Spiritual Formation: a Program to Be Incorporated Into the Theological Education Curriculum at Solusi College, Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A PROGRAM TO BE
INCORPORATED INTO THE THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT SOLUSI
COLLEGE, ZIMBABWE

by

Zacchaeus Abram Mathema

Faculty Adviser: Russell L. Staples

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT

A Dissertation Project

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A PROGRAM TO BE INCORPORATED
           INTO THE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT
           SOLUSI COLLEGE, ZIMBABWE

Name of researcher: Zacchaeus Abram Mathema

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Russell L.Staples,
                                     Ph.D.

Date completed: July 1991

Problem

        The problem addressed by this developmental project
is inadequate spirituality among Adventist ministers in
Zimbabwe as observed by the researcher and expressed by
other colleagues in the ministry. The study pursued is not
simply academic, but is designed to meet the need for
enhanced spirituality in the lives and practice of Adventist
ministers in Zimbabwe, and is to be tested and refined by
use in an actual program of ministerial formation.

Method

The study is developed in three stages as follows: First:, it investigates appropriate forms of spirituality as they are revealed and alluded to in the New Testament and illuminated in Christian literature on spirituality, church, ministry, and ministerial formation. The method used in Chapters 2 through 4 is Scriptural pursuit and exegesis inasmuch as biblical images of spirituality, church and ministry are explored. Exegesis is general and not focused on each text. The biblical data on what it means to be an authentic Christian, church, and minister are augmented by Christian literature on similar topics. Second, the study seeks to build a case for enhanced spirituality among Adventist pastors in Zimbabwe. Third, lessons and other appropriate methods of promoting spirituality, based on the findings of the study, are developed as a proposed program of spiritual formation to be incorporated into the ministerial training curriculum at Solusi College.

Results

An investigation of various images of Christian experience, church, and pastoral ministry reveals that spirituality involves a radical transformation of life, living in intimate communion with God, maturing in Christ, and becoming more like Him.

Conclusions

The conclusion is that a proper understanding of appropriate forms of spirituality on the part of the individual Christian, the Christian community, and the Christian pastor constitutes an essential part of ministerial formation.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A PROGRAM TO BE
INCORPORATED INTO THE THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT SOLUSI
COLLEGE, ZIMBABWE

A Dissertation Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Zacchaeus Abram Mathema

July, 1991

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by
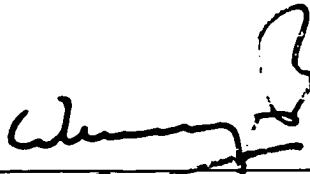
Zacchaeus Abram Mathema

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

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Russell L. Staples, Adviser   Dean, SDA Theological Seminary

_____
Robert M. Johnston

_____   June 28, 1991
Norman K. Miles   Date approved

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to

all those who seek to minister for Christ

in Zimbabwe, who share my concerns for maturing

spirituality in ministry, and have grown

to love the ministry as I do.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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My gratitude also goes to Dr. Robert Johnston, my vice-chairperson, whose insightful suggestions and precise terminology helped me to express myself better. I am thankful also to Dr. Norman Miles, who as my professor and reader, sensitized me to issues in ministry which are often by-passed.

I am thankful to Dr. C. Raymond Holmes who inspired me in the class on spirituality in ministry. His influence made me see another dimension of ministry which I was not

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aware of before, and thus led me to write on a topic of this nature.

Outside my project committee I am thankful to the following:

To the Eastern African Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Solusi College for providing funds to enable me to pursue this study.

To Joseph Karanja and Gordon Christo for their computer skills and their willingness to go out of their way to help me print the document and insert Greek and Hebrew terms by computer.

To my family: my wife Nonceba and my three children, Hlengani, Senzosenkosi, and Sindiso. They endured my absence while I was working on this project and they must have paid an emotional price.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Background of the Project

The purpose of this project was to design a program
of spiritual formation that is based on selected New
Testament images of Christian experience, ecclesiology, and
ministry. This program was designed to promote spirituality
among students and faculty of the Seventh-day Adventist
Theological College at Solusi in Zimbabwe. The program of
spiritual formation designed is to be incorporated into the
four-year post-Cambridge School Certificate program for
preparing pastors.

There is a strong conviction within my heart
that for the Seventh-day Adventist Church[1] to accomplish
its mission in Zimbabwe, it needs to develop strong
spiritual leaders. Christian leaders who are adequately
mature spiritually are needed to lead numerous emerging
Christians in Zimbabwe to deeper levels of spirituality and
commitment to Jesus Christ and His church. Since spiritual
leaders may not produce what they have not experienced, it
is important that while they are being trained and educated,

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[1]In this project the term "Seventh-day Adventist" may
be shortened to "Adventist" or "SDA."

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they also be helped to develop spirituality. To work toward producing a spiritually strong church, leaders must be prepared in ways that will make them what they seek to produce. Hence, a program of spiritual formation is designed here for the purpose of meeting this need.

There are encouraging signs of health and vitality in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe. The health of the church can be seen in its rapid numerical growth.

Justification of the Study

This study is justified by the following factors: First, it is justified on the basis of my personal experience in the field. On the one hand, it always has been gratifying to see many people joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church of which I was a pastor. On the other hand, however, it was disturbing to sense my own inadequacy and that of members in Christian experience. This inadequacy is viewed in terms of the outward observable manifestations or fruits of the Spirit which are specified later in this study. I felt that something deeper than active proclamation of the gospel was missing. Many of my fellow church members and I needed something that could transform persons at the core of their being. It is now when I look back that I can see that my ministry and that of my colleagues did not promote the contemplative dimension of spirituality, both for me as a pastor and for the rest of the members in the church.

I began my ministry in a rural setting, and was responsible for thirteen congregations scattered over a large district. Some of my colleagues had more than twenty congregations. The situation as a whole disturbed me because I had to keep on the move most of the time preaching, promoting various church programs, and collecting reports and trust funds. The pressure to succeed, in terms of baptizing more people and collecting more funds, was kept high. At times I felt as if we, as pastors and as congregations, were competing; as a result, spells of fatigue invaded me from time to time. The Holy Scriptures mandate the proclamation of the gospel by Christians, but the evangelistic thrust needs to be balanced by the meditative, praying, and reflective mode of the Christian life. This seems to be weak in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The emphasis of one mode at the expense of the other is not being faithful to Scripture. A program of spiritual formation to facilitate the development of the contemplative mode of spirituality is, therefore, essential. Such a program should begin with those who are being educated and prepared for spiritual leadership in the community of faith.

Second, this study is justified because Solusi College functions as a seminary to prepare those who are to be spiritual leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Such leaders need to be equipped not only with sound Christian doctrines and professional skills for doing

ministry but also with a deep spirituality which co-ordinates everything that the minister does.   As Richard McBrien asserts, it is not enough for the Christian minister to be a competent professional.   The minister's life should bear witness to the reality that he proclaims and communicates.[1]   Spiritual formation is the program that can be incorporated into the process of preparing pastors to enhance the spiritual dimension of education for the ministry.

Third, this study is justified because of the nature of Christian experience that is portrayed in the New Testament in general, and the nature of spiritual leadership which is called for therein.   Scriptures portray genuine Christian experience as an intimate relationship with the living God in ways that influence everything the Christian does.   Scripture also teaches specific qualifications of persons who are to become spiritual leaders.   These qualifications are not mere outward conformities but are the fruit of a spiritual relationship with God.   The exacting demands which are called for in spiritual leadership indicate a need to deepen the spiritual lives of those who prepare for ministry in a theological school.   Hence, a need for a program of spiritual formation.

Fourth, this study is justified by some of the findings of research in ministry.   Early in the seventies,

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[1]Richard McBrien, <u>Ministry: A Theological Pastoral Handbook</u> (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987), 77.

the Association of Theological Schools in the United States
and Canada (hereafter referred to as ATS) appointed a task
force to investigate spiritual development in theological
schools. In its report the task force emphasized: "For us
the issue of spiritual development stands central, not only
in the training for ministry, but central for all of us who
dare in any way to do theological education in times such as
these."[1]

Spiritual development is central in the person who
functions as a pastor because the pastor's effectiveness as
a spiritual leader is derived from whom the pastor is as a
Christian called by God and consecrated to Him. The
minister's spirituality evokes spirituality in others.

Four years after the publication of the above
report, David Schuller and others remarked,

> A closer scrutiny reveals the continuing request of the
> community of faith that their leaders be more than
> persons who have learned facts and mastered techniques.
> First, the community demands that they be persons who
> have experienced the reality of being freed by the
> Gospel, who have personally glimpsed meaning in the
> midst of a fractured world.[2]

This quotation shows that Christians across
denominational lines need pastors who have a positive
relationship with God. These expectations are not contrary
to the teachings of Scripture concerning spiritual

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[1]David Babin et al., Voyage, Vision, Venture: A Report
on Spiritual Development (Dayton, Ohio: Association of
Theological Schools, 1972), 3.

[2]David Schuller et al., Readiness for Ministry, II
(Vandalia, Ohio: Association of Theological Schools, 1976),
9.

leadership. It is essential, therefore, that in the process of preparing persons for pastoral ministry, there must be provision for spiritual formation.

Fifth, the study is justified because of the cultural milieu of the church in the region which is served by Solusi College. The church in Africa is challenged by political creeds, ideologies, slogans, tribalism, and nationalism which may shape people's thinking in ways that militate against the development of authentic Christian experience. Tribalism and nationalism divide the church in ways that make a mockery of oneness in Christ. Authentic spirituality should be an antidote to the above-mentioned forces. Thus, educating pastors spiritually is another way of preparing them directly, and the church indirectly, to meet the challenges that confront the church in times like these.

It is important, especially for Seventh-day Adventists, to bear in mind that the founding fathers and mothers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church believed they had a mission to prepare a people to meet God. There can be no adequate preparation of people without also preparing them spiritually. By engaging in spiritual formation for the ministers, the church and the college are actually facilitating preparation for the people of God as a whole.

Michael Hollis says: "To develop the church without at the same time developing the ministry has deformed the conception of the church, of the sacraments and of the

ministry itself."[1] It might be added that to train
ministers without educating them for spiritual growth may be
a prescription for spiritual deformation. Rene Padilla also
maintains that the church needs to grow in quality as well
as in quantity. Thus he writes, "In speaking of the
numerical expansion of the church, it is not out of place to
ask what kind of church it is that is being multiplied. It
may be that such multiplication turns out to be a
multiplication of apostasy."[2] A program to promote
spirituality is needed therefore to avoid the situation of
baptized paganism, and the place to begin is with pastors in
training.

Description of the Study

This study meets the requirements for Project II of
the Doctor of Ministry degree. This means that it is a
study without the in-ministry field component.[3] The first
part of the project is the researcher's position on the
issue of spirituality and spiritual formation as portrayed
in the New Testament. On the basis of the position
explicated in part one, part two is prepared as a

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[1]Quoted in William Burrows, New Ministries: The Global
Context (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1980), 116.

[2]Rene Padilla,   Mission Between the Times (Grand
Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 33.

[3]Doctor of Ministry projects fall under two
categories. Project I includes an in-ministry component
conducted in the field with appropriate instruments and
procedures. An evaluation is required as part of the
completed project. Project II is completed before field
testing.

professional paper to describe the context and implementation of the proposed project at Solusi College. Implementation and evaluation of the project can only be made after the project has been completed.

In some ways this study is a scriptural pursuit in as much as selected scriptural images which inform spirituality are explored. However, exegesis is general rather than focused on each text used. Pertinent insights from theologians who have written on the spiritual life and other authorities are also employed. Selected scriptural images which inform spirituality are explored.[1]

The major resources for the study are those that can be found in the James White Library. Available church records and church statistical reports of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe and Solusi College provided certain factual information. Studies and literature on the topics of Christian Ministry, Church, and Spirituality constitute the major resources. Literature on other related disciplines is also used.

Organization of the Study

In Part ONE of the project the biblical and theological base for a program of spiritual formation is developed. The argument for an intentional program of spiritual formation is advanced in three parts as follows:

First is an exploration of selected New Testament

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[1]In this study, the Revised Standard Version (1952) is used unless otherwise indicated.

images of Christian experience which inform spirituality. Second, a full chapter is devoted to a brief exploration of selected images of the church which also inform spirituality and spiritual formation. The emphasis in this chapter is on corporate rather than individual spirituality. The ethos and self-understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are examined to show how these influence the spirituality of its members. Third, the roles and functions of Christian ministry are explored to show how these conceptions influence spirituality.

It is shown in the fourth chapter why preparation for the ministry should be informed by what has been explicated above, and why spiritual formation is central in this process.

Part TWO of the project moves toward the development of a program of spiritual formation which is based on the Biblical and theological data preceding it in Part ONE.

Chapter 5 is mainly a description of the historical development of the program of theological education at Solusi College and of the rationale for the proposed program of spiritual formation. My spiritual journey and personal experience at the college as a student and instructor and in the field as pastor are featured in this chapter.

Chapter 6 is a sample of courses that are taught at Solusi College, with a proposed recasting of the teaching of those courses in order to promote spirituality.

Chapter 7 consists of seminar lessons which are intentionally designed to awaken in the participants a thirst for God, a sense of His presence, and a desire to be like Him.

The seminars on spiritual formation are to be conducted during regular seminar weekends which are already provided for at Solusi College. Four lessons are to be presented during four seminar periods of about ten hours each. The lessons are mainly in outline form with comments, introductions, and conclusions written in prose form.

LIVING IN UNION WITH GOD is the theme of the lessons on spiritual formation, and all other spiritual activities during the spiritual formation weekend focus on the same theme. Lesson presentations are interspersed with guided discussions, meditations, prayers, reflections as the Spirit leads, and special worship services which complement the lesson theme.

Opportunity is created for regular student/faculty fellowship and mutual ministry to one another. Chapter 7 also describes how this is proposed to be accomplished.

Chapter 8 is a summary of the study with some recommendations.

Definition of Terms

Pastoral Ministry: A combination of two words: "pastor" and "minister." As used in this project, the expression refers to spiritual leadership that nurtures the people of God and helps them to develop spiritually and

mobilizes them for Christian service. The terms "pastor" and "minister" are used interchangeably in this project.

Solusi College: A coeducational senior college and seminary operated by the Eastern Africa Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It is situated on an 8,800-acre farm, 32 miles west of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.[1]

Spiritual Diary: A personal notebook in which students record what is happening in their spiritual lives from the time they enter a program of spiritual formation. The diary functions as a spiritual journal and is for personal use only.

Spiritual Direction: Tilden Edwards' definition is employed here:

> The particular discipline of listening with a soul
> friend to the ways the Spirit is uniquely moving through
> our whole life, deepening our conversion into the joy
> and mission of God in Christ. The relationship also
> involves attention to the disciplines undertaken by a
> person to assist ongoing, daily listening. Such
> spiritual guidance personalizes theological education in
> terms of this person's gift, call, and need, in the
> context of the Body of Christ.[2]

Spiritual Disciplines: Again Tilden Edwards's definition is employed:

> . . . the specific, concrete, regular means of
> attentiveness to grace that we or others discern are
> appropriate for us as part of our ongoing formation in
> the Spirit's way. These may include such classic forms
> as corporate and personal prayer and meditation,

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[1]SDA Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Solusi College."

[2]Tilden Edwards, "Spiritual Formation in Theological Schools: Ferment and Challenge," Theological Education 17 no. 1, (Autumn 1980): 11.

fasting, journal keeping, scripture and other spiritual
reading, and particular kinds of service to others.[1]

Spiritual Formation: The major concept of this

project. It is used here to designate the process which

disciplines and mobilizes the soul's attentiveness to God's

graciousness. This in turn leads to the internalization of

those Christian principles and values which promote

spiritual maturity. Spiritual formation should promote

patterns of motivation, thought, and decision-making which

result in positive Christian action. The terms

"Spirituality" and "Spiritual Formation" have been borrowed

from the monastery, and they are used interchangeably.

"Spiritual Formation" emphasizes process while

"Spirituality" emphasizes quality or attribute.

Spiritual Friend: A person who shares a common

faith, provides mutual support in the search for God, and is

trustworthy enough to enable someone else to speak freely

and openly about his/her spiritual journey.

Spirituality: The following working definition of

"Spirituality" is employed in this project: "Spirituality is

living a human life in this world in union with God."[2]

Spiritual Journey: The process of progressing in the

spiritual life toward Christian maturity.

Zambezi Union: A Seventh-day Adventist church

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[1]Ibid., 10.

[2]Lawrence O. Richards, A Practical Theology of
Spirituality (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing
House, 1987), 50.

organization and an administrative unit which supervises three mission fields and one conference in Zimbabwe, and is responsible to the Eastern Africa Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Its territory covers the entire country of Zimbabwe. It was organized in 1919 with headquarters in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe: (Formerly known as Southern Rhodesia, and subsequently as Rhodesia) A newly independent nation situated in southeastern Africa bounded on the west by Botswana, on the north by the Zambezi River which separates it from Zambia, on the east by Mozambique, and on the south by the Republic of South Africa.[1]

Zunde: A recently organized Seventh-day Adventist Lay Persons' Movement (not yet recognized officially by the Seventh-day Adventist Church) whose spiritual and evangelistic fervor has significantly impacted upon people living in the midlands section of the country of Zimbabwe. The term "Zunde" is a Shona word which means "a gathering together to accomplish the task for someone." The organizers of the movement qualify the term with the Shona possessive construction "ra Mwari" meaning "God's." A qualified expression "Zunde ra Mwari" means "a gathering together to accomplish God's task."

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[1]SDA Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Rhodesia."

Limitations of the Study

The program of spiritual formation developed in this study is designed for Seventh-day Adventist ministerial students at Solusi College. It is proposed that this program be incorporated into the four-year post-Cambridge School Certificate degree program with a concentration in pastoral ministry.

This study is limited in several ways: First, it is a library study which has not undergone field testing.

Second, it is difficult to obtain information regarding spirituality from Seventh-day Adventist Church records because the topic of spirituality is not specifically addressed.

The third limitation is due to the fact that spirituality is difficult to quantify or measure. The two terms "spirituality" and "spiritual formation" do not seem to be familiar to many Seventh-day Adventist Christians, although they are starting to be used by a few.

Fourth, the study is limited because I have not had access to authorities connected with the Church in Africa or Zimbabwe who have written on the topic of spiritual formation.

Fifth, the study is limited by my own lack of experience. The study is being pursued not just for the sake of others, but with the hope that I will reach higher spiritual planes which are yet to be attained by the grace of God. Readers who are concerned about developing a

ministry with profound spirituality need to know, first of
all, that I included myself when sharing the concerns for
depth and spirituality in ministry.

PART ONE

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE

FORMATION OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF NEW TESTAMENT IMAGES

OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

There is no systematic description of Christian experience in the New Testament. However, by exploring certain images which portray spiritual life in its varied forms a good picture of what the spiritual life is supposed to be is portrayed. The numerous images which describe the believer's spiritual life combine to elucidate the multi-faceted and profound reality of the new life lived in union with God. It would be a mistake to dwell on only one or a few of the images used and regard them as adequately portraying Christian experience. Such an approach may lead to a warped view of true Christian experience. It is true that there is no single image which is adequately definitive of spirituality; each tells us something about spirituality. It is safer to say that the numerous images used are complemen-tary and interdependent. All the images used describe what Howard Kee regards as a formal relationship between the Redeemer and the redeemed and involve participation by the redeemed in the new, divine,

and eternal life.[1] The believer experiences the new life while remaining fully human.

In this chapter, a few New Testament images are selected and explored with the purpose of gaining a clearer view of how the New Testament describes Christian spirituality. There is no attempt to engage in deep exegesis of every passage used or referred to; rather this is an overview of selected images and expressions which carry significant spiritual insights. Some images emphasize the nature of spirituality, some emphasize the dynamics of spirituality, while others emphasize the goal of spirituality. There is also considerable overlapping in emphasis and this makes it difficult to categorize some of the images.

Images of Spirituality in John's Gospel and Epistles

John's Gospel and epistles, especially the First Epistle, bear informative images of spirituality. Among the images are light, life, love, new birth, vine and the branches, and many others. One of the outstanding features in John's imagery is a biological emphasis. The term "life" is prominent in the Johannine literature and is considered to be the central theme of John's Gospel.[2] Two

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[1]Howard Clark Kee, Understanding the New Testament (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 169.

[2]G. A. Turner, "The Gospel of John," The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, (1975), 3:660.

images are examined in this section, the image of new birth and the image of the vine and the branches. The image of the vine and the branches is a parable which integrates several other images of spirituality. The image of the new birth is considered first.

New Birth

John's Gospel gives the message clearly that the beginning of the new life in Christ is marked by "new birth." John records the words of Jesus to Nicodemus which express a need to be born again from above (John 3:3f). The expression used in Greek is "γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν." The precise etymological translation of this is "born again" or "born from above." The Greek adverbial expression "ἄνωθεν" can actually mean "from above," "from the beginning," or "again, anew."[1]

The precise meaning of the word "ἄνωθεν" is also significant theologically. There is no equivalent English word which aptly expresses the theological concept of the Greek word "ἄνωθεν." Howard Kee comments that both of the meanings expressed by the Greek word are important. The reader of this passage must hear both "born again, anew," and "born from above" as he reads this passage.[2] In this

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[1]William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, _A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature_ (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 76.

[2]Kee, 151.

dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus stresses not only the reality of the new life in Him but also the source of that life. Jesus is specific in pointing out that a person needs to be born of the "water and the Spirit." That means, apart from validation of the new experience through the symbol of baptism, the source of the new Christian spiritual life is the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit. The change in the person who believes and accepts Christ is not only real, but it is also radical. Kee further comments that the new life in Christ is not merely an improvement of the old. The new life is so radically different that the change can be regarded as new birth.[1] According to the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus, new birth is a prerequisite to entrance into the kingdom. Incidentally, this is the only passage in John in which the term "kingdom of God" is used.

John says something about becoming a child of God in the prologue. Those who receive Christ also receive power to become the children of God (John 1:12). The word used for "power" here is "ἐξουσίαν." It means that those who receive Christ also receive authority or the right to become the children of God. This authority or right is received as a gift from God. The fact that a human being can become a child of God is in essence part of the good news of the gospel. Receiving Christ and believing in Him

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[1]Ibid.

entitles one to become the child of God. A new identity that is conferred upon the believer should lead the believer to become what he/she is declared to be in Christ. The process of becoming what a person is entitled to in Christ is spiritual formation. The same theme of "being born" and "child of God" is carried on in John's epistle (1 John 2:29; 3:1-2, 9-10). John describes the new life in Christ not just as a promise to be dispensed to the believer sometime in the future. The new life is a possession right now, as John puts it, ". . . he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, <u>has eternal life</u>" (John 5:24, emphasis supplied). In his epistle, John says, "He who has the Son has life" (1 John 5:12). The new life in Christ should be experienced and it expresses itself in love to God and humankind (1 John 2 and 4).

The Vine and the Branches

This is, perhaps, the most informative image of Christian experience in John's Gospel. It expresses several concepts and dimensions of the Christian spiritual life. In this image Jesus compares the relationship of the vine and the branches with the relationship which should exist between Him and His people.

The image of the vine and the branches can be regarded as a parable. What Jesus says in John 15 appears to be an elaboration of the statement made in chap. 14 where He discusses the role of the Holy Spirit Who is

spoken of as the Comforter, Counselor, or Advocate. In
14:10, 11, 20, Jesus states that He is in the Father and
the Father is in Him. In like manner, Jesus is in the
believer and the believer is in Jesus. The believer who
loves and obeys Jesus will have the privilege of living in
union with both the Father and the Son (John 14:23),
because They will dwell in the believer or make Their home
with the believer. The image of the vine and the branches
expresses the oneness which exists between the Father and
the Son and all those who believe in Him.

Jones recognizes what he calls "unity-in-duality of
the Father and the Son" as one of the main themes of John's
Gospel and as one that "lies behind both the words and the
'works' of Jesus."[1] Jones further elaborates on this point
by alluding to other passages which express the same theme.
The Father and the Son come to dwell in the observant
believer, and Jesus' prayer "is that the believer should
come to share the heavenly glory and mutual love which the
Father and Son have shared from eternity."[2]

Christian spiritual life flows from the believer as
a result of the believer's intimate relationship and
fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy
Spirit. John tells us that the purpose of the gospel

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[1]Cheslyn Jones, "Introduction: The New Testament," in
Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, eds.,
The Study of Spirituality (New York: Oxford University Press,
1986), 85.

[2]Ibid.

proclamation is that the believers may have fellowship with the Father and the Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3).

In several passages within John's writings the new life in Christ is portrayed as possible only because God unites with the believer to make it happen. So the believer's new identity is affirmed by the assertion that the believer is a child of God, and that the God of the universe desires to have fellowship with the believer.

The spiritual insights and theological meanings that can be drawn from the image of the vine and the branches suggest that an intimate relationship should exist between Christ and the believer. It should result in positive spiritual formation. Jesus makes it clear to the disciples in this parable that they can only manifest the hallmarks of true Christian discipleship if they maintain an intimate union with their Lord, Jesus Christ. Some of the hallmarks specified are "fruitfulness, in mutual love, even to death (15:13; cf. 13:1), in joy (15:11), in obedience (15:14) and in apostolic work (15:16). So will they be able to accept and overcome, as He has done, hostility of the world, even to martyrdom (chap. 15:18-16:4)."[1] The fruits which are to characterize the disciples are manifestations of the new life which is received from Christ.

The image of the vine and the branches carries

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[1]Ibid., 88.

other images with it. Since the life of the vine is in the branches, Christ's life is also in the believer. Although we do not have to understand this in a mystical or pantheistic way, we must recognize the spiritual implications. The spiritual life begins with Jesus and is also sustained by Jesus. Believing in Jesus and accepting Him as Lord and Savior initiates a process of becoming like Him. It is a process that is empowered by the grace of God. Just as a newly born baby grows into physical maturity by partaking of nutritious food, the believer grows into spiritual maturity by partaking of the spiritually nutritious food that is provided by Christ. Spiritual formation begins when a person is born again of the Spirit and is connected spiritually with Christ. Formation continues as long as the intimate union between Christ and the believer is maintained. As F. F. Bruce points out: "Faith in Jesus, acceptance of his words, inaugurates a union with him through which his eternal life and power become forever available to the believer."[1] Moreover, the image of a tree or vine suggests that the spiritual life must grow upward and downward.[2] While it bears fruit to the glory of God, it must also be pushing

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[1]F. F. Bruce, The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 310.

[2]Christopher Bryant, "The Nature of Spiritual Development," in Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, eds., The Study of Spirituality (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 565.

its roots downward to draw adequate nourishment all the time.

Thus, not only the essence of the spiritual life can be seen in this image but also its source and roots, its dynamics, and its sustenance. The union between Christ and the believer should be intimate, and it effects a change in the believer and enables her/him to bear fruit for the glory of God (John 15:8).

Images of Spirituality in the Synoptic Gospels

Although the phraseology or expressions in the Synoptic Gospels may be different from John's phraseology, the Synoptics also tell us something about the new life in Christ and spiritual formation. Spiritual formation, which is a process of growth toward spiritual maturity, is underscored by various images in the Synoptics. The following are among the few selected ones.

Repentance

The new birth in John's Gospel appears to be equivalent to what the Synoptics call "repentance." Repentance describes a change of life. The Greek word which is translated "repentance" is "μετανοιά," and it can also be translated as "conversion" or "change of mind." Commenting on the change of mind signified by repentance, Urban T. Holmes states that "fundamentally we are what we

think!"[1] There is a radical change in a person's life with repentance or conversion for this is the beginning of a Godward or spiritual journey.

In the Synoptic Gospels, John the Baptist's preaching calls the whole nation of Israel to repentance (Mark 1:4). Jesus also heralds the message of repentance (Mark 1:15). In fact, in this text we find what Jones regards as the summary of Jesus' message which is: (1) The time is fulfilled, (2) the Kingdom of God has drawn near, (3) repent, and (4) believe in the Gospel.[2] The same call to repentance is made in Matthew and Luke, and details of what this repentance entails are given (Matt 3:2-12; 4:17; Luke 3:3-14). Henri J. M. Nouwen is definitely referring to repentance or conversion when he comments that "living a spiritual life requires a change of heart, a conversion. Such a conversion may be marked by a sudden inner change, or it can take place through a long quiet process of transformation."[3]

Kingdom of God/Heaven

The terms "Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven" are pregnant with insights which help us understand some

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[1]Urban T. Holmes III, A History of Christian Spirituality: An Analytical Introduction (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 17.

[2]Jones et al., 63.

[3]Henri J. M. Nouwen, Making All Things New: An Invitation to the Spiritual Life (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981), 57.

aspects of the spiritual life. John the Baptist makes repentance a prerequisite to entrance into the Kingdom of God, and Jesus repeats the same message.

The Greek expression translated "Kingdom of God/Heaven" is "ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ / τῶν οὐρανῶν." It has been defined as "The sovereign activity of God as king in saving men and overcoming evil, and the new order which is established."[1] It means that to be saved as a human being is to experience God's salvational activity, and this experience is what spirituality is all about. Entrance into the Kingdom of God entails living a life that is controlled by God. As Nouwen concludes: "To set our hearts on the kingdom therefore means to make the life of the Spirit within and among us the center of all we think, say or do."[2]

The Centrality of the Kingdom Motif

The concept of the kingdom is the central theme in the Synoptic Gospels. The term "kingdom" appears fifty-five times in Matthew's Gospel, twenty times in Mark's Gospel, and forty-six times in Luke's Gospel. The expression "Kingdom of God/Heaven" occurs about eighty times in the Gospels.

According to Jesus, seeking the Kingdom of God and

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[1]*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, (1975), 3:801.

[2]Nouwen, *Making All Things New*, 43.

setting one's heart on it should be a priority in every person's life (Matt 6:33). Thus, if we regard the seeking of the Kingdom of God and setting our hearts on it as making the life of the Spirit the center, then the development of the spiritual life is central in every human being. The statement which stresses the importance of seeking the Kingdom of God follows that which shows the futility and destructiveness of a worry-filled life that is preoccupied with needs that are less important. If the spiritual life is so central, then it means that the business of establishing and building Christian spirituality is the greatest pursuit that can be engaged in. There is nothing more important than being saved and experiencing life in the Kingdom of God.

The priority of the kingdom is further underscored by the parables of the kingdom which Jesus told to teach important lessons about the kingdom. Jesus teaches His people about the treasure that is hidden in the field and about the pearl of great value. The person who finds the treasure hidden in the field (kingdom) is overwhelmed with joy. So he quickly and gladly sells everything he has in order to buy the field with the hidden treasure. Another parable which emphasizes the same point is that of the merchant who seeks fine pearls. In this pursuit he finds one pearl of great value. He then sells all he has to buy it (Matt 13:44-46). Both of these short parables illustrate the point that has already been made: First and

foremost, it is better to be saved and be in the kingdom, no matter how much it costs, than to have everything and miss the kingdom of God. The pursuit of the spiritual life is basic to all other pursuits.

Spiritual Growth Motifs
in the Synoptic Gospels

Several parables in the Synoptic Gospels carry the growth motif referred to in the parable of the vine and the branches. Through the parable of the sower, Jesus teaches that the seed sown in the soil of the human heart germinates and grows or dies depending upon the type of soil in which the seed is sown (Matt 13:3-8; Mark 4:3-8; Luke 8:5-8). The process of sowing, germinating, and growing can be applied to the spiritual life. Spiritual formation is a process which begins as an act of God. God also makes the spiritual life grow and He nurtures it. However, the divine initiative does not exclude human effort and discipline. The various kinds of soils upon which the seed falls indicate that it is up to the person to allow the Spirit of God to accomplish God's purpose in a person's life. Spiritual growth is also implied in the parables of the grain of mustard seed, the leaven, and the talents. The grain of mustard seed is one of the smallest and yet after it germinates, the plant may grow to be one of the big trees (Matt 13:31-32; Mark 4:31,32; Luke 13:18,19). Through the parable of the leaven, Jesus teaches that even a small amount of leaven can permeate the

meal, and make it grow much larger than the leaven itself (Matt 13:33; Luke 13:20,21). The parable of the talents implies that God expects growth and development from what He has given (Matt 25:14,19-29; Mark 13:34; Luke 19:11-28).

Maturity

Jesus summarizes part of the Sermon on the Mount by giving a kind of command: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48). The key word translated "perfect" is "τέλειος." The word is defined as "having attained the end or purpose, complete." When used of persons "τέλειος" means "fully grown, mature."[1] Basically, spiritual formation should aim at spiritual maturity. Ellen White puts it more succinctly: "Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached."[2]

The "In Christ" Experience in Paul's Writings

Of the numerous images which Paul uses to express Christian experience, "in Christ" "ἐν Χριστῷ" seems to be the dominant and integrative one. It occurs constantly in Paul's writings. Richard Longenecker states that with its cognates, the phrase "in Christ" occurs 172 times in Paul's

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[1]Arndt and Gingrich, 816, 817.

[2]Ellen G. White, _Education_ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1952), 18.

writings, and he considers it to be Paul's major soteriological expression.[1] William Barclay regards the phrase as the summary of Paul's religion.[2]

Language evolution makes it difficult to specify the precise meaning of the phrase in each occurrence, and there is a possibility also that Paul may have used it with varying shades of meaning. Moreover, the case ending of the word "Χριστῷ" is not helpful because it could be dative, instrumental, or locative. Furthermore, while the preposition "ἐν" may be translated as "in" in classical Greek, it is possible, as Barclay says, that linguistically the phrase "in Christ" may be translated "through Christ," "by means of Christ," or "through the agency of Christ."[3] Whichever way the phrase is taken, it expresses an intimate spiritual relationship between Christ and the believer. As Longenecker comments, Paul uses the phrase to express "a personal and most intimate communion of man with his God and of God through Christ with man, and is thus the basis for the Christian's life, hope and acceptance."[4] So, in general, we may conclude that the phrase "in Christ" describes a life lived in union with Christ. Much can be

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[1]Richard Longenecker, The Ministry and Message of Paul (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), 98.

[2]William Barclay, The Mind of Paul (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1958), 121.

[3]Barclay, 127.

[4]Longenecker, 98, 99.

said about this union with Christ. There are images of Christian experience which are more expressive of the union between the believer and God or Christ, and the following are among those images.

More Images of Union with Christ

A number of images fall under the umbrella of "in Christ" in Paul's writings. Although each image may emphasize a different dimension of Christian experience, they all bear an element of union with Christ.

Baptized and Clothed with Christ

Paul speaks of a person who believes and is baptized as one who is clothed with Christ (Rom 6:3,4a; Gal 3:27). Thus Paul pictures the Christian as a person who is covered and enveloped with Christ. No wonder Paul writes to the saints in different places as those who are "in Christ" (Phil 1:1; 4:21; Col 1:2). After explaining how a person who accepts Christ is justified and entitled to salvation, Paul boldly states that there is no condemnation to those who are "in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1).

The symbol of baptism is an act of incorporating the believer into new life in Christ. In baptism, the believer is not only clothed with Christ, but he/she dies and is buried with Christ (Rom 6:3, 4). This image symbolizes and signifies union of the believer with Christ. Paul expresses this union with Christ to the Galatians as follows: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no

longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20).

Image of Mutual Presence and Indwelling

In some passages, Paul expresses union with Christ as "a two-directional experience: man in Christ, and Christ in man."[1] The same Paul who says that the believer is in Christ also says that Christ dwells in the believer's heart. The believer lives in Christ (Col 2:6) and is instructed by the words of Christ which dwell in the believer (Col 3:16). Paul describes one of the mysteries being made known as Christ in the believer, the hope of glory (Col 1:27). It is also the prayer of Paul that Christ may dwell in the hearts of the believers (Eph 3:17).[2]

The Temple

The image of the believer as the temple of the Holy Spirit also comes in here. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul states that God dwells not only in the Christian community (1 Cor 3:16,17) but also in the individual Christian (1 Cor 6:19). Both the church as the

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[1]John B. Nielson, In Christ (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hills Press, 1960), 54.

[2]I believe that the letter to the Ephesians was written by Paul though there are scholars who tend to believe otherwise.

community of faith and the individual Christian are
referred to as the temple of the living God. Commenting on
the temple image, Heyns states that "The Spirit's
indwelling places obligations on the church, as well as on
the believer's life-style: he does not belong to himself,
and so he must obey God's law."[1]

Dunnam elaborates on the dynamics of being indwelt
by the divine presence of Christ drawing from the Pauline
delineation of Christian experience.[2] The understanding
of Christian experience as being indwelt by Christ awakens
deeper awareness of the potentials of Christian
spirituality. This awareness is apt to bring about
radical changes in the believer's life which can be
realized because of the power of the Holy Spirit in the
life. Several images and expressions in the New Testament
emphasize the radicalness of the changes in the Christian's
life as a result of the Christian's right relationship with
God. In the following section we briefly examine a few of
those expressions.

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[1]J. A. Heyns, <u>The Church</u> (Pretoria, South Africa:
N.G. Kerkboekhandel, 1980), 60.

[2]Maxie Dunnam, <u>Alive in Christ: The Dynamic Process
of Spiritual Formation</u> (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon
Press, 1982), 41ff. Dunnam has written an exposition on
the dynamics of Christ's presence in the believer's heart.
He speaks of the presence as: (1) affirming presence, (2)
forgiving and healing presence, (3) guiding and creating
presence, and (4) converting presence.

Images of Radical Change

Several images of the Christian experience give us a picture of a radical change from a life without Christ to life in Christ. Only a few may be selected.

Resurrection to New Life

Paul speaks about being resurrected to walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:4,5). Although Paul is speaking spiritually, his logic is clear: There must be crucifixion, death, and burial before resurrection to a new life. What is suggested here is that becoming a Christian is not without struggles. In fact, the struggle may be severe because the old man of sin or the principle of life in sin does not die easily. Self-centeredness must die and Christ-centeredness must live. Holmes affirms the New Testament, reasoning that since spiritual resurrection follows spiritual death and burial, Christian living and sanctification cannot be realized without a prior death.[1] Writing to the Galatians, Paul contrasts the works of the flesh which characterize life dominated by sin (Gal 5:19,21) with the fruits of the Spirit which characterize life in Christ or in the Spirit (Gal 5:22-24). The difference is radical and qualitative. No wonder Paul admonishes the believers at Colossae that if they have been raised with Christ, they should seek heavenly things by

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[1]C. Raymond Holmes, <u>Baptized but Buried Alive</u> (Berrien Springs, Michigan: A Pointer Publication, 1987), 10.

focusing their minds on Christ (Col 3:1-4). He appealed to the Romans to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God as their spiritual worship. Christians are not to be conformed to the present value systems of the world; they must be transformed and have their minds renewed according to God's will (Rom 12:1, 2).

