitudes for it to be acceptable. God is not interested in a formality or a tradition (John 15:10; 1 John 5:3, Heb 13:15) .

2. More so, we have observed that God is more interested in obedience than sacrifices (1 Sam 15:22; Jer 7:21-24; Hosea 6:6). He is so much interested in our worshipful attitudes not observance of mere religious activities or formalities. In other words, worship is more about God.

3. Also, it has been pointed out that, God is a respecter of no persons but he honors those who obey his voice. For true worship does not originate from our religious activities but from God himself. So, until as a church we obey his voice fully our worship will be just a mere tradition like that one of Cain.

4. Sin is at a door of our hearts when we fail to obey his will and becomes a hindrance to true worship.

Conclusion

1. True worship only emanates from our broken, contrite hearts which obeys Gods voice and worship according to his will. Additionally, it must maintain a worshipful attitude.

2. God will never accept any kind of worship unless he is the author, initiator or its origin and above all, he is the object of worship.

3. God is not a respecter of persons but honors those who obey his voice always. So, it important for us as church to worship according to his will.

4. God is not interested in animal sacrifice but in the sacrifice of his Son Jesus on the cross which takes away sin (Heb 9:12-15).

5. Therefore, unless we obey Gods voice in regard to true worship, chances are that our worship will be a mere formality.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.

2. The secretary will report the response of each group of ten people.

3. The discussion will take 40 minutes.

4. The item for discussion is what made the difference that Abel's worship was accepted whereas, Cain's was rejected?

Day Eight

Topic: True Worship is Missional, honors Biblical Order and Decency, and involves spiritual sacrifice.

Goal: It is to sensitize the worshipers that worship is missional, honors biblical order and decency, and demands spiritual sacrifice.

Audience: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church members.

Venue: New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Time Frame: From 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm.

When: On Sabbath.

Discussion: Group discussion and response will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.

Welcome: Prayer, and introduction of the topic.

1. I believe that each one of you has enjoyed our seminar and more especially as we are coming to the end our discussion today. Our last three related subjects are entitled true worship is missional, honors order and decency, and demands spiritual sacrifice. Hence, we are going to read from the two books respectively. So, I invite you to turn with me first to the book of Genesis chapter 13:4 and I will read from the King James Version in your hearing. “And he went on his journeys from south even to Bethel, unto the place his tent has been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abraham called on the name of the Lord.”

2. According to this verse, Abraham was an authentic, committed, and sincere worshiper of the true God. As a nomadic person, wherever he moved to he had to build an altar for offering sacrifices for his God.

3. And also, if you could observe properly, as he moved from one place to another he would build a new altar. The former altars would remain undestroyed and reminded the heathens that Abraham was a worshiper of a unique God. In other words, Abrahams worship activity was missional to many nonbelievers in his times.

4. Also, in the earlier church in the New Testament we find that worship was missional. I will read from Acts 2:42-43, 47 in the King James Version in your hearing. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders were done by the apostles . . . Praising God, and having favor with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

5. It is important to note that, as result of consistent study of the gospel and fellowship besides prayers fear came upon every soul. Just to mention, true worship must include study of the word and prayers. It is as a result of the worship practices that they gave themselves as spiritual sacrifice as God manifested himself through miracles. Besides that, many souls were converted to the truth. In short, true worship is missional in nature. Additionally, true worship takes time, involves possession, self-sacrifice, and also families (Jos 24:15, Acts 2:44, Rom 12:1-2).

6. Actually, all that believed were together. In observing unity, it was affirmation to the world that Jesus was sent by the father to save that lost world (John 17:21). In other words, by practicing true worship the world was impacted or influenced positively besides being informed that, Jesus was the savior unto the lost world.

7. They praised God, and they had favor with all people and besides such as should be saved. Hence, the Lord added to the church daily such (Acts 2:47). Finally, more souls accepted Jesus as their personal savior as a result of worship becoming missional, and honored order and decency. True worship makes the church to grow rapidly.

8. Also, in the early church Paul exhorts that the God they worshipped is not of confusion but rather he upholds decency, order, and peace (1Cor 14:33).

Summary

1. Abraham did not destroy his former altars because they could serve the purpose of reminding nonbelievers that he was inseparable with his God either in a foreign land or at home. Actually, worship is the communication with God wherever you are or whatever you are doing.

2. As a result of sincere worship, God influences people to believe in his Son either through a holy fear or miracles as he fills the church. In short, it is God who influences new souls to accept the gospel through the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

3. The early church prospered rapidly because they steadfastly studied the scripture, shared, prayed, and did everything in order and decency. Actually, they devoted much of their time or sacrificed a lot for the gospel.

4. Unity in the gospel ministry was one of the effective ways ordained by Jesus to prove that he was sent by God to save the world.

Conclusion

1. The altars served a missional work to the nonbelievers in the patriarch's times by identifying Abraham as a worshiper.

2. God always works with his people to influence the world to accept the truth if only they worship sincerely and truthfully. In other words, as a church if we observe worship genuinely, God will influence new souls to accept Jesus and fill the church.

3. Also, it has been pointed out that, God ordained many ways for preaching the gospel and unity amongst believers was one of them. So, when we have wrangles amongst ourselves we become a hindrance to the gospel furtherance as opposed to the purpose of our existence. More so, our missional commission by Jesus Christ will never be accomplished (Matt 28:19-20).

4. Unless as a church we steadfastly study the word and pray regularly, it will be impossible for us to ascertain the cause of conflicts in our worship and how they should be solved amicably maintain the church unity.

5. It is upon God to add more souls into our church if we worship sincerely as he did to the early church.

Discussion Groups

1. Each group has to choose its own chairperson and the secretary.
2. The secretary will report the response of each group of ten people.
3. The discussion will take 50 and 40 minutes respectively.
4. The item for discussion is how is worship a missional activity in our church as in the earlier church today?

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