New Creation

Another image of radical difference which Paul uses to portray Christian spiritual life is the image of " new creation." In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul concludes one of his arguments: "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). This rendering of the passage in the Revised Standard Version emphasizes individualistic newness by adding "he is." This is not in the Greek text. Other interpreters emphasize God's act of creation. Barrett translates the verse: "A further consequence is that if anyone is in Christ, there is a new act of creation: all old things have gone, behold new things have come into being."[1]

The key phrase here seems to be "καινὴ κτίσις" which means "new creation" or "new creature." Linguistically, the newness suggested by the word "καινός" has a sense of being new "in the qualitative sense of

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[1] Cited by Haarbeck and Link, "New," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (1976), 2:672.

something previously unknown, unprecedented, marvelous."[1]
Aymer has written a dissertation on the Pauline
understanding of "καινὴ κτίσις."[2]

In Gal 6:15 Paul contrasts the ineffective
legalistic way to salvation with the effective way he calls
"new creation." No wonder Haarbeck, Link, and Brown
recognize that "new creation" is "God's saving act in the
cross of Christ."[3] On the basis of the new covenant
promise (Jer 31:31f) and the fulfillment in the Christ
event (Heb 8:8f), redemption is new creation in Christ.
Hence, when a person is in Christ, a new creative act of
God becomes operative in this person effecting real changes
in the believer. Paul can speak of the Christian as
experiencing new life. The Christian's life is derived
from its hiddenness with Christ in God (Col 3:3). The old
nature is put away and the new nature which is renewed in
the image of the Creator is put on (Col 3:10; Eph 4:24).

It is on the basis of new creation or God's saving

[1]Ibid., 669.

[2]Albert J. D. Aymer, "Paul's Understanding of
'Kaine Ktisis': Continuity and Discontinuity in Pauline
Eschatology" (Ph.D. dissertation, Drew University, 1983).
The expression "καινὴ κτίσις" as found in 2 Cor 5:17 is
pursued by Aymer, who recognizes the juxtaposition of
creation with redemption. He believes that the expression
"καινὴ κτίσις" describes the eschatological age that has
come through Christ's death and resurrection. It is an age
which is already partially realized, but remains to be
fully realized in the future. So, in place of the clause
"he is a new creation," Aymer prefers the translation
"there is a new creation." The same expression appears in
Gal 6:15.

[3]Haarbeck, Link, in Brown, "New," 671.

act on the cross of Christ that makes it imperative for the Christian to walk in the newness of life. The Christian, therefore, develops a new world-view, a new perspective, and a new value system which informs thinking, choicemaking, and acting. God calls Christians to a life that is qualitatively different from the old, not because the believer who manifests this new life is a moral person, but because the believer is in Christ.

Images of Spiritual Development in Paul

Paul makes strong appeals for spiritual development or spiritual maturity in different ways. The following are among the expressions Paul uses to describe growth to spiritual maturity.

Infants (νηπίοι) versus the Mature (τέλειοι)

Paul tells the Corinthians that he could not address them as spiritual people. He states that he had to feed them with milk, because they were not ready for solid food. Their behavior was a manifestation of their undeveloped spirituality (1 Cor 3:1-3).

Paul, in the letter to the Ephesians, lists specific gifts which have been bestowed upon various members of the church. One of the major purposes of those gifts is to help believers to mature fully so that they may no longer be childish in their Christian experience, and thus be vulnerable to deceptive and misleading forces (Eph

4:11-14). With reference to the above passage, Tilden
Edwards points out that Paul "held a developmental view of
human spirituality. He speaks of the "νηπίοι" (nepioi),
the beginners who are ready to be fed only with milk, and
the "τέλειοι" (teleoi), the mature who can be fed solid
food, those with spirit-filled knowledge."[1] The Christian
should grow and develop from a condition of spiritual
infancy to spiritual maturity.

Fullness of God and Fullness of Christ

The terms "fullness of God" and "fullness of
Christ" are used by Paul to express his wish to see members
of the Church grow up into spiritual maturity which comes
as a result of "being rooted and grounded in love" as the
following text says. Paul sees his role as facilitator of
spiritual maturity. Thus he prays:

> For this reason I bow my knees before the Father from
> whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that
> according to the riches of his glory he may grant you
> to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the
> inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts
> through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in
> love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints
> what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses
> knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness
> of God (Eph 3:14-19).

This passage is rich in the language of spiritual
formation. The New English Bible has an appositional
statement, "fullness of being," preceding "fullness of

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[1]Tilden H. Edwards, Spiritual Friend (New York:
Paulist Press, 1980), 42.

God." Perhaps this phrase was added by the translators to emphasize what is obviously a legitimate concern on Paul's part--to see Christians grow toward complete maturity.

Reference has been made to Eph 4:11-16 in which Paul points out that spiritual gifts are bestowed upon the church with the express purpose of building up the community of faith spiritually. In Eph 4:13, Paul uses the expression "fullness of Christ" instead of "fullness of God" as in Eph 3:19. Paul is calling for a secure spirituality that can stand its ground through all kinds of shaking. It is this mature spirituality which is needed by believers in Christ in times like these. Paul also speaks of spiritual progress to maturity as pressing "on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:12-15). Commenting about the need to mature spiritually, Leech writes: "Spiritual formation then, according to the New Testament letters, is a way of progress in which we are formed in and grow in, Christ; and its goal is maturity, perfection."[1]

There is another image of spirituality which seems to dominate the New Testament--the image of love. The section below briefly explores love as the major spiritual quality of the believer. Love is considered as God's love for us which in turn, evokes both love in us for Him and for our fellow human beings.

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[1]Kenneth Leech, Spirituality and Pastoral Care (London: Sheldon Press, 1986), 11.

The Supreme Virtue of Love As
Evidence of Spirituality

The two New Testament Greek words and their relatives which are translated "love" are "φιλία" and "ἀγάπη." "Φιλία" is love between friends. "Ἀγάπη" is the love of God, and we are concerned about this latter kind of love in this project. It is the kind of love which should characterize the spiritual life. In many cases in the New Testament, the word love is used in the genitive as "ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ," the love of God. This use is either subjective (God's love for humanity) or objective (human being's love of God), love "which is evoked by the presence of God."[1]

"Ἀγάπη" love cannot originate from a human heart for God is the source of this kind of love. The spiritual person loves because God loves. Christian loving is part of the expression of life that is lived in union with God.

There is no adequate definition of love even in our modern way of speaking. New Testament writers do not endeavor to define love, but they give some attributes or characteristics of love. The psychiatrist, Peck, gives what he describes as a teleological definition of love: "The will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth."[2] However, this

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[1]W. Gunther and H.G. Link, "Love," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, (1976), 2:543.

[2]M. Scott Peck, The Road Less Traveled: A New

definition reveals only a partial truth because it does not state the divine source and motivation of the love defined. Moreover, it does not state the dimension of unconditionality of love. Win Arn and his co-authors also endeavor to define love as "intentionally doing something caring or helpful for another person, in Jesus' name, regardless of the cost or consequences to oneself."[1] This definition is somewhat nebulous as regards motivation, source, and attributes of love as we read about them in the New Testament. It may suffice to settle for less adequate definitions as the nature of divine love in the New Testament is explored.

The Virtue of Love in Jesus' Teachings

In the New Testament, God's love is portrayed most supremely in the person, life, work, and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. The specific term "love" may not be used in some cases where Jesus demonstrates love in His life and ministry, but it is easy to see love in the background. To cite a few examples, the Gospels record that Jesus was compassionate (Mark 6:34; 8:2) and that He loved the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21).

Apart from His demonstration of love, Jesus teaches

Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 81.

[1]Win Arn, Carroll Nyquist, and Charles Arn, Who Cares about Love (Monrovia, California: Church Growth Press, 1988), 25.

much about love. It is important to bear in mind that whatever virtue Jesus teaches, He is teaching about Himself. Jesus taught what He was. When one of the scribes asks Jesus about the commandment of supreme importance, Jesus replies by citing part of the <u>Shema</u> which calls for undivided love to God. Jesus quotes from Deut 6:5 when He answers the Pharisaic lawyer who questions Him about the great commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matt 22:37). Jesus reaffirms the commandment recorded in Hebrew Scriptures. Jesus also quotes from Lev 19:18 in the same context to state the second commandment of supreme importance: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt 22:39). As can be observed, this is just one commandment--a commandment to love. Commenting on the command to love God, Jones points out that "In the original context this love would be understood primarily as undivided allegiance and unquestioning loyalty to the God of Israel in the face of polytheism and idolatry."[1]

Love is in the background in Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom. As has already been mentioned, Jesus teaches that the pursuit of the Kingdom should be the number one priority for the disciple of Jesus. In various ways Jesus tells His audience to maintain a focused singleness of

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[1]Jones, 64, 65.

purpose in their pursuit of the Kingdom of God. Although
there is a high price to pay to get into the Kingdom, the
Kingdom is worth any cost. Such a demanding pursuit can
only be embarked upon by a person who is motivated by the
love of Christ. In His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus
points out not only a need to be born again from above to
enter the Kingdom but also makes a statement about God's
immeasurable love. This love moved God so much and to the
extent that He gave His only Son to save humankind (John
3:16). A person who becomes a disciple does so because he
or she is possessed by this immeasurable love. Such a
person shares the love of God and becomes a channel of it.
The disciple is also called to love in a self-sacrificing
manner even if his or her love is not reciprocated or hate
is returned for that love (Matt 10:37f; 25:31f; Luke
6:22f).

The radicalness of Jesus' teaching about love is
extended in His teaching that those who are true children
of God will love not only their brothers, sisters, and
friends but their enemies also (Matt 5:43-48). In the
parable of the lost son, Jesus teaches God's unconditional
love (Luke 15:11f). Jesus illustrates the love of neighbor
and enemy by the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-
37).

One of the expressions of love that Jesus teaches
is mercy (ἔλεος). Jesus extols mercy in one of the
beatitudes. Those who are characterized by mercy are

blessed (Matt 5:7). Matthew sums up Jesus' radical message by recording the words of Jesus saying: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48). Luke records what appears to be a parallel statement: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). This makes it appear that being merciful is not only equivalent to expressing love but also a manifestation of spiritual maturity which is regarded as perfection. Love, therefore, is one of the most important qualities of the spiritual life. The Christian life without love is not Christian life at all.

The Spiritual Virtue of Love in the Teachings of Paul

Paul has much to say about love. He makes it clear that a person who becomes aware of God's inexpressible love and responds to it enters the sphere of God's love. This makes the person who responds to God's love a loving person because he or she derives love from God's love.[1] In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul prays that Christ may dwell in their hearts (the Ephesian Christians), that they may be "rooted and grounded in love," and that they may "know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge" (Eph 3:17-19). This virtually implies that to be filled with God is to be filled with love. As Gunther and Link indicate, the Pauline formula "in Christ" describes the existence of the

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[1]Gunther and Link, 545.

believer in the sphere of God's or Christ's love. When a person is in Christ or Christ is in a person, the love of God takes hold of that person and makes a believing person into a loving person (Gal 2:20; 1 Tim 1:14).[1] It is safe to conclude that the authenticity of Christian spirituality may be measured by the genuineness of the love manifested by the Christian.

Paul specifically links spirituality with love. He considers love to be the supreme spiritual quality. Paul is obviously referring to love when he tells the church at Corinth that he is about to show them the "more excellent way" (1 Cor 12:31). As far as Paul is concerned, all accomplishments are worthless unless they are motivated by love (1 Cor 13:1-3). Love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom 13:8-10). Love provides better motivation (1 Cor 5:14) in the sense that there is no trace of selfishness in the Christian's service to God and to human beings. Love harmonizes and stabilizes relationships among members of the church (Phil 2:2). Paul writes about the supreme virtue of love in a way that makes us sense that love cannot be surpassed by anything. Moreover, Paul affirmed that nothing on earth or in heaven can separate the believer from the love of God (Rom 8:33-39).

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[1]Ibid.

The Spiritual Virtue of Love
in John's Writings

The references to love in John's Gospel and epistles emphasize the inseparability of love and spirituality. John states clearly that to be a child of God and not love at the same time is a contradiction in terms (1 John 4:7) because God is love (John 4:8). The statement of mutual indwelling whereby God abides in the believer's heart and the believer abides in God is repeated by John in different ways, even as he records what Jesus said. The passage which emphasizes mutual indwelling--the vine and the branches--has already been explored. Jesus says "abide in me, and I in you" (John 15:4). Jesus also prays for unity among His people which is based on the unity that exists between the Father and the Son. The Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. Jesus Himself says that He is in the believers, and the believers are in Him. With this multifold union, the believer is enabled to know the love with which the Father loves the Son (John 17:20-26). In his letter, John states that, by loving, the believer demonstrates that he or she lives in union with God or Christ (John 4:13,16). Thus, true spirituality is evidenced by love, and this love is to be seen in the love the believer shows to fellow human beings. A person who professes to love God but still hates another human being is to be taken as a liar (John 4:20).

John records the words of Jesus as He reaffirms the

commandment to love fellow Christians. The badge of
Christian discipleship is Christian love among fellow
Christians (John 13:34,35).

Summary

All the images of Christian experience and
spirituality surveyed in this chapter express the reality
of Christian experience. It is important that each
individual Christian study and understand the essence of
Christian experience. This is essential in order to seek,
by the power of the Holy Spirit, to become what the images
portray the Christian life to be.

It is important also for the persons whose mission
is to help others build their Christian lives to have
first-hand knowledge and experience of that which they seek
to develop in others. Ministers or pastors are
professionals who seek to promote spirituality in lives of
other people. As such, they need to have a genuine
experience of faith and spirituality so as to be able to
share it with others. A personal experience and clear
understanding of a truly Christian life is the best
equipment for pastors because it helps them to work with a
clear objective of what is to be produced through their
efforts.

A clear idea of what constitutes the genuine
Christian experience should form a basis for the education
of pastoral persons. Education for ministry is not

intended to produce only champions on Christian doctrines. Neither should it focus only on equipping students with pastoral skills. It should prepare persons at the core of their being. More than anything else, ministerial students need to understand that Christianity is essentially and fundamentally, a dynamic and living relationship with Jesus Christ. If the ministers personally miss the experience of salvation, all other efforts they engage in may ultimately be meaningless.

It is on the basis of what has been stated in the above paragraph that this project is designed for Solusi College. Those who are educated for pastoral ministry at Solusi College should also be spiritually educated. In this chapter, the source, nature, dynamics, and goal of Christian spirituality have been briefly explored. John, Paul, and the Synoptic writers, each in his own way, have recorded images which portray what Christian experience is supposed to be.

The New Testament makes it clear that new life in Christ begins as a complete change. This is described as new birth in John's Gospel and as repentance in the Synoptic Gospels. Paul speaks of being crucified with Christ, dying to sin with Christ, being buried with Christ, and being raised to newness of life with Christ.

From the lips of Jesus Himself, the message comes in no uncertain terms that seeking the kingdom first is the priority of every person who believes in Him. People enter

this kingdom through new birth and repentance. It has been concluded that pursuing the kingdom of God can be regarded as the need to cultivate and develop spirituality. Jesus teaches this in different ways, including the use of parables recorded in the Gospels. Maturity, or Christlikeness, is the goal to which Jesus calls His people.

The significance of the Pauline phrase "in Christ" has been examined and found to be a summation of Paul's understanding of Christian religious experience. Other images which elucidate the category of being in Christ have also been briefly examined. All the images help us to understand the nature, dynamics, and goal of a life that is lived in union with Christ.

Finally, it has also been made clear that the spiritual virtue of love is one of the dominant themes throughout the Gospels and epistles in the New Testament.

The emphasis in this chapter has been on spirituality in the individual Christian. However, there is not a great deal in the New Testament about personal spiritual formation. The focus in the New Testament is on the community of faith.[1] Most of what has been written in this chapter about the basis of spirituality actually relates to both individual and corporate spirituality. For the greater part, Jesus was addressing groups when He spoke

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[1]Leech, 9.

about spiritual experience and the Pauline epistles were written to churches. In the next chapter, selected images and conceptions of the entity called "church" which inform spirituality are explored.

CHAPTER III

SELECTED NEW TESTAMENT CONCEPTIONS AND IMAGES OF
ECCLESIOLOGY WHICH BEAR UPON SPIRITUALITY

The New Testament images of spirituality explored in the previous chapter portray the centrality of spirituality and spiritual formation in personal Christian experience. Some of the same images focus on corporate Christian experience. In fact, the New Testament describes spirituality mainly as a corporate experience. In this chapter, some conceptions and images of the entity called "church" are briefly explored to see how the images bear upon spirituality and spiritual formation.

The broader question is: What is the Church? It is difficult to explain what the church is; hence, numerous images are used in the New Testament to designate it. Nevertheless, the conception the church has of itself provides it not only with the basis for its theology and practice of ministry but also with the ethos that conditions its spirituality. Some insights on spirituality may be derived from both what the New Testament portrays the church to be and the reasons for its existence.

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In this project, and in this chapter in particular, the focus is on those dimensions of church and church life which inform spirituality and spiritual formation. First of all, the nature of the church itself, whether expressed in certain terms or images in the New Testament, tells something about Christian spirituality. Second, the purpose for which the church was called into being suggests that authentic Christian spirituality should enhance the integrity of the church as it engages in accomplishing the task for which it was called into being. Third, the life of the church, its liturgical and sacramental dimensions, should promote spirituality. These three dimensions of the church are explored in order to underline some insights on spirituality.

" Ἐκκλησία" Expresses the Nature of the Church

The most common Greek word used in reference to the church in the New Testament is "ἐκκλησία,"[1] which literally means "a calling out." It was known in the Greek secular world, and it meant any called or summoned assembly

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[1]L. Coenen, "Church, Synagogue," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (1985), 1:297-298. " Ἐκκλησία" is used three times in the Gospels and only in the first Gospel (Matt 16:18; 18:17). Luke uses it more than 23 times in Acts. Paul uses the same word about 60 times. " Ἐκκλησία" also occurs frequently in the first three chapters of the Revelation to John. It occurs twice in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb 2:12; 12:23), once in James (5:14), and once in 3 John (vs 6).

of free citizens who "gathered together for some public
purpose."[1]

It is not clear how the word came to be used for a
religious community. Nevertheless, the term "ἐκκλησία"
has become rich with theological content and meaning. The
Hebrew word "קָהָל," (qahal), is translated "ἐκκλησία" in the
Septuagint. In the Old Testament, the word "קָהָל"
designates both local assemblies or Israel as a community.[2]
It can be asserted that the "ἐκκλησία" of the New Testament
is the continuation of the "קהל" of the Old Testament.

With reference to a religious community, "ἐκκλησία"
appears to have five possible meanings:

First, it is used in some passages to refer to the
whole body of believers throughout the world (Eph 1:22;
3:10; 2 Cor. 10:32; 12:28; Phil 3:6; Col 1:5,8,24; Matt
16:18).

Second, "ἐκκλησία" is used to designate a
a particular local church such as the Church at Corinth,
Thessalonica, or Laodicea (2 Cor 16:1, Gal 1:1; 1 Thess
2:14).

Third, "ἐκκλησία" is used to designate any
assembly of believers who gather at any place for the

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[1]Milo L. Chapman, "The Church in the Gospels," in
The Church: An Inquiry into Ecclesiology from a Biblical
Theological Perspective, eds. Melvin E. Dieter, and Daniel
N. Berg (Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, 1984), 29.

[2]SDA Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Church, Nature
of."

purpose of worship (1 Cor 11:18; 14:19, 23, 28).

Fourth, "ἐκκλησια" is used to designate a group of churches in a region (Acts 9:31).

Fifth, "ἐκκλησια" may refer to a group of believers in an individual's home (1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 2).

The concept of being "called" carries meanings that require exploration. The Holy Scriptures indicate that God has always called persons for use in accomplishing His purpose for humankind. Those who are called are separated and bonded in a new solidarity of people who belong to God. They are bound together by a compact known in a special way as a covenant (διαθήκη).[1]

It is the sense of covenant which "grounds a community called into being from beyond itself," as Fowler says, and the members of this community are shaped by

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[1]The word "διαθήκη" is to be contrasted with "συνθήκη." "συνθήκη" is an agreement or treaty between two partners who may be of equal rank. On the other hand, "διαθήκη" is a unilateral action by the superior for the benefit of the inferior. God establishes a covenant (διαθήκη) for the benefit of His people. For explanation, see J. Guhrt, "Covenant, Guarantee, Mediator," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (1985), 1:365f. So the word "covenant" is used here in the New Testament sense as described with provisions of that covenant in Heb 8:8-12; 10:16f, and as a fulfillment of Jer 31:31-34. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews brings out an understanding of the covenant that is beyond the mere agreement of ordinary contractarians. This covenant is to be understood as God's enabling call and promise. God calls a people, and in the person, ministry, and work of Jesus Christ, promises and enables them to become what He intends them to be.

"cause, beliefs and values that are bigger than they."[1] The church is this community that has been called into being by God. It is imperative for the church to accept the provisions of the covenant and to allow God's grace intentionally to enable it to mature in its spiritual relationship with the calling and covenant-making God.

God's call to a people effects changes if those called respond positively to the calling. The whole gospel story is about this. When persons respond positively to the gospel, they are graced by God to experience new identity in Jesus Christ. Thus, being "called out" should be experienced and bring about dynamics which enhance the relationship between Christ and the church. Relationships among members themselves are also enriched. Watson develops the concept of being called out in four points: called out of the bondage of sin, called for an intimate relationship with God, called together into a nurturing and redemptive community, and called to an eternal glorious inheritance.[2] All the points are powerful, and with this kind of vision, the Church should always be striving to live according to its calling.

The church is described in the New Testament as a fully human community, and yet to be understood as

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[1]James W. Fowler, <u>Faith Development and Pastoral Care</u> (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 34.

[2]David Watson, <u>I Believe in the Church</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 67-73.

belonging to God. Hence, Paul writes "to the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1). This gives a clue to the effect that the church is God's community.[1] In this community, members have responsibilities to God and mutual obligations to one another. This understanding of the church should have a bearing upon how those who lead such a community should be educated and formed. No matter where the church is and no matter the numerical size, Jesus promises to be present to make the gathering a church. "For where two or three are gathered in my name," Jesus says, "there am I in the midst of them" (Matt 18:20).

Images Which Portray the Nature of the Church

The New Testament employs numerous images to describe the nature of the church. In this section, a few of those images which relate to spirituality and spiritual formation are examined.

The Church as the Body of Christ

The image of the church as the Body of Christ is the favored one in Paul's writings. Four of the Pauline books, Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians carry the image.

Paul himself gives us clues as to how this image is

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[1]John Westerhoff III, Living the Faith Community: The Church that Makes a Difference (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 24. Westerhoff establishes by quoting Congar that the Church is "fundamentally a community."

to be understood. In some passages, Paul uses the expression "body" to speak about the whole person (Rom 6:12; 12:1). To help us to understand the ecclesiological significance of the expression "Body of Christ," Minear refers us to 5-8. Two human solidarities are mentioned by Paul, and the solidarities are bodies. Adam represents the body of death while Christ represents the body of life.[1] Thus the term "body" is used to express the Hebrew idea of corporate personality and also to express the Greek concept of the body as a unity of various parts. These two ways of using the term "body" seem to lie behind Paul's use of the image "Body of Christ" (Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:13, 27; Eph 4:12).[2]

It appears that the image "Body of Christ" is related to the expression "in Christ," which has been discussed above.[3] Believers "in Christ" are also designated as the "Body of Christ."

Some ecclesiologists have gone to the extreme of interpreting the metaphor to indicate that the church is an extension of the incarnation of Christ. In this view, the church is Christus prolongatus. As Heyns stresses, the

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[1]Paul Minear, Images of the Church in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 174-178.

[2]Bill J. Leonard, The Nature of the Church: Layman's Library of Christian Doctrine (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1986), 46.

[3]See pp. 28-37, "The 'In Christ' Experience in Paul's Writings," in chapter 2.

concept <u>Christus prolongatus</u> must be rejected because the church is not that.[1] Contrary to Küng's assertion,[2] Christ exists apart from the church because he maintains a distinct existence. The church is dependent upon Christ, but Christ is not dependent upon the church. Christ has always been there even before the church came into existence (John 8:58). Moreover, the church is sinful. We cannot harmonize our understanding of Christ as the sinless one with the concept of the church as <u>Christus prolongatus</u>.

By this image, "Body of Christ," Paul underlines several important spiritual truths. The image has to be understood in terms of Christ being the head of this body. In this way, the expression "Body of Christ" expresses an intimate spiritual union that exists between Christ and His church and among the believers themselves. The image is also clearly a statement of unity in diversity, and of interdependence among members. Paul makes the meaning of the metaphor clearer in his discussion of spiritual gifts (Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:12-30; Eph 4:1-16). Paul shows in these passages that just as the physical body has many limbs that are useful to the proper functioning of the body, the Body of Christ also has many limbs (members) who are useful to its proper functions.

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[1]Heyns, 50.

[2]Hans Küng, <u>The Church</u> (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), 234. Küng goes to the extreme and is taking the image too far when he says: "Christ does not exist without the Church."

John also emphasizes the unity that exists between Christ and the church. "We are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 5:20). The believers' fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and with one another is also affirmed by John (1 John 1:3-7).

In His priestly prayer, Jesus Himself expresses unity between Himself and the Father, and He prays for unity between the Godhead and the church (John 17:20-26). In this prayer, Jesus shows that His mission to the world is validated when members of the church live in union with God and are lovingly united among themselves (vs. 23). The redemptive interpersonal relationships among members of the church transcend national, racial, cultural, or any other barriers which separate human beings. Heyns states it succinctly when he says that the vertical union with Christ has a consequence, a horizontal union with other members. It is not a unity which means a fusion of personalities. The Christ who is closely united in fellowship with His body does not lose His distinctiveness. Members of the body who are united do not lose their distinctiveness and individuality. Distinctions remain; they lose not only their divisiveness but also are intended to strengthen the body.

The image "Body of Christ" also places a supreme value on the church. It gives a sense of the exaltedness of the church and also of its complete dependence upon Him.

Additional Images Related to the "Body of Christ" Image

More New Testament images express similar concepts expressed by the image "Body of Christ," although the emphases may differ slightly. The images "Bride of Christ," "God's Building Project," and "Love" are among those images.

The Church As Bride of Christ

Paul also uses the image of church as the "Bride of Christ" (Eph 5:22f). In one of the parables, Jesus alludes to Himself as the Bridegroom (Matt 25:1-13). The writer of the Apocalypse portrays the gathering of the people of God as the Lamb's wife (Rev 19:7). The major emphasis of this image seems to be the intimate spiritual union between Christ and the church, which should lead to love and loyalty on the part of the church. The profundity of the mystery of union between Christ and the church is expressed by Paul himself when he quotes from the Pentateuch record (Gen 2:24) and from Jesus (Matt 19:5, 6). In the same manner, Paul writes concerning marriage but with reference to the church: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church" (Eph 5:31, 32). The love relationship between Christ and the church must grow from strength to strength.

Church as God's Building Project

The idea of being built up as God's dwelling place or temple seems to be parallel with the idea of growing up as the body of Christ. Spiritual formation is underscored by the two parallel ideas. The body has to grow and the building must go up as God's temple. It is quite significant that the emphasis on building in the New Testament is placed on people and not physical temples. The people who make up the Church are to be built up. Believers are God's corporate building project (1 Cor 3:9); they are God's temple or dwelling place (1 Cor 3:16, 17; Eph 2:22); they are also "God's house" or "God's spiritual house" (Heb 3:6; 1 Pet 2:5). Thus, the image of the church as a building points to the theme of growth and development. One other parallel idea that has been emphasized can also be drawn from the image of the building. It is the idea of spiritual union between Christ and the Church. In the body image, Christ is the Head of the body. In the image of the bride, Christ is the Bridegroom, and in the image of the building, Christ is the "cornerstone in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph 2:20, 21; 1 Pet 2:6-8).

Minear maintains that the image of growth as a body has the same impact as the image of being built up as a house. "The process by which men are 'built into a

spiritual house' (1 Pet 2:5) becomes a virtual definition of the church itself."[1]

The Place of Love in the Growth
and Development of the Body

It is important to see how love relates to the images which are being dealt with. It is with a conviction of the need to grow up into Christ and "building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12, 15), that Paul makes an appeal for "a more excellent way"--the way of love (1 Cor 12:31-14:1). Love, as Mulholland recognizes, "expresses the essential dynamic of a radical new order of being that shapes Christian life in the midst of the old order of being."[2] This new order of being is ushered in by the redemptive and loving act of God in the person of Jesus Christ whose life, ministry, and sacrificial death personify God's unspeakable love and mercy. The redemptive act of God effects a reconciliation between God and believers in Him. In this way, those who are in Christ Jesus by faith become the body of Christ with Christ as the head. This means that the believers' lives are under the lordship of Christ. Within this new order of being, Christians are enabled to love God with all their hearts,

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[1]Minear, 164.

[2]M. Robert Mulholland, "The Church in the Epistles," in An Inquiry into the Church from a Biblical and Theological Perspective, ed. Melvin E. Dieter and Daniel N. Berg (Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, 1984), 95.

soul, mind, and strength and to love their neighbor as themselves (Mark 12:29-31). Love nurtures and transforms human lives for the glory of God. It is this that inspires Paul to state that when a person is in Christ, he/she is in the context of new creation (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15).[1] According to Minear, we must recognize that

> The image of the body and the image of love should for all significant purposes be considered as one image; they cannot, in fact, be considered otherwise, since the primary content of both is determined by the image of Christ.[2]

What Minear says about the relationship between the image of body and that of love could also be said about the relationship between the images of the bride and love, and building and love. For the body, the gifts of the Spirit are essential to the building up of the body of Christ and according to the apostle Paul, love as the fruit of the Spirit is "the more excellent way" (1 Cor 12:31-14:1). Love co-ordinates the operation of the gifts because, as Minear observes, it provides the greatest cohesive force in the growth of the building (1 Cor 8:1; Eph 2:21f).[3]

When Paul speaks of Christ as the head of the body, he also points out that members of the body are to grow up

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[1]See pp. 29-33 above "Images of Radical Change" in chapter 2 for a brief exploration of the significance of the image, "New Creation."

[2]Minear, 194. Prior to this Paul Minear has already pointed out to us that "First Corinthians 13, must therefore be interpreted as having major ecclesiological importance."

[3]Minear, 164.

to be like Christ (Eph 4:15). Christlikeness is the ideal. Love had a role in the process of growing up as vs. 16 shows: "the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."[1] Love "knits together" every part of the body so that the parts may work together and edify one another.

The Purpose of the Church

The image of the 'Body of Christ' also indicates the purpose for which God called the church into being. God's purpose for humankind is to be accomplished through the community of faith, the church. As Ellis states: "The church is both the product of God's purpose and the means for achieving it."[2] God's purpose for the church seems to encompass three main components: to glorify God, to nurture Christian spiritual life, and to proclaim the gospel to all creation.

To Glorify God

First and foremost, the church's main purpose is to glorify God. The two other components are closely linked to this first one. We get a clue to the meaning "to the glory of God" in the New Testament from Jesus Himself. For example: the disciples' light is to be allowed to shine and

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Joe S. Ellis, The Church on Purpose (Cincinnati, Ohio: Standard Publishing, 1982), 33.

their good works seen so that those who observe them may glorify the Father in heaven (Matt 5:16). God is glorified when His people bear much fruit of the Spirit (John 15:8). Jesus states that He Himself has lived in a way that glorifies God on earth (John 17:4) by accomplishing the very things that are in accordance with God's will.

Paul states that glory is due to God forever (Rom 11:36; Eph 1:14). Sin makes people fall short of God's glory (Rom 3:23). Members of the church are to glorify God in their bodies (1 Cor 6:19, 20), and whatever they do, whether they eat or drink they should do it to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). The benediction in the epistle to the Hebrews invokes God to equip the saints to do that which is pleasing to God, thus giving glory to Him forever and ever (Heb 13:20, 21).

Peter points out that God has called the believers to his own glory and excellence (2 Pet 1:3). In the Revelation, John sees a picture of many people from every nation, tribe, and language, together with the angels, fall before the throne of God in worship. They shout saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen" (Rev 7:9-12). Furthermore, John sees the angel that proclaims the eternal gospel to every nation, tribe, and people. The essence of the message proclaimed includes giving glory to God (Rev 14:6, 7).

The glory of God is a constantly recurring theme in the New Testament. In fact, the word "glory" (δόξα) occurs 165 times in the New Testament alone.[1] Glory is an important image of spirituality.

Michael Ramsey describes glory as essentially God's revealed character. This includes ideas of light in the form of God's dazzling radiance in His manifestation in the world and "evokes the human response both of acts of worship and praise and of living in accord with God's purpose."[2] Glory and glorifying God have prominent roles in Christian spirituality, as Ramsey reminds us. It is the discovery of the majestic and self-giving God that awakens in a person a response of adoration, love, awe, dependence, and fellowship with God. Men and women are glorified as they participate in the glory of God.[3] As a person worships and beholds the glory of God, he/she is changed to be what God wants him/her to be. No wonder Paul writes: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is

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[1]S. Aalen, "Glory, Honor," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 2:44-46. Aalen shows that the Hellenistic meaning of the word does not bear the profound theological content. New Testament writers use the word "glory" in the richer Old Testament sense.

[2]A. Michael Ramsey, "Glory," The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality, 1983 ed., 175.

[3]Ibid., 176.

the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18). Images of God's glory profoundly influence spirituality. 2 Cor 3:18 indicates that persons are changed by beholding and living in an atmosphere of awareness of the presence of God. Spirituality has to do with living in the presence of God.[1]

Ramsey alerts us that while human beings may share in God's glory, God remains distinctly God and the human person remains distinctly human. Thus, "the line of distinction between the adorer and Adored, redeemed and Redeemer, creature and Creator" remains unblurred.[2]

John Powell elaborates on the statement made by one of the early Church Fathers, Irenaeus, who said: "The glory of God is a human being who is fully alive!"[3] Powell draws developmental insights from Irenaeus' statement by giving a description of what a fully human and fully alive person is like. Essentially, a fully human and fully alive person is one who is growing in all his or her faculties and powers. Spiritual formation is a program whereby the believer intentionally seeks to become all that God intends him/her to be for the glory of His name. The church glorifies God,

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[1]Tilden H. Edwards, _Living in the Presence: The Disciplines of the Spiritual Heart_ (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987). Edwards has written the whole book on spirituality in pursuance of the theme "Living in the Presence."

[2]Ramsey, 176.

[3]Quoted in John Powell, _Fully Human, Fully Alive: A New Life Through a New Vision_ (Allen, Texas: Tabor Publishing, 1976), 7.

not only by demonstrating what human beings can become by the grace of God but also by providing the atmosphere and environment in which such growth can take place. This leads to the second component of the church's function--the nurture of the spiritual lives of those who live for God.

One-Anothering

There are numerous references in the New Testament to the phrase "one another," and most of them signify the mutual care which church members should manifest to one another.

The theme of "one-anothering"[1] can be heard coming from Jesus Himself. At the Last Supper, Jesus urges His disciples to wash "one another's feet" (John 13:14). Jesus gives them an example of humble service one to the other. In the same passage, Jesus gives what He calls a "new commandment"--to love one another (vs. 34). The commandment to love one another is mentioned repeatedly in the fifteenth chapter of John (15:12, 17). Perhaps there is justification in inferring that the importance of the divine imperative to love deserves repetition.

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[1]The expression "one-anothering" is coined by Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr., in the introduction to his book _Effective Biblical Counseling_ (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), 16. Although Crabb is arguing for a counseling program whereby local church members can counsel one another, this coined expression inspired me to explore further the concept of "one-anothering" in the New Testament. What we find in the New Testament is quite revealing. Hence, it seemed quite fitting to select this expression as the image which aptly describes the second component of the church's reason for being.

Paul also uses the expression "one another" many times in connection with the mutual love and care that should exist among church members (1 Thess 3:12; 4:9). In times of sorrow, believers are to comfort one another (1 Thess 4:18). They are also to "encourage one another and build one another up" (5:11). Christians in Rome are urged to "love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor" (Rom 12:10), and "live in harmony with one another" (vs. 16, 15:5), and settle the ever-present debt of love to one another (13:8).

The Colossians are forbidden from lying to one another (Col 3:9) and are urged to be patient with one another, to forgive each other, and "admonish one another in all wisdom" (vss. 13, 16). Ephesians are also admonished to be patient with one another (4:2); they are to remember that they are one and should be "kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (vss. 25, 32).

One of the Biblical mandates for having regular meetings as a church to worship God is found in the epistle to the Hebrews (Heb 10:24, 25). Here the apostle implies that believers have mutual obligations to "stir up one another to love and good works" and to "encouraging one another." Thus the experience of meeting from time to time is essential to the church because when believers meet, they not only give glory and praise to God in worship but also experience mutual edification. James calls for

confession of sins and faults to one another and prayer for
one another, so that there may be healing (Jas 5:16).
Although the healing referred to here is physical, the
whole statement indicates that sickness is more than
physical. Emotional, spiritual, and other aspects of human
well-being are involved. True healing is holistic. Human
beings cannot bear grudges and resentments and expect to
function properly. They need to confess to one another and
pray for one another.

Peter also admonishes believers to "love one
another earnestly from the heart" (1 Pet 1:22). He
considers love for one another to be of prime importance:
"Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since
love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet 4:8). John
contrasts Christian life in the new order of being with the
older existence outside Christ. To John, the contrast is
as real as the contrast between light and darkness (John
1:4,9). Those who have fellowship with God live in the
light, and they "have fellowship with one another (1 John
1:5-7). John speaks quite profusely about Christian life
which should be characterized by redemptive loving
relationships (1 John 2:10, 11; 3:11; 3:23). Fifteen of
the twenty-one verses of 1 John 4 are devoted to
exhortations to love one another.

It is clear in the New Testament that the church
exists to give glory to God and to nurture the spiritual
lives of its members. Mutual care for one another is part

of the divine imperative for the church. John McNeill
describes this practice in the New Testament Church as
"mutual edification (aedificatio mutua) and fraternal
correction (correptio fraterna).[1] One-anothering means to
love one another in Christ. As shown above, the New
Testament regards love as the supreme Christian virtue and
evidence of true spirituality.[2] It might be added and
emphasized that the church should be challenged to nurture
its members and thus enhance their spirituality in times
like these. As Crabb says,

> Christian service is not only evangelizing but includes
> the selfless building up of the Lord's people. Perhaps
> this is the most important aspect of service since a
> healthy group of believers best illustrates the Body of
> Christ and has a magnetic influence far greater than a
> fervent gospel appeal.[3]

Much alienation, brokenness, and loneliness can be
reduced by a church that adequately nurtures its members.
A church that worships and gives glory to God and has
members who are adequately nourished spiritually is in a
good position to take care of the third component of its
purpose, which is to "preach the gospel to the whole
creation" (Mark 16:15).

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[1]John McNeill, _A History of the Cure of Souls_ (New
York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951), 85.

[2]See pg. 37-44 above, "The Supreme Virtue of Love as
Evidence of Spirituality" in chapter 2.

[3]Crabb, 10.

Preaching the Gospel to the Whole Creation

The third component of the church's purpose is to proclaim the gospel to all the people of the world. Jesus commissioned His disciples to reach out to the world in order to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19). Jesus foretells: "And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations" (Matt 24:14). In the last book of the Bible, John is shown an "angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people" (Rev 14:6). The church is the entity that is charged with the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel to all people in all places. Scriptural evidence indicates that preaching the gospel is not just verbal proclamation. It has to do with witnessing or demonstrating with personal lives the power of the gospel to transform human lives. Spirituality enables the church to preach the gospel more effectively. There are images which emphasize this component of witnessing to the power of the gospel. Three images which inform the witnessing dimension of the church are briefly examined.

The Church as a Letter
from Christ

The image of being a letter from Christ appears once in the New Testament, and it is found in Paul's letter to the church at Corinth. Although the message was

addressed to a particular church, the image conveys an important truth about the church in general. Paul points out that the church at Corinth is the letter of recommendation which is known and read by all people (2 Cor 3:2, 3). In this image, Paul is referring to the members' lives which have been transformed by grace. To Paul, this is a strong argument for the authenticity of his ministry to them. It is the genuine Christian experience that can be seen by others that constitutes a powerful testimony to the power of the gospel to change lives.

Being a letter from Christ presupposes the letter must be a genuine one. It becomes clear that authentic spirituality becomes the key to being a genuine letter from Christ. All those who have been transformed by the gospel, Minear comments, constitute the letter itself.[1]

The Church as a Light to the World

The image of the church as light elucidates God's purpose for the church. It is also an important image of spirituality, for light carries with it overtones of God's revelation to humanity for redemptive purposes.[2] The term "light" occurs seventy-two times in the New Testament. In some ways light suggests the embodiment of the essential

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[1]Minear, 31.

[2]H. S. Blaney, "Light," Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, 1976 ed., 3:933. God's character and holiness are imaged as Light (1 John 1:5; Jas. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:16).

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message which should go out to the world. John and Jesus
equate light with Jesus Himself and Christian life lived in
accordance with God's will (John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 9:56; 12:36;
1 John 2:7-10). Living as a Christian is said to be living
and walking in the light, and this is contrasted with
living as a non-Christian, walking in darkness. Urban
Holmes recognizes that light versus darkness is a dominant
image of spirituality in John.[1] Believers are also in the
light while unbelievers are in darkness (2 Cor 6:14; Eph
5:8).

Paul was converted when he received light from
heaven, and through him God sent light to the Gentiles
(Acts 9:3; 26:13-18). Believers are to put on the armor of
light as they relate to various sectors of the world
community (Rom 13:12).

Peter refers to the covenant people of God as
those who have been called "out of darkness into his
marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9). When people receive light,
they are illuminated by the light intellectually, morally,
and spiritually. The church is God's channel of light to
the world, as Jesus pointed out in His Sermon on the Mount:
"You are the light of the world," and "Let your light so
shine before men, that they may see your good works and
give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt 5:14,
16). Hahn stresses that it is important and necessary for

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[1]Urban T. Holmes, History, 19.

the church to reflect the Light because, in doing so, the church meets its missionary responsibility.[1] This also presupposes authentic spirituality. God's purpose for humankind cannot be accomplished meaningfully when those who are members of the body of Christ do not reflect genuine light from the Light of the world.

The Church as the Salt of the Earth

In the passage where Jesus calls His disciples the light of the world, He also refers to them as the salt of the earth (Matt 5:13). Although this is the only reference where salt is used to designate Jesus' disciples, the image of salt bears ecclesiological connotations. Minear points out that several properties of salt make it a significant image of the church.[2] First of all, salt has value in preserving food. Second, it makes food more palatable. Third, salt has medicinal value. In the same manner, Christians should lead a life that curtails the corrupting influences in the human communities. They should also contribute to making life more livable. Medicine is intended to heal. The church is a healing community. God works through the church to alleviate pain and heal the wounds that inflict not only those in the church but also those in the world at large. The church endeavors to heal,

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[1]H. C. Hahn, "Light," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 2:494.

[2]Minear, 29.

not just physical wounds but also emotional and spiritual wounds.

Spirituality and the Life of the Church

This third dimension of the church grows out of the depths of its nature and from the purpose for which it was called into being. "All activities which members of the church would regard as expressions of what their church is and does"[1] constitute the third dimension of the church. Depending on how they are engaged in church activities may enhance spirituality or hinder it. Specific church activities and ceremonies like worship, participating in sacraments, studying the written Word, and praying may enhance spirituality.

General Worship and Spirituality

The church worships God. When the church worships as it should, God is glorified and the worshipper is sanctified. By nature human beings are worshippers. Those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Some of the issues in the book of Revelation center on worship. Those who belong to Christ and love God worship God while those who do not belong to Christ worship the Beast (Rev 13:8; 14:7). The New Testament makes it clear in passages like those above that the One a person

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[1]Bruce Reed, The Dynamics of Religion: Process and Movement in Christian Churches (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1978), 71.

worships determines the destiny of the worshipper. Worship is the believer's loving response to God. Worship may have a tremendous shaping power upon the life of the Christian.

The early church worshipped regularly (Acts 2:42), and they are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of the brethren (Heb 10:24, 25). It ·s at worship where the presence of God is experienced in a special way and the worshipper is empowered to live according to God's will. The early church was empowered to live for God. As Mulholland writes:

> The inner orientation of its being in worship/love of God and its experience of the living presence of God in its midst empowered it to live in the world a life whose radiance and power set at nought the imprisoning dynamics of the surrounding culture and the dehumanizing consequences of its false worship. The church as Temple is the inbreaking into history of an order of being whose worship is true and whose community of love provides a matrix of nurture for wholeness that militates against the fragmenting brokenness and bondage of the world order of being's false worship.[1]

What Mulholland says shows that true Christian worship enhances the believer's spirituality. No wonder Robertson suggests that the mission of the church is not fulfilled without the cultivation of the spirit and attitude of reverence to God, adoration, and devotion to Him.[2] Robertson further maintains that the vision of the glory of God sustains the soul and enables it to survive through

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[1]Mulholland, Jr., 107.

[2]James D. Robertson, <u>Minister's Worship Handbook</u> (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 14.

times of storm and stress. The worshipper is apprehended,
and he or she responds with the whole heart to the mystery,
majesty, and mercy of God. As a result of true worship,
the believer is impelled "to go about doing good even as
our Lord did."[1]

Although written some decades ago, the words of
William Temple are still an apt description of the dynamics
of true Christian worship:

> Worship is the quickening of conscience by God's
> holiness; the nourishment of the mind with His truth;
> the purifying of the imagination by His beauty; the
> opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of the
> will to His purpose; and all of this gathered up in
> adoration--the most selfless emotion of which our
> nature is capable, and therefore the chief remedy for
> that self-centeredness which is our original sin and
> the source of all actual sin.[2]

There are indeed spiritual blessings that accrue to the
worshipper as specified by authorities above.

Reed's Oscillation Theory
Illustrates Importance
of Worship

Spiritual dynamics derived from true worship are
clearly expressed in Reed's oscillation theory[3]. Reed's

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[1]Ibid., 15, 17.

[2]William Temple, _Readings in St John's Gospel_ (New
York: Macmillan Company, 1947), 68. See also Robertson,
18.

[3]Oscillation Theory was developed by the Grubb
Institute in London. The Institute is chaired by Bruce
Reed, an Anglican clergyman. The theory applies principles
of social research into the functioning of groups,
organizations, and communities. In _Dynamics of Religion_
(p. 73, n. 1 above) Reed's theory is explained and
applied.

oscillation theory is built on what he calls two modes of human experience, that of <u>extradependence</u> and of <u>intradependence</u>.[1] In this theory, precise terms derived from the social sciences are used to describe the process of moving from extradependence to intradependence and vice versa. It is a process that takes time and has transitional stages and phases between the two modes. The six stages of the process are clearly delineated as: Regression Phase, Extradependent Mode, Transition from Extradependence, Transformation Phase, Intradependent Mode, and Transition from Intradependence.[2]

Reed uses the model of a child's dependence upon the parent and relates this to each person's dependence on God. Thus, like a small child who oscillates between playing alone and coming back to the parent for emotional support, each human being is supposed to regress[3] to

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[1]<u>Extradependence</u> here is used to refer to outside dependence which constitutes conditions where a person regards herself or himself as dependent upon a person, object, or power other than self for confirmation, protection, and sustenance. On the other hand, <u>intradependence</u> refers to conditions where the individual regards his confirmation, protection, and sustenance as in her/his own hands. The assumption is that the conditions imply dependence upon self that has internalized and assimilated persons or primal object's values and principles. See Reed, <u>The Dynamics of Religion</u>, 32.

[2]For a diagram that illustrates oscillation theory see Appendix A. A brief explanation of the process follows the diagram.

[3]The term "regress" is used here not in a negative sense to describe a situation of going back to an earlier childish stage of development. It is used positively to describe a situation of withdrawing from self-reliance to

extradependence. According to the theory, it is necessary to regress in order to be refreshed and encouraged "to venture again," as Edwards puts it.[1] Corporate worship provides the experience of extradependence which is vital to human living and functioning. Although, in some places, Edwards uses Reed's exact words, he goes on to say, succinctly, that

> Corporate worship is a prime example: in such acts of worship our thoughts and feelings are engaged by narratives, images and ideas which refer to a world, or a realm of experience other than that of our working and social lives. When worship is fully and undefensively experienced as a mode of extradependence, including a transforming sense of transcendent worthiness, people are able to shift to intradependence with greater capacity for risk-taking and change projects, and for exploring the unknown.[2]

This statement indicates that there is a way of engaging in worship which leads to an experience of God and prepares a person to face the challenges of living. It means that false or improper participation in worship whereby the worshipper is "not able to regress deep enough" leads to false religious life or false spirituality. False spirituality manifests itself when the life and behavior of the worshipper does not reflect God's principles and values attendant to them. Edwards' words are more forceful in pointing out that the worshipper may leave the place of

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relying on the primal object, God.

[1]Edwards, Spiritual Friend, 77.

[2]Ibid., 78. See also Reed, 23.

worship "'stillborn' unable to be fully intradependent."[1]

Reed's oscillation theory falls short of the biblical model in three ways: First of all, it may be misleading in suggesting that there are moments when a person has to act independently of God. The term "intradependence" does not state properly the theological paradox of living in union with God as a Christian. The Christian is always dependent on God. Jesus expresses an important spiritual reality when he points out that His followers are to have childlike faith (Luke 18:16). Second, the theory presents a kind of cyclic oscillation without clarifying the biblical motif of growth and development. The theory seems to indicate that religion is functional only to the extent that it enables persons to adjust properly in life situations. I believe that religious activities and rituals are functional only as they aid the process of transformation to Christlikeness. Christian experience, contrary to Reed's theory, is fundamentally an ongoing love relationship between God and the Christian. This relationship should grow stronger all the time in spite of the adverse conditions which may assail the Christian. Third, the theory does not emphasize mutual interdependence among members of the body of Christ.

Nevertheless, Reed's oscillation theory helps us to see how authentic spirituality may be enhanced or hindered

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[1]Ibid., 79.

by religion. The theory has implications for the way church services are constructed and conducted. It also has implications for the spiritual leader who should guide worshippers through all the stages, phases, modes, and transitions in the process described.

Spirituality and Sacraments

The two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are briefly examined from the point of view of their relationship to spirituality.

Paul explains baptism in the name of Christ as signifying a dying with Christ and being buried and rising to a new life with Him   (Rom 6:3ff; Gal 2:20; 5:24; Col 2:12). Paul also explains that baptism is incorporation into the body of Christ (Gal 3:27ff; 1 Cor 12:13). Baptism gives to the person baptized and to the Church a chance to experience conversion. A new identity is conferred upon the believer. According to Beasley and Murray, baptism is to be understood as "an embodiment of the gospel of grace and the supreme occasion for confessing it, hence the ultimate point of restoration of relations between God and the repentant sinner."[1] Baptism, therefore, should be highly and solemnly regarded as an "event of turning to God and uniting with him."[2] Spiritual formation draws from the

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[1]G. R. Beasley, "Baptism, Wash," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 1:147.

[2]Ibid., 148.

event when a person is baptized in the sense that the baptized person begins a journey to become all that he/she is declared to be in the new identity in Christ. According to Saliers this is the "the heart of Christian spirituality."[1]

Spiritual insight may be gained from the imagery and symbolism connected with the Lord's Supper.[2] There is both a Christological and ecclesiastical emphasis in the Pauline account of the Lord's Supper. Paul argues for unity among members who constitute the body of Christ on the basis of what the Lord's Supper means (1 Cor 10:16, 17 cf 12:13-27). The participants should be aware of what they are doing when they take the Lord's Supper. Living in union with God is expressed tangibly as the believer takes part in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper symbolizes union between Christ and the believer and among believers who constitute the body of Christ. Jesus even washed the disciples' feet when He instituted the service, thus making the Lord's Supper even more significant. Disciples were invited to have fellowship with Christ which they did not deserve. Jesus went further and washed them, and that was even too much for Peter who could not help but protest (John 13). God's unconditional love was yet to be

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[1]Don. E. Saliers, Worship and Spirituality (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 63.

[2]Five times the New Testament records the giving of the Lord's Supper by Jesus Himself (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:15-20; John 13:1ff; 1 Cor 11:23-25).

expressed as Christ went to the Cross to be sacrificed for sinners who do not deserve His love. This was to leave a lasting impression in the minds of the disciples, and they are to remember the event with thanksgiving as they take the Lord's Supper. A commemoration of the saving event of Christ crucified and risen from the grave calls for praise. The believer eats and drinks to signify "receiving gifts of His grace."[1]

The Lord's Supper was instituted within the setting of the annual Passover meal which was a commemoration of God's liberating power from Egyptian slavery. That event was a type of the saving event which was to be realized by the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ. Eating bread and drinking from the cup at the Lord's Supper signifies participation in the new order of salvation "founded by God in Christ's death."[2] It symbolizes a way of identifying closely with Christ so as to internalize His principles and values.[3] Meaningful participation in the Lord's Supper can help one to experience the reality of God's eternal love and sacrifice.

Both sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are memorials of spiritually significant events. By partici-

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[1]Gordon S. Wakefield, "Eucharist," The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality, 1983 ed., 137.

[2]B. Klappert, "Lord's Supper," New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 2:533.

[3]See Edwards, Spiritual Friend, 80.

pating meaningfully in them, believers also celebrate who they are in Christ and what they are becoming in Him. Spiritual life is energized by participation in these sacraments because they symbolize the presence of Christ in the church. As the whole community of faith participates in the sacraments, it reaffirms its faith and renews its commitment to Christ.[1] The Holy Communion with Christ nurtures and sustains faith and enhances solidarity and intimacy with God and fellow believers at the table of fellowship. Saliers writes concerning the spiritual journey: "If baptism is our birth from the womb of God and the wellspring of new life from above, then the Lord's Supper is our manna for the way, our life-giving bread and saving cup."[2]

Participating in the sacraments with understanding is essential for the development of the spiritual life. Wainwright quotes part of the prayer for those who have received baptism and communion as follows:

> Grant that the sacrament we have received at Easter
> May continue to live in our hearts and minds.
> Grant that we may imitate and achieve
> What we celebrate and profess.
> Grant that we who have celebrated the Easter ceremonies
> May hold to them in life and conduct.[3]

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[1]Leonard, 75.

[2]Saliers, 76.

[3]Geoffrey Wainwright, "Types of Spirituality," in The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 603.

The Written Word of God and Spirituality

The proper study and the proclamation of the Word are essential to the nurturing of the spiritual life. The teaching of God's Word was part of worship in the New Testament church (Acts 2:42). The letter to the Hebrews describes the dynamic power of the Word of God: "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and spirit of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb 4:12). Paul speaks of the Word as the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17).

The New Testament underlines the importance of the Word in all dimensions of the Christian life. Christians are born again through the Word (1 Pet 1:23). Christians are also urged to live according to the Word of Scripture (1 Cor 4:6). The Word is to dwell in the Christians and Christians are to hold firm to the Word (Col 3:16; Titus 1:9). Believers are to be doers of the Word and not hearers only (Jas 1:22). Leech, who recognizes all this, affirms the Word as the integral element in the process of spiritual formation.[1] Galilea asserts: "The Word of God is the primordial source for Christian spirituality because it gives rise to faith."[2]

It is obvious that the Word of God is absolutely

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[1]Leech, 13.

[2]Segundo Galilea, The Way of Living Faith (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988), 47.

essential to spirituality. The question is: how can the Word be used to achieve the best results? Leech partly answers the question for us. He suggests that an approach to the Word that can enhance spirituality must include wrestling, brooding, and weeding.[1] All these are necessary because our understanding of the Word has been enfeebled and degenerated by life out of fellowship with God. Things of the Spirit do not come easily to us and we need spiritual discipline to receive spiritual blessings. The practice of meditation on the message of Scripture is helpful. There must be constant repetition and reflection on the Word until there is a taste for spiritual things and the Word itself (Heb 6:5) and digestion of it.

Spirituality and Prayer

Another element of church life that is specified in our key text is prayer (Acts 2:42 last part). In this section the necessity of prayer to spirituality and spiritual formation is briefly affirmed.

Jesus Himself made numerous statements about the Christian's need to pray. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and He gave them a model prayer (Matt 6:9ff). Jesus

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[1]Leech, 14,16. Leech suggests that the church provide the following: 1. A wrestling center, a forum in which there can be open debate and struggle on the crises of the day in the light of biblical insights. 2. A still point, where individuals can find the space and the solitude for the necessary inner creative brooding and prayerful reading. 3. Facilities for continual weeding, purging, clarifying of the truths of the Gospel message.

spent much time in prayer. The Holy Scriptures indicate that prayer may be supplication, intercession, praise, and thanksgiving to God (1 Tim 2:1; 5:5; Rom 15:30f; 1 Thess 5:17, 25; Jas 5:14-18; Rev 4:8-11; 5:8-14; 7:9-17; 19:1-8).

Prayer springs from the life that is lived in union with God. It is a direct expression of dependence upon God. There is a divine promise of Christ's presence when believers gather for worship and prayer (Matt 18:19, 20). Christ is there to give the spiritual power needed by the worshippers. As the spiritual body of Christ, the church is the spiritual powerhouse. To the extent that the church prays constantly and fervently, as should be the case, it becomes the gathering where people sense the presence of God and enjoy being with Him. In the life of the individual Christian and the church, "prayer must become perpetual, as uninterrupted as breathing or the beating of the heart."[1] The church is the gathering of praying people. As it is written: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa 56:7).

Self-Understanding and Spirituality of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The question to be answered in this section is: Where does the Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular fit in terms of all dimensions of church which have been explored? The answer to this question should have a

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[1]Ibid., 27.

bearing upon the spirituality of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Seventh-day Adventists have a general understanding of themselves as a church, and a particular understanding based on what they consider to be their mission. Both general and particular statements about the church are part of the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The general understanding of the church is described in article 11 as follows:

> The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to all mankind and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. . . . The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all ages, the purchase of His blood, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish.[1]

This statement is concise and comprehensive in terms of what has been explored so far. The thoughts, phraseology, and nuances are drawn from the Bible. This statement encompasses the three dimensions of church explained in this project. The statement also employs some images which have been explored in this project.

Adventist spirituality is rooted in Adventists' understanding of their identity and mission. As was noted above, Adventists have a particular understanding of who

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[1] Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1986), 6.

they are. Article 12 of the statement of fundamental

beliefs expresses this particular understanding:

> The universal church is composed of all who truly
> believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of
> widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to
> keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.
> This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment
> hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds
> the approach of His second advent. This proclamation
> is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; it
> coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and
> results in a work of repentance and reform on earth.
> Every believer is called to have a personal part in
> this worldwide witness.[1]

"Remnant" is the special self-image of the SDA Church.

Adventists view themselves as God's people who emerged in

fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies such as Rev 12:17

and 14:6-12. This fulfillment was to take place in the

last days, and Adventists understood themselves as a people

called out to fulfil the mission of the "Remnant." Thus

Adventists understood their commission as taking them

beyond what other church groups taught and did. They

perceived their role as fulfilling a special calling to

lead people "to a more complete understanding of His

(God's) will," and to the neglected aspects of God's law.[2]

The founding fathers and mothers of the Seventh-day

Adventist Church were missionary-minded people who had

strong convictions about the urgent proclamation of what

was commonly known as the "Three Angels' Messages."

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[1]Ibid., 6.

[2]Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v.
"Church, Nature of."

Perhaps it was this sense of urgency on the part of Adventists which became the major contributing factor to their spirituality. It has often been said that Adventist spirituality tends to be activistic in mode. They are actively involved in the proclamation of the Three Angels' Messages to all the world. Today the SDA Church is one of the widespread Protestant denominations in the world with a presence in more than 184 countries. It is the missionary vision of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that has contributed to this growth. For this growth and vitality, the name of the Lord is to be glorified.

In this project the contention is that while the missionary vision of the church should be kept ablaze, there should also be growth in the contemplative dimension of the church's life. The journey Godward is vital to the individual Christian and to the church as a whole. After all, Jesus Himself says "come to Me" before He says "go." The "doing" is derived from the "being" of the church. Adventists also need to understand clearly who they are in their new identity in Christ as His body and intentionally design more programs that will help them become fully who they are. Many programs in the Adventist Church orient its members to "doing" rather than "being." There is a need for balance so that one mode is not emphasized at the expense of the other. "Being" and "doing" are the two legs which the church needs as it marches on to Zion.

There is a need among Adventists to realize fully

who they are as a church portrayed in the Bible. There is also a need to reconsider the spiritual depth that can be derived from participation in sacraments as has been noted in the foregoing Scriptural pursuit. Generally, the order of worship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church may need to be reconstructed so that it may help members to become all that God intends them to be in all places where the church is present.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church proclaims the Three Angels' Message of Rev 14:6-12. This message entails a call to humankind to reverence, worship, and give glory to God. The call to "give glory" to God and "worship him" (Rev 14:7) constitutes a powerful basis for Christian spirituality. As mentioned above in this chapter, the church was called into being to glorify God. God is glorified when His people manifest authentic spirituality. It was also mentioned that true worship enhances true spirituality. The message which the Seventh-day Adventist Church proclaims should lead to authentic living in union with God. It is illogical to be a church which calls the whole world to worship God and give glory to Him, and yet fall short of that quality which demonstrates a living, intimate relationship with God. The suggestion here is that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should be a very spiritual church, manifesting not only activistic spirituality but a contemplative one as well.

Broadly speaking, Adventists are Evangelicals. The

general and often repeated criticism of Evangelicals is that they are weak on worship.[1] Allen and Borror have written the book on the missing jewel in the Evangelical church. They identify that missing jewel as the worship that establishes a deep heart relationship with God.[2] Holmes' main thrust in his book on worship is that the Adventist Church is liturgically illiterate.[3] These observations seem to arise out of the desire on the part of the observers to see a change for the better.

It has been observed generally that many Christian movements neglect spirituality. Lovelace makes a pertinent statement in connection with this:

> Spirituality is in many ways treated as the neglected stepchild of the Christian movement. It is often reduced to an emotional frosting spread over the surface of other parts of Christianity which are considered more substantial and important, such as the maintenance of sound doctrine, correct social engagement or institutional policy. But it is seldom recognized to be the indispensable foundation without which all of these are powerless and fall into decay. In parts of the church a fairly shallow spirituality is the bread and butter of daily experience, but it is almost invisible as a matter of serious concern among church leaders because it is either taken for granted or unconsciously held in contempt. Other parts of the church have developed an intricate machinery for spiritual perfection which intimidates the laity and most of the leaders. Other sectors have neglected a

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[1]Richards, 111. What Richards says here indicates that he is among those who are aware of this general criticism.

[2]Ronald Allen and Gordon Borror, Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1982).

[3]C. Raymond Holmes, Sing a New Song (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1984).

program of spiritual development because they have
concluded that it is either too hard or not worth
doing. In many of these circles spiritual theology, if
its existence is recognized at all, is likely to be
dismissed as 'mere pietism.'[1]

Perhaps, it has not been sufficiently internalized among

many Adventists that spirituality is an absolutely

essential quality of the Christian. The mission of the

church is not complete unless it helps people develop sound

spirituality. Luther and the Pietists recognized the need

for spirituality and they stated the conviction that "the

life of the church was critically dependent on the

spiritual condition of its people."[2] Lovelace puts it

cogently when he says that without true Christian

spirituality in the church, we have a situation parallel to

that of "engineers working with broken and ill-programmed

computers."[3] It can hardly be added or subtracted from the

argument advanced by Lovelace.

There is hope, however, for better days ahead in

the SDA Church in terms of programs that help its members

to develop spiritually. Adventists affirm the sola

Scriptura principle as a rule of faith and practice, and

this should help them to develop biblical spirituality.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot afford to be

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[1]Richard Lovelace, Dynamics of the Spiritual Life:
An Evangelical Theology of Renewal (Downers Grove,
Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1979), 12, 13.

[2]Ibid., 14.

[3]Ibid., 16.

complacent about what God has achieved through it. The
work of reform according to the full intent of Scripture
must continue. It has been said that the church must
always strive to be "ecclesia reformata semper reformanda,
a reformed church always reforming."[1]

There are already signs of awareness among some
Adventists of the need to promote spirituality. The
Andrews Society for Religious Studies has already conducted
a seminar on spirituality.[2] Moreover, several distinctive
doctrines of the SDA Church carry tremendous implications
for spirituality. Selected distinctive doctrinal emphases
are explored below when implementation of the project as a
whole is dealt with.

The Church in an African Context and Spirituality

What has been explored in this chapter is
applicable to the pastorate in Zimbabwe, and to the
students who are preparing at Solusi College to enter
pastoral ministry. A clear conception of the church
informs the identity of the pastoral vocation and should
also inform the efforts made to educate pastoral persons.
The effectiveness of the pastors in the field and their

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[1]Ibid., 13.

[2]The seminar referred to was conducted in Chicago
during Fall Quarter, 1988. Several papers on the topic of
spirituality were presented by various scholars. The
organization is made up mostly of religion teachers in
North America, some from abroad, and other interested
persons.

identity hinges on the identity of the church.

Hough and Cobb affirm that the conception and vision of the church should shape the way church leaders are educated. "What is needed today as a basis for reforming theological education, is a strong conviction about who we are as a Christian people."[1]

The images of the church explored in this chapter should supply the necessary vision of the church for training of the ministers at Solusi College. Such images should be allowed to inform us as to who we are as a church.

In times like the present, it is important for an institution such as Solusi to educate pastors who are the embodiment of what it means to be a true Christian and what it means to be a true church. In this project it is recognized that self-understanding on the part of the individual Christian or the church influences spirituality. It is, therefore, important that men and women who are leaders in the community of faith internalize fundamental

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[1]John Hough, Jr., and John Cobb, Jr., Christian Identity and Theological Education (Scholars Press, 1985), 4. Although Hough and Cobb's theological presupposition is not in line with mine, they make a pertinent point here in connection with education for pastoral ministry. In response to Hough and Cobb's work, Thomas Groome also affirms that "the identity of the Church and its praxis in the world should provide the starting point and norm for envisioning the kind of ministerial training which is necessary for our Church leaders." See Groome's response to Hough and Cobb in The Education of the Practical Theologian (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1986), 79.

facts of whom they are in Christ as individuals and as a community of Jesus Christ.

The corporate nature of the church as portrayed in the Bible finds fertile soil to thrive on in an African setting. Sundler affirms "the supra-individual and corporate forces which are at work in African group life."[1] There is a way whereby the supra-individual and corporate forces in an African context still have a nurturing and shaping power. The church in Zimbabwe, and Solusi College in particular, can maximize on this in the process of training ministers. This may be done by creating and promoting community spirit and community ethos in the college itself. By internalizing what the images explored stand for and relating the meaning to the African context, students and faculty at Solusi may establish bonds of fellowship with Christ and His people. A family atmosphere may be created where brothers and sisters care enough about one another to help one another to be like Christ. Corporate spirituality would be enhanced also by putting more emphasis on the sacramental dimension of the church in Africa because there is an "innate propensity of the African for sacramental life."[2] In many ways, the richness of the African emotional life finds natural expression in the way the church is supposed to express

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[1]Bengt Sundkler, The Christian Ministry in Africa (London: Charles Birchall and Sons, 1962), 117.

[2]Ibid., 121.

itself. There is a tremendous potential in the way the church may express itself in Zimbabwe by drawing from the biblical imagery of what the church is and relating the message of the images to the African context. The experience of training for the ministry at Solusi may be spiritually edifying, nurtured by the facilitative community of faith in which there is unity in diversity, mutual edification, and fraternal correction.

One of the phenomena that mocks church unity in Africa is tribalism. Sundkler cites Marjory Perham as saying that tribalism should be 'sublimated rather than superceded.' This is where the church as an alternative tribe, nation, or race comes in. As Sundkler continues, "sublimation requires wide and free vision, in this case the vision of a universal church within which the differences which God created may play their appointed part."[1] It is this vision of the church as God's alternative tribe that should be instilled in the minds and hearts of the pastors in Zimbabwe. In this way, the love of God which passes all understanding may radiate from the pastors and all the members of the Body of Christ. The students at Solusi College need to be helped to develop spirituality which is imbued with this love for God, for fellow church members, and for the world as a whole.

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[1]Sundkler, 57.

Summary

In this chapter the entity known as the church has been examined. The Greek word translated "church" has been studied, and selected images which portray the nature, function, and life of the church have also been surveyed. In all, it has been shown how the images selected relate to spirituality and spiritual formation.

The church has to understand itself clearly as the body of Christ, with Christ as the head, and it should strive by God's grace to live according to the full implications of the meaning of this image. Additional images explored in this chapter are also important in broadening the scope of the church's self-understanding. Whether the church understands itself as the body of Christ, God's temple, or building project, a letter from Christ, light of the world, or salt of the earth, it must endeavor to live up to these New Testament images.

All the images explored, whether they emphasize the ontological, functional, or sacramental dimensions of the church, carry deep implications for spirituality. The plain indicatives of what the church is should be linked with the imperatives of what it ought to become. The church is the called-out community in process, and through the church, God accomplishes His purpose for humankind. The purpose for which the church was called into being is better accomplished when the church is what it should be in all its dimensions. Spirituality is the quality that the

church should not lack. All the provisions that were made for the way the church should live are intended for awakening a sense of God's presence and reverence for Him, mutual edification and effective witnessing for God to the world at large.

God has accomplished much through the Seventh-day Adventist Church by enabling Adventists to reach the utmost parts of the world with a life-changing message and good news of the gospel. The thousands and millions that have been won to the ranks of the Adventist Church must be helped to develop a contemplative spirituality. This may translate into designing special programs that enhance the contemplative dimension of spirituality. It is the purpose and goal of this project to help ministers to be better prepared spiritually so that they may better equip the saints.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the essentials of Christian or pastoral ministry and to preparation for it. These are explored in terms of how they relate to spirituality and spiritual formation.

CHAPTER IV

PASTORAL MINISTRY: ITS ESSENTIALS, PREPARATION

AND SPIRITUALITY

This chapter focuses on essentials of pastoral ministry which constitutes spiritual leadership of all believers in the community of faith. The images explored in chapters 2 and 3 elucidate the nature of Christian experience in the individual Christian and in the community of faith. It has been made clear that spirituality is central to both individual and corporate Christian experience. Pastoral ministry is considered in this chapter with the understanding that it has much to do with the kind of spirituality that characterizes the church and its members.

It was pointed out in chapter 1 that the relationship that exists between pastoral ministry and the church is a "genetical" one. Burrows likens the interdependence and interrelationship between the church and pastoral ministry to that of the chicken and egg. "The Church," Burrows writes, "is the chicken that gives birth to its clergy, but the clergy in turn shape the Church."[1]

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[1] Burrows, 117.

It is, therefore, quite in order to tackle the question of ministry only after tackling the nature and function of the church.[1] Ministry is considered in conjunction with the community of faith to which the ministry is directed.

After exploring various models of the church, Avery Dulles contends that each model "entails a particular vision of the ministry."[2] The centrality of spirituality as portrayed in images of Christian experience and ecclesiology compels us to conclude already that genuine spirituality is crucial in the person who is a minister. A minister may not give or produce that which he does not have.

There are questions which must be answered concisely in connection with the biblical and theological data on pastoral ministry and its essentials. Among the questions are: What is pastoral ministry and what is the nature of its role? The questions are answered in relation to spirituality. Answers given to these questions have a bearing on how those who are called to the ministry are educated and prepared.

The Meaning of Pastoral Ministry

Like the church, ministry is an elusive reality. It is difficult to define. Even some of the best books on

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[1]Cited by John A. Coleman, "A Theology of Ministry," The Way: A Contemporary Christian Spirituality, January 1985, 7.

[2]Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978), 168.

ecclesiology do not even attempt to define ministry. They
may describe the importance of ministry and what it does
but stop short of defining it. Perhaps the main reason why
many ecclesiologists do not define ministry is that the New
Testament itself is not as definitive about the precise
order and pattern of ministry as some of us would like it
to be. In fact, Dulles is fully aware of the lack of
precise patterns of ministry in the New Testament.
Ministry varied in different communities.[1] Apparently,
members of the Faith and Order Commission of the World
Council of Churches who prepared the Lima Document on
Ministry were also aware of the lack of specific form of
ordained ministry in the New Testament.[2]

Selected Images of Pastoral Ministry

The New Testament gives clues not only to what
ministry is but also to its essential qualities. Various
terms are employed to describe a person who is a spiritual
leader in a local church congregation or congregations. A
few of those terms are briefly examined.

Ministry (διακονία) or service is a very important
concept in the New Testament along with the personal noun
"servant" (διάκονος) or minister. Hess points out that in

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[1]Dulles, 167.

[2]Faith and Order Commission, <u>Baptism, Eucharist and
Ministry</u> (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches,
1982), 22.

secular Greek the term is used with three shades of meaning having to do with waiting at the table, caring for household needs, and serving generally.[1] "The first meaning involves personal subjection which was considered unworthy and dishonoring for a free man," although Plato used it in some cases to signify honorable service.[2]

Jesus injects dignity and importance into the concepts of service and servanthood, apparently against the prevailing notion of the surrounding culture's values of greatness and importance. Jesus endeavored to eradicate from His disciples' minds the notion of greatness based on power to rule and lord it over others. Jesus rebuked the disciples, "It shall not be so among you" (Matt 20:26; Mark 10:43; Luke 22:26). He washed the disciples' feet (John 13:4f), thus performing a task which was considered below the dignity of a great person. In many ways, Jesus personified a pattern of ministry which He sought to instill into the minds of His followers.

Paul refers to himself and other apostles as servants (1 Cor 3:5). An additional nuance that is conveyed by the term "servant" is that it suggests essential and beneficial service. Christ Himself had to become a suffering servant to serve and save humankind

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[1]K. Hess, "Serve, Deacon, Worship," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 3:545.

[2]Ibid.

(Matt 20:28; Rom 15:8). Angels are "ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation" (Heb 1:14). Moreover, Paul considers himself not only as a servant but a willing slave (δοῦλος) of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Titus 1:1). Christ's self-humiliation is described by Paul as "taking the form of a servant" or slave (Phil 2:7f). Christ did this to accomplish redemption for humankind. Among Christ's followers and servants, this is the attitude and way to become effective instruments of God's saving activity among human beings. David Watson emphasizes that ministry is not a status mark but a function to help people toward spiritual maturity in the measure of the stature of fullness in Christ.[1]

Ironically, even in a society that has emphasized the professional model of ministry, "service in humility"[2] is still highly valued.

The word "pastor" (ποιμήν) is currently the most used term among Protestants in reference to a spiritual leader in many Protestant denominations. The English word "pastor" appears once in the New Testament (Eph 4:11) although the Greek term (ποιμήν) and its relatives occur

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[1]Watson, I Believe in the Church, 254.

[2]Daniel O. Aleshire, "Eleven Major Areas of Ministry," in Schuller, Strommen, and Brekke, Ministry in America, 36. According to this study by the ATS, all persons of various denominations were agreed that "service in humility" is an important personal quality in the person who is a minister.

about seventeen times in other books of the New Testament. The literal translation of "ποιμήν" is "shepherd." Frequently, the term is used to designate a leader, ruler, or someone who cares for the flock or sheep.[1] "Ποιμήν" suggests an important function. The picture is that of a shepherd with a flock of sheep which depends upon the shepherd for protection against enemies. Sheep also depend upon the shepherd to lead them to places of good and adequately nutritious food. The wounded ones also are healed by the shepherd.

Shepherding is exemplified by Jesus Himself. Jesus designates Himself as the good Shepherd (John 10:10-27). As a good and model shepherd, Jesus lays down His own life for His sheep. He leads the sheep, protects them, and knows them. Leon Morris points out that the human shepherd is actually the under-shepherd who should tend the flock in Christ's way. The pastorate exercised by the Lord Jesus Himself is exemplary to all Christian ministers. "The great shepherd, the chief Pastor, is Jesus Himself."[2] The benediction in the epistle to the Hebrews states that the Lord Jesus is "the great shepherd of the sheep" (Heb 13:20). The under-shepherd, therefore, operates under the auspices of the great Shepherd, Jesus Christ Himself. The

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[1]E. Beyreuther, "Shepherd," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 3:564.

[2]Leon Morris, Ministers of God (London: Intervarsity Fellowship, 1964), 27.

next question is: What do the images of "minister" and "pastor" as terms that designate a spiritual leader tell us about a leader's spirituality?

If pastoral ministry were conceived in the original sense of the terms as shown above, ministerial spirituality would be greatly enhanced. True servant leadership as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ is no ego trip. Pride, greed for gain, lust for power, status seeking, and all other forms of human selfishness have no place in servant ministry as Jesus taught and exemplified it. To be a servant in this model is to experience selflessness and self-sacrificing love that characterized the ministry of Jesus. Humble service to God and fellow human beings is not weakness, but an expression of authentic spirituality at its deepest level.

The apostle Paul internalized the notion of being a servant of Christ as Christ was the suffering servant of God. Personal achievements were relativized. In fact, Paul speaks of those things that might go for him as "refuse" or "dung" in relationship to the value of knowing Christ as specified in his letter to the Philippians. So he continues to state the major focus of his life's pursuits: "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his suffering, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:10-11).

Service in humility is an attitude of dependence on

God, and this attitude is basic to pastoral ministry and the pursuit of spirituality. Servant leadership is radically different from world notions of leadership. It is modeled "not on the power games of the world, but on the servant leader Jesus, who came to give his life for he salvation of many."[1] What has been detrimental to this kind of leadership in the church is a combination of factors which are fed by cultural norms of business and success outside the church. Among those factors are a professional model of ministry, which the late Urban Holmes rightly criticized,[2] and a misconception of both church and ministry. The image of a minister as a humble servant is helpful in guarding against what Sundkler regards as a "predilection for power and influence which has destroyed ministry."[3]

The image of "pastor" ($\pi o \iota \mu \acute{\eta} \nu$) or shepherd is also spiritually significant. This image is better understood by those who have spent time in an agrarian setting where the relationship between the shepherd and the flock can be experienced. There is a strong love for sheep in the heart of the shepherd which does not tolerate the loss of even one of the sheep. I grew up in a setting where there is a

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[1]Henri J. M. Nouwen, _In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership_ (New York: Crossroad Books, 1989), 45.

[2]Urban T. Holmes III, _Spirituality for Ministry_ (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1982), 30.

[3]Sundkler, 134.

strong bond between the pastor and those he has baptized. Thus the image of shepherd has implications for pastoral care. To the extent that the pastor is spiritually deep, he/she, to a certain extent, determines the spiritual depth of his/her flock. In reality, the flock belongs to Christ. It is no accident that Jesus Himself elicits love to Him from Peter before charging him with the pastoral responsibility of feeding the lambs, tending the sheep, and feeding them (John 21:15-17).

Paul uses the word "πρεσβεύω" when he speaks of himself and fellow workers as ambassadors for Christ. Paul is the only one in the New Testament who designates himself and other gospel workers as "ambassadors" (2 Cor 5:20; Eph 6:20). In each case Paul uses the verb form. In Corinthians he says, "Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν" (plural), literally meaning "We are ambassadors for Christ," and in Ephesians he says, "οὗ πρεσβεύω ἐν ἁλύσει," meaning "I am ambassador in chains." Literally, the term "ambassador" means "a personal envoy or representative of someone, especially a king."[1] In Paul's case, the One who sends him as a personal representative is Christ. The image of ambassador suggests that the Christian servant as a person is not just a performer of duty. His life as a person is "part of the message he proclaims."[2] Bosch further points

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[1]David Bosch, _A Spirituality of the Road_ (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1979), 43.

[2]Ibid.

out that "the ambassador is more than just an instrument that carries messages to and from his government. He is not the same as the diplomatic mailbag. He is a personal representative of his government, the very embodiment of the one who sends him."[1]

There are implications for spirituality here. How else can the ambassador make the government he/she represents look good in the eyes of a host country? The integrity of pastor, minister, or any Gospel worker is established to the extent that the worker reflects Christ's character. The minister needs to be an authentic ambassador of the heavenly King, otherwise, those who fall within his or her sphere of influence will fail to know the King.

Seventh-day Adventist Concept of Ministry

The Adventist Church, officially, places a high regard on pastoral ministry or leadership as the following quotations indicate:

> The setting apart of men for the sacred work of the ministry should be regarded as one of the most vital concerns of the church. The spiritual growth of God's people, their development in the virtues of Christ, as well as their relationship to one another as members of His body, are all closely bound up with and in many respects dependent upon the spirituality, efficiency, and consecration of those who minister in Christ's stead.[2]

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[1]Ibid.

[2]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: Working Policy (Washington D.C.: The Ministerial Association 1988), 273.

Ellen White is referring to the same kind of ministry when she writes of "a divinely appointed ministry." Thus she writes:

> God has a church, and she has a divinely appointed ministry. . . . Men appointed of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men.[1]

These two quotations from Adventist sources suggest that the spiritual health, well-being, and the overall development of the church spiritually, to an extent, depend upon the calibre of pastoral ministry. The church's survival, destiny, and ability to accomplish God's purpose fully, are affected by the ministry as well. This places a solemn responsibility upon the ministry and those who are ministers. If the church is a spiritual community of people who are in the constant process of spiritual formation then the person who is a spiritual leader of the community should be one with vibrant spirituality.

Perspectives Connected with Ministry

Over and above definitions of ministry that can be given and the images of ministry that may be examined, there are two essential perspectives of ministry which must be kept in view: ministerial identity and ministerial functions.

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[1]Ellen G. White, _Testimonies to Ministers_ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1962), 52, 53.

Ministerial Identity

The dignity of the ministerial calling is never to be lost sight of as a vocation. The high regard with which pastoral ministry is to be viewed should not be lost. Ellen White makes an assertion: "Those who belittle the ministry belittle Christ."[1] On ministry as a vocation, Williams writes: "Vocation is more than a role, it is a life dedicated and responsibility assumed. No one should be playing a role where ultimate things are at stake."[2]

The minister's self-conception or identity contributes either to belittlement or enhancement of the ministry. It is, therefore, important that the minister maintains a proper self-image. There must be some inner constraints within the minister that influences what he does. Raymond Holmes comments:

> In either case, the minister's conception of the nature of his calling will determine whether or not his ministry takes on the characteristic of the peddler or of the prophet. . . . He is not called to do something. He is called to be something. The doing is a compulsive consequence of the being. But it is the being that is crucial if the doing is to have authority, authenticity, and credibility.[3]

The constant awareness of who he/she is determines the kind of spirituality that the minister manifests. It is the

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[1]Ellen G. White, _Gospel Workers_ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 63.

[2]Daniel D. Williams, _The Minister and the Care of Souls_ (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1961), 103.

[3]C. Raymond Holmes, "Peddlers or Prophets," _Ministry_, April 1975, 21.

awareness of the nature of the calling that keeps the minister humble and dependent on God. The dignity of the ministry gives no room for spiritual pride and arrogance. As the knowledge of God grows deeper, there is also a deepening sense of how one has fallen short of the glory of God. The realization of God's holiness contrasted with human weakness is a prerequisite to an essential hunger and thirst for God. It is this hunger and thirst for God which issues in a growing love relationship with God and growth of the spiritual life. Without the sense of dependence on God and of human fallenness, there tends to be a neglect of spiritual formation on the part of the minister, and that is a serious omission.

Pastoral ministry is more than a function. To emphasize this point, Karen Lebacqz quotes Nolan Harmon as saying: "The Christian minister must be something before he can do anything. . . . His work depends on his personal character."[1] All of this carries immense implications for authentic ministerial spirituality. It is important to maintain the perspective of who one is as a minister. Function derives from who the minister is, as informed by the holy Scriptures. The corporate business model, the models of the professional or entertainer are all out of place in the ministry.

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[1]Karen Lebacqz, Professional Ethics: Power and Paradox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 63.

Ministerial Functions

Even in connection with ministerial functions there is a perspective that needs to be kept in view. There have been some difficulties and confusions recently resulting from two developments. The first stems from the growing emphasis on collegiality as it relates to "priesthood of all believers." Some use the principle of "priesthood of all believers" to argue against the need for ordained, full-time ministers in the community of faith. On the other hand, it may make some ministers feel that their profession is superfluous. Second, there has been the gradual erosion of the ministers's role in that many of the functions the minister used to perform have been taken over by other professionals. Counselors, psychotherapists, physicians and other helping professionals are in many cases trusted more than the minister as Nouwen observes.[1] Nouwen also shows that there is a strong temptation on the part of ministers to be more relevant, popular, and powerful. He argues in his book that ministers do not have to yield to these temptations.

Difficulties may remain as long as churches and ministers allow themselves to conform to the surrounding culture in their approach to life and service. Macquarrie makes a strong point when he suggests that there must be a distinction between the theological essence of the

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[1]Nouwen, _In the Name of Jesus_, 19.

Christian ministry and cultural trappings or sociological accidents of ministry. The distinct role of the Christian minister can be reestablished if churches and ministers "look beyond the sociological accidents of ministry to its theological essence."[1]

Hans Küng uses mathematical language to differentiate between the theological givens concerning ministerial functions and the cultural peripherals of ministry. Thus, according to Küng, there are "constants" and "variables" of ministerial functions. Constants are the unchanging theological givens while variables are those ministerial functions which are rooted in changing cultural settings.[2] Ministerial constants fall within the realm of realities not ordinarily perceived through ordinary human

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[1]John Macquarrie, Theology, Church and Ministry (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1986), 155-157. To maintain the perspective on ministry, Macquarrie stresses the point that ministry is to be considered within the context of the church and in no other way. With the church as the theological starting point for the ministry, Macquarrie recognizes three clusters of ministerial function--Service which is exemplified by Jesus and includes attending to the sick, handicapped, outcasts, and rejects of society to bring wholesomeness or salvation to them. Paul speaks of this service as reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19) of those estranged from God and each other, those who are split within themselves, and to reconcile all of these to God. Proclamation is the second cluster of functions and it includes evangelistic, pastoral, and prophetic ministries. The third cluster of functions is priestly, which sums up and unites service and proclamation functions and entails administration of sacraments.

[2]Hans Küng, Why Priest? A Proposal for a New Church Ministry (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1972), 75.

senses. The minister has an important function of raising the level of awareness to the unseen realities and enhancing them.

Jesus was talking about those spiritual realities when He said: "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes" (John 3:8). The minister is a person who embodies the unseen realities. Hughes describes those realities as "mysteries" which animate the life of the person who has allowed God to appropriate to him/her the provisions of the gospel through His grace. The effects of the mysteries can be seen, and they have a sanctifying power to those around the minister.[1]

It is the special privilege of every genuine Christian to be animated by the "mystery of godliness which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). The sad fact is that some Christians are not animated by those unseen realities of the new life in Christ. That is bad enough. It is even worse if the minister's life is not animated by the realities of being in union with Christ. Unless the Lord overrules, and He often overrules, there is always the danger that people may not be sanctified because the person who ministers does not know God, and therefore, bears no sanctifying influence upon those who surround him.

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[1]Alfred C. Hughes, _Preparing for Church Ministry: A Practical Guide to Spiritual Formation_ (Donville, New Jersey: Dimension Books, 1979), 124.

It is dangerous to have a minister who is not maturing spiritually because "it is spiritual maturity that draws others to maturity in their lives. It is holiness that attracts others to a holy way of life."[1]

As Macquarrie concludes, bringing salvation to the human spirit is the "distinctive work of the Christian ministry, the fundamental constant which remains through all the variables."[2] The experience of salvation is effectively shared by persons who have experienced salvation themselves. No wonder spirituality is the fundamental quality of the person who functions as a minister.

The Essential Qualifications of a Minister

What are the basic and essential qualities of the person who is a minister? The New Testament Pastoral Letters and 1 Peter contain data on the essential qualities and qualifications of a person who is a spiritual leader. Three main passages--1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Pet 5:1-4--specify personal qualifications of bishops or elders.[3] Additional qualifications can also be found in other passages of the two letters to Timothy. These

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[1]Hughes, 19.

[2]Macquarrie, 157. See also Williams, 11.

[3]For more elaborate analysis of the personal qualifications of the pastor drawn from the passages referred to, see Wayne E. Oates, The Christian Pastor (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 100-127.

qualifications should apply to any person who functions as a minister today.

The demands placed upon the pastoral person are high and rigorous, and rightly so because the stakes are high when it comes to spiritual leadership. On the personal level, the minister's life can influence others positively or negatively both inside the community of faith and outside. The demands specified in the epistle also include appropriate qualifications as a spouse and parent. The research conducted by Schuller and his colleagues also seems to bear upon the minister as a spouse and parent. This research indicates that undisciplined living receives the most negative rating.[1]

The exacting demands and qualifications of a spiritual leader specified in the Pastoral Epistles underline a need for discipline and cultivation of an intimate relationship with Christ on the part of a spiritual leader. All the qualifications specified do not come by chance or accident. They are cultivated through the co-operation of the divine and the human as the Holy Spirit sanctifies the life. The qualifications are the

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[1]For the construct of "undisciplined living," see David Schuller, "Identifying the Criteria for Ministry," in David Schuller et al., Ministry in America: A Report and Analysis Based on the Indepth Survey of 47 Denominations in the United States and Canada with Interpretation by 18 Experts (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980), 19-20. In this research, "undisciplined living" was supposed to entail illicit sexual relationships and other self-indulgent actions that irritate, shock, or offend.

fruits of the spiritually mature person with the genuine experience of a living relationship with Christ. As Ellen White puts it, "A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature, the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man."[1]

Most of the qualifications mentioned are personal. All of this tells us that Christian ministry is not just a performance. It involves the whole life. It is modelling a life that is lived in union with God, actually experiencing this life and sharing it with others. Commenting on the qualifications of a pastor, Oates makes two points which bear upon the need for genuine Christian experience on the part of the pastor. The pastor's genuine experience is vital to the spiritual health of others. First, people depend upon the pastor "for confidence, security and certainty," and second, congregations need authority in their ministers. Part of that authority is "personal experience with Christ."[2] Spirituality is precisely the kind of life that is lived in union with God. The terms "Spirituality" or "spiritual formation" are borrowed from monastic language. They do not exist in the New Testament. However, there are nuances, concepts, and even terms in the New Testament which express the same

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[1]Ellen White, Education, 57.

[2]Oates, 118.

ideas. The qualifications of a church leader mentioned in the Pastorals and Peter should be understood in the context of the new order of being ushered in by the Christ event. The New Testament calls every person to this growth and new order of being. Those of us who are Christians today should also understand that spiritual maturity is the goal of the new life lived in union with Christ. It means that those whose task is to nurture and shape that new life should be spiritually mature themselves.

Spirituality and Pastoral Ministry

Paul not only gives counsel concerning qualifications of those who are spiritual leaders; he was also an example to the believers. Paul could urge believers to be imitators, not only of God and Christ but also of him as a servant of Christ (Eph 5:1; 1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17; 1 Thes 1:6). A man like Paul could say this. In a closing comment, Longenecker writes about Paul: "He possessed a firmness of commitment to his Lord, a fervency of spirit, a compassion of heart, a breath of outlook, a keenness of perception, a constant openness to the Spirit."[1] Paul taught and wrote what he was when he described the believer as a person "in Christ." According to Paul's counsels, the power and effectiveness of the pastor is centered on who the pastor is and more than on

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[1]Longenecker, The Ministry and Message of Paul, 112.

what the pastor does. The specific qualifications mentioned emanate from authentic spirituality. They are not just outward conformities to certain ethical codes.

The power of exemplary spirituality seems to be behind Paul's admonition to the young pastors to be models of Christian life and conduct (1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7,8).

Urban Holmes wrote a book of almost two hundred pages on spirituality for ministry in which he concludes that in the minds of Church members, the spirituality of their minister is of high priority. "Yet there is no doubt that ordained persons today embody people's expectations that they be spiritually proficient in a special way."[1] Through historical cultural conditioning, people have come to expect spiritual proficiency from ordained spiritual leaders. This is because the ordained person is regarded as a "symbol and symbol-bearer" with "intangible power of the presence." The pastor "objectifies in his/her person and by what he/she does as the one preaching and presiding at the liturgy a constellation of images that serves as a symbol of God's presence."[2] Holmes seems to be aware that there is no "characterological change in a person" who ministers, but he underlines the way the minister affects others:

> It does appear true, however, that within the
> consciousness of a community that recognized a person

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[1]Urban T. Holmes, Spirituality for Ministry, 31.

[2]Ibid., 32.

as ordained and within the awareness of its individual members he or she becomes a symbol. He or she represents and shapes a sense of the divine that wells up from deep within the corporate and individual memories of the people of God.[1]

Many Christians may not consciously espouse the belief that their pastor is a symbol of God's presence, but the way their lives are affected by what he does still shows that they expect spiritual proficiency from the pastor. The community of faith expects its leaders to be persons who have experienced God.[2]

The pastor may not make a conscious choice to influence others in a special way, but the pastor's life inevitably bears a witness. Spiritual formation on the part of the minister is, therefore, imperative.

Education and Preparation of the Ministerial Student

The previous statements inform the way the minister or pastor is educated and prepared for the task of ministry. That is, theological education and preparation for the ministry should draw from what the Bible says about the Christian life, the church, and the ministry itself.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] David S. Schuller et al., Readiness for Ministry II (Vandalia, Ohio: Association of Theological Schools, 1976), 9, 13. The researchers point out: A closer scrutiny reveals the continuing request of the community of faith that their leaders be more than persons who have learned facts and mastered techniques. First, the community demands that they be persons who have experienced the reality of being freed by the Gospel, who have personally glimpsed meaning in the midst of a fractured world.

It should also, of course, be contextualized within a cultural setting within which graduates or ordinands have to serve, since issues may differ from context to context.

This section considers those factors which have a bearing on the education and preparation of the ministry. Among those factors are the biblical basis for the spiritual leader's preparation, theological arguments for adequate preparation, strands in theological education, and partners in the task of education for ministry.

Biblical Bases for Preparing Spiritual Leaders

Preparation for the ministry is serious business. The Bible contains some record about people who were leaders of God's people and gives some clue of how some of them were prepared for leadership. For some, it took much longer than for others. Moses, Joseph, and others are among the examples of those who were prepared thoroughly for special service. They were used mightily by God.

There are also examples of thorough preparation in the New Testament. The Lord Jesus Himself spent the first thirty years of His life at home. We do not know the program that He went through to be prepared for the task of ministry, but we do know that He prepared. After baptism by John, Jesus spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness fasting and praying (Luke 4:1,2). Soon after He started His ministry, Jesus called a few disciples to follow Him to be prepared for specialized service. The

Gospels record how Jesus gradually, lovingly, and patiently prepared the disciples. There is justification also in the assertion that He also formed them spiritually. Meye recognizes that the disciples spent time with Jesus and observed Him. In the process, they were gradually growing to be like Him spiritually and sharing His vision of the Kingdom of God.[1]

The men whom Jesus chose and formed spiritually might have amounted to nothing if they had not gone through the process that they went through with Jesus. Today Christians know even through their own experience with Christ that the apostles proclaimed and wrote what they had seen with their eyes, touched with their hands, and heard (1 John 1:1-3). What they wrote has been instrumental in transforming the lives of millions of people through the ages. The church's witness stands as evidence of the power behind their words.

One of the outstanding champions of the gospel was the apostle Paul. Paul was a Jewish theologian and a man well-versed in Hebrew Scriptures. He was also a highly sophisticated man of the Graeco-Roman world. After his conversion to Christianity, Paul spent three years in the Arabian desert (Gal 1:17), apparently preparing for his mission. He had to go through desert discipline in

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[1]Robert P. Meye, "Theological Education as Character Formation," Theological Education Supplement I 24 (1988): 112.

preparation for specialized ministry. In some of his letters, Paul makes it clear that he considered himself responsible for the spiritual formation of those who had been led to Christ. For example, he pointed out that he longed to be with the Christians in Rome so that he might impart to them a spiritual gift (Rom. 1:11). What Paul says in this same passage (vs. 12) seems to indicate that he was aware that spiritual formation is not the work of specialists only in the experience. It is a mutual obligation among all church members. Every member has a responsibility to contribute to the ongoing formation of all other members including the minister himself. Members of the body of Christ need one another for mutual encouragement in the process of spiritual growth (Rom 1:12; 12:4f; 15:1-6). As McNeill points out concerning mutuality among church members in the New Testament, "Men were to be spiritually available to one another for help and criticism."[1]

In the Pastoral Letters, Paul writes not only about the character of a minister but also about training in the Christian life. He admonishes the young Timothy to train himself in godliness because godliness holds promise for both the present life and the life to come (1 Tim 4:7, 8). The word "spirituality" may be substituted for "godliness." Godliness is the closest equivalent to spirituality that we

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[1]McNeill, 86.

find in the Pastoral Letters and in the epistle of Peter.
The term "godliness" (ευσεβεία) carries with it overtones
of piety, reverence, holiness, and devoutness.[1] The
Revised Standard Version often uses "religion" to translate
"godliness" (1 Tim 2:2, 10; 3:16). To Paul, godliness is
more important than material things (1 Tim 6:6). Peter
points out that divine power enables Christians to
experience godliness (2 Pet 1:3), and he suggests that
believers are to lead lives of holiness and godliness
(3:11). So it appears there can be training in
spirituality.

Importance of Spiritual Formation in Education for Ministry

There is a growing awareness that education for the
ministry is not complete unless it includes spiritual
formation. The ATS has been aware of the need of
incorporating spiritual formation in the education of the
ministerial students. Early in the seventies, a task force
on Spiritual Development was set up under the auspices of
ATS to study spiritual formation in theological education.
In their preliminary report, members of the task force
concluded: "We are convinced it is in dealing with the
matter of spiritual formation that theological intelligence
finds its moorings and it is there that ministry still
discovers its justification for being and its power to act

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[1]Arndt and Gingrich, 326.

redemptively in human affairs."[1] If a ministry that is not adequately formed spiritually cannot justify its existence, the theological school that does not take pains to form its students' spirituality also cannot justify its existence. As an instrument of the church, the theological school must assist the church to accomplish God's redemptive purpose in the world by doing all it can to prepare students spiritually.

George Lindbeck suggests that circumstances are such that the need for spiritual formation in theological schools has increased.[2] Oden emphasizes the inseparability of preparation for pastoral work from spiritual preparation. "Intrinsic to preparation for pastoral care," he writes, "is the spiritual and moral formation of the pastor."[3]

There may be some who believe that there is no need for intentional effort to educate people in spirituality. To this group, Edwards offers a pertinent reply which shows that spiritual formation cannot be left to chance. "Development of one's spiritual life requires intelligence, instruction and discipline of practice. Holiness is an art

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[1]Babin et al., 45.

[2]George Lindbeck, "Spiritual Formation and Theological Education," Theological Education Supplement I 24 (1988): 16. Lindbeck makes a case for spiritual formation with several others in the Theological Education Supplement I cited above.

[3]Thomas C. Oden, Becoming a Minister (New York: Crossroad Books, 1987), 174.

which needs guidance, challenge and support."[1] Thus, it can be seen that there must be a specific program that is intended to enhance spirituality. In planning a curriculum for ministerial students, it is important to make spiritual formation a vital part of the curricula.

The Strands in Theological Education

This subsection is concerned, generally, with approaches to relevant education for ministers in our rapidly changing society. The changes throw enormous challenges to the church, and the church needs to educate its professionals accordingly.

As has been stated above, the conception of the nature, ministry, and mission of the church forms the basis for the education of its ministers. Cobb and Hough reiterate in their study that Christian identity and praxis constitute both starting point and norm of theological education.[2]

The vision of what the church is, what its mission is, and how it is supposed to be accomplished should be kept in view as efforts are made to educate pastoral persons. Many questions demand specific answers. What should be the framework and specific content of theological

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[1]Tilden Edwards, "Spiritual Formation in Theological Schools: Ferment and Challenge," 37.

[2]In Christian Identity and Theological Education. See also Thomas H. Groome's response to Hough and Cobb's proposal in The Education of the Practical Theologian (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1989), 79.

education? There are some basics which must not be lost sight of in the process of educating people for pastoral ministry. About a decade ago, the Consultation on Ministerial Formation of the World Council of Churches specified the major basic ingredients of theological education: "Ministerial formation must include as basic ingredients: intellectual resourcefulness, sensitivity to human problems, appropriate skills, exemplary spirituality, and commitment to congregations and people."[1] What this statement points out constitutes an appropriate goal in educating persons for pastoral ministry.

Osborn draws a concise framework for a facilitative program of theological education consisting of three strands[2]. He describes three strands in theological education--the scientific, the professional, and the fiduciary. A little bit about each of these needs to be said.

The Scientific Strand

The scientific strand may also be referred to as the Academic Strand. It should furnish the minister with

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[1]Program on Theological Education, Ministerial Formation: A Report of the Consultation on Ministerial Formation (Tagaytay, Manilla: World Council of Churches, July 7-10, 1979), 1.

[2]See Ronald E. Osborn, The Education of Ministers for the Coming Age (St. Louis, Missouri: CBP Press, 1987). In this book Osborn describes both the world that was and the one to come to show contrasts that call for renewal of approaches to theological education. The concern in examining the strands in theological education is to highlight further the place of spiritual formation in theological education.

essential academic preparation and should not be neglected.
While the scientific study of religion is fundamentally
necessary, it has also been a disadvantage in some ways.
The dominance of this mode in graduate schools of religion
and even in some seminaries tends to dilute or displace
spirituality. It tends to be relativistic and
secularistic. Osborn sees it as dehumanizing and as
limiting the scope of human ways of acquiring knowledge.
The intense and destructive competitiveness, intellectual
snobbery, and arrogance which have invaded institutions of
higher learning should not be allowed in a seminary or
theological school. Students and faculty in a seminary
need to bear in mind that academic excellence can be
maintained, but the unchristian ethos of competitiveness
and irreligion which prevail in secular institutions should
be rejected. Academic respectability is highly valued in
our society, and Christian scholars cannot afford to
neglect it.

The Professional Strand

The professional strand equips the student with
skills for the practice of ministry. Ministerial skills
are essential: "Ministry cannot proceed effectively without
the acquisition of hardwon skills which cannot be
substituted by the pretense of piety."[1] Unfortunately,

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[1]Oden, 150.

there are also some negative developments which have plagued this strand. It can feed professionalism and clericalism which have plagued the church for many years. The professional model of ministry tends to lead back to the academic strand where even the "professional courses" in the seminary end up being academic courses. American and British theologians are said to have tried to solve the problem in days gone by, by appointing outstanding parish ministers to professorships in graduate schools of religion. It was believed that such appointees could integrate their pastoral wisdom with scholarship, and would not lose sight of the congregation.[1]

In spite of all the disadvantages connected with the professional strand, the seminary should not slacken on its commitment to professional proficiency. There should be exposures of the ministerial students designed to lead the students to "confront human reality with resources of their biblical, historical, theological and technical knowledge."[2]

The Fiduciary Strand

The fiduciary strand of theological education is the most neglected, and yet it is the one that theological education should be concerned about. It has to do with the impartation of faith and the nurturing of it. Osborn

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[1] Osborn, 166.

[2] Ibid., 167.

asserts that institutions of high learning in any society should be entrusted with the responsibility of guarding, testing, enhancing, and enlarging the cultural and spiritual heritage of society.[1] In the same manner, the seminary should assume the responsibility of guarding the community's spiritual heritage. It is the responsibility of the seminary to enhance and promote positive faith and authentic spirituality. "Spiritual integrity lies at the heart of authentic ministry, the responsible seminary simply cannot ignore its achievement and cultivation. This is a central element in the school's fiduciary obligation."[2]

The seminary is not just another graduate school of religion, Osborn rightly maintains. It, therefore, must go beyond academia and provide professional skills because ministry is more than scientific knowledge and ordinary professional competence. It is also living a life that bears "witness to the work of God in Christ"[3] In carrying out its responsibility faithfully as the "steward of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor 4:1), the seminary should not

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[1]Ibid., 169.

[2]Osborn, 179. On the same page Osborn goes on to emphasize that in educating persons for ministry it should be borne in mind that "the essence is not the information one has acquired, the functions one has learned to perform, the skills one has developed, but rather one's identity as a Christian and one's readiness to serve as a channel for the holy."

[3]Ibid., 170.

become anti-intellectual. The fiduciary strand should strengthen the other two strands because it should enhance intellectual honesty and a broader system of thinking.

It is unfortunate that the fiduciary strand of theological education has been neglected. Theological education without any one of the three strands is incomplete, and theological education without the fiduciary strand defeats its own purpose. The fiduciary strand should also co-ordinate the other two strands. Anselm defined the study of theology as <u>fides quaerens intellectum</u>, or faith seeking understanding. Theological study should be pursued with all the scientific rigor of the mind, but its crucial concern is the elucidation of faith. Academic rigor is necessary because it enhances the understanding of the message. Professional competence is also essential because it equips the minister with essential skills for doing ministry and establishes professional integrity. The spiritual integrity of the minister as a Christian and a leader is enhanced by the fiduciary strand, and that means it should never be neglected.

What has been said above about seminary education should also apply to the college that prepares people to be spiritual leaders. It is argued above that education for the spiritual life (fiduciary strand of seminary education) is of fundamental importance.

This project is to be implemented at Solusi College

in Zimbabwe within the African context. It is important that African pastors be educated in authentic spirituality. As early as thirty years ago, some Christian leaders recognized the need for training in spirituality. Bengt Sundkler makes pertinent remarks regarding ministry in Africa. "The real authority wielded by the individual pastor depends to an immeasurable extent upon the way by which he himself demonstrates his message in his practical life." Therefore, as Sundkler maintains, there is need for devotional training in the process of preparing for the ministry in Africa.[1] It is the traditional view of pastoral ministry in Africa which should not be neglected as the church engages in the task of educating and preparing pastoral persons

Partners in the Process of Spiritual Formation

The question here is: Who is responsible for spiritual formation in a theological school? It has to be borne in mind all the time that those who become ministers are to constantly grow in faith. They are to be people whose communion with God grows from strength to strength, whose conversion of heart keeps deepening, and whose love

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[1]Sundkler, 131. Sundkler makes important points about Christian ministry. For example, he makes the spiritual quality of the minister a central issue: "What matters above all else is that he [the minister] should be a saint. Given that, nothing else matters nearly as much." Sundkler apparently uses "saint" in a qualitative sense.

for God, His people, and His church keeps expanding.[1]
Ministers are guardians of the faith that the church
confesses, and everything that can be done to facilitate
their adequate preparation for the task should be done.
The individual student herself or himself is ultimately
responsible for her or his formation. The school as a
whole and the denominational leadership of the church
should be partners in helping the ministerial student gain
full spiritual preparation.

Apart from the individual student's devotional
habits, several additional factors contribute to the
spiritual formation of the minister in training. The
faculty and administration of the seminary or theological
school as a whole and the denominational leaders who
entrust the school with the students should all play
important roles in formation of the ministerial person.

The Role of the Faculty and College As a Whole

The faculty of a school plays a crucial role in the
formation of a pastoral person. "The spiritual formation
and development of seminary students begins with and is
dependent upon, the spiritual formation and development of
the faculty."[2] What Jesus was to His disciples, the
faculty is to be to the students in a theological school.

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[1]Hughes, 19-20.

[2]Babin et al., 9.

Faculty members are to be an authentic model of authentic spirituality. Although spirituality may be taught in the form of lessons, spirituality is mainly caught from those who are spiritually mature. Faculty members impart what they are to the students. As members of the body of Christ who are involved in the preparation and education of those who have been called to advance the redemptive purpose of Christ, faculty are to act to impart to the students all that will help them shape the church according to God's design and purpose.

Faculty members are significant others who contribute significantly to the total formation of the ministerial person. The faculty, therefore, must be persons who are agents of spiritual formation. They must be persons "whose lives strike upon other people as lived from God and unto God, people whose presence somehow both communicates and evokes the divine."[1] The ATS task force on spiritual development referred to above further admonishes that seminary faculty should demonstrate the unity of the body of Christ. As brothers and sisters in Christ, they are to make the seminary a demonstration community of what the church is supposed to be.[2]

Non-teaching faculty in a theological school should also be involved in the formation of the ministerial

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[1]Ibid., 19.

[2]Ibid., 10.

student. This includes the chief executive officer of the college. According to Edwards, the chief executive officer is to "raise and maintain consciousness of the importance of holistic formation throughout the entire community."[1] The theological school should provide an environment which is conducive to the desired formation. Both the hidden and official curriculum should communicate what the school cares about most. The school should provide the "towel and basin" for the Lord's grace which transforms human lives.[2] It should maintain a "vision of what it means to be formed 'in Christ' and can join the churches in striving toward that formative vision."[3] It means that there should be co-operation between the theological school and the churches in the field which receive services of ministerial graduates from the school.

The Role of the Administrative Unit
of the Church Denomination

Denominational leaders, congregations, and the seminary should co-operate in the formation of pastoral persons. While the minister is going through the process of training in school, churches and the school should co-operate in spearheading the process of spiritual formation.

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[1]Edwards, "Spiritual Formation in Theological Schools: Ferment and Challenge," 37.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Meye, "Theological Education as Character Formation," 122.

After all, in many situations, denominational leaders and the church largely determine who is suitable for the ministry and who is ready for ordination. There can be co-operation between the school and the church in determining suitability and readiness for ministry. This implies close contact between faculty and students in redemptive and spiritually accountable ways. Students preparing for the vocation of leading in the formation of the body of Christ should be taken seriously by both the church and the theological school. Thus, the church, through proper channels in the field, and the theological school can be essential partners in the process of preparing pastors.

Summary

This chapter began by pointing out the "genetical" relationship which exists between the church and pastoral ministry. The chapter shows that although no fixed pattern of ministry existed in the early church, it was an important office. History also shows that ministry has always been vital in shaping both the individual believer and the church corporately. As such, pastoral ministry contributes significantly to the advancement of God's redemptive purpose in the world.

The New Testament images used to designate a person who serves as a minister and functions as a spiritual leader tell us much about the kind of person the minister should be. They also tell us about the nature and function

of the pastoral office. It has been shown that the nature and function of pastoral ministry are such that spiritual awareness and spiritual qualities are more desirable than other abilities to the person who functions as a pastor. Even the essential qualifications specified in the Pastoral Letters underline the importance of personal spiritual qualities of a spiritual leader. Authentic spirituality is the fundamental quality of the spiritual leader because all the qualifications specified in the New Testament emanate from authentic spirituality. Authentic spirituality enhances pastoral leadership and service.

It also has been shown in this chapter that the matrix for education and formation of pastoral persons includes clear conceptions of what it means to be Christian and church, as explored in chapters 2 and 3. The matrix also includes what it means to be a spiritual leader in the community of faith. Specific qualities and qualifications which are called for in the person who is a minister give a clue as to what should be done to equip the person who is to be a pastor for more effective service.

It has been shown that the Bible gives us clues as to the thoroughness that should go into education and preparation of the pastoral persons. Jesus Himself is a good example, and so is Paul. Spiritual formation has been shown to be a fundamental component which should not be neglected in the process of educating future pastors. To achieve the goal of adequately forming spiritually men and

women who are to be agents of God's on-going formation, both the church at large and the theological school must co-operate.

The need for the process of spiritual formation in theological schools is not only mandated in the Bible, it is also recognized by many Christians of various persuasions as confirmed by current research in ministry. Spiritually formed ministers, who in turn help shape churches, are needed today.

A method of implementing this project is developed in Part TWO. Solusi College and its constituency is the context where the project is to be implemented. Chapter 5 traces the historical development of the theological education program at Solusi and argues the case for a program of spiritual formation there.

PART TWO

TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF A PROGRAM OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION
AT SOLUSI COLLEGE, ZIMBABWE

CHAPTER V

A CASE FOR A PROGRAM OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION AT

SOLUSI COLLEGE, ZIMBABWE

This chapter begins with a look backward, but the focus of the whole project is on the future. The case for a program of spiritual formation in this chapter is built on the platform of the past reconstructed to show changing needs. A new emphasis is placed on educating ministerial students in spirituality. I believe that this new emphasis is in line with missionary and spiritual objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Solusi College in particular. The emphasis is pursued also with a view to responding to new realities and developments which challenge the church and its ministry today. The first section of this chapter is, therefore, a brief review of the development of the theological education program at Solusi College.

A Synopsis of the Historical Development of the Theological Education Program at Solusi

The program of ministerial preparation at Solusi dates back to the early days of the Seventh-day Adventist Church missionary expansion in Southern Africa. Early pioneer missionaries followed European settlement in the

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territory which was later known as Southern Rhodesia. In July 1894, seven missionaries camped at a station which came to be known as "Solusi."[1]

As an educational institution, Solusi started by offering education to orphan children who had been adopted by missionaries. As early as 1901, one of the mission superintendents, F. L. Mead, had laid down the plan for a training school that would prepare workers who were "to be sent out into villages to teach Christianity."[2]
The educational effort at that time focused on promoting literacy and sharing the good news of the gospel. Ability to read, write, and do arithmetic was considered important. It is reported that "the missionaries sought to teach the Africans to read the Bible, to write and to become leaders among their own people."[3]

Education was an integral part of the church

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[1]Virgil Robinson, The Solusi Story: Times of Peace, Times of Peril (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1979), 16, 25, 33. Among the pioneer missionaries were three Americans: Alma Druillard, E. Goepp, and J. H. Harvey; there were four South Africans: Pieter Wessels, J. Landsman, Fred Sparrow, and I. B. Burton. Solusi is a corruption of "Soluswe" which was the name of the local chief in the area at the time when missionaries arrived. The institution known as "Solusi College" has changed names over the years. There was a time when it was known as "Solusi Training School." Later it was known as Solusi Missionary College.

[2]Robinson, 82. Records do not show clear descriptions of courses that were taught at that early stage of Solusi's development.

[3]Alberto Sbacchi, "First Seventh-day Adventist Mission in Africa," Adventist Heritage 4, no. 1, (Summer 1977): 41.

mission in those days. Like many other mission organizations, the Seventh-day Adventist Church played a significant role in educating people in a territory that is now known as Zimbabwe. The established government of the day assisted mission schools financially in their efforts to educate the Africans. The system of grants-in-aid started by the colonial government has continued up to the present day in Zimbabwe. Grants-in-aid boosted Solusi and other mission schools.

For many years Solusi offered only elementary education. A Division[1] Council Meeting of Seventh-day Adventists in 1925 passed a recommendation that Solusi "provide for pastoral training in their courses of study."[2]

In 1929 Solusi was chosen as a site for a training school to prepare teachers who could also help spread the gospel message.[3] The teacher training which was offered by Solusi around 1930 was two-year post standard three.[4]

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[1]The term "Division" is used here to describe the "largest geographical and administrational unit next to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists embracing a number of unions, missions, conferences, etc." Each division is supposed to be the section of the General Conference operating in a particular area. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 393.

[2]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, African Division (Claremont, Cape), Minutes of Council Meetings of the African Division, June 22, 1925.

[3]Sbacchi, 43.

[4]This is indicated by D. P. Harder's report to the Zambezi Union constituency meeting in 1931. He specifies that Solusi carried a course which was two years beyond Standard Three. See Minutes of Constituency Meetings,

Mission educators at that time were concerned about preparing people who could teach at village schools, evangelize, and provide ministerial leadership. Classes and lessons taught were prepared by the Ministerial Association of the General Conference. Classes taught included Bible Doctrines, Denominational History, Pastoral Training, Homiletics, Physiology and Hygiene, Missionary Volunteers, and Sabbath School Work.[1]

By 1934 Standard Five was the prerequisite for admission into the training program.[2] The program offered at Solusi was not purely teacher training--it included ministerial training. Bible subjects were incorporated into the program. Graduates from the program were expected to teach in grade schools and to be spiritual leaders in communities where they worked as teachers. Graduates bore the title: "Teacher Evangelist." Both pastoral training and teacher training were included in the standard-five level of education until 1936.[3] It appears that a post standard five training course was offered after 1936 with

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September 1, 1931. Zambezi Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe).

[1]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Africa Division (Claremont, Cape, 1931), Minutes of the Meetings of the Division Committee, June 8, 1931.

[2]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Southern African Division (Claremont, Cape, 1934), Minutes of Meetings of the Division Committee, April 23, 1934.

[3]Sipelo L. Masuku, Personal Interview (Solusi College, Zimbabwe), November 13, 1989.

some emphasis on pastoral training. In 1950 the Southern

African Division authorized Solusi to offer two years of

professional training for the ministry beginning with the

year 1953.[1] The professional training is not described,

but it is clearly stated that its entrance equivalency was

to be a Junior Secondary Certificate.[2] By this time church

leaders were expressing concern for a training school of

higher learning to meet the needs of the English-speaking

territories of the Division.

In 1952 the teacher training program was

transferred to Lower Gwelo, one of the mission stations

that had been started by the Seventh-day Adventist Church

in the midlands section of Southern Rhodesia. The transfer

was made with the understanding that Solusi was to grow to

be a college that would offer degrees. By this time the

leaders at the Division, especially R. S. Watts, were

convinced that it was time for Solusi to be upgraded to a

degree-granting institution in theology.

Solusi became a Division institution in 1957, and

in 1958 a four-year program in theological education was

started. The Solusi faculty presented a memorandum to the

Division committee in which they expressed the need for

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[1]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Southern African Division (Claremont, Cape), Minutes of the Division Committee Meetings, April 18, 1950.

[2]Junior Secondary Certificate at that time was a level of education equivalent to eleven years of schooling.

well-educated and professional ministry.[1] Spiritual
qualifications of the minister are mentioned here and
there as essential, but there was apparently no thought of
a specific spiritual formation program for the pastors in
training at that stage. Regular daily evening and morning
worship times were provided for all students even if they
were not preparing for the ministry. There were also weeks
of spiritual emphasis as is still a tradition on every
Seventh-day Adventist college campus.

When R. L. Staples became principal of Solusi
College in 1962, he took specific steps to achieve an
affiliation with Andrews University. Richard Hammill, on
behalf of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,
visited Solusi toward the end of 1962 with the purpose of
studying the feasibility of establishing an affiliation
arrangement with Andrews University. Hammill's report on
Solusi College was presented to the Board of Trustees of
Solusi College and to the Southern African Division
Committee in Salisbury.[2]

Following suggestions by Richard Hammill, the
theology program was revised. A formal request for
affiliation with Andrews was filed. It is noteworthy to

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[1]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,
Southern African Division (Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia),
Minutes of Year-end Meetings, November, 1960.

[2]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,
Southern African Division (Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia),
Minutes of the Division Committee Meetings, December 6,
1962.

recognize that even 28 years ago, Hammill pointed out a need for spiritual and character training at Solusi in the light of numerous lapses in Sabbath-keeping by young people who faced employment problems.

In May 1967 Staples presented a paper to the Division Committee stating problems connected with the recruitment to the ministry and possible solutions.[1] This paper is also a plea for the development of African ministers of high calibre in every way in order to provide spiritual leadership to a rapidly changing Africa.

Staples left Solusi in 1967, and Daniel Walther who succeeded him also pursued the path of arranging for affiliation with Andrews University. By the time Walther left in 1969, Solusi had received only the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists accreditation to offer degrees in theology. Two young national Solusi graduates were sent to the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in 1975 to acquire advanced degrees in order to join the theology department faculty. Those young men have since obtained doctoral degrees and are currently faculty members in the religion department at Solusi.

Negotiation for affiliation with Andrews University of the theology program were overtaken by introduction of other programs at Solusi and events which kept the program

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[1] R. L. Staples, "Recruitment to the Ministry," Unpublished Paper (Solusi College, Bulawayo, Rhodesia), May, 1967.

unaccredited until 1984. From 1984 to the present, Andrews University offers a Bachelor of Arts degree on Solusi Campus with concentration in pastoral ministry.

It must be mentioned that affiliation with Andrews University was a culmination of a long-cherished dream by those who had worked hard to see Solusi grow to a level of offering a program with academic credibility. Students celebrated openly with an excitement that was beyond description. I was a faculty member of the religion department when this happened. Today, the Andrews University theology degree offered at Solusi is also the basic professional degree for the minister in the region that is served by Solusi College.

Two actions taken at the Division Council five years ago would eventually lead to elimination of ministerial training below degree level.[1] Ministers without college education are encouraged in different ways to improve themselves academically and professionally.

All the above-mentioned developments indicate that the goals for academic and professional excellence are being pursued steadily. The latest development is the current negotiation to offer the Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Ministry at Solusi College beginning in 1990. The administration at Solusi College and faculty in the

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[1]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Eastern Africa Division, Minutes of the Mid-year Committee Meetings, June 3, 1985.

religion department are negotiating for a Master's degree with pastoral ministry concentration, and they have the support of the Division which operates the college.

After briefly establishing where Solusi has come from and where it is now, it is important again to specify the major argument in this project. Along with the academic and professional excellence that Solusi pursues, there should also be an intentional program to educate those in preparation for the ministry in spiritual growth. In other words, the fiduciary strand of theological education should be added.[1] The stakes for the Church are high in the region where Solusi is located. Those who graduate from Solusi will determine the shape and character of the Seventh-day Adventist Church not only in Zimbabwe but also in the regions served by Solusi. It is imperative that the men and women who are trained at Solusi should be spiritually formed so that they in turn may lead other Christians to deeper levels of spirituality. The ultimate test of the integrity of Solusi College as a Christian college will be its ability to produce spiritual leaders.

It is already clear even to the casual observer that Solusi produces spiritual leaders not only at the local church level but also at various levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church administrative hierarchy. To cite a few examples, the heads of the Seventh-day Adventist

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[1]See "Strands in Ministerial Education" in Chapter 4.

Church in Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are all Solusi alumni. The influence of Solusi continues to grow as more graduate from the training program at Solusi College.

Furthermore, there are developments inside and outside the Church in Zimbabwe which force the college to take a fresh look at the relevance of its program to meet the needs of rapidly changing parishes. Some of the developments compel the college to thoroughly prepare ministerial students spiritually.

The following section briefly explores some of the factors that warrant a program of spiritual formation at Solusi College. Since I have been connected with Solusi College from 1964, this section includes what I have experienced and observed as a Christian, student, pastor in the field, and instructor of ministerial students at Solusi. The case for a program of spiritual formation at Solusi is established in three ways: (1) by considering factors within the SDA Church, (2) by considering factors outside the Church, and (3) by examination of personal spiritual journey.

The Rationale for a Program of Spiritual Formation at Solusi College

Internal Factors Which Warrant a Program of Spiritual Formation

The Mission of the SDA Church Mandates Spiritual Formation

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God has called them to prepare a people to meet God. It is unthinkable to embark on a program of preparing people without preparing them spiritually. If those who minister within the ranks of the Adventist Church are not spiritually prepared, they may not be able to help others prepare spiritually. Therefore a program of spiritual formation is in line with the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Solusi College Statement of Mission Provides for Spiritual Formation

Furthermore, a program of spiritual formation is also in line with the Solusi College Statement of Mission and with its seal. One of the tenets specified in the mission statement is that the college engage in "constructive educational endeavors that are balanced in the development of the student's spiritual, mental, physical, and social aspects."[1] Spiritual formation, then, is an integral part of the specified goal of Solusi College's educational endeavors. The seal bears three Latin words: spiritus, mens, and corpus. Spirituality is derived from the first Latin word spiritus which means

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[1] "Solusi College Statement of Mission," 7.

"the life-giving force which stems from God, quickens the baptized Christian and transforms the relationships he has with his fellow human beings."[1] Thus, according to this understanding, by developing spirituality, the social dimension of Christian experience is also enhanced. Shorter further points out that spirituality entails experiential prayer as a living communion with God, and a mode of living which is not just a "new way of looking at human life, but a new way of living it."[2] Solusi College must educate for this kind of spirituality if it is to be faithful to its mission statement and the seal it bears.

The Numerical Growth of the SDA Church Warrants a Program of Spiritual Formation

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zimbabwe is growing at the rate of 18.86 percent per annum.[3] This is a high average compared to the SDA Church world average of 6.94 percent over the same period of time. This means that the SDA Church in Zimbabwe will probably double its membership within less than six years. Rapid social change seems to have increased the receptivity of the people of

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[1] Aylward Shorter, African Christian Spirituality (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1980), 4.

[2] Ibid., 5.

[3] These figures are arrived at by calculation from F. Donald Yost, Harvest '90 Annual Statistical Report, nos. 124, 125, and 126, covering a period of three years (Washington D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1986-1988), 8, 24.

Zimbabwe to new ideas. The Christian message of love is
well received. My own perspective on this rapid growth
picture is that God's hand is in the movements that lead
people to a knowledge of Him. The political leaders in
Zimbabwe are working hard to enable Zimbabweans to be on
the cutting edge of human civilization and development.
Can Christian spiritual leaders do any less in placing
their fellow Christians on the cutting edge of spiritual
formation? Can the Theological College or Seminary do any
less? At the risk of sounding judgmental, it must be
mentioned that generally the spirituality of many Seventh-
day Adventist Christians in Zimbabwe--both pastors and
laity--is activistic and shallow. There are exceptions, of
course. The negative developments and incidents to be
cited in this chapter support the painful conclusion that
my spirituality and that of the members of my parish was
shallow as measured by biblical spirituality. Our
spirituality must be deepened, and the process of deepening
it must begin at the Theological College.

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External Factors Impacting on the Church Warrant a
Program of Spiritual Formation

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Impact of Social Change Warrants
a Program of Spiritual
Formation

A program of spiritual formation at Solusi is also
necessary because of the rapid social change in Zimbabwe
and the territories served by Solusi. As early as almost
30 years ago, changes in the whole continent of Africa were

seen by Sundkler as taking place at a "breath-taking

speed." He correctly recognized that "New ideologies

supply modern geo-political dynamics"[1] which shape thinking

and action.   The rapid changes taking place impact upon

the church as a whole, including the spirituality of its

members. Neither the church nor a college like Solusi can

turn a blind eye to those changes which significantly

affect the mission, ministry, and life of the church.

Sundkler quotes Bishop Neill who upon surveying the church

in Africa expressed "a sense of immense opportunity and

immense peril."[2] While opportunities continue to expand in

their immensity, the perils also continue to loom in their

immensity. The dangers of syncretism, nominalism, folk

religion, and even secularism continue to pose a threat to

the church in Zimbabwe. Industrialization, urbanization,

and other forces of modernization impact significantly upon

the church, and this challenges the church and Solusi

College as an educational institution that prepares church

leaders. In the light of this situation, the development of

authentic spirituality cannot be overemphasized.

At the time of the census of 1982, the total urban

population of Zimbabwe was 25.7 percent of the total

population and growing at 4.5 percent per annum. The urban

population would be higher if every person living in town

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[1]Sundkler, 142.

[2]Ibid., 142.

had been included. In this census, only towns that had a population above 2,500 were regarded as urban. In the provinces of Mashonaland East and Matabeleland North, 57.46 percent and 53.80 percent of the population, respectively, was urban.[1]

The cities of Bulawayo and Harare are industrialized, and many people flock to them for jobs that enable them to earn cash. Moreover, the national character seems to be shaped by an urban ethos which permeates all areas. The following factors seem to contribute to this situation: (1) The policy makers and thought leaders of society are urbanized people. (2) The national media and press are powerful. Radios, newspapers, and even television sets are available today even in rural areas. (3) Many people oscillate between town and country and spread the urban ethos and condition.

With the situation as it is in Zimbabwe, the church is impacted as traditional modes of religious expression and sense of solidarity in community break down. People's spiritual needs are affected. The situation calls for a creative ministry with a profound spirituality. Such a spirituality is to be intentionally promoted because people's ways of living have become more complex. Those who minister in situations of rapid change should minister

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[1]Central Statistical Office, Main Demographic Features of the Population of Zimbabwe: An Advance Report Based on a Ten Percent Sample (Harare: Zimbabwe, June 1985), 55, 56.

from positions of spiritual maturity and intellectual responsibility. Hence, a program of spiritual formation is needed at Solusi College.

The World Council of Churches has been concerned about the impact of rapid social change in many countries. Earlier studies of social change in various developing countries, such as those published by All Africa Conference of Churches in collaboration with the Department of Church and Society of the World Council of Churches,[1] are revealing. Situations of rapid social change as in Zimbabwe carry dynamics which have implications for the church and its ministry. Depending on how the ministry of the church responds to the situation of rapid social change, there may be either moral and spiritual chaos or spiritual growth.

Shorter suggests that African Christians must accurately perceive the situation and creatively seek viable alternatives that help maintain social and spiritual health of the church in Africa. The break up of the traditional African community, village, and tribal structures offer the church opportunities of service and

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[1]All Africa Churches Conference, Africa in Transition: The Challenge and the Christian Response (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1962). Studies from various countries are described in this document. They are helpful to the church that seeks to accomplish its mission in such situations and minister effectively in similar contexts.

meet the need for community and fellowship.[1] The key to maintaining sound spirituality in the contemporary circumstances lies in the hands of those who are spiritual leaders of the church. It goes without saying, then, that spiritual leaders need to be trained and equipped to function effectively in such circumstances.

The Zimbabwe National Ethos
Warrants a Program of
Spiritual Formation

When Zimbabwe became independent as a nation, its leadership espoused a socialist path of development. This frightened many church people who understood this to mean that it was an atheistic path promoted by the state and enforced on citizens by the state. However, fears have abated as the government has assured Christians and churches that they have a place and a role to play in Zimbabwe and its development. Nevertheless, the church must not allow itself to be lulled into stupor by being accepted in the culture that surrounds it. In many nations and cultures, the church has failed to be a transformative influence so that, while it might claim to be winning the world, the church itself is won to the world. Unscriptural ideologies, creeds, and slogans, whether leftist or rightist, which shape people's thinking and action should not be allowed to destroy authentic Christian spirituality. The church is in the world as God's redemptive instrument

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[1]Shorter, 19.

to the world, but the church is not of the world (John 17:15, 16). It means that the church cannot be a tool of any worldly system no matter where it exists.

The previous state president of Zimbabwe, Rev. Canaan S. Banana, had earlier been a Methodist clergyman. As a state president, he liked to address church people and church professionals. He seemed to have taken it upon himself to sensitize Christians and churches to the new realities of Zimbabwe and of their need to participate constructively in the development of Zimbabwe while fulfilling their God-given mission. Like his counterparts in the government, Banana used to pursue the theme of transformation--a total transformation which included the cultural, economic, political, religious, and social dimensions of Zimbabwean people.

In one of his addresses to church professionals, Banana deplored what he perceived to be churches' inertia and paralysis when it came to reading the signs of the times in Zimbabwe. Banana maintained that churches were "often totally lost as to where the Zimbabwean masses are, and where they are going politically, socially and economically."[1] Banana often challenged churches and invited them

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[1]Canaan S. Banana, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ and Revolutionary Transformation," Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies 2, no. 4 (1985): 12. (The article is the address by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Rev. Canaan Banana, at the sixth Conference of the International Association for Mission Studies, Harare, January 9, 1985.)

to "become catalysts for creative and positive change."[1]

Many of the addresses and speeches by politicians like Banana contain some points which cannot be ignored by the church. Christians can welcome the challenge and examine themselves critically to see where they need to improve, but Christians do not have to allow politicians to dictate agendas to them. With a divine mandate to witness to the love of God and justice, Christians engage in society in its endeavor to make life more human, not with a contemptuous "holier-than-thou" attitude,[2] but because they are animated by the love of Christ which is extended to every human being.

The question might be: What does the state president's promotion of certain courses of action by the church have to do with spirituality? It is precisely because of the external pressures upon the church to move in a certain direction that makes it imperative for the church to develop authentic spirituality. Otherwise, there are potential dangers developing which may lead to civil religion, a traditional folk religion, and other aberrations which perpetuate a religion without Christ and without spiritual power. It will take mature Christian leaders to discern the potential enemies of true Christianity in Zimbabwe. Such leaders must also be

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[1]Ibid., 14.

[2]See comments by All Africa Churches Conference, 77, 78.

sensitive to the movement of the Spirit as He leads His people to deeper levels of spirituality.

For the work of Christian transformation to grow in Zimbabwe, the church must adhere to the call made at the Oxford International Missionary Council: "Let the Church be the Church."[1] When the expression was used, its content was to be given in terms of the concrete situation in which the church found itself. It is used here broadly in line with the description of the church outlined in chapter 3 above. Such a church must glorify God by being transformed to be more like Him. It must nurture members of the community of faith spiritually. It must also reach out to the world with the Good News of salvation from God.[2] Reaching out to the world includes living out the principles of the Good News by being a redeemed and redeeming community. The church engages in works of mercy and justice through its members who mingle as leaven and salt with other members of the society at large. The church in Zimbabwe must always ask itself what it means to be an authentic church in Zimbabwe without losing the vision of the church portrayed in Scripture.

A college like Solusi bears an important responsibility of enabling the Seventh-day Adventist Church

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[1]Cited in All Africa Churches Conference, 76. This categorical statement was made at the Oxford Conference of the Church ecumenical gathering in 1937.

[2]See "Purpose of the Church" in chapter 3.

to become what it ought to be as a church. After wrestling with the issues and problems that influence the spiritual condition of the people in Zimbabwe, I am convinced that the basic way of preparing spiritual leaders is to help them develop the spiritual dimensions of their lives during the training process. Solusi College can contribute to the accomplishing of the church's task by educating men and women who will go out to the churches and society as redeemed spiritual persons to be instruments of redemption and spiritual transformation. With men and women of profound spirituality leading out in the community of faith, both the leaders and the community itself will be in a strong position to respond to all kinds of challenges. Hence, this program of spiritual formation is being designed for Solusi College.

My Own Experience as a Christian, Student and Pastor Indicates the Need for a Program of Spiritual Formation

In this section I reflect briefly on my own spiritual journey, vocation, and experiences to indicate the need for a program of spiritual formation.

I was a small boy when I encountered the Lord Jesus Christ. Young children who had attended a Seventh-day Adventist lay evangelistic effort in the village told me stories about Jesus. When I got the chance, I also attended children's meetings where stories were told. One afternoon a school teacher told us a story about Jesus who

was cruelly crucified on the cross and died a very painful
death. At that time I could hardly hold my tears whenever
this story was told. It was a story that remained
indelibly marked in my mind. On one Sabbath afternoon, a
lay Seventh-day Adventist was preaching. He also ended by
telling the story of Jesus' death on the cross. This lay-
person also pointed out that Jesus died for me personally.
At that moment, I wanted to do something for the Jesus I
had heard of so frequently. When the lay preacher made a
call to invite those who wanted to be followers of Jesus to
have their names written in a certain notebook, I quickly
gave my name. My mother and my relatives did not take me
seriously, but I was highly motivated in my heart.

I took all the Bible class lessons which were given
to us, read the New Testament through, and memorized many
passages of Scripture and more than half of the songs in
the Zulu hymnal. I gave correct answers to all the Bible
questions asked by those who prepared people for baptism.
There was not much encouragement in my faith journey at
home because the people I lived with did not seem to be as
concerned as I was about a Christian life-style. The
messages I got were that, at my age, I should not hurry to
be a Christian. It would be better to wait, to become an
old person before getting serious about being Christian. I
did not sense the change I wanted in my life. Somehow, and
naively, I calculated in my mind that if I were baptized as
a member of the church, I was going to have enough strength

to live according to what was revealed to me to be God's will. Those who led our local congregation were pleased that I could answer Bible questions correctly, and for that reason, apparently, they were keen to let me be baptized.

My interest in the church and religious activities was heightened when the local district pastor visited our village. He became a special friend to me. He used to put me on elevated platforms and ask me to repeat certain specific passages of scripture from memory before congregations. He told me that I was doing that for Jesus, and I enjoyed it. My pastor friend, Magutsha, used to speak to his elders in my hearing and say: "Uzakuba nguMfundisi lomfana," which means "This boy is destined to be a pastor." Those words have remained in my mind ever since. Although Pastor Magutsha frequently used me to repeat scriptural passages before congregations, he did not baptize me. For a period of about two years I attended church and baptismal classes; perhaps, I was considered too young to be baptized. Pastor Magutsha passed away before I was baptized. He was a beloved pastor, and many people mourned his sudden death. I personally was shaken, too. Our small congregation spent time on a Sabbath afternoon singing the hymn which had been requested by Pastor Magutsha himself at his death bed in the hospital. The song begins with the words: "I'm pressing on the upward way, New heights I am gaining every day. . . ." The

experience of mourning that beloved pastor had a lasting impression in my mind.

Unfortunately, after the passing away of such a beloved pastor, the person who replaced him acquired a very bad reputation soon after he arrived. As a child, I heard elderly people say negative things about him. They repeated sordid details of his immoral life and his verbal and physical fights with church elders and other leaders of the small congregations. This disturbed me very much. In fact, some of our leaders stopped attending church in protest. Some of them left the church and have not returned to this day. Unfortunately for me, I was baptized by this notorious pastor.

I was keen to be baptized, even though I was without an adequate understanding of what it really meant. Although the pastor who baptized me had no positive influence in the church where I was baptized, there was an elder who had a formative influence over my spiritual life. On the day of my baptism, he shook my hand in a congratulatory manner and told me that I was to be different from other boys. I was too happy for words the day I was baptized. However, the change in my life which I had anticipated did not take place right after baptism. Somehow I had a wrong concept of both baptism and salvation. I had looked forward to baptism because I believed it would free me from sin and temptation, but things proved otherwise. My understanding of the Christian

life was a legalistic one. I was seeking to be good enough for God to take me to heaven. I tried to keep all the commandments of God as I knew them, but I failed. No one helped me or guided me. Five young people who were baptized when I was and who were older than I, later left the church. These developments kept me wondering whether there was a way out.

In those early years, I attended Saint Ebbas elementary school run by the Anglican Church. I faced conflicts with teachers, especially in connection with sports on Saturday, which I had begun to keep as God's holy day. My teachers did not like my religion, but they liked me as a student. I successfully answered all the test and examination questions. An unusual infection on my head kept me out of school for a full term when I was doing the equivalent of grade 2, but I was able to complete the grade in two school terms with first position in the class. After some tests by the school, I was even able to "skip" grade 3, and I was put into grade 4.

Conflicts with school authorities increased. Ridicule from peers was not easy to take. Many times I wondered how I could attend a Seventh-day Adventist school. I was confident that spiritual struggles would cease if only I could be placed in a Seventh-day Adventist environment. The principal of the school I attended expected me to attend the school of his denomination, Cyrene Mission. However, as far as I was concerned, the

time had come for me to attend either a government school or a school run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. My focus was on attending a government secondary school because it was free. A Seventh-day Adventist school was out of my parents' and guardian's plans because it was perceived as too expensive for my poor family.

I was not accepted into a government school. I suspect my teachers chose to recommend another student. Two weeks before the beginning of the school year I was stranded without a school to attend. I had a certificate issued by the Ministry of Education with a first division pass, but due to lack of means and religious persuasion there was no hope for me to continue school.

I visited Solusi for the first time about a week before the school term began in hopes of getting into the secondary school there. When I visited the registrar who was an American missionary, I was told that the school had closed applications. The school was supposed to admit 72 students, but had accepted 82. I was not really disappointed; after all, my guardians did not have the money to pay the school fees at Solusi. What impressed me most was the way the registrar treated me. He was kind, considerate, and empathetic. I sensed his care and concern. It was the first time I had met a white man who was so down-to-earth and caring. He advised me to be there on opening day if I had money, in case there might be an opening.

To cut the story short, I was there on the opening day with half the money required. My money had been borrowed from a local business man. I was accepted, and that was the beginning of my connection with Solusi in 1964. My feelings were mixed. I was happy to be a student of Solusi Secondary School, but I was not sure whether my behavior might desecrate what I considered to be God's school. The uppermost question in my mind was: Am I good enough to be at Solusi? Moreover, I kept wondering whether there would be money for me to continue school the following term. The first question had a disappointing answer. Within a month, I discovered many boys and girls at Solusi whose behavior was no different from that of boys and girls at the Anglican school. I was disappointed when one of the senior boys, chosen as a prefect, wanted to beat me for a very trivial offense. Other incidents kept me disturbed. I was a quiet, shy boy, and no one suspected the unsettling questions in my mind. I could not understand why some of my peers did not like the morning and evening devotions which I enjoyed very much.

After two years, I completed my Junior Certificate as the third highest achiever in that class. My guardians had sold half a dozen of their cattle to put me through school, and that was all they could do at that time. The year 1965 was almost the end of my formal schooling. I told the principal of the college about my situation. He encouraged me to continue. The school had worked out a

system of prize-giving to the three highest achievers in the government Junior Certificate examinations. I was entitled to the third prize, about half the tuition for the quarter. The principal also took my name to the Student Aid Committee which granted me additional money as a bursary that covered all my tuition. My guardians had to find money for my uniform and books. The bursary was renewed in 1967 when I completed my Cambridge School Certificate.

Although I did not like being in the third position in the class almost every school term (I had been number one in an Anglican school), I enjoyed my secondary education at Solusi. My Christian experience was warm. I loved to take part in many religious activities and to visit small congregations near Solusi. Some peers looked down upon those in college who were preparing to be pastors because the remuneration in the pastorate was very low. Pastors were respected in the community, but they had no social prestige among the young who were seeking to rise economically as opportunities became available to those with a good education. My friends' derogatory remarks about college students made me feel very bad. I did not know why then, but in looking back, I can tell that my heart was set on the pastorate. Deep in my heart I was jealous for the Lord's cause, but I did not know how to express it. Moreover, Pastor Magutsha's words kept ringing in my mind: "This boy is destined to be a pastor." Two

teachers in the secondary school approached me on different occasions and pointed out to me that I had a ministerial gift. That meant I was to consider returning to Solusi College to spend another four years preparing for the task of pastoring. I dismissed the suggestion. Surprisingly, several of my peers also suggested the same thing. Friends who were very close to me, however, did not suggest this. We planned to go to a certain school together and to prepare for careers in medicine and university education. The Lord arranged circumstances in such a way that I found myself back at Solusi College.

I do not know to this day who was behind the circumstances that led me to return to Solusi for the theology degree offered there. Two senior pastors from the local mission circuit of Seventh-day Adventists visited me at a relative's home in the city. They had heard that I was living there temporarily. The two pastors had a message from Solusi College, the Zambezi Union, and the local Field/Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that my application to enter pastoral ministry had been favorably considered by both the school and the local conference. They specifically told me that I was to prepare to go to Solusi, and the Zambezi Union was going to pay my tuition bills. I am still puzzled today what they meant when they talked about my application, because I had not, either formally nor specifically, applied.

I went to Solusi College in March 1968. Later on,

I wrote to my closest friends that "I could not be disobedient to the heavenly vision." By "vision" I was referring to the unusual circumstances that had led me to Solusi again. The first two years of college were very trying. I loved to witness for the Lord, but I had not seriously considered and envisioned myself as a full time pastor. Many uncertainties filled my mind at first, but my quiet disposition revealed nothing to others. No faculty member or fellow student knew there were internal conflicts within me.

Once again, I made the mistake of assuming that if I joined college to prepare for the gospel ministry, my personal struggles against sin and temptations would be reduced. That was not the case. My first two years of college were very trying, and the major disturbance came from an unexpected source. The man I had admired as a dynamic Christian, one who had taught me a number of courses proved not to be the kind of person I thought he was. Details are not needed here, but what happened was enough to discourage me from continuing with the course of studies to prepare for pastoral ministry. In fact, I almost quit. My Christian experience cooled off. My grades were good during the first semester, but after that they became very poor. My mind was filled with regrets. I wondered whether I had not been deceived and trapped into deciding to be a pastor in the church--which, at the time, I perceived to be full of hypocritical leaders. The root

of bitterness was poisoning my life whole life. I was

critical and judgmental. The joy of Christian fellowship

and witness left me. While all of this was going on within

me, no one seemed to understand enough to offer guidance.

That is when I needed guidance. I needed to understand

religion as essentially an internal and dynamic experience

that manifests itself in external ways. My focus was on

external conformity.

During my junior year when I was considering

alternatives for my future career, a new instructor

arrived. He befriended me in a way that made me catch the

warmth of Christian experience again. Another faculty

member who came involved us in programs to help others

understand the implications of being a Christian. He wrote

dramas in which we participated as a small group of friends

helping others. This added more warmth for me to enjoy,

and I was strengthened in my resolve to continue with a

ministerial career. My sense of being called to the

ministry deepened. I realized later that my inner

conflicts which spilled out in different ways stemmed from

my shallow Christian experience. The close friendship with

teachers and fellow students who shared freely their

Christian pilgrimage made the difference to me. Some of

the Christian instructors and fellow students helped deepen

my experience by facilitating the turning of crises into

opportunities for growth.

I have briefly outlined my own spiritual journey to

highlight one factor that seems to be essential to Christian living--the need for mutual encouragement and guidance in the Christian journey. Few people can make it alone. God made us not only to be dependent on Him but also to be interdependent as members of the Body of Christ. Looking back, I feel there should have been more people who treated me like Pastor Magutsha who affirmed me at a very early age and "predicted" that I was going to be a pastor. More elders, like the one who congratulated me warmly when I was baptized and encouraged me to be "different" from other boys, are needed in the church family. I wish there had been more school authorities and faculty members with positive influence whose spirituality had made me catch what it means to be a Christian. I do not know what would have happened if no faculty members had reached out to me, not in a condescending way, but in a way to arouse a sense of value within myself. Now I am convinced that every student needs persons and communities to affirm the good they are trying to be and to do, especially while preparing for a career that deals with issues of ultimate concern. Specific times and occasions should be provided at the theological college to help students develop spirituality.

Many other experiences in the field had a bearing on what I see as the need to help people develop spiritually. I have selected a few experiences as illustrations.

As a pastor in the field, I have observed

developments in my parish which signalled to me that more
emphasis must be given on spirituality in ministry than
just evangelizing, instructing in doctrines, and ethics.
As my colleagues and I worked in the field, I felt that the
Lord was blessing our efforts in evangelizing and teaching
doctrines and ways of Christian living. However, I also
felt we were not as successful in developing sound
Christian experience whereby principles of Christianity
were internalized by many members. The principles were
not animating the lives of many Seventh-day Adventist
Christians. The developments and issues observed, however,
reveal deeper spiritual problems which the church in
Zimbabwe must address.

Among other things, the following are some of the
problems I have encountered in my pastoral experience:

1. In spite of the principles taught in the
church, many young people slip back to unbiblical customs
and practices when they get married. They deliberately
marry non-Christians, usually in the traditional way, and
the church loses many of them.

2. Syncretism surfaced in crises connected with
birth, marriage, employment or positions at work place,
death, and burial. Z. M. Ncube describes this situation in
his doctoral dissertation.[1]

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[1]Zebron M. Ncube, "Ancestral Beliefs and Practices:
A Program for Developing Christian Faith among Adventists
in Zimbabwe," D. Min. Project, Andrews University, 1988.

3. Evidences of isolation, loneliness, and rootlessness also have been observed among Christians in cities. Those who move to the cities and towns break away from the traditional tribal family and are stripped of the needed emotional support. Congregations have not yet maximized the development of community support for these people who suddenly find themselves thus isolated. Perhaps there are lessons to be learned from the growth and strength of some of the Independent Churches. Their ethos and liturgy seems to address what Mbiti speaks of as the failure of "mission Christianity," which "has not penetrated sufficiently deep into African religiosity."[1] It is time experts studied and developed ways of church life that enable members to feel at home and experience their faith as a dynamic relationship with a living God.

Other incidents in my pastoral experience underlined my belief that we had failed to help members develop the necessary spiritual muscle to deal with crisis situations.

4. Among experiences which touched me deeply occurred in 1985 after the national elections. General elections became a big event necessitating the closing of schools for about a week. After the elections when things returned to normal, the Ministry of Education decided to have schools make up for the time lost during the

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[1]John S. Mbiti, <u>African Religions and Philosophy</u> (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1969), 233.

elections. The office in Harare directed that Saturday be a regular school day for some weeks. Seventh-day Adventist schools asked for permission to conduct classes on Sunday, and permission was granted. However, there was a problem with thousands of Seventh-day Adventist students who attended non-Seventh-day Adventist schools. There was also a problem with Seventh-day Adventist teachers who taught in non-Seventh-day Adventist schools. Some teachers and students who were confronted with this problem decided not to report for duty or attend classes on Sabbath. However, many teachers saw no problem in reporting for duty on Saturday. In fact, one Seventh-day Adventist teacher even wrote a newspaper article that was published in a local newspaper with a very wide circulation, advocating teaching and attending classes on Sabbath. When I visited congregations in the city of Bulawayo, I found that more than half of the school-going adherents were not in church but attending classes. The education director of the Zambezi Union was concerned. He approached the Ministry of Education office and requested that Seventh-day Adventist students be excused from attending classes on Saturday. The reply from the Ministry of Education office was that no one was compelled to attend classes on Saturday if he or she had religious reasons for not attending because Zimbabwe adheres to the principle of religious freedom. It was embarrassing to me as a pastor to face the fact that my fellow members in the body of Christ had no spiritual

backbone. I concluded then that many of us were not ready for worse crises than that which proved to be not a crisis at all.

5. I observed many lapses during the political struggle for an independent Zimbabwe. Many young Seventh-day Adventists, and even some senior ones, ignored friendly counsel and went to the "bush."[1] Nationalistic feelings and political sentiments appeared to be stronger than religious commitment. Loyalty to the cause of nationalism appeared to be stronger than loyalty to the community of faith. I was stunned by the attitude toward religion displayed by some of the young people I used to know, including some of my close relatives when they returned from the "bush." They were cursing God and espousing atheism. I did not understand how people who had been raised in Bible-believing Sabbath- keeping families could, within a few months, espouse another system so devotedly. After things normalized in Zimbabwe, many of them were spiritually rehabilitated and again became members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Another issue that disturbed me after Zimbabwe had gained its status as a new nation was the way Christians related to members of other tribes outside and inside the church. Some Seventh-day Adventist Christians

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[1]This term was used to refer to going out of the country in order to participate in the violent struggle to overthrow the system of government that was in place.

participated in party and tribal conflicts where people beat one another.[1] Some people may regard this as political immaturity, but the problem seems much deeper to me. It also was also evidence of a lack of spiritual maturity and a manifestation of inadequate understanding of what the church is. The problem was not limited to lay members. Some pastors were accomplices. In spite of the fact that national leaders called for peaceful rallies and campaigns, grassroots supporters of different parties at the lower levels were cruel to their opponents. There was little respect for human dignity and the sanctity of human life even among those who are professed followers of Christ. When I observed these developments and problems, I found myself placing the blame on myself and my fellow ministers for failing to lead the people of God to deeper levels of spirituality that would have facilitated more redemptive interpersonal relationships. As already noted, there is a need for ministers who have a sound relationship with God. The situation in places like Zimbabwe needs men and women who will minister from a position of spiritual maturity and Christian integrity.

At one point in my career, I tentatively concluded that the emphasis in our ministry was not balanced. We focused on external conformity, doing the expected thing.

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[1]Some SDA Christians were beaten up by their fellow SDA Christians, had their properties destroyed, and were falsely accused of subversion because of constant rumors emanating from mutual mistrust even among Christians.

Too much time was spent on effects and symptoms instead of causes.

I was disillusioned and sought to acquire something that would help me and my people gain deeper levels of spirituality. I considered the pursuit of a degree in developmental counseling to find a way of reducing these problems. While I was struggling with focus, I was introduced to something new.

I used to discuss church problems with a close friend at home in Zimbabwe and while pursuing studies at Andrews University. We were seeking ways that might help solve some of these problems. As ordained pastors upon whom the church had deployed a considerable amount of the resources at its disposal, we felt both a burden and a responsibility. In the context of the discussion, my friend introduced the topic of spirituality as a discipline that can be studied and as a quality that was weak in our ministry. I did not fully understand what he was talking about when he referred to the course "Spirituality in Ministry" which he had taken.

A book on ministerial spirituality by the late Terry Holmes proved to be a very difficult book for me to read and understand because of my unfamiliarity with the terms of reference. My initial reaction was that it was a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense.

Even after I had written a tentative proposal for my doctoral dissertation on alternative patterns of

ministry in Zimbabwe, I decided to take the class on "Spirituality in Ministry." After some reflection on what I had learned, I dropped the topic and decided to embark on a study of spirituality. This came about as an expression of the deep concern I now share in connection with the ministry which I have grown to love.

I went to the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament, for information about Christian spirituality. After studying images of Christian experience, it became clear to me that the New Testament portrays the spiritual life as a dynamic life lived in intimate union with God. The Christian minister, as a person who helps facilitate the experience of intimate relationship with God, is portrayed not just as a performer of the job but as one who radiates a living connection with Christ. Her/his life is to be animated by love for the Lord Jesus Christ and His body, the church. This means that spirituality in ministry is a quality of fundamental importance. My conviction about the need for a program of spiritual formation was strengthened.

CHAPTER VI

PROMOTING SPIRITUALITY IN SELECTED
COLLEGE CLASSES

Two college classes, Doctrines of the Christian
Church and Pastoral Counseling are selected, in a special
way, to be avenues for promoting spirituality at Solusi
College. One of the main objectives of these two classes
is to promote spirituality and increase students' spiritual
awareness.

Spiritual Formation as Co-ordinating Principle in Teaching Doctrines of the Christian Church

In educating people for Christian ministry, it
seems quite in order to unearth spiritual insights from the
Church's fundamental beliefs. Some spiritually
invigorating insights are implicit in each of the Church's
fundamental beliefs. In this chapter, only a few of the
fundamental beliefs are selected as examples. The
doctrines selected and briefly explored are among those
with distinctive Seventh-day Adventist emphasis. These are
considered in order to highlight some spiritual insights
that may help a Seventh-day Adventist minister develop a
distinctive Seventh-day Adventist Christian spirituality.

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Spiritual Insights from the
Doctrine of the Sabbath

Of all the doctrines with distinct Seventh-day
Adventist emphasis, the Sabbath, perhaps, contains
resources for spirituality which are recognized even by
those who do not observe the biblical Sabbath, the seventh
day of the week. An example of this recognition is clearly
seen in such spiritual masters as Tilden Edwards. Edwards
writes about the Sabbath as "A guiding rhythm in life that
is <u>essential</u> for individual and societal well-being, and
<u>crucial</u> for spiritual awareness."[1]

Seventh-day Adventists learned about the Sabbath
from Seventh-day Baptists. Today, many Christians
recognize the importance of keeping the Sabbath, although
there is no agreement on which day should be recognized as
the Sabbath. Seventh-day Adventist cherish the seventh day
Sabbath as a day set aside, not only for rest, but as a day
of delightful communion with God, and a sign of
sanctification and redemption in Christ.[2]

It has also been shown in chapter 3 that human
life needs two modes of experience--extradependence and
intradependence.[3] The weekly Sabbath provides for the

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[1] Edwards, <u>Spiritual Friend</u>, 69 (emphasis
supplied).

[2] Ministerial Association, <u>Seventh-day Adventists
Believe . . .: A Biblical Exposition of the 27 Fundamental
Doctrines</u> (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-
day Adventists, 1988), 158.

[3] See above, "Life of the Church" in chapter 3.

essential mode of extradependence when properly observed. As Christians truly worship God in a special way on this day, they should experience a transforming sense of God's presence. In a way, the Sabbath is a constant reminder that life is meant to be lived in union with God. The weekly Sabbath provides for that rhythm of life whereby the spiritual life is constantly revitalized.

On the Sabbath day, human beings shift away from their weekly toil and focus on sacred events and sacred history as they worship God. The spiritual blessings of the Sabbath accrue to the person truly worshipping God. "Renewed by this remembrance of God's gifts," Holmes maintains, "we leave the worship service to live our faith in the time God gives us for the days to come."[1]

According to Rabbi Heschel, on the Sabbath the "seed of eternity planted in the soul" is to be cared for, and the soul affirms its belongingness to the Creator God. "Six days a week we seek to dominate the world," Heschel writes; "on the seventh day we try to dominate the self."[2]

If ever there was a time when human beings needed freedom and serenity in the midst of a tension-filled environment, that time is now. Proper observance of the Sabbath meets this need. No wonder Heschel speaks of the

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[1]C. R. Holmes, Sing a New Song, 30.

[2]Abraham Heschel, The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1952), 13 (emphasis supplied).

Sabbath as an "island of stillness" amidst "the tempestuous ocean of time and toil." The Sabbath is "a day of detachment from things, instruments and practical affairs as well as of attachment to the spirit."[1]

Heschel describes the Sabbath as "a sanctuary and cathedral in time."[2] When properly observed, the Sabbath cements a relationship between God and human beings who acknowledge His authority and lordship. In this situation, idolatry is negated. No wonder Seventh-day Adventists acknowledge that the Sabbath enhances worship of the true God. "As the memorial of creation, Sabbath observance is an antidote to idolatry."[3] Ellen White underlines more spiritual insights that may be drawn from the doctrine of the Sabbath, as the following paragraph shows:

> The power that created all things is the power that recreates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath command is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience.[4]

True Sabbath observance contributes significantly to spiritual maturity for what Ellen White describes as recreation in God's "likeness," "harmony with God," and

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[1]Ibid., 35.

[2]Ibid., 28.

[3]Seventh-day Adventists Believe, 251.

[4]E. G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 4:350.

"oneness with Him in character" are goals of spiritual formation. According to Rice, the Sabbath is the capstone of Seventh-day Adventist theology, and potentially the most valuable contribution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to the larger Christian community.[1]

Spiritual Insights from the Doctrine of the Second Advent

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Jesus will return to earth in person. The statement of fundamental beliefs reads: "The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the Gospel."[2] The distinctive feature of this fundamental belief among Seventh-day Adventists is that they believe that Christ "will return soon" although no specific date is set "for this event to occur."[3]

On one hand, this belief in the soon coming of Christ may contribute to activistic spirituality whereby there is an emphasis on active proclamation of the gospel and accomplishing the task. It is this sense of urgency which makes Adventists emphasize "doing" instead of "being." This mode of spirituality seems to characterize many Seventh-day Adventists in general. An emphasis on

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[1]Richard Rice, The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1985), 356.

[2]Seventh-day Adventists Believe, 333.

[3]Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 1165.

eschatology is proper, but an unbalanced emphasis may negate the contemplative mode of spirituality which is also important for deepening Christian experience. On the other hand, however, the belief that Christ is coming soon creates a sense of urgency to prepare to meet Jesus Christ. This belief energizes the Christian to brave trials and temptations in the hope of imminent salvation. It was partly the confident expectation of the soon-returning Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, that enabled the early Christian Church to endure the extraordinary trials and conflicts it encountered. Paul expresses the dynamics of living in hope:

> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:11-14 emphasis supplied)

According to this passage, the major reason for godly living is the anticipation of Christ's return. Thus, the "blessed hope" affects Christian spirituality qualitatively. Much can be said about hope and how it affects human life. Emil Brunner writes:

> What oxygen is for the lungs, such is hope for the meaning of human life. Take oxygen away and death occurs through suffocation, take hope away and humanity is constricted through lack of breath: despair supervenes, selling the paralysis of intellectual and spiritual powers by a feeling of senselessness and purposelessness of existence. As the fate of human organism is dependent on its supply of oxygen, so the

fate of humanity is dependent on its supply of hope.[1]

There are inspiring examples of people who have endured indescribable adversity because of the sense of meaning that is fed by hope. An outstanding example of the tenacity of human life under adverse conditions is that of Viktor Frankl in Nazi camps.[2]

With the hope of the soon-coming Savior burning in their hearts, Seventh-day Adventists have at their disposal immense resources for healthy spirituality. Living in a society that is threatened by nuclear annihilation and characterized by loneliness, lack of meaning, and lack of hope, Christians who have hope can lead a life that is qualitatively different as they expect Christ to return.

The promise that Jesus will come again soon is spiritually significant to the Christian because the new life in Christ is made possible by the Christ-event which has brought about the new order of being. This Christ-event is not complete. There is still the "Not Yet" of this event. In the same manner there is still the "Not Yet" of the new life in Christ. While the Christian can experience this new life in Christ now, he/she is yet to be

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[1]Emil Brunner, _Eternal Hope_ (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 7. See also Holmes, _Sing a New Song_, 56.

[2]Viktor Frankl, _Man's Search for Meaning_ (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984). This whole book contains some details of unusual extremities which can only be endured by someone who has hope. This book has inspired the lives of many people.

glorified when Jesus comes again to take His people to live with Him forever. Thus the second coming of Christ is the glorious climax of what Jesus suffered for and for which the Christian longs.

Writing to Timothy just before his execution, Paul points out that he and fellow believers love His appearing (2 Tim 4:8, emphasis supplied). This, "His appearing," is the same as the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus (Titus 2:13) as quoted above.

The promise of Christ's return keeps the Christian aware of God's desire not only to have an intimate relationship with the believer but also to be together forever in a special sense (1 Thess 4:17). Jesus makes this clear as he addresses His disciples that He wants His people to be where He is (John 14:3). The new life in Christ which Jesus has come to give is not complete until Jesus comes to take His people to live in complete union with Him and see Him face to face. Christians live in anticipation of that glorious experience.

Three Johannine[1] passages express deep implications for spirituality that is related to eschatology: (1) In portraying believers in Christ as children of God John implies that since the believers hope for the coming of

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[1]I believe that Johannine writings include: the Fourth Gospel, the three Epistles of John, and the Revelation to John (Apocalypse).

Christ, they should purify themselves and become like Him who is pure (1 John 3:2, 3). (2) The coming of Christ in glory to take His people to glory is portrayed as marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7). (3) The Church or believers are the Lamb's bride. Most brides joyfully and thoroughly prepare for their wedding days. So should Christ's bride prepare. The last book of the New Testament closes with a prayer which expresses the Christian's longing: "Amen. Come Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20).

Spiritual Insights from the Doctrine of the Sanctuary

The doctrine of the sanctuary is informed by specific apocalyptic prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation. The Christological applications of the sanctuary services are made by the apostle in the New Testament epistle to the Hebrews. As pointed out in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ ministers on behalf of His people in the heavenly sanctuary which the Lord Himself set up (Heb 8:1, 2).

Adventists have derived a distinct understanding from the teaching concerning the sanctuary services of the Hebrew religion. Two distinct emphases based on two phases of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary have been developed by Adventists, as concisely expressed in SDA article of faith number 23.[1] The first emphasis expresses

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[1]See article 23 of Fundamental Beliefs in Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, 1986. Article 23 reads:

a distinct view of the atonement, and the second involves the work of judgment. Adventists understand that Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary has to do with Christ's application to believers of the benefits of His atoning sacrifice on the cross.

There are specific insights of the sanctuary doctrine which bear upon spirituality. First of all, God's original instruction to build a sanctuary specifically stated that God sought to dwell among His people (Exod 25:8). "Dwelling among them" suggests that God wants to relate to His people on a personal level. The sanctuary itself symbolizes God's presence and desire to live among His people. In a way, the sanctuary should keep the consciousness of God's presence in the minds of the people. God wants His presence to be experienced not in a

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"There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandment of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom."

threatening way, but in a redemptive way. God is present
with His people and for His people. The sanctuary tells us
that God is to be the center of life as it was the center
of Hebrew religious life.

Second, the services of the sanctuary tell us that
God is concerned about our relationship with Him. He wants
us to be always reconciled to Him and experience a sense of
forgiveness. The services of the sanctuary tell us that
God has from eternity been involved caringly in the work of
restoration, redemption, and atonement. Hence, SDAs
understand the sanctuary as constituting the framework for
God's salvational history.

Another way of showing the deep implications for
spirituality connected with the sanctuary is to understand
the sanctuary as God's temple. John was shown in a vision
the climax of salvation history. John writes: "And I saw
no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the
Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev 21:22, emphasis supplied).
This verse seems to point out that the sanctuary or the
temple will not be needed when the "dwelling of God is with
men." The record says: "He will dwell with them, and they
shall be his people, and God himself will be with them"
(Rev 21:3). The clear message from this is that by this
time God's purpose will have been accomplished, and God's
purpose seems to be that, ultimately, His people should
experience the consummational dimension of the life that is
lived in union with Him. The sanctuary and its services

constitute the symbol and means to the goal of eternal enjoyment of fellowship between God and His people.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the second phase of Christ's ministry involves the work of judgment as typified by the Day of Atonement services in the old Hebrew religion. Some call it the "investigative judgment," others prefer to call it the "pre-Advent judgment."

It is the element of judgment which brings a sense of discomfort to those who are uncertain about their destiny (and it is unfortunate that many Christians live under this cloud of uncertainty). However, there should be no fear of judgment among those who cherish the assurance that Christ guarantees salvation by sacrificing His life to save any person who accepts Him and lives for Him. God's judgment is not against His people but for them.

Spirituality and the Ministry of Ellen White

Ellen White occupies a special place among Seventh-day Adventists. She was not only the key founding mother of the Church, but had a special spiritual gift which was recognized as prophetic. In line with the understanding that the Holy Spirit gives specific abilities to certain individuals to build up the church (Eph 4:11-16), Seventh-day Adventists recognized a special ability in Ellen White. In her life and ministry she manifested a gift which passes all the biblical criteria of a prophet. Her ministry encouraged and guided the church. She was instrumental in

expanding the missionary vision of the church and in

shaping its life and philosophy on many issues.

Ellen White's writings are not regarded as an

extra-biblical authority on a par with the canon. Her

writings are regarded as inspired commentary. Her ministry

is understood as one of upholding "the Bible as the basis

of faith and practice, to explain its teachings, and apply

its principles to daily life."[1]

It should be mentioned in passing that Ellen White

has contributed much to the spiritual welfare and

development of many Christians who have read her works and

apply what she says. It would take volumes to put together

all the spiritual insights that can be found in Ellen

White's works. She wrote and taught much about

spirituality without using the contemporary terms which

have been used in this project. Hammill writes concerning

Ellen White:

> Although she never held an official position, was not
> an ordained minister, and never received a salary from
> the Church until after the death of her husband, her
> influence shaped the Seventh-day Adventist Church more
> than any other factor except the Bible.[2]

There are immense resources in Ellen White's

writings to assist Seventh-day Adventist Church members in

the process of spiritual formation. White qualifies

adequately as a spiritual director and spiritual friend on

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[1]Seventh-day Adventists Believe, 216.

[2]Richard Hammill, "Spiritual Gifts in the Church
Today," Ministry, July 1982, 17.

the basis of spiritual guidance and counsel she provided to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on many issues. She also wrote numerous and spiritually insightful letters to individual Christians. The messages in the letters were spiritually edifying both to addressees of those letters and others who read them afterwards. A proper use of her writings would enhance spirituality among Seventh-day Adventists.

Ellen White's spiritual background is revealed in her writings. She came from a Methodist background, and she was a member of Pine Street Methodist Church in Portland, Maine. Her instructions and counsels on social meetings[1] sound similar to those of the class meeting of John Wesley.[2] This background colors Ellen White's spirituality to a certain extent. It might be mentioned, generally, that Methodism spread rapidly in England and North America during the nineteenth century. To a certain extent, the rapid growth of Methodism was spurred by the revival and reform related to the Methodist spiritual

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[1]See White, Testimonies for the Church, 2:577. For example, White instructs concerning time when the social meeting should begin: "If possible, all should be prompt to the hour appointed. . . ." "The meetings should open at the appointed hour if possible, be there few or many present." This sounds identical to the rules of the Band-Societies of John Wesley.

[2]See John Wesley, The Works of Rev. John Wesley, 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1831), 8:272. Rule two of Wesley's Band Societies is "To come punctually at the hour appointed, without some extraordinary reason." Rule three says: "To begin (those of us who are present) exactly at the hour, with singing or prayer."

discipline promoted by the Wesley brothers. Ellen White and other prominent pioneers came from this strand of Christianity.

Spiritual Insights from Healthful Living

Although healthful living is not a fundamental belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, much emphasis is put on health among Seventh-day Adventists. Believing that the physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19, 20), Seventh-day Adventists believe that it should be treated as such. Any substance or practice that impairs health is viewed as destructive of the temple. This belief makes Seventh-day Adventists health-conscious.

It is important that Seventh-day Adventists understand that there is an intimate relationship between the physical, mental, spiritual, and social dimensions of a human being. These aspects of a human being are closely related so that "when one suffers all the others sympathize," so it is often repeated. It is not a negation of spirituality to keep all the dimensions of human living in sound health.

Ellen White links spiritual health with bodily health in many ways. "Godliness and righteousness," she writes, "are not destructive to health, but are health to the body and strength of the soul."[1] On the mind, she writes:

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[1]White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:502.

A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is on the pathway to health. To have a consciousness that the eyes of the Lord are upon us and His ears open to our prayers is a satisfaction indeed. To know that we have a never-failing Friend in whom we can confide all the secrets of the soul is a privilege which words can never express.

Passages which express the close relationship between the body and the spiritual dimension of a person are quite common in Ellen White's writings.

From the few selected fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its emphasis on healthful living, it has been shown that doctrines carry spiritual insights which need to be reclaimed. Students preparing for the ministry need to understand the spiritual implications of the doctrines of the church and internalize them.

Students may be helped to meditate on scriptural passages that underlie the various doctrines.

The Concepts of Spiritual Direction Developed in a Pastoral Counseling Class

I believe that the ministry of spiritual direction should be understood and practiced by all ministers. It seems appropriate to incorporate concepts of spiritual direction in a pastoral counseling class in order to enhance the ongoing formation of the ministerial students.

In the pastoral counseling class at Solusi College, students learn a theory and practice of counseling rooted mainly in the discipline of psychology. About ten years ago students and faculty at Solusi College felt there was a

need to equip ministers with counseling skills. This was
to be done to help future pastors develop skills to help
them deal with some of the personal and social problems
they would encounter. The class, "Pastoral Counseling,"
offered at Solusi is not of sufficient depth to make
pastors professional counselors. The course is designed to
help the pastor in the field handle minor problems and to
know when and where to refer clients. Spiritual direction
is more appropriate when it is taught more simply than
counseling. Ministers are spiritual leaders. They,
therefore, need all the skills that can be developed to
help them develop their own and others' spirituality.

Spiritual Direction Defined and Explained

Barry and Connollys define spiritual direction as

> . . . help given by one Christian to another which
> enables that person to pay attention to God's personal
> communication with him or her, to respond to this
> personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with
> this God, and to live out the consequences of the
> relationship.[1]

According to this definition, the ministry of spiritual
direction fits under the umbrella of the "one-anothering"
motif which was briefly explored in chapter 3.[2] Spiritual
direction is not to be viewed as a ministry that was
invented by human beings. It is better to say that

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[1]William A. Barry and William J. Connollys, The
Practice of Spiritual Direction (New York: Seabury Press,
1982), 8.

[2]See above, "The Purpose of the Church" in chapter
3.

Christians discovered this ministry. It is a ministry that is explicit and implicit in the Holy Scriptures. God can direct people directly Himself, but many times He chooses to use human instruments to accomplish His purpose.

The Holy Scriptures state that God made human beings in His own image (Gen 1:26,27). That means God made human beings for Himself. Human beings, therefore, find their fullest fulfillment by communicating with this God and growing in intimate and loving fellowship with Him. As Augustine recognized many centuries ago: "For Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee."[1]

As Barry and Connollys see it, spiritual direction is to be the core in Christian ministry from which "all forms of pastoral care should radiate."[2] Fenhagen believes that the ministry of spiritual guidance should be regarded as normative in parish life.[3]

The term "spiritual direction" has been misunderstood. When some Christians hear the term 'spiritual direction,' they get the impression that this is another way of manipulating another human being. They conclude that such a practice would lead the directee to

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[1]Augustine The Confessions of St. Augustine, trans. F. J. Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1943), 3.

[2]Barry and Connollys, 44.

[3]James C. Fenhagen, Invitation to Holiness (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 50.

abdicate the principle of personal responsibility which is
God-given. Seventh-day Adventists place a very high
premium on this principle. Ellen White points out that in
all His dealings with human beings, God recognizes the
principle of personal responsibility.[1] Spiritual
direction, unless abused, should not, in any way, lead to
abdication of the principle of personal responsibility.
The person directing should not tell the directee what
he/she is to do.

Attempts have been made by theologians who write on
the spiritual life to clarify the true meaning of spiritual
direction,[2] but up to now no satisfactory term has been
found to take its place.

A Case for the Ministry of Spiritual Direction

There is a mandate for the ministry of spiritual
direction in the New Testament, and there are developments
in every church parish today which call for this kind of
ministry.

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[1]E. G. White, _Education_, 18.

[2]Barry and Connollys, 10, 11. Barry and Connollys
endeavor to explain the term by pointing out that spiritual
direction is not "spiritualism" and "authoritarianism."
Spiritual direction should be understood in context of the
spiritual life being a journey to God whereby each
Christian needs a companion. Edwards entitled his book on
spiritual direction _Spiritual Friend_ in an effort to avoid
the misunderstanding.

New Testament Mandate for
Spiritual Direction

Christ taught and modelled spiritual direction. In various images and parables, Jesus taught spiritual growth. Such teachings presupposed a need for a process that brings about growth. It has already been noted also that Jesus called disciples and guided them spiritually so that they in turn would be instrumental in guiding others.[1] There are numerous references in the Gospels which indicate that Jesus was a spiritual Director to both individuals and groups. It is not uncommon to read about Jesus' one-to-one conversation with others for spiritual reasons. Persons like Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), the Woman of Samaria (John 4:7-26), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), and many others are good examples of this approach. Commenting on Jesus' personal approach to ministry, Ellen White writes, Jesus "had a faithful regard for the one soul audience."[2]

When Jesus gave the "Gospel Commission" He used expressions which suggest a need for a process of spiritual direction. Jesus commissioned His disciples to go out and make disciples, too (Matt 28:19,20 emphasis supplied). The

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[1]See pp. 117-120 above under biblical mandates for preparing spiritual leaders in chapter 4.

[2]E. G. White, Christ's Object Lessons (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941), 229. See also McNeill, 72. McNeill refers to incidents in the Synoptic Gospels and then comments: "The conversations of Jesus as given in the Synoptic Gospels exhibit his method and power in the guidance of souls. Much of his teaching was uttered in dialogue."

emphasis is on making disciples (μαθητούσατε). Disciples are made through the process of spiritual guidance and discipline. Jesus specified the task of the pastorate to Peter when He said to him: "feed my lambs," "tend my sheep" or "feed my sheep" (John 21:15-19).

Paul also exemplified spiritual direction, guided those who were young in the faith, and gave instructions on spiritual maturity. Paul's concerns for spiritual maturity among believers come out in different ways. His letters to churches and individuals are in some ways spiritual guidance. To the Ephesians, Paul expressed a desire to see members of the family of God filled with the fullness of God and formed in Christ and grounded in love (Eph 3:14-19). Paul's prayer was that the believers at Ephesus attain to the spiritual goals which are emphasized here (vs. 14).

Paul considered himself a spiritual father who was responsible for directing those he had led to Christ (1 Cor 4:14, 15). Moreover, Paul did not hesitate to challenge fellow believers to imitate him as he imitated Christ (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7). An example of deep spiritual friendship between Paul and Timothy shows the importance of mutual encouragement in faith and ministry.[1]

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[1]Derrek Morris, "Nurturing the Pastor's Spiritual Discipline of Prayer through the Dynamic of Spiritual Direction" (D. Min. project, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1987), 21-22. Morris puts together

There are insights on spiritual guidance in other New Testament epistles. James urges confession of sin so that there might be healing in the community of faith (Jas 5:16). Peter exhorts spiritual leaders in congregations to be shepherds to the flock (1 Pet 5:2-4).

The frequently recurring expression "my children," in John's writings carries overtones of affection. God's supreme love grips and animates the life of John. It is the kind of love which has a horizontal consequence—redemptive, loving relationships with fellow human beings. John exhorts his fellow believers to love one another. As members of the community of faith who love one another, they are encouraged and kept together. John writes against the background of persecution and syncretism. His message is not only that of encouragement but also of warning against syncretism. The essence of John's message is: stay in the faith and nurture one another in love.

Additional Reasons for the Ministry of Spiritual Direction at Solusi

Developments in many parishes today call for a ministry which can provide spiritual guidance. As shown in chapter 5 above, the issues that challenge the Christian faith in Zimbabwe are serious. Some of the challenges are subtle but powerful enough to derail many members from

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textual references which substantiate this spiritual friendship.

genuine Christian experience. Therefore, the need for spiritual direction cannot be overemphasized.

Spiritual direction to combat
false spirituality

First of all, spiritual direction is necessary because of proliferation of false spirituality.[1] In this project, "false spirituality" describes a religious experience and expression which is diluted or contaminated by alien forces in any form. It must be emphasized that while genuine spirituality is an essential quality to the Christian, there is always the constant threat of false spirituality.

Genuine spirituality is rooted in the written Word of God. All spiritualities are to be measured by Scripture as to whether they are true or false. False spirituality may be derived from several sources: One of the sources of false spirituality is spiritualism which includes alien spirits, ancestral spirits, and magic powers. Another source of false spirituality may be a political ideology which contaminates biblical theology. Faulty hermeneutics which lead to distortion of the intent of biblical message may also lead to false spirituality. All these forces have a potential for distorting Christian spirituality in

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[1]Leech, 50, 51. Leech does not define precisely what he means by "false spirituality," but he lists examples such as resurgence of cults, revival of Christian fundamentalism, Christian anti-materialism, and self-cultivation.

Zimbabwe. One of those forces is a kind of spiritualism which derives from the traditional spirit world and ancestral beliefs and practices. Many thought leaders even promote these beliefs and practices because they believe that independence should lead people back to traditional beliefs.

Throughout the ages, genuine spiritual movements have been vulnerable to deceptive and spiritualistic aberrations which are now on the increase.[1] Seventh-day Adventist Christians in Zimbabwe are no exception. It is important therefore, to provide for spiritual direction to develop genuine spirituality that is rooted in the Bible. "Spiritual direction is very much concerned with διακρίσις (discernment), and this involves the discrimination between true spirituality and false."[2] Spiritual direction within the body of Christ facilitates discernment of spirits and God's will so that the Christian may see the difference between that which edifies and that which deceives.

Another force is a secular one quite opposed to traditional beliefs. It is a promotion of Marxist ideology

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[1]Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon, The Seduction of Christianity: Spiritual Discernment in the Last Days (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1985). In this book, Hunt and McMahon describe numerous deceptive spiritualistic forces and counterfeit religious experiences.

[2]Leech, 50. In connection with spiritual direction, Leech concludes that there is "a critical and doctrinal dimension to direction which is particularly necessary today when we are in the midst of a revival of spiritualities of various kinds."

by some politicians. False spirituality does more harm to the Christian cause than atheism because, even in Zimbabwe, it arms those who want to discredit Christianity. There has been a time in the young nation of Zimbabwe when some political leaders were advocating a Marxist path of development. Many young intellectuals were attracted by the Marxist socialist ideology. They saw it as an answer to the economic problems which affect the majority of the people in Zimbabwe. Some of the influential political leaders even selected portions of Scripture and forced them to support their ideological leanings. Unfortunately, this trend poses a threat to Christian spirituality in the sense that it tends to develop ideological religion whose adherents are also ideologically motivated. Christians in Zimbabwe need to be aware that whether Capitalist or Marxist, a person who is ideologically motivated may not develop authentic Christian spirituality.

Perhaps it was false spirituality which was responsible for the development of atheistic ideologies like Marxism. It was the abuse of humankind by self-proclaimed religious people, and the resort of the abused to false consolation through religious rituals that angered people like Marx and led them to the conclusion that religion was the "opiate of the people." If there is any lesson to learn from Marxism's critique of religion, it is that religious practice may be privatistic to the extent of insulating a person and making him/her insensitive to other

people's needs. A spirituality that manifests this kind of aberration should be shunned as false. At the same time a spirituality which derives from traditional spiritualism or secular atheistic ideologies should also be shunned as false.

As spiritual direction aims at helping a person conform to God's will, it has a potential to help a person transcend ideological imprisonment and limitations.

Spiritual direction should help Christians in Zimbabwe to answer Marxist and other critics of Christianity by the following: (1) Developing pastors and Christians whose spirituality enables them to be responsible citizens who are sensitive enough not to ignore human suffering in Zimbabwe; (2) developing pastors and Christians whose perspective is radical enough to recognize that human problems are deeper than economics, politics, and structures --sin and selfishness are realities which are at the root of most human problems-- (3) developing pastors and Christians who have internalized God's answers to questions of ultimate concern and can see beyond the penultimate of human existence. This development of pastors enables them to be meaningfully involved in alleviating human suffering with the knowledge that God has from eternity been doing something to restore His creation to its original condition. Such Christians affirm the material world as God's creation, practice stewardship of life and resources, and are holistic enough to address all

the needs of a person as they proclaim the Good News of
salvation.

Spiritual direction grounds movements
in biblical tradition

Second, spiritual direction is needed to
ground all revivals and charismatic movements in the
biblical tradition.[1] The present situation in Zimbabwe
today can be described as religiously fertile. A recent
development in the Seventh-day Adventist Church known as
"ZUNDE"[2] has penetrated many places in the midland section
of Zimbabwe. At one time Zunde was dismissed by many
Seventh-day Adventist pastors as a charismatic movement
which was disorganized, emotional, and doctrinally deviant.
Nevertheless, its influence continues to grow because it
capitalizes on the richness of African sense of community,
which is undermined by the ethos of the Seventh-day
Adventist Church. Like independent church movements, Zunde
may be commended for having succeeded in adapting its
religious expression to the culture of the people.
Independepent movements have been able to penetrate deep

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[1]Ibid., 52.

[2]"Zunde" is a Shona word that is not translatable
to English. It carries the idea of members of the
community working together to help someone accomplish the
task he/she is engaged in. Thus, each member of the
community may invite members of the community for her/his
"Zunde." After 1980 some Seventh-day Adventist lay persons
organized themselves into a "ZUNDE." They added a phrase
"RA MWARI" (of God) to it in order to show that it was
gathering together in service to God. See also page 13
under "Definition of Terms."

into African religiosity, as Mbiti points out.[1] For
example, they have been able to create a community
patterned after the traditional African way of life where
many of their members feel at home. Zunde also seems to
have been able to incorporate healing ministries and
exorcism as part of the Christian service, just as
independent movements have done. Again, like independent
movements, Zunde people are able to meet the need and
desire in the African worshipper for the experience of the
presence of God and Christ here and now.[2] Thus, although
judgment has not yet been passed for or against Zunde,
important lessons may be learned from the movement. Zunde
people seem to be meeting a need that is not met by the
organized Seventh-day Adventist Church. One of the lay
persons who has been involved with Zunde comments: "There
is comradeship in Zunde. One senses spiritual warmth in
Zunde meetings. Zunde people speak from the heart, and
that is very impressive. People make specific confessions
at Zunde meetings and give up their heathen practices."[3]
The same interviewee indicated that there is power in

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[1]Mbiti, 233.

[2]Marie-Louise Martin, "The Mai Chaza Church in
Rhodesia," in African Initiatives in Religion, ed. David B.
Barret (Nairobi, Kenya: East African Publishing House, 1971),
109-110. See also M. L. Daneel, Zionism and Faith-Healing
in Rhodesia: Aspects of African Independent Churches
(Mouton, The Hague, Paris: n.p., 1970), 10-23.

[3]Emmanuel Mungwena, interviewed at Andrews University,
Berrien Springs, Michigan, July 2, 1990.

Zunde. People give up witchcraft, evil spirits and demons are cast out, and sick people are healed. There are definitely many questions concerning Zunde, and the Church in Zimbabwe has not yet settled the issue. However, it is no longer an ignored movement. The director of Church ministries of Central Zimbabwe Field of Seventh-day Adventists told me that his department is preparing guidelines for proper expression of "Zunde" spirit within the field.[1]

People in Zimbabwe are receptive to new ideas. Such a situation offers tremendous opportunities for inculcating biblical patterns of spirituality among believers in God. On the other hand, receptive people are vulnerable to counterfeits if genuine spirituality is not developed in them. An evolutionist is quoted as saying "where fertility is not matched by careful cultivation, it yields no livable human habitat, but instead the deadly luxuriance of swamp or jungle."[2] These words apply to the spiritual realm as well. Religious fertility in Zimbabwe needs careful cultivation. Leech makes a pertinent point when he writes concerning spiritual movements. "Many spiritual movements are syncretistic, lacking roots in

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[1]M. M. Muhau, interviewed at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, July 2, 1990.

[2]Theodore Roszak, Unfinished Animal: The Aquarian Frontier and the Evolution of Consciousness (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1975), 31. See also Kenneth Leech, Spirituality and Pastoral Care (London: Sheldon Press, 1986), 51.

authentic tradition, and they often rely on a view of humanity and spirit which is alien to biblical theology."[1]

A word of caution needs to be said about the dangers inherent in the practice of spiritual direction, although hints have already been given in the attempt to define "spiritual direction." First, spiritual direction may lead to domination of one person (directee) by another (director). Second, a directee may become emotionally dependent upon the director in a way that violates the principle of personal responsibility. Dangers of this nature are real and they need to be avoided in the ministry of spiritual direction.

Differences Between Spiritual Direction and Counseling

Some spiritual masters have specified differences between counseling and spiritual direction.[2] Basically,

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[1]Ibid., 51.

[2]Leech, 57, 58. According to Leech, spiritual direction is "essentially and centrally concerned with God, with the vision of God, with an understanding of the workings of God, and with helping human beings to attain union with God." On the other hand, counseling is not necessarily concerned with belief.
Second, "Spiritual direction is rooted in a Christian tradition going back to monastic movement of the fourth century." On the other hand, counseling is not dependent on theology.
Third, "Spiritual direction is rooted in life and practice of sacramental community." Counseling tends to be office or clinic based.
Fourth, spiritual direction is not primarily problem oriented and may not seek to solve and deal with crises. It focuses long term "guidance within an ongoing and maturing spiritual life."

spiritual direction seeks to enhance the vertical dimension of the Christian's life, and, of course, the vertical dimension also conditions the horizontal. Counseling aims at helping people develop skills for solving and managing their problems. Edwards contrasts psychotherapy with spiritual direction.[1]

Spiritual Direction: Structure and Flow

Two patterns are followed in developing skills for the ministry of spiritual direction among ministerial students at Solusi College. In the first pattern of spiritual direction, the group directs each of its members. A group of five or six students is organized with a group leader or moderator. The criteria for selecting a moderator is his or her demonstrated spiritual maturity and gift of discernment. The organized group acts as a skills-development group and is responsible to the instructor of the course. Each member is given a chance to be directed by the group as a whole and is asked to evaluate the experience of spiritual direction and reflect on it. Students are asked to embark on the process of directing one another after concepts of spiritual direction have been presented and after the class instructor has illustrated how spiritual direction works.

The second pattern of spiritual direction is one-on-one individual guidance. After learning about spiritual

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[1]See chart in appendix B.

direction, students are asked to put into practice what they have learned. The instructor illustrates spiritual direction at work in class using a role-playing method. A selected case study is also analyzed in terms of concepts learned. Students are then given a chance to direct someone spiritually, who comes to them for help. Students who may not get directees are asked to find someone who needs spiritual direction within or outside the class.

It also helps to know some of the qualifications of a spiritual director. Many writers on spiritual direction are agreed on basic qualifications of a spiritual director as "Personal spiritual commitment, experience, knowledge and humility, and an active discipline of prayer/meditation. The capacity to be caring, sensitive, open, and flexible with another person, not projecting one's own needs or fostering long-term dependency."[1]

Summary

An attempt has been made in this chapter to show that spiritual formation can be an integral part of the program of instruction in a theological college. The two classes, Doctrines of the Christian Church and Pastoral Counseling, are appropriate vehicles for spiritual formation. Doctrines may inform and shape spirituality. Spiritual formation may be the co-ordinating principle in

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[1]See Edwards, <u>Spiritual Friend,</u> 126-130 for essential qualities of a spiritual director. See also Barry and Connollys, 124f.

the instruction on pillars of the Christian faith. In this chapter, it has been shown that doctrines with distinctive Seventh-day Adventist emphases can actually be sources of rich and dynamic spirituality.

The Pastoral Counseling class, as it has been shown in this chapter, should not only equip students with counseling skills but also with concepts of spiritual direction. In a way, a combination of adequate knowledge of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and acquisition of skills in spiritual direction contributes to the preparation of the pastor to direct others spiritually.

CHAPTER VII

SEMINARS ON SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spirituality is to be further promoted among students and faculty of the religion department at Solusi College in the form of seminars on spiritual formation which are to be conducted as part of the over all program of education for spiritual growth. Seminars on spiritual formation consist mainly of lessons to be covered during the weekends set aside for spiritual formation.

It is proposed here that five of the nine 10-hour seminar periods, already provided for in the ministerial training program, be devoted to spiritual formation each year.

Seminars are appropriate periods for promoting spirituality for three main reasons: (1) Students usually learn without the pressure to obtain a grade. (2) Seminars also offer opportunities for dialogue between the instructor and students, and among students themselves, on issues that affect the Church and its members. (3) Moreover, seminars enable students and faculty to reflect on what Christian ministry is and what it is about.

Seminars usually begin at 3:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon and end on Sunday morning at 7:30. The first

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seminar focuses on conversion as the foundation for the spiritual life. Conversion is defined and explained as a process with various dimensions involving a complete transformation of a converted person's life.

It is assumed that the new life in Christ does not just happen. God's grace which animates the Christian is free, but the Christian is not passive. There are disciplines which aid the process of spiritual formation. Spiritual disciplines are spiritual exercises which enable God to accomplish His work of freely saving a human being by His grace. Spiritual disciplines, when properly practiced, make the Christian vulnerable to God's saving grace. They are not to be legalistically engaged in, as was the case with Pharisees, but as heart expressions of a sense of need that can be met by God alone without any merit on the part of the needy person.

John Wesley regarded spiritual disciplines as "means of grace." Wesleyans or Methodists spoke of two types of the means of grace. The first, known as "Instituted Means," included prayer--private, family, and public; searching Scriptures--reading, meditating, and hearing; the Lord's Supper; fasting; and Christians' conference. The second type, "Prudential Means," included fellowship in a class and in small bands. Prudential means provided opportunities for prayer, learning, sharing, and

testing spirituality.[1] The spiritual revival which swept all over England and the United States of America during the period of Wesley is probably traceable to the disciplined believers who were of the Wesleyan "Methodist" tradition. Many other Christian movements of revival and reform can be traced to those who decided to deepen their spirituality. Thus, John Wesley may have seen his dream come true even in his own lifetime. Methodist spirituality "along with John Wesley's preaching and Charles Wesley's hymnody, brought a new spirit that swept like wildfire throughout England, reviving religious life."[2]

In this project some disciplines of the spiritual life are surveyed with the purpose of understanding how they aid in the process of spiritual development, and with a view to encouraging students at Solusi College to practice them. A comprehensive study of disciplines of the spiritual life is done by Richard Foster.[3] The presentations on spiritual disciplines are, therefore, dependent on his outline and much of what he has to say. Personal insights are brought in and other authorities, of course, are cited including some concepts which have

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[1]R. W. Gribben, "Methodist Spirituality," in Gordon S. Wakefield, ed., The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 265, 266.

[2]Cully, 30.

[3]Foster explores thirteen spiritual disciplines in his book Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1978).

already been considered in some parts of the project.
There are cases, therefore, where the lesson presentation
refers back to what has already been covered.

Foster does not cover the discipline of suffering
which is covered separately in this project. Of the
disciplines that Foster explores, he classifies them under
three separate categories: the Inward Disciplines, the
Outward Disciplines, and the Corporate Disciplines. The
seminar which follows the first seminar dwells on spiritual
disciplines as categorized and named by Foster.

The third seminar focuses on conflict and suffering
as disciplines which may be beyond the believer's control.
Conflict and suffering are explored as realities of the
human condition which give the Christian the opportunity to
exercise the God-given power of choice and to use moments
of suffering as opportunities for growth.

What has been mentioned in all seminars above is
applied to the life and ministry of the apostle Paul who is
presented as a shining example of a well-formed spiritual
person.

All registered students in the religion department
at Solusi College are required to participate in every
seminar conducted; the same will be the case for seminars
on spiritual formation. Faculty members of the department
are also invited to participate. During the seminar,
students and faculty are given opportunity to minister to
one another in small groups under duly chosen group

leaders. Small groups are also encouraged to provide spiritual guidance to each member within the particular group. Small groups may also meet outside the seminar hours at the place and time of their choice. Whatever transpires within each small group is to be kept in confidence, unless there is mutual agreement that there be sharing with those outside the small group. Each student is asked to secure a spiritual diary or spiritual journal in which to record what happens in her/his spiritual life from the beginning of the spiritual formation program. No student is required to turn in the diary to the instructor. However, each student is required to submit to the instructor a personal reflections paper at the conclusion of each seminar.

The proposed theme of the seminars is: LIVING IN UNION WITH GOD. Once a quarter, the seminar includes a celebration Sabbath. On each celebration Sabbath, special services of worship, organized by faculty of the religion department and led by the designer of the project, are conducted.

On the first celebration Sabbath, the participants celebrate "New Life in Christ." The focus of the second celebration Sabbath is on "Celebration of Community." "Celebration of Vocation" is the focus of the third celebration Sabbath. A fellowship dinner follows the divine service of each celebration Sabbath. On each

celebration Sabbath there is also a Holy Communion service to climax the day.

Participation in the celebration includes all ministerial students with their families--for those who have families--and all who may want to attend whether invited or not invited formally. Faculty members with their families are also encouraged to participate.

Lessons in outline form shown below are designed to facilitate a clear understanding of the practical implications of process of spiritual formation and of the disciplines which aid in this process. A participatory approach to learning is employed in the presentation of the lessons. Lessons are interspersed with other activities, including services with preaching, guidance group sessions, and testimonies. Lesson presentations are also punctuated with seasons of fellowship, meditation, reflection, prayer, silence, and celebration. Students are asked to practice the disciplines of the spiritual life from the time they start learning about them. While students are led to shun all foolishness which leads to unnecessary suffering, they are also encouraged to maintain a view of suffering which transcends pain in the here and now in view of the glory yet to be experienced.

FIRST SEMINAR

LESSON ONE

CHRISTIAN CONVERSION AS FOUNDATION OF
AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

LESSON AIM: To show that the spiritual life is a result of
complete transformation of the person by God's grace as
that person fully appropriates to herself/himself the
provisions of the gospel through faith in Christ; it does
not come about as a result of mere exhortation of the
unregenerated life.

I. CONVERSION DEFINED AND EXPLAINED

Conversion is a "supernatural transformation of the
mind, affections, and the life that restores the freedom,
self-control, and spiritual union with God that were lost
as a result of sin."[1] Conversion involves an unconditional
decision to surrender and reorient will, aims, and life as
a whole so that they all conform with the will of God.
Conversion is "a fundamentally new turning of

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[1]Don Neufeld, ed., "Conversion," Seventh-day
Adventist Encyclopedia, 10 vols. (Washington D.C.: Review
and Herald Publishing Association, 1976), 10:349.

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the human will to God."[1] Conversion marks the beginning of

the process of spiritual growth or growing in union with

God with the Holy

Spirit operating from within the life of a converted

person. The process also involves a continuing process of

rethinking the relationship with God.

II. LANGUAGE AND TERMS THAT DESCRIBE CONVERSION

    A. "μετάνοια" usually translated "repentence"

literally has to do with change of mind and turning

away from a certain course of action with regret.

        1. The term appears in the Synoptic Gospels used

by:

John the Baptist (Matt 3:2; Mark 1:15).

Jesus (Matt 4:17); Disciples (Mark 6:12)

        2. The term appears in Acts of Apostles used by

Peter (Acts 2:38; 3:19).

        3. The term appears in the book of Revelation used

by Jesus (Revelation 2:5, 16, 22; 3:3, 19).

    B. "ἐπιστροφή" is usually translated "conversion" or

"turning." Religiously, the term signifies turning away

from sin and to God (Matt 13:15; 18:3; Mark 4:12; Luke

22:32; John 12:40; Acts 15:3; 3:19; Jas 5:19, 20).

        The two terms, "repentance" and "conversion,"

are used by many Christians synonymously with emphasis

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      [1]F. Laubach, "Conversion," The New International
Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 3 vol. (Grand Rapids:
Zondervan Publishing House, 1985), 1:355.

on both turning away from sin and journeying to God.

C.   "μεταμορφόω," translated "transform" or

"transfigure," has the basic meaning to "change into

another form or image." This term is used in two

senses in the New Testament.

    1.   It is the description of Jesus' experience at

Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:2; Mark 9:2).

    2.   It is used also by Paul to describe the moral/

spiritual change whereby the believer is renewed to

become more like her/his Lord (Rom 12:1, 2; 2 Cor

3:18).

    3.   John underlines the Pauline idea (1 John 3:1-

3).

D.   "γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν," translated "born again" or "born

from above," is used by John to describe the experience

of conversion (John 1:12, 13; 3:3, 7).

E.   Pauline Insights

    1.   "πίστις" translates as "faith," and when used

in connection with the believer, it signifies

"turning to God in trust" after hearing and

receiving Christian proclamation and living

according to it (Rom 1:8; 1 Thess 1:8; 1 Cor 2:5;

15:14, 17).

    2.   New creation and new nature (Gal 6:15; Eph

4:24).[1]

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[1]See exploration of "καινὴ κτίσις" in chapter 2
above.

3. Resurrection from death to life in Christ (Eph 2:1, 5, 6; Col 2:12, 13).

4. "In Christ" is "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17).[1]

The terms used in these passages combine to express the reality of complete and radical change of a person who has been touched by the Holy Spirit.

A converted person enters a lifetime experience of growing to be like Christ. As Edwards points out, all of what a person is, the will, the mind, imaginations, feelings, and so on, are to be controlled by this experience, and are attracted towards soundness in Christ. "Little by little our whole being is called into conversion . . . into the likeness of God."[2]

III. CONVERSION AS A PROCESS

    A. A Process of Growth, Always Unfinished

        1. Involves a living relationship between God and the Christian whereby God extends His loving invitation and the Christian responds totally in faith.

        2. Does not rule out crises, doubts, ups and downs, progression, and regression. Powell suggests that doubts and crises must occur because

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[1]See description of "ἐν Χριστῷ" in chapter 2 above.

[2]Tilden Edwards, ed., Living with Apocalypse: Spiritual Resources for Social Compassion (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1984), 3.

doubt "eats away the old relationship with God, but only so that a new one may be born."[1]

3. Involves purification. Galilea points out that conversion is "purification of the depths of our spirit to prepare us for God."[2]

B. A Process Underscored by Various Biblical Images[3]

C. A Process Informed by Sciences of Human Development.

1. Explain and illustrate Erikson's developmental theory and relate it to faith development.[4] (Refer to appendix C in explaining.)

2. Explain and illustrate Fowler's faith development theory.[5] (Refer to appendix D.)

3. Explain limitations of humanistic theories of development in terms of human origin, nature, and destiny.

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[1]John Powell, <u>A Reason to Live! A Reason to Die! A New Look at Faith in God</u> (A Division of DLM: Argus Communications, 1972), 148.

[2]Galilea, 87.

[3]For more elaborate elucidation of images which describe this process with appropriate references, see chapter 2 under the section which deals with spiritual growth motifs.

[4]Erik Erikson, <u>The Life Cycle Completed: A Review</u> (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1982), 56, 57. See the illustrating diagram of Erikson's theory in appendix C.

[5]For elaborate explanation of this theory, see James Fowler, <u>Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning</u> (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981). Fowler's stages of faith are also shown in appendix D.

IV. DIMENSIONS OF CONVERSION

Although conversion is a personal experience with far-reaching consequences intrapersonally, there are also social and cultural dimensions to it. At conversion, the Holy Spirit touches the individual at the core of her/his being in a way that affects the individual's value systems and priorities. It affects a person's motivation, thought processes, and decision making. All of this impacts not only upon the way a person relates to God but also to the way the person relates to other human beings and the whole of God's created world.

A. The Social Dimension of Conversion

1. Generally, a converted person should relate to others redemptively.

2. Conversion should enhance marriage and family relationships.

3. Conversion should bring about a better work ethic and honesty in business transactions.

4. Unconscious consciousness of class, gender, race, or tribe that discriminates against other human beings is gradually eliminated. A converted person should be liberated from social prejudices and criteria of the class to which he/she belongs.

5. A new community of brotherhood and sisterhood is established by God, and conversion experience is nurtured in this community.

A person's social aspects of life are
enhanced by conversion because conversion expands a
person's love to move beyond self-centeredness. A
converted person moves towards perceiving things
differently.[1]

B. The Cultural Dimension of Conversion

Culture exerts enormous power on every human being and
it influences Christian spirituality either negatively
or positively.

1. Conversion should enable a converted person to
take a critical distance of cultural contexts
including that of her/his own. Galilea shows that
this is to be done in order to enable a break with
attitudes, norms, and criteria of culture that are
incompatible with the Christian life.[2] Ultimately,
the Christian is not a product of culture or should
not be.

2. Niebuhr's thesis on "Christ and Culture" is
helpful in relating culture to Christian religion.[3]

3. Religion may be enculturated and authentic
conversion may call for "purification of
cultural deformities" which overwhelm spirituality,

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[1]Edwards, Living with Apocalypse, 3.

[2]Galilea, 91.

[3]H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper Brothers, 1951).

and thus limiting, manipulating, and even corrupting the practice of justice.[1]

4. It is possible to live a genuine Christian life in any culture. "The process of conversion, like that of evangelization, has a transcendent and liberating dynamic with regard to cultural and ideological chains."[2]

In conversion, spirituality has a solid foundation. The love which draws the person and leads to the renunciation of a life of self-centeredness is God's love. The power that transforms the individual is the Holy Spirit who is involved in the process of making the believer more like Christ. This internal purification of the converted person manifests itself in tangible fruit worthy of conversion (Matt 3:8). The fruit can be manifested in interpersonal relationships.

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[1]Galilea, 92.

[2]Ibid., 96.

SECOND SEMINAR

LESSON TWO

DISCIPLINES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

LESSON AIM: To specify activities and exercises essential
to individual and corporate spiritual growth.

I. DEEPENING INDIVIDUAL COMMUNION WITH GOD THROUGH:

A. Meditation

Meditation is essentially a way of listening to God,
communing with Him and experiencing Him. It is like
deep communication between the Lover (God) and the
beloved (Christian). Meditation is one of the ways of
acquiring knowledge of God which goes beyond cognition
and assimilation of rational facts.

In the realm of faith and relationship with God,
meditation is necessary. There are different ways of
meditating, but the important thing is that Christians
learn to meditate. The practice of meditation fell into
disrepute among Christians when many began to associate
it with Eastern religious practices. It is unfortunate
today that many Christians neglect this important
discipline. The misapplication of the discipline should
not lead to rejection of that which is genuine.

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The Bible shows that meditation is essential to the believer's spiritual life. Foster quotes Thomas Merton before he begins to discuss meditation: "True contemplation is not a psychological trick but a theological grace."[1] Christians who neglect the discipline of meditation may be doing disservice to themselves. It is essential to meditate in our day because the hustle and bustle of modern living tend to keep people shallow and promote alienation. There is a need to hear the "still small voice" of God in the midst of confusion.

1. The Bible and Meditation

Numerous examples of people who meditated in the Old Testament: Isaac (Gen 24:63) and the Psalmist (Ps 1:2; 63:6; 119:78, 148) are examples. The New Testament may not use word "meditation" but the idea of meditation is there:

a. Jesus spent forty days and forty nights in the wilderness apparently communing with His Father. He also used to withdraw from the crowd to be alone with His Father, as mentioned in chapter 4 above.

b. Paul spent more than three years in the Arabian desert (Gal 1:15).

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[1]Foster, 13.

2. What Ellen White Says about Meditation

There are numerous quotations in Ellen White's writings. The following are just a few examples: "Walk continually in the light of God, _meditate_ day and night upon His character."[1] (emphasis supplied).

> Abstract meditation is not enough; busy action is not enough; both are essential to formation of Christian character. Strength acquired in earnest, secret prayers prepares us to withstand the allurements of society. And yet we should not exclude ourselves from the world, for our Christian experience is to be the light of the world. The society of unbelievers will do us no harm if we mingle with them for the purpose of connecting them with God and are strong enough spiritually to withstand their influence.[2]

Seventh-day Adventist Christians need to take seriously what Ellen White says in passages like the one above in order to balance their activism with meditation. Ellen White is calling for a balanced spirituality. Again she writes:

> It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit.[3]

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[1]Ellen G. White, _The Ministry of Healing_ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 514.

[2]Idem, _Testimonies for the Church_, 5:113.

[3]Idem, _The Desire of Ages_ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1940), 83.

3. Dangers of Wrong Meditation: Detachment from the world without attachment to Christ and excessive and harmful introspection. There are also two extremes which are described by Hughes as "empty-headed spirituality" and highly "intellectualized spirituality."[1]

B. The Discipline of Prayer[2]

1. Prayer Defined and Explained:

Ellen White defines prayer: "Prayer is the opening of heart to God as to a friend."[3] She explains that prayer brings us up to God. Prayer is the essence of the spiritual life in the sense that it is the expression of a life that is lived in union with God. Prayer is communion with God that enhances the needed intimacy between God and the Christian.

2. Jesus and Prayer

In His teaching about prayer Jesus emphasized the intimate relationship which should exist between God and the believer. God is to be addressed as "Our Father" which is the Aramaic "Abba" (Matt 6:6-9).

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[1]Hughes, 32.

[2]Prayer has already been briefly explored above: "The Life of the Church," in chapter 3. See pp. 83-84.

[3]Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1908), 97.

Paul repeats this significant expression (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6).

3. The Power of Prayer (Luke 18:10, 14; 11:13; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6).

4. Hindrances to Effective Prayer (1 Pet 3:7; Jas 1:5-7; 4:3; Matt 5:23f; Mark 11:25).

5. How to Pray

Prayer is to be engaged in with faith, simplicity, concentration, discipline, patience, confidence and obedience.

C. The Discipline of Fasting

Fasting is the practice of abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. It is not a hunger strike to attract attention. Fasting may be partial or absolute, with no food at all and no water.[1] Apparently, fasting was a normal practice of believers in God, both in Old Testament and New Testament times as evidenced by:

1. Jesus

   a. Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights and taught about proper fasting (Matt 4:2ff; Luke 4:2ff; Matt 6:16).

   b. Paul fasted after his encounter with Christ and often went without food (Acts 9:9; 1 Cor 11:27).

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[1]Foster, 42.

2. The Blessings of Fasting

rebukes our preoccupation with physical satisfaction
so that we may focus on the spiritual ones. "Man
shall not live by bread alone. . ." (Matt 4:4).
Fasting can help us to clearly conceptualize the
value of foregoing immediate satisfaction for the
sake of ultimate ones. Jesus says fasting helps in
freeing from demonic forces (Matt 17:21; Mark 9:29).

3. Dangers Connected with the Practice of Fasting:
It may promote spiritual pride and make some parade
self-righteousness. Fasting may also be an end in
itself.

D. The Discipline of Silence and Solitude

Silence and solitude are disciplines that go together.
Meditation may also go together with the disciplines of
solitude and silence. Some writers on the spiritual
life like Thomas a Kempis in The Imitation of Christ,
Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Life Together, and Thomas Merton
in Thoughts in Solitude underline the importance of
silence and solitude. Each Christian needs to be alone
in solitude without intolerable loneliness.

1. Jesus Taught and Exemplified Solitude

Jesus went to a lonely wilderness after baptism
(Matt 4:1f; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1f), went to the
mountain to pray before calling disciples (Luke
6:12), and withdrew to a lonely place after
hearing about John the Baptist's death and after

feeding thousands (Matt 14:13, 23). Jesus also

called upon His disciples to withdraw from the

crowd for a while (Mark 6:31). Even in His most

trying hour at Gethsemane, He went yonder to be

alone to pray.

2. The Blessings of Silence and Solitude

Rice writes in connection with blessings derived

from the disciplines of silence and solitude:

> Silence can provide a way of seeing for ministry
> which is one in two-dimensional space, and space
> in three dimensions. The practice of silence as
> shadow resists our inclination towards
> superficiality and unintentional movement. It
> provides that which is necessary for
> articulation and reflection--the pastoral
> counterpart of shadow and negative space in the
> visual arts. Silence pulls the whole into focus
> and depth in surface textures.[1]

Rice also likens silence to a sponge which absorbs

the loneliness of others who are suffering. Being

present to those who are suffering and silent can

extract poisons and bring about healing.[2] Ministry

is made effective when empowered by grace. In

silence and solitude, God graces the minister or

Christian in a special way for the task to be

accomplished and conflicts or struggles to be

resolved. Rice adds:

> It is imperative that we avail ourselves of this
> source of ministry. It in silence that we are

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[1]Richard S. Rice, "Minister of Silence," The
Christian Century 102, no. 14 (April 24, 1985): 406.

[2]Ibid.

liberated to become God's women and men. It is in the empty place, as Nouwen reminds us, that we can separate ourselves from our actions--that they become based not on compulsion but on freedom. Here we discover that our worth is not the same as our usefulness, but that worth is a gift of God. Here we encounter God; here God fills us.[1]

Silence is "the primary point of the human-divine encounter."[2] The Psalmist wrote: "Be still and know that I am God . . ." (Psalm 46:10). Silence and solitude should enable a person to be sensitive to the needs of others and be compassionate to them. Note the following quotation:

It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my brothers. The more solitary I am the more affection I have for them. It is pure affection and filled with reverence for the solitude of others. Solitude and silence teach me to love my brothers for what they are, not for what they say.[3]

E. The Discipline of Study

Foster defines study as "a specific kind of experience in which through careful observation of objective structures we cause thought processes to move in a certain way."[4] Foster further adds that whatever is studied must be seen and felt, and when study is done with concentration, perception, and

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[1]Ibid., 407.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Thomas Merton, The Sign of Jonas (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1953), 261.

[4]Foster, 54f.

repetition it helps develop life-giving habits of thought which replace old habits of destruction.[1] Depending on the kind of study pursued, certain habits are formed, and habits are steps in the process of character formation.

1. New Testament and Study

    a. Jesus recognized the need to search the Scriptures (John 5:39) because they contain the message that leads to eternal life and bear testimony to Him.

    b. Jesus indicated also that it is helpful to study nature when He taught about His Father's gracious goodness and provisions to sustain life (Matt 6:26-29).

    c. Paul writes about the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2), focusing on good things (Phil 4:8), diligence in study as a worker (2 Tim 2:15 KJV).

    d. Paul has something to say about studying oneself. He writes: "Examine yourselves. . ." (2 Cor 13:5). Self-examination is essential to maintain perspective. The ancient philosopher, Socrates, is credited with the undying statements of "Know thyself" and "An unexamined life is not worth living."

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[1]Ibid.

2. Ellen White and Study

There are numerous references concerning study and prayer in Ellen White's writings. She also has much to say concerning self-examination.

    a. The minister is supposed to set aside time for self-examination.[1]

    b. There is also need for self-examination on special days like birthdays.[2]

3. Four Steps Involved in Studying

Repetition, Concentration, Comprehension, and Reflection.[3]

F. **The Discipline of Simplicity**

    Simplicity derives from a heart that is indwelt by Christ and His Spirit. The life that has been graced and cleansed from within by the power of God manifests an outward life-style which does not seek to impress any one because such a life is anchored and centered in God. A life that is characterized by simplicity is content with the basic necessities of life and is not affected by the culture's unchristian values of importance. Foster points out that because of lack of "inward reality and outward life-style of simplicity" in our

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[1]E. G. White, _Testimonies for the Church_, 2:213. See also _Gospel Workers_, 100, 275f. Ellen White even suggests questions to be asked in pursuance of self-study (_Testimonies for the Church_, 2:144, 261).

[2]White, _Testimonies for the Church_, 2:261.

[3]Foster, 66.

culture, there is insane attachment to money and things that money can buy.[1] The New Testament advocates simplicity and attacks greed and materialism as evidenced by:

2. Jesus

Jesus warns against Materialism (Mammon) as God's rival and pronounces woe to the rich (Matt 6:24; Luke 6:24). His disciples are not to be enslaved by material things (Matt 6:19-21; Mark 10:21f). Jesus also emphasizes that the Kingdom of God is of more value than material things, and a person should be willing to sell anything to get it (Matt 13:34f).

3. Paul and Other Apostles

Paul saw spiritual dangers connected with attachment to money and wealth (1 Tim 6:6-11), counseled that Church leaders are not to be lovers of money (1 Tim 3:8), and condemned covetousness and greed as vices to be shunned as idolatry (1 Cor 5:11; Eph 5:5). James condemns killings and wars connected with lust for possessions (Jas 4:1-2).

The discipline of simplicity should help to enhance stewardship of life and resources. God's creation is to be affirmed, but extravagance is to be rejected. What God has provided to meet the basic necessities of life should be enjoyed and used to glorify God and to meet people's

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[1]Ibid.

legitimate needs. The New Testament shows that the Christian's life has to be detached from things and be attached to Christ. The love of things like money and wealth have a way of diluting or hindering the love that should exist between the Christian and his/her God.

II. DEEPENING INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE COMMUNION WITH GOD

A word needs to be said here in connection with the communal dimension of spirituality. Several images of church explored in chapter 3 above bear implications for corporate spirituality. The image of the church as the body of Christ and Christ as the head of the church convey profound messages in connection with corporate spirituality. It was mentioned in chapter 3 above that these images tell us that the church depends on Christ, and that there is interdependence and mutuality among church members who constitute the body.

There is a bond of fellowship or communion with God and with one another. God Himself establishes this fellowship. John remarks concerning Christians' fellowship with God the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3). Jesus Himself declares that He is in His Father, the Christians are in Him, and He is in them (John 14:20). The same message comes from John 15:1, 5 where Jesus says that His Father is the vine-dresser while He is the vine, and Christians are branches. Christians are to live together according to this image of being members of God's community of faith in Jesus

Christ. It is this community of faith which is designated as the church.

The church as a community established by God to accomplish God's redemptive purpose is the matrix for the formation of the spiritual life. Spirituality was never meant to be developed in isolation. Leonard puts it succinctly when he points out that the church instructs persons in the spiritual life and at the same time provides "a community in which spiritual exploration and experience may be cultivated."[1]

God created life in such a way that it requires community.[2] Schramm speaks of the church as the intentional community in which spirituality is formed. He writes:

> Intentional community gives us the possibility of experiencing ourselves as part of a people--a people affirmed, forgiven, and gifted. In such places we don't lose ourselves in some corporate identity. We find ourselves as unique persons but freed from the individualism so prevalent in our culture.[3]

In this passage, Schramm specifies a need for community in spiritual development, and he affirms the individual identity. There is a need for solitude in order to grow

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[1]Leonard, 96.

[2]Westerhoff, _Living the Faith Community: A Church That Makes a Difference_. (It needs to be specified that in this book already cited before, Westerhoff speaks of the church as God's community which nurtures spiritual growth and provides environment which is conducive to the development of the spiritual life that God intends.)

[3]John Schramm, "Intentional Community and Spiritual Growth," _Word and World_ 8, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 52.

spiritually, but there is also a need for community. The spiritual life is to be characterized by "a rhythm of solitude and coming together."[1]

In his book, Life Together, already cited above, Bonhoeffer underlines the need for community without eliminating times of solitude and silence. In fact, he points out that those who cannot be alone should beware of community, and those not in community should beware of being alone.[2]

The universal need for community is felt acutely in Zimbabwe, Africa, where the project is to be implemented. Many social scientists today recognize that the extended family system and community spirit provide essential emotional support. African peoples, Zimbabweans included, are being stripped of this support system today because of industrialization, urbanization, and other forces of modernization that come into play. Daneel points out that koinonia or fellowship is very essential in an African setting. The "need for warmth and fellowship is not only a spontaneous religious need among Africans, but expresses a yearning in the midst of the disruption and confusion of

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[1]Edwards, Living in the Presence, 75. The rhythm of solitude and coming together was also exemplified for us by Christ Himself. Edwards further points out that Jesus' rhythm was one of withdrawal and community. "But the withdrawal then and now is never from community, only to community in a different form, and for community" (p. 76).

[2]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 77.

modern Africa."[1] The church needs to be aware of this and maximize on its fellowship dimension to be relevant and facilitative in Africa. Many Africans join independent church movements to meet their need for emotional security and certainty which those movements provide. Africans need a "place to feel at home" in the sea of alien environment of the modern technological civilization. The church can be that intimate community marked by "mutual concern and voluntary service."[2] Bosch conveys the same message of building intimate church community in Africa. He recognizes that so far the missionary church has failed to adequately meet this need.[3]

It is time, then, that the church lived according to the way it is portrayed in the Bible. In this way, the church is in a position to meet the needs for spiritual nurture and development among Christians in Zimbabwe.

The next question is: What spiritual exercises does the church engage in to provide spiritual nurture and promote spirituality? Bosch strongly suggests that it is time the church made it clear that it is truly the new community of Jesus Christ. This must be taught and

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[1]Inus Daneel, The Quest for Belonging (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1987), 272.

[2]Ibid.

[3]David Bosch, "Renewal of Christian Community in Africa Today," in Pan-African Christian Leadership Assembly, Facing New Challenges (Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1978), 93.

demonstrated tangibly for all people to see. At all costs, the church should endeavor to live according to God's blue print.[1]

Communion with God may be deepened individually and corporately through:

A. Fellowship (κοι νωνία).

The New Testament records that those who were baptized into the church were also devoted to fellowship (Acts 2:42). Koinonia was a very essential function of the New Testament Church, and the church which neglects this vital biblical function is not accomplishing the task fully as God intended when He called it into being.

In his book, The Secular City, Cox makes controversial and alarming conclusions. His premise, too, may be a problem. Nevertheless, some of the points which Cox makes are, in principle, valid and relevant to some of the concerns addressed in this project. Two main points which seem to have a bearing on what is being addressed in this project are: (1) That the forces of secularization, urbanization, and all forces of modernization are inevitable, and they call for newly matured Christian people and leaders who understand the

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[1]Bosch, "Renewal of Christian Community in Africa Today", 100, 101.

meaning of these and can respond responsibly.[1] (2)
That the church is to be God's avant-garde by carrying
out its threefold responsibility of "keryqma
(proclamation), diakonia (reconciliation, healing and
other forms of service), and koinonia (demonstration of
the character of the new society)."[2] The Bible shows
that fellowship was part of the church's life, and Cox
makes it clear that fellowship is the integral part of
the church's task. Koinonia or fellowship "calls for
visible demonstration of what the church is saying in
its keryqma and points to its diakonia. . . ." The
church "already lives in the ethos of the new era."[3]

There is a need to build warm fellowship and
close interpersonal relationships whereby brothers and
sisters can edify one another for the glory of God. If
the local church becomes too big for meaningful
fellowship, then there must be small groups of church
members who can provide koinonia for every church
member.

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the need
for fellowship is underlined by one other factor:
Seventh-day Adventists proclaim the message which calls

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[1]Harvey Cox, The Secular City: Secularization and
Urbanization in Theological Perspective (New York: MacMillan
Company, 1966). The call for a new mature responsibility
comes through in different ways throughout the book.

[2]Ibid., 127.

[3]Ibid., 144.

people to come out of their communities. The call to
come out to be God's people (Rev 18:4) should be
heeded, but the people called out of world communities
should not be starved for community. A new community of
the redeemed and redeeming people should be established.

B. <u>The Discipline of Worship</u>[1]

To worship truly is to experience reality, to
break into the Shekinah of God's presence, or be invaded
by the Shekinah of God as a community.[2] The gracious
God seeks true worshippers who respond fully to His
initiative. When such worshippers gather before God,
their "spirit must be ignited by divine fire."[3]

The object of worship is *God*. No other idol or
gods should take the place of God who declared when He
gave His commandments: "You shall have no other gods
before me" (Exod 20:3). Tozer is quoted as saying: "The
essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts
about God that are unworthy of Him."[4] The unworthy
thoughts lead to false worship which does not empower
the worshipper to live in union with God.

Worship must also take priority. The first and

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[1]Worship has already been discussed above, "The Life
of the Church" in chapter 3. See pp. 72-77. The
presentation of this lesson refers back to that section.
Only a few additional insights are highlighted here.

[2]Foster, 138.

[3]Ibid., 139.

[4]See Foster, 139.

most important commandment is to love God with all the heart, with the whole soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength (Mark 12:30). This love to God is to be expressed at worship. The worship of God comes first before anything else is undertaken. By participating wholeheartedly in worship as a discipline, the worshipers are placed in an ordered way of acting and living before God so that God can transform them.

Changes must take place within the lives of those who worship God in spirit and truth. As God's people worship together, they are to be helped not only to know that God is among them, but they should also experience the presence God. True worship changes lives. If worship does not change worshippers, then it is just an "opiate" and an attempt to escape from the pressures and demands of living. The experience of worship should lead worshippers to respond positively to the call from God: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa 6:8). Reed's oscillation theory helps to understand the dynamics of true worship.[1]

C. Sacramental Participation[2]

Sacramental participation should be distinguished from sacramentalism. Sacraments are to be

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[1] See Appendix A.

[2] Sacramental participation has already been shown to be one of the major avenues for development of spirituality (See pp. 77-81).

regarded as visible signs of the unseen realities. By appropriating all that the sacraments stand for and mean, or what participation means, both individual and corporate spirituality is developed.

D. The Disciplines of Service[1] and Submission

Service and submission are disciplines which are grossly misunderstood by many people today. The misunderstanding is also common with the community of faith, the church. The "me first" mentality, emphasis on self-actualization, refusal to be a door-mat, and a call for assertiveness seem to feed this misunderstanding all the more.

It should be made clear that service does not mean self-abnegation. Service is a spirit of being helpful to others without expecting reward in return for services rendered. Contrary to the surrounding culture's notions, service is not demeaning. Christians are to be spiritually available to one another for services needed.

1. Concept of Service in the New Testament

The New Testament speaks of service and servanthood to God which seems to emphasize relationship, as numerous references show. Servanthood is contrasted with the Lord. The

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[1]The concept of "service" has already been briefly explored above, "Selected Images of Pastoral Ministry" in chapter 4. See pp. 98-100.

recognition of Christ as "Lord" connects with the recognition that the Christian is a "servant" who is controlled by Christ, and the Christian is obedient and has his/her will surrendered to Him.

There is also service to other people that has nothing to do with being great or small. Our contemporary culture associates greatness with moving away from serving other people and being served by as many as possible. It was the same in times of Jesus on earth, because Christ rebukes the notion in no uncertain terms: "It shall not be so among you; but whosoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Matt 20:26).

Christ and Paul teach and demonstrate the meaning of service and servanthood (Matt 20:28; John 13:3-11; Phil 2:3-11; 3:3-11; 1 Thess 2:9-12). Christ is self-sacrificing, self-emptying, self-giving, and completely identifies with those who need His service. Paul seeks to emulate Christ. In fact, Paul was so surrendered to God that he preferred to designate himself as a slave of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Tit 1:1). Self-sacrificing service of love is the law of the new order of being, according to Jesus' and the apostles' teaching. People are to be regarded as so valuable that even sacrificing personal interests in order to help them should be a pleasure. In his

letter to the church at Philippi, Paul exhorts Christians to have the mind of Christ of unity and service to one another. Moreover, spiritual gifts bestowed upon the church are there for service to other members of the church and not for self (1 Cor 12).

2. Submission

Perhaps submission is the most misunderstood concept, even within the church. Foster indicates that submission is an attitude of Christian self-denial which neither demeans a person or fosters pride. Submission has nothing "to do with hierarchical relationships, but inner attitude of mutual subordination."[1] There would be fewer problems among church people if submission was viewed as a free choice exercised among people as they relate to one another. It is healthy to let the other person have his/her way as long as it does not violate principle. Submission or self-denial is modeled for us by Christ who came down from glory to live among sinful human beings in order to save them. Jesus speaks of submission as the way to true fulfillment (Mark 8:34f).[2] A craving for power and positions of privilege and status in order to

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[1]Foster, 98.

[2]See also Foster, 98.

dominate others is rejected by Jesus (Matt 20:20-28). The essence of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) is submission.

Both Paul and Peter teach submission to government authorities (Rom 13:1f; 1 Pet 2:13f), and both teach servants' submission to masters (Col 3:18-22; 1 Pet 2:18). Mutual submission in marriage and family is also called for (Eph 5:21f; Col 3:18-22). The New Testament says something about the limits of submission (Acts 4:19; 5:29).

It should be borne in mind that service and submission do not mean that the Christian should do whatever other people want, even if it is dangerous to them. Neither do they mean that the Christian has to seek to please all, even to the extent of encouraging them in their selfishness, irresponsibility, and immaturity.

E.   The Discipline of Confession

Confession of sin is an essential discipline. Sin is a reality, and its presence in the life breaks communion, not only between God and the sinner but also between the sinner and other people. Cherished sin may drive away a sense of God's presence which is essential to spiritual growth. Clearly, then, cherished sin is a major roadblock to spiritual growth.

There may be an uncherished sin in the life in such a way that the presence of God overwhelms the

sinner with intolerable sense of sinfulness. On the one hand the critical moment of overwhelming guilt may lead one to either run away from God and other people to hide behind covers which do not work. On the other hand, an overwhelming sense of sinfulness may make one seek freedom and cleansing from sin.

Confession is a way of dealing with sin. Confession derives from the understanding that God loves enough to provide the supreme sacrifice in the person of Jesus Christ to atone for sin and reconcile men and women to Himself. Men and women with contrite hearts who live in union with God do not have to run away from God. They may confess their sins before God with the assurance that God forgives sin as He has promised (1 John 1:9).

Confession as a discipline is considered soteriologically, here, as the acknowledgment of sin with a desire to be forgiven and freed from it. Confession is necessary to the soul. The Bible teaches about the indispensability of confession of sin before a person experiences God's forgiveness and reconciliation. Spiritual vibrancy and inner peace cannot be experienced when sin is harbored in the heart and unconfessed. The wise man writes: "He who conceals his transgression will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy" (Prov 28:13).

One of the problems which have persisted among

religious people, including Christians, is spiritual pride and arrogance which forces people to wear masks and facades which become a hindrance to authentic spirituality. People may deny sin or excuse it, but all denials, excuses, and projections do not work. Sin should be dealt with through confession and by forsaking it. The heart of the Christian religion is a recognition of the need for interior decoration of the soul. Mere outward conformity without heart conversion is a sham of cold religiosity or what the Bible calls "a form of godliness without power" (2 Tim 3:5). A form of godliness without power will not do for the Christian life. Authentic spirituality does not develop without the presence of the Holy Spirit who is grieved by sin.

1. The Blessings and Dynamics of Confession[1]

"In confession the break-through to community takes place." There can be no meaningful community without dealing with sins which alienate people.

"In confession there is break-through to the Cross." The Cross destroys pride which hinders fellowship with God and with one another.

"In confession a man breaks through to certainty." God can give certainty through a Christian brother or sister. In true mutual

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[1]Bonhoeffer, 112-21.

confession the presence of God can be felt.

"In confession the break-through to new life occurs." When truly confessed sin loses power., confession is therapeutic (Jas 5:16). It releases power which heals emotionally, spiritually, and even physically. Paul Tournier recognizes that real confession effects not only a decisive religious experience and freedom from guilt, but can also bring about sudden cure of physical and psychological illnesses.[1]

3. Practical Suggestions on Confession

Confession is to made to God, but if necessary, it may also be made to God-fearing brothers and sisters. Confession of sin may be made to those who have been harmed by the sins committed. Confession must be specific, but sins are not to dramatized in detail before mortal brothers and sisters as a parade of being religious. Extremes of the confessional system and Penance introduced around the third century where few priests (confessors) dominated others spiritually should be avoided. Mutuality in confession is biblical (Jas 5:16).

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[1]See article by V. C. Grounds, "Confession," in The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, 1:939.

F.   The Discipline of Guidance[1]

G.   The Discipline of Celebration

Dawn describes celebration by citing Sarah Wenger Shenk as follows:

> Celebration is the honoring of that which we holdmost dear. Celebration is delighting in that which tells us who we are. Celebration is returning with open arms and thankful heart to our Maker.[2]

Christians have a reason to celebrate because they have many things which they hold dear. God's gracious acts on behalf of human beings and His provisions need to be celebrated.

Foster ends his exploration of spiritual disciplines with "celebration" as one of the disciplines. He begins by quoting the Westminster Catechism: "The chief end and duty of man is to love God and to enjoy Him forever."[3]

Celebration is a discipline in the sense that it comes as a result of a conscious decision to set the mind on things above (Col 3:2) which are real as specified in the holy Scriptures. Christians might as

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[1]Spiritual guidance is the same as spiritual direction which has already been explicated in chapter 6 above. The second major section of chapter 6 deals with spiritual guidance and this lesson refers to it.

[2]Cited by Marva J. Dawn, Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 150.

[3]Foster, 163.

well celebrate because the new order of being brought by the Christ-event is real.

1. Jesus and Celebration

Jesus came on a note of celebration (Luke 2:10). Before he left His disciples He bequeathed joy to them (John 15:11). He began His public ministry by proclaiming the year of Jubilee (Luke 4:18, 19) as stipulated in the Old Testament Jewish tradition. The Beatitudes within the Sermon on the Mount ring a note of celebration or happiness, and in the same sermon Jesus counsels His disciples to get rid of anxieties which take away celebration and to trust God as their reliable provider of all the their necessities (Matt 6:25f).

2. Paul and Celebration

Paul writes that one of the fruits of the Spirit is joy (Gal 5:22). Celebration is an expression of joy. Paul also writes to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord. . ." (Phil 4:4f).

It is important also to note that celebration is central to the spiritual disciplines as Foster points out: "Without a joyful spirit of festivity the Disciplines become dull, death-breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees."[1]

3. Practical Suggestions Concerning Celebration

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[1]Foster, 164.

a. Make the Sabbath an occasion for "a weekly eschatological party" whereby God's creative and redemptive acts and love are celebrated.[1]

b. Church services and places of meeting can be filled with celebrative flowers, lights, music, and rituals.

c. Cultural festivals like Christmas may be taken advantage of to really celebrate. Lives and contributions of members of the Church or family may be celebrated.

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[1]Marva Dawn, 151.

THIRD SEMINAR

LESSON THREE

CONFLICT, SUFFERING, AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

LESSON AIM: To show that conflict and pain are realities of
the human condition since sin entered this world, and that
while the Christian is not exempt from conflict and pain,
he/she may let God use these as opportunities for growth.

I. INTRODUCTION

        In his letter to the Romans, Paul portrays the
struggle and conflict in which the Christian is always
involved (Rom 7:13-25). Human nature is bent towards
expressing itself contrary to God's will. God's expressed
will is always contrary to the natural desires of the human
heart. The Christian should know about this conflict and
make a conscious choice to live for God and in accordance
with His will in spite of the natural inclinations. God's
grace is sufficient for any person who chooses to live for
God, and as the relationship with God matures, living
according to God's will becomes second nature to the
Christian. The Christian can live contrary to the pull of
passion and corruption of the world. As Peter says, the
Christian can be a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet

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1:4). The struggle continues even in the penultimate of human existence. Conflict, pain, and struggle could even be more severe for the Christian, especially as he/she draws nearer to Christ and sees the contrast between him/herself and Christ. The capacity to sense the conflict may even be enhanced as the journey to God continues.

Suffering is not a discipline in the sense that Foster considers a discipline to be. However, suffering is a discipline in the sense that the sufferer makes a conscious choice to do God's will in spite of adverse conditions which militate against that choice to live for God and to do His will.

Suffering is a "condition of severe distress that arises when a person perceives his or her wholeness to be imperiled by pain, injury, loss or oppression." It is "the state of severe distress occurring when a person confronts impending destruction or disintegration."[1]

Suffering became a law of life when sin entered this world. From the Bible point of view, it looks like all good things do not just happen. They have to be preceded by suffering. God decreed after sin that mothers would suffer pain at childbirth (Gen 3:16). Jesus and the early Church reiterated the same point (John 16:21; Rev 12:2).[2] So it

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[1]Richard F. Vieth, God, Where Are You? Suffering and Faith (New York: United Church Press, 1989), 13, 14.

[2]Flavian Dougherty, ed., "Voices of Suffering in Biblical Prophecy and Prayer," The Meaning of Human Suffering (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1982), 97.

is with the most important entity, character. Good
character does not come easily. Suffering can help develop
character.

II. WHO SUFFERS AND WHY SUFFERING?

Paul contrasts the new life in Christ as life in the
Spirit and life outside Christ as life in the flesh. Texts
can be found in the New Testament which support the Pauline
understanding of this contrast. When Paul presents as a
solution to humankind's predicament, as the Christ, whose
suffering makes salvation possible, he indicates that
suffering is a fact of life in God's creation (Rom 8:17-25).

   A. Who Suffers?

   The whole creation groans in travail (Rom 8:22).

   1. Believers in God suffer as part of creation.

   2. Unbelievers suffer also.

   3. Both innocent and guilty suffer in this world.
   When God created the world, He declared that
   everything He had made was good (Gen 1:31). After
   sin, God pronounced curses upon creation as a
   consequence of sin (Gen 3:14f).

   B. Why Suffering?

   Apart from suffering as the result of sin and a fact
   of life, suffering seems to be necessary in the
   process of growth. Holmes speaks of moments in the
   human life cycle as characterized by death and pain
   in all stages. For example:

1. Birth--is death to prenatal comfort.

2. Ego Development--is death to childhood dependence.

3. Conversion--is death to sin and old man.

4. Eternal life--is death to this life.[1]

III. KINDS OF SUFFERING

    A. Holmes identifies four kinds of suffering:

    1. Suffering which comes to us as a result of being human.

    2. Suffering which we bring to ourselves by bad and foolish living (for example, disease may follow certain indulgences in sinful living; drinking intoxicating liquors may lead to problems).

    3. Suffering which comes as a result of our determination to be disciples of Christ (1 Pet 2:20, 21).

    4. Suffering which comes as result of God seeking to discipline us and purify our character (Heb 12: 5-11; Rev 3:19).[2]

    B. Lewis identifies six kinds of suffering:

    1. Suffering which comes as divine judgment for sin.

    2. Suffering which comes as a result of deep

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[1]C. R. Holmes, "Spirituality in Ministry," class notes taken on February 19, 1987 (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan).

[2]Ibid. (Bible texts supplied).

empathy for someone else in misery (entering into the feelings of others out of love for them brings about suffering).

3. Vicarious suffering (suffering in the place of someone else as Christ did).

4. Testimonial suffering as a result of following Christ (genuine Christian living is not just for pleasure). This kind of suffering comes from external opposing forces (2 Thess 1:5; 1 Pet 3:13, 14; Phil 1:29; 2 Cor 1:5; 1 Pet 4:13). It might be added to Lewis' point that the word "testimony" (μαρτυρία) gives the English word "martyr" which has to do with someone who suffers as result of standing for a cause.

5. Preventative suffering (that is intended to keep us from problems or to help us solve certain problems [2 Cor 12:7].)

6. Educational suffering (the same suffering as a disciplinary process to purify character [Rom 5:3, 4]).[1]

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[1]G. R. Lewis, "Suffering and Anguish," in The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible (1975), 5: 532. Kierkegaard is quoted here as saying that "inner suffering becomes a door way to all the blessings of the Christian life. . . . The greatest good of the Christian life is not freedom from pain, it is Christlikeness. God is less concerned with the comfort than with the character of His people."

IV. THE CHRISTIAN AND SUFFERING

It has already been noted that the Christian is not exempt from suffering. Suffering may actually increase when a person becomes a Christian, but God supplies sufficient grace to enable the Christian to endure.

A. Christ Suffered

1. Christ lived in consciousness of impending death on the Cross. Isaiah prophesied that He was to be a suffering Servant (Isa 53).

2. During His ministry, Christ was slighted and rejected by those who claimed to be worshippers of the living God.

3. Toward the end of His life, Christ suffered desertion by disciples, betrayal by Judas, denial by Peter, mistrial in court, physical pain through scourging by Roman authorities, torture, crucifixion on the Cross, public shame, and a sense of abandonment by God.

B. The Christian Suffers

1. Jesus suggests those who seek privileged positions in His kingdom should be prepared to suffer as He did (Mark 10:38).

2. The Christian is to suffer with Christ in order to be glorified with Him (Rom 8:17). There must be willingness to suffer in order to enter Christ's

glory. "Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering."[1]

3. Those who stand before the throne of God, saved and clothed in white robes, are those who have passed through tribulation (Rev 7:14f).

4. There is a cross to bear for every follower of Christ (Mark 8:34).

5. In the letter to the Hebrews, the apostle suggests that there may be a Gethsemane experience (Heb 12:3, 4).

C. The Benefits of Suffering

1. Suffering enhances and deepens religious experience. "A religious experience is attained only through conflict, through disappointment, through severe discipline of self, through earnest prayer."[2]

2. Suffering begets compassion. Rice indicates that the minister may suffer, not because of what the minister does or creates. Suffering may come upon the minister to develop ways of dealing with pain in others. Techniques to deal with suffering taught in theological college are not enough. "Yet it is the moments of our suffering which allows, if

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[1]Ellen G. White, _Early Writings_ (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1945), 66, 67.

[2]Idem, _Testimonies for the Church_, 4:444.

we will listen through them, to hear and heal the
suffering of others."[1]

The words from a minister who has suffered
have a healing power to those who suffer. Rice
likens the experience of suffering in ministry to
Jacob's wrestling with the Angel. "As ministers we
emerge from silent wrestling like Jacob with a limp,
and with a new God and with new names."[2]

3. Suffering purifies:

> The Lord in His providence brings men where He
> can test their moral powers and reveal their
> motives of action, that they may improve what is
> right in themselves and put away that which is
> wrong. God would have His servants become
> acquainted with the moral machinery of their
> hearts. In order to bring this about, He often
> permits the fire of affliction to assail them
> that they may become purified. The purification
> of the people of God cannot be accomplished
> without their suffering. God permits the fires
> of affliction to consume the dross, to separate
> the worthless from the valuable that the pure
> metal may shine forth.[3]

V. THE OTHER SIDE OF SUFFERING

A. The Meaning of Christ's Suffering and Ours

Gartner believes that "Christ's vicarious suffering
means, however, for his followers not deliverance

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[1]Robert Rice, 407.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ellen G. White, <u>Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing</u>
(Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association,
1943), 10f.

from earthly suffering, but deliverance *for* earthly suffering."[1]

1. Christ did not suffer in vain. He foresaw the glory that was before Him by faith, and human beings eternally saved by His self-sacrificing love. So He endured (Heb 12:2). He foresaw the other side of suffering.

2. The Christian does not suffer in vain. For the Christian, too, there is the other side of suffering. In the same text referred to above, Christians are urged to focus their eyes on Jesus even when disciplined through suffering (12:2-8), there is the other side of suffering.

3. Christ's suffering on the Cross explains suffering as the result of sin. At the same time, "the Cross tells us that God has taken care of suffering. In Christ it is potentially destroyed."[2] "Suffering should not destroy one's relationship with God because he already participates in eternal life in Christ."[3]

B. The Glory on the Other Side

1. Resurrection will mean a new and glorious

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[1] B. Gartner, "Suffer," in The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, 1985 ed., 3:724.

[2] Ncube, 147. See also Ephraim K. Mosothoane, "Communio Sanctorum in Africa," Missionalia 1 (August, 1973):88.

[3] Ibid.

existence.   Images of death to this life and resurrection to new life have been used by Paul to show that the Christian participates in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection through baptism (Rom 6:1-11; Col 2:12f).   This participation in the experience at the present time guarantees eternal participation in Christ's glory above, following resurrection from the grave.

2.   God will eradicate sin and suffering.   It was revealed to John that there would be "a new heaven and a new earth. . ." and that God Himself "will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away" (Rev 21:1-4).   There will be no more suffering!   Hence, no more tears!

FOURTH SEMINAR

LESSON FOUR

THE PORTRAIT OF A WELL-FORMED SPIRITUAL MAN: PAUL

LESSON AIM: To demonstrate the efficacy of God's grace and the unlimited usefulness of a life that is fully surrendered to God.

I. INTRODUCTION

The man who features more prominently than any other in the New Testament is the apostle Paul. Although Luke has written more than any other New Testament writer, he also has a lot to say about Paul. Paul's writings and teachings shaped not only the New Testament Church but still shape the Church today.

Many books have been written about the apostle Paul, and it is not easy to put together a concise portrait of the man called Paul nor of his contributions. Only those aspects of Paul's life and teachings which are relevant to what has been mentioned before in terms of spiritual formation are selected here. It must be born in mind that whatever Paul says about the spiritual life is from his own experience. He speaks from what he had experienced from what had been revealed to him.

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II. PAUL'S CONVERSION

In some ways the apostle Paul's conversion was a conversion as described in lesson 1 above. However, in another way, Paul's conversion does not quite fit the description, because Paul was already a believer in God. Paul was a devoted, zealous Pharisee and a Jewish Rabbi. The distortions in the Jewish and Rabbinic system had no room for Christ who came as a suffering servant and died in order to redeem sinners.

As a Pharisee, Paul shared the faith and distortions of his cult until he met Christ on his way to Damascus to extradite Christians. He had participated in the persecution of Christians, and he believed that he was doing God's work in persecuting Christians. On the road to Damascus, Paul met Christ personally. The experience of Paul's encounter with Christ is recorded in Acts 9, 22, and 26. In Acts 9, Luke tells the story, and in the two other chapters, Paul himself tells the story. Paul himself believed that on the Damascus road he was confronted by the Christ who had risen from the dead. This same Christ had appeared to some apostles, and on the Damascus road He appeared to Paul (1 Cor 15:3-8). The encounter transformed Paul's life and his theology.

As far as Paul was concerned, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His appearance to him validated, beyond doubt, the truthfulness of Jesus' claims and His message. Accordingly, those who rejected Christ and were

now seeking to undo His followers were not only wrong but also sinful. When it became clear to Paul that he was fighting Christ, and thus fighting God, he surrendered fully to God through Christ whom he had encountered.

The experience of encounter with Christ was not only life-transforming to Paul but also a revelation as to what he was to spend his life doing. The radicalness of the experience of conversion in Paul's understanding can be learned from the way he himself describes it. In his teachings, Paul describes the beginning of life in Christ as resurrection to newness of life. Becoming a Christian is like putting away the old and corrupt nature and being renewed by putting on the new nature (Eph 4:21-24). What matters most for the Christian is the new order of being, the new creation, which the Christian enters (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15) by being in Christ. It is like being raised from death to life (Eph 2:1, 5, 6; Col 2:12, 13).

A. Effect of Paul's Conversion on His Values

Paul's conversion transformed him personally and altered his value system. As a Jew, Pharisee, and Rabbi, Paul bore certain credentials in which he could have taken pride or gloried.

Paul writes to the Church at Philippi and tells Christians there that they are to glory in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:3). He further specifies values upon which a true Hebrew like himself could base his life and faith. For those who had reasons for confidence in the flesh,

Paul had more. He was circumcised according to Jewish custom, he was a Benjamite, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee in terms of observance to the law and, therefore, blameless. He was a zealous persecutor of Christians and sought to exterminate the Christian cause completely (Phil 3:4-6).

Paul was an accomplished person. He was educated at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), who was considered the most influential person of the time. He came from Tarsus in Cilicia, and in his words, "a citizen of no mean city" (Acts 21:39). Furthermore, Paul was a Roman citizen through historical circumstances which are not clearly explained. As Barclay points out, "Roman citizenship was no empty honor. . . . In the ancient world the Roman citizenship was an accolade of honor and a safe-conduct to the ends of the earth."[1]

Clearly, Paul acquired much of what would be considered important in terms of his society's values of importance. He had social status, position, power, and prestige. In the Jewish system he was legally blameless and, therefore, could claim salvation.

The striking thing about Paul is that when he was converted, the value system upon which life had been built lost its power on him. Several times Paul had to

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[1]Barclay, 26, 27.

remind both friends and foes about what was going for him socially and culturally, but counted it all as refuse or waste. Christ was of more surpassing worth to him than all those things (Phil 3:7, 8). It was the intimate relationship with Christ which mattered to him and was the consuming passion in his life. Thus, he can state the goal of his life's pursuits: "that I may know him [Christ] and the power of his resurrection" (Phil 3:10). In the first chapter of this same letter, he says: "For me to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21). To the Galatians he says: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Christ's principles animated Paul's life through and through. The phrase "in Christ"[1] sums up what Paul conveys in terms of his Christian experience and the goal of whatever he does (Phil 3:8-14).

As mentioned in chapter 2 above,[2] some images of spirituality used by Paul indicate that Christ lives in the believer and the believer lives in Christ. There is mutual presence and union with Christ which "subtly influences all our words and gestures, even though we are not aware of this union at every waking moment."[3]

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[1]See brief exploration of this expression in chapter 2 above.

[2]See above "Images of Mutual Presence," in chapter 2 above.

[3]Francis J. Buckley and Donald B. Sharp, Deepening Christian Life (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 26-27.

So it was with Paul; the intimate relationship with the Christ he had met on the Damascus road determined the course of his life.

When he gave up his society's values of importance and the Jewish system of merits, Paul clung to the Cross upon which Jesus had suffered. Thus, Paul writes: "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal 6:14). The contemplation of the meaning of the Cross removed blinkers from Paul. Holmes aptly states the effect of the Cross on the believer: "The Cross is the imaginative shock that blows the filters of humanity's awareness and opens us to the grace--i.e., the power and presence of God--that bestows upon us the mind of Christ."[1] So profound and complete was Paul's Christian experience that the love which he sensed from Christ and responded to compelled him to do what he did (2 Cor 5:14). Paul's life underwent complete reorientation and reorganization.

Paul's radical transformation not only sensitized him to the inexpressible love of God, and thus inspired unreserved devotion to Him, but also

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[1]Holmes, <u>History of Christian Spirituality</u>, 19.

broadened his scope and outlook towards the world of humankind.

B. Cultural and Social Dimensions of Paul's Conversion

Paul's conversion impacted radically on his cultural and social outlook. His scope was broadened in a way that enabled him to see all humankind as objects of God's inexpressible love. He understood God's plan to save all humankind, and he accepted the call to take God's life-transforming message to all people--Jews and Gentiles. As far as Christian history is concerned, Paul's conversion is a significant event because God used Paul mightily to reach out to the world with the Christian message.

It was important that there be a person or people who could break barriers that existed among people in the Greco-Roman world with the life-saving message of Christ. The apostle Paul became that person. Humanly speaking, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for Paul, a Jew, to reach out to the Gentiles. As a Jew, Paul would have nothing to do with Gentiles.

Barclay mentions how "Jews were involved in double hatred--the world hated them and they hated the world."[1] Nevertheless, in the person of the converted Jew, Paul the apostle, the life-transforming message of

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[1]Barclay, 9.

Christ spread like wild fire to the then known world.

Paul saw the Christ event as breaking down the walls of hostility between people (Eph 2:14f), and he himself reached out with the gospel to all people without discriminating against any. Thus, Paul could include in his letter to the Galatians what has been referred to as the "Magna Carta of the New Humanity" stating that in Christ "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).[1] This was a radical position to take in the light of the social and cultural milieu of the times. Longenecker portrays the situation in the following words: "Peoples were pitted against peoples, classes against classes, religious creeds against religious creeds, philosophical stances against philosophical stances--yet all (supposedly) existed within a common culture and common laws."[2]

As a Jew converted and become Christian, Paul proclaimed and lived a message which reconciled God and humankind, and with the consequence of reconciling human beings to one another. Paul could rebuke even Peter

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[1]Richard Longenecker, <u>New Testament Social Ethics for Today</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 30.

[2]Ibid.

when he failed to live up to the message they were both
proclaiming as apostles (Gal 2:11f).

The spiritual equipment which Paul had combined
with his learning and training and cosmopolitan outlook
helped to advance the cause of the Gospel. "He combined
the fervency of an evangelist, the compassion of a
pastor, the perception of a scholar, and the diplomacy
of a statesman."[1] In his own words, Paul states his
sanctified adaptability to every situation for the sake
of the Gospel:

> For though I am free from all men, I have made
> myself a slave to all, that I might win the more.
> To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews;
> to those under the law I became as one under the
> law--though not being myself under the law--that I
> might win those under the law. To those outside the
> law I became as one outside the law--not being
> without law toward God but under the law of Christ--
> that I might win those outside the law. To the weak
> I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have
> become all things to all men, that I might by all
> means save some. I do it for the sake of the
> gospel, that I may share in its blessings (1 Cor
> 9:19-23).

What better qualification can the gospel worker
need? Paul's conversion and commitment to Christ
resulted in horizontal outworking as shown here.

Paul had much to say not only about the
transformation of his life but also about the growth of
the spiritual life. In chapters 2 and 3, the Pauline
images of spiritual formation were explored with both
the individual and corporate emphases of spirituality.

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[1]Longenecker, The Ministry and Message of Paul, 111.

It may be helpful to refer to some of those images. The whole concept of mutual edification and fraternal correction underlined also by the Pauline understanding of spiritual gifts speaks to the need for spiritual growth. Images of attaining to the measure and stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13), the fullness of God (Eph 3:19), changed by beholding (2 Cor 3:18) are among those that speak to spiritual formation. More specifically in this lesson, however, it seems proper to look at Paul's spiritual pilgrimage in terms of the spiritual disciplines, most of which have been named by Foster. Is it possible to identify the same spiritual disciplines in the life and ministry of Paul?

III. PAUL AND THE DISCIPLINES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Paul believed that there was a need for discipline in order to grow spiritually. He told the believers at Philippi to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:12). Paul made it clear to the Corinthians that even he himself did not believe that good things just happen. As a Christian he could not passively wait for something good to happen without personal discipline on his part. He then shows how he himself disciplines his body or he would be lost (1 Cor 9:24-27). Paul applied to himself and practiced most of the disciplines which were surveyed above. A look at each of

the disciplines named by Foster[1] helps to highlight how Paul practiced the same spiritual disciplines.

A. Paul and Internal Disciplines

1. Paul and the Discipline of Meditation

Meditation is not specifically mentioned in Pauline writings. It can be surmised that he practiced meditation on the basis of two factors related to his spiritual journey and ministry.

a. He spent three years in the Arabian desert (Gal 1:15f). He must have spent time contemplating the mission God had given to him and thinking about his new relationship with the Lord.

b. Paul admonishes believers at Philippi to think about uplifting things (Phil 4:8, 9). Instead of reading the statement which says "think about these things," it might still be proper to say "meditate on these things."

2. Paul and the Discipline of Prayer

Paul was a man of prayer. Coggan points out that prayer must have been central in Paul's life since he was of a devout Jewish family.[2]

a. To the Church in Rome he writes that without ceasing he mentions members in prayer (Rom 1:9).

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[1]See Foster's work, Celebration of Discipline, already cited above.

[2]Donald Coggan. Portrait of a Revolutionary (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 121.

He also speaks of intimacy between God in Christ and the believer which suggest that communication using even the expression "Abba! Father!" (Rom 8:12-27).

b. To the Church at Ephesus he writes that he does not cease to give thanks and remembers them in prayer (Eph 1:16). He also requests that they pray for him with perseverance and for the work of the gospel (6:18, 19).

c. The Philippians are urged not to be anxious about anything but pray with thanksgiving (Phil 4:6).

d. Colossians are admonished to continue steadfastly in prayer (Col 4:2).

e. To the Thessalonian Christians he writes that he thanks God for them and constantly mentions them in prayer (1 Thess 1:2; 2:13). They are also admonished to pray without ceasing (5:17).

Much could be said about Paul as a man of prayer. The few illustrations above indicate that Paul believed in communion with God through Christ. The key terms connected with prayer like "without ceasing," "rejoicing and thanksgiving," and "steadfast" are quite revealing about Paul's prayer-filled life.

3. Paul and the Discipline of Fasting

There is not a great deal of fasting mentioned in connection with the life and ministry of Paul. Fasting, however, was a common practice in the early Church, and Paul as a Christian leader must have practiced fasting, too. As a leader, he does not say anything against it.

Fasting is mentioned in connection with the beginning of Paul's Christian spiritual journey. After his encounter with Christ on the Damascus road, Paul abstained from eating. For three days he neither ate nor drank (Acts 9:9). He also mentions that he often fasted (2 Cor 11:27).

4. Paul and the Discipline of Study

Paul was a student. He studied and he urged fellow workers to do the same. Several instances give us a clue into Paul as a student of the Scriptures.

a. He requests young Timothy to bring him books and parchments (2 Tim 4:13).

b. He exhorts the same Timothy to do his best to present himself to God as an approved worker (2:15).

c. He suggests that Christians in Rome should have their minds renewed (Rom 12:2).

d. The Philippians are supposed to think on uplifting things they have learned, received, heard, and seen (Phil 4:8, 9).

B. PAUL AND THE OUTWARD DISCIPLINES

    1. Paul and the Discipline of Simplicity

        Paul's decision to accept the call from Christ was in itself a choice against certain privileges which go along with a person of his standing in society. However, there are also specific instances in his writings which underlie biblical simplicity which he practiced and promoted in his ministry.

        a. Church leaders are not to be lovers of money or greedy for gain (1 Tim 3:3, 8).

        b. Most important is cultivation of the spiritual life. Having the basic necessities of is life enough. Desire to be rich brings snares and the love of money is the root of evil (1 Tim 6:6-11).

        c. Christians are not to associate with greedy people (1 Cor 5:11).

        d. Covetous or greedy people will be excluded from God's kingdom (Eph 5:5).

        Paul lived what he taught. Therefore, he must have practiced the discipline of simplicity.

    2. Paul and Disciplines of Silence and Solitude

        There is no specific scriptural reference in Paul's writings in connection with Paul engaging in silence and solitude as disciplines. It can be

assumed, however, that Paul practiced these disciplines because he was a follower of Christ who used to withdraw, as recorded.

It also appears that Paul purposely withdrew from contact with his associates to spend three years of contemplation in the Arabian desert. There, he must have engaged in silence and solitude.

3. Paul and the Discipline of Submission

The Christological foundation of Paul's message and ministry also becomes the basis for the discipline of submission as he taught the practice of it. One of the major passages which promotes mutual submission indirectly is Phil 2:3ff. Here Paul teaches that Christians are not to be selfish and conceited. Each Christian is to be humble and to esteem his fellow Christians to be better than her/himself. The key statement in this passage is that they need to have the mind of Christ, who although He was God, was so self-sacrificing that He humbled Himself and submitted Himself. In all other passages where Paul teaches about submission, it should be put in context of what Christ has sacrificed. In the third chapter of his letter to the Philippians, Paul explains his own submission to Christ as explained above in connection with what Paul gave up in order to become a follower of

Christ. For the sake of Christ, Paul was willing to do anything.

    a. In the family, husbands and wives are to submit to one another (Eph 5:21f).

    b. Servants and slaves obey masters as they obey the Lord (Col 3:22, 23). Obedience becomes a choice.

    c. Christians are also to submit to government authorities (Rom 13:1f).

4. Paul and the Discipline of Service

    Again, on the basis of what Christ was willing to go through, Paul embraced the concept of self-sacrificing service.

    a. He was happy that Christ appointed him to His service (1 Tim 1:12).

    b. Paul considered himself not only a servant, but a slave (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Titus 1:1).

    c. He considered himself a servant or slave of all (1 Cor 9:19-23).

C. PAUL AND CORPORATE DISCIPLINES

1. Paul and the Discipline of Confession

    There is no specific mention of Paul confessing or urging other Christians to confess. It can be inferred, though, that Paul could not tolerate a sense of guilt on his part or on the part of others.

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Several times Paul freely confessed that he was a persecutor of the church, and he knew that God had forgiven him of that sin. He writes to Timothy and states that Christ came to the world to save sinners of whom he was the foremost (1 Tim 1:15).

In the seventh chapter of his letter to the Romans, Paul seems to be dealing with the bent toward sin which he freely admits to be the case with every human being since the fall. Paul is no Augustinian who believed that human beings are part of the seeds of sin, and who, therefore, are guilty because of Adam's sin. Neither was he a Pelagian who believed that human beings are free from sin until they choose to sin. Human beings are born with irresistible tendencies towards sin, and Paul seems to be expressing this in the seventh chapter of Romans.

Paul was anxious to make things right between Christian brothers and sisters. Whichever way it was done, confession must have been involved. For example, when Onesimus, Philemon's slave, had run away, it was Paul who reconciled them. Common sense tells us that Paul's strong sense of community could not tolerate estrangements caused by sin.

2. Paul and the Discipline of Worship

It has already been pointed out that worship was a central element of church life in the early

church (Acts 2:42).[1] As a Jew, Paul was a
worshipper of God. There is no evidence of change
of custom or practice when he became a Christian.
All indications are that becoming a Christian
enhanced his worship experience. He speaks in
glowing terms about the church as the new Israel of
God which has come about not as a result of natural
descent or circumcision, but by the redemptive act
of God in Christ who has brought about the new
creation (Gal 6:11-17).

As he writes to the Romans, Paul refers to
the glorious heritage of Israel which included
worship (Rom 9:4). At least, it shows that Paul
valued the worship of God in Israel.

A little of Paul's experiences in the
synagogues is recorded in the Book of Acts. It must
have been his custom to attend the Jewish
synagogues.

  a. Luke records that they went outside the gate
  at Philippi on the sabbath day looking for a
  place of prayer (Acts 16:13).

  b. At Corinth they argued in the synagogues
  every sabbath with the Jews (Acts 18:4).

  c. At Ephesus he entered the synagogue to teach
  about the kingdom of God (Acts 19:8).

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[1]See under section entitled "Spirituality and the Life
of the Church" in chapter 3 above.

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These few examples indicate that Paul

continued the practice going to a place of worship

every week.

3. Paul and the Discipline of Guidance

The concept of mutual guidance in the early church

has been explored by examining what has been termed

by others as "one-anothering," "mutual edification

and fraternal correction."[1] Many of the references

are taken from the writings of Paul. There is,

therefore, no need to repeat those references here.

4. Paul and the Discipline of Celebration

Celebration as discussed above is also a

Pauline discipline. A sense of celebration comes

out of several passages from the writings of Paul.

a. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul

includes "joy" as part of the fruit of the

Spirit (Gal 5:22).

b. To the Romans, he writes that "we also

rejoice in God through our Lord. . ." (Rom

5:11).

c. Several times he uses the expression

"rejoice" in writing to the Philippians, e.g.,

"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord"

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[1]See chapter 6 above. "One-anothering," "mutual
edification," and "fraternal correction" have been examined
or mentioned in other chapters of this project in support of
the indispensability of spiritual community to enhance
spiritual maturity.

(Phil 3:1). "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice" (Phil 4:4).

d. To the Thessalonians he writes, "Rejoice always" (1 Thess 5:16).

Apparently, Paul believed that Christians have reasons to celebrate. He must have celebrated himself as he also urged others to celebrate.

Clearly, Paul's maturing spirituality was no accident. While the grace of God worked on him, he also practiced what has been identified as spiritual disciplines or "means of grace." Today's Christians, and more so the gospel workers of our times, need to practice disciplines more than ever before in order to enable the grace of God to effect sound spirituality which is needed urgently. There are more pressures today which impact upon Christians which have a tendency to undo authentic spirituality.

IV. PAUL AND SUFFERING

Paul suffered much for Christ. He is not only a human example of Christian living and ministry, but also an example of what it means to suffer in spite of the good that a person may be doing.

A. He Was Called to Suffer

It was after Paul's encounter with Christ that the Lord revealed to Ananias, one of the Christians at Damascus, that Paul was a chosen vessel to carry the

gospel to the Gentiles. In that same revelation to Ananias, it was also mentioned that Paul was to suffer much for the Lord's name (Acts 9:15, 16).

B. He Testifies about Various Kinds of Suffering

Paul mentions in his letter to the Corinthians that he endured affliction, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, and hunger (2 Cor 6:4, 5). In the fourth chapter of the same letter he writes: "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (4:8, 9). Later on in the same chapter he writes of suffering as slight momentary affliction which "is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (vs. 17).

In some cases Paul sounds as though he is boasting about his suffering as he personalizes the experiences of suffering. Such is the case in the eleventh chapter of his letter to the Corinthians:

> Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches. (2 Cor 11:24-28)

What more could a person go through? All Christians today are blessed by the ministry of Paul, but it is not always in the consciousness of all Christians that Paul suffered much. Paul was writing from personal experience when he admonished the young Timothy to share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ (2 Tim 2:3; 4:5). Paul was ready to be sacrificed (tradition has it that he was beheaded) as he wrote the inspiring words in the last chapter of his second letter to Timothy (2 Tim 4:6, 7).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul poses an unanswerable question: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" After mentioning that suffering is a reality in Christian experience he clinches the passage with a triumphant statement:

> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:37-39)

Much more can be said about Paul as a shining example of what it means to be a Christian and gospel worker. Paul has left an enduring legacy which probably has not been matched.

In his concluding reflections of one of his books, Bruce recognizes Paul's far-reaching influence. Some outstanding Christians of all ages have been shaped

by the life and message of Paul. Some of them have testified in connection with the impact of Paul on them. Among these are Augustine, a fourth- and fifth-century Christian of "colossal influence"; Luther, an outstanding champion of the Reformation; the Wesleys who championed Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century; and Barth with his "epoch-making theological publications."[1]

Longenecker ends one of his books with a concise statement on Paul. That statement is such an apt expression of the concern which lies at the heart of this presentation that we will use it in closing this chapter:

> It has often been devotionally said: 'The world has yet to see what God can do with a man wholly committed to Him.' Paul was such a man, and the world has witnessed the effect. He possessed a firmness of commitment to his Lord, a fervency of spirit, a compassion of heart, a breadth of outlook, a keenness of perception, and a constant openness to the Spirit. Such an example of a Christian life and ministry stands as both a paradigm and an inspiration to us today.[2]

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[1]F. F. Bruce, <u>Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free</u> (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), 469-474.

[2]Longenecker, <u>The Ministry and Message of Paul</u>, 112.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research effort made in this project has aimed at understanding the nature and practice of Christian spirituality as it relates to pastoral ministry. It is a study which has been pursued with a view to applying and implementing what has been learned to the educational endeavor that prepares students for pastoral ministry at Solusi College in Zimbabwe. The main thesis is that pastoral ministry is adequately conceptualized from the perspective of what it means to be an authentic Christian and an authentic Christian community. This understanding should, in turn, inform all efforts that are aimed at educating and preparing pastoral persons.

What has been made abundantly clear from the New Testament is that the Christian life is a real experience. It is a life that is portrayed in various complementary images, some of which are explored briefly in this project. Although the terms "spirituality" and "spiritual formation" are not used in the New Testament, the description of Christian experience furnished by some of the images underline what today would be considered "spirituality." As a human life that is supposed to be lived in intimate

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relationship with God, spirituality is exemplified by Jesus Himself. The incarnation of Jesus is an event with deep and far-reaching significance which human beings may not even begin to fathom. It is made clear, however, in various ways that Jesus has come to demonstrate how life, according to God's design, ought to be lived.

In this study, only a few of the statements connected with Christian life from the lips of Jesus Christ have been selected for examination. Jesus used various images and parables to teach how the spiritual life is supposed to be, and how it is absolutely necessary to pursue it. Jesus described the spiritual life as one that should be sought above everything else. He also presented God, not only as one who loves unconditionally enough to save humankind, but as one who, as a Father (Abba), seeks to establish a living and an intimate relationship with the human beings He has created and redeemed.

Various facets of the truth about the spiritual life are conveyed by the images or parables which Jesus used in His teaching. He may have used the parable of the Pearl of Great Value to convey the truth of the prime importance of the pursuit of the spiritual life. Jesus used the parable of the vine and the branches to convey the truth about the Christian's need for close union with God in order to grow both higher and deeper in the Christian life bearing fruit for the glory of God.

Some of the New Testament writers like John and Paul recorded what to them was a living experience of relatedness to the living Lord, Jesus Christ. John portrayed Christians as those who are united in fellowship with God and with one another. Christians, according to John, are the children of God who is a Father to them, and they need to grow to be like Him. God gives the power and the right to enable those who believe to become what God intends them to be. It is this life of intimate fellowship and union with God that manifests itself in loving as God loves.

Paul portrayed Christians as those who have been graced to experience the newness of life in Christ. "In Christ" is Paul's favorite image of Christian experience which is contrasted with being "in Adam." In various ways, Paul showed the dynamics of the experience of being in Christ. It is the experience of being resurrected to the newness of life lived within the new order of being, the new creation. Paul also portrayed Christian experience as being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, crucified with Christ, baptized and clothed with Christ, and formed in the image of Christ. Love, which is derived from God's supreme, self-sacrificing, and unconditional love, becomes the major quality of all those who have a living connection with God.

Apart from the New Testament, there are human beings who have written on the Christian spiritual life (many speak from personal experience) and make pertinent comments concerning the centrality of spirituality in the Christian.

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This study also has shown that Christian life or experience is communal in nature. Although many images of Christian experience can be used to describe the individual Christian experience, they are used in the New Testament, mainly to describe corporate Christian experience.

The community of faith, known as the "church," is portrayed in various images, some of which carry immense implications for corporate spirituality. Spiritual persons are not made in isolation as individuals, but they are made in community.

The portrayal of the church as the body of Christ with Christ as the head, God's building project and the bride carry implications for corporate Christian experience. As shown in this project, these images should be understood together as portraying important realities connected with the Christian life. Thus the church is a living entity which derives its life from Christ. Dependence on Christ, union with Him and with other members, and the principle of mutuality and interdependence are underlined in these images. There should be mutual support and interdependence in Christ and in the process of becoming like Him. In this way, spiritual growth is affirmed. No wonder love becomes the greatest energy and cohesive force which binds the body together for mutual growth in Christ. As a living entity, the body must grow or die and decay.

A brief exploration of the purpose of the church has shown that the church has a responsibility to God, a

ministry to its members, and a mission to the world at large. The church lives to glorify God who calls it into existence. It also lives to nurture spiritual growth of its members by providing the environment that is conducive to spiritual growth. Growth is also to be accomplished through the processes of education, and liturgical and sacramental participation. To the extent that the church, through its programs and rituals, cements a strong and intimate love relationship with God, it enables its members to transcend the powers that seek to undo it. Meaningful liturgical and sacramental participation in all church ceremonies should provide each member not only with the dynamics to survive but also with the ability to grow from strength to strength and become more like its head, Jesus Christ. On the basis of an intimate love relationship with Christ, the church also reaches out to the world as a letter from Christ, a light to the world and salt of the earth. The images which emphasize reaching out to the world presuppose the church's likeness to Christ. It is Christlikeness which conveys effective witness to the world, and this suggests a need for authentic spiritual formation on the part of the church.

This project also examined the self-understanding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and how this self-image relates to its spirituality. It is quite significant to realize that the Seventh-day Adventist ethos tends to keep the church in the activistic mode of spirituality. There is a need for contemplative spirituality among Seventh-day

Adventists to balance the activism which seems to dominate at the present time. It is the conception of both Christian and church identity which are a major part of the matrix for developing Christian ministry.

Christian ministry, as considered in this project, plays an important part in bringing about the desired Christian and a desirable church. Ministry enhances spirituality or hinders it. The Christian minister is called to "deepen awareness of God in the life of the people of God," to use Urban Holmes' words. Ministers shape the churches as they are also shaped by them. Thus, a proper conception of the Christian ministry is crucial. It may determine not only the calibre of ministers who are spiritual leaders in congregations but also the spirituality of the people of God themselves. It has been made clear that authentic spirituality is central to the practice of ministry. It is this centrality of spirituality in ministry which should inform all approaches in the education and preparation of the pastoral persons. All levels in the administrative structure of the church, the set up of the theological college itself, and the whole church should make spiritual formation of the ministerial students a high priority.

Part Two of the project considered spiritual formation in terms of the concrete situation at Solusi College and applies the project there. It seemed proper, therefore, to begin by examining what Solusi has endeavored

to accomplish in its preparation for ministers from the time
it was established up to the present time. Chapter 5
summarized events and actions which are connected with the
theological education program of Solusi College. The second
part of this same chapter described the current situation
inside and outside the church in the region which is served
by Solusi College. The events and developments warrant a
program of spiritual formation. Otherwise, the events and
developments in societies like that of Zimbabwe have a
subtle shaping power which may dilute, distort, and even
eradicate the vision of church and ministry portrayed by the
Holy Scriptures and inherent in the philosophy and mission
of the SDA Church. To develop and implement a program of
spiritual formation is a matter of being true to the stated
mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a whole and
to the Solusi College statement of mission and philosophy of
education. The challenges currently are such that Solusi
College and the whole church in the region should take their
mission seriously.

Practically, this project is implemented in two
settings, the classroom setting and the less formal seminar
setting. The classroom setting is restricted to those who
are registered for classes where spiritual formation is the
integral part of the course offerings. One hopes that other
instructors will also design their courses in such a way
that faith is enhanced and nurtured.

Two classes, Doctrines of the Christian Church and Pastoral Counseling, have been selected because they seem to be appropriate for this project. Belief informs and conditions actions. The church's fundamental beliefs, therefore, should constitute the foundation of its spirituality. Pastoral Counseling class is augmented with concepts of spiritual direction because, ultimately and fundamentally, the minister is called to direct others spiritually. He leads others to God and should have a working knowledge of caring for souls and cementing their relationships with God.

The implementation of the project also takes place in the form of ten-hour week-end seminars to be attended by all students as described in chapter 7. The lessons which are part of chapter 7 are not designed to follow a particular model of development. They are put together with a view to helping students understand the process of Christian spirituality, how it is developed, and to help them apply to others what they have learned in their own experience.

It has been shown that Christian experience deepens and matures with time. There is no end to growth and development, and the journey Godward is not a smooth one. There are crises, pains, and struggles so that new experiences may be a reality again and again. Living in close union with God does not eliminate suffering. It may actually intensify suffering as the Christian is being

processed and purified to be like Christ. Students are helped to understand that the process of developing authentic spirituality does not just happen. It is the achievement of grace, but the Christian must co-operate by practicing disciplines which have been found to be helpful to the development of spirituality. The disciplines of the spiritual life named by Foster are discussed, analyzed, and practiced by all participants in the seminars.

Seminar lessons close with the consideration of a biblical example of a mature, spiritual person--Paul. What has been learned in the previous lessons is demonstrated in the life and ministry of Paul. Among Bible characters who demonstrate the efficacy of grace by precept and example, Paul stands second to none.

In conclusion, it must be reiterated that spirituality is of fundamental importance not only to Christian living but also to Christian ministry and witness. Christian living, ministry, and witness that is devoid of spirituality is like a wheel without a hub. Authentic spirituality is the hub that holds the spokes of the wheel of Christian living, ministry, and witness.

As has been shown, authentic spirituality is to be rooted in sound biblical theology. Nothing else can keep Christian spirituality from being mere mind manipulation and other dysfunctional practices or lack of practice. Nothing else can keep Christian spirituality from aberrant extremes in the understanding and practice of spirituality

except the correct understanding and application of biblical theology.

Like salvation, spiritual development is to be understood paradoxically. Spiritual growth is the work of God who graces the person who responds to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. However, each person is ultimately responsible for her/his own spiritual growth in co-operation with the Holy Spirit. A person has to engage in specific disciplines which make her/him "vulnerable" to the work of the Holy Spirit and sensitive to the presence of God.

It is apparent also from the study that a truly spiritual person is a fully human person with all the faculties of human functioning; one who has the capacity to feel all the basic human needs. Authentic spirituality enhances other faculties of human functioning and puts all the basic human needs in perspective. Difficulties, suffering, trials, and all other human pain are not eliminated from a truly spiritual person. They may even be increased. However, the adverse conditions are accepted and borne by the spiritual person with a perspective which even deepens and enhances spirituality.

All the conclusions which can be made in connection with spirituality and spiritual formation as pursued in this study have implications for the calibre of Christian ministry which, to a very large extent, determines the calibre of Christians and churches to advance God's redemptive purpose in times like these. There can be no

overemphasis on the need to exercise care in selecting, educating, and preparing those who are to be spiritual leaders.

Two recommendations come from the wrestling that I have gone through in thinking about the best way of designing and implementing a program of spiritual formation:

First, there is a need for further study on liturgics in relation to the culture of the people. Such approach and discipline is essential for the people of Zimbabwe. Christian worship and praxis in places like Zimbabwe should be designed to remain biblical while penetrating deeper into the people's religiosity. Otherwise, there is the constant danger of syncretism and confusion since people tend to resort to what they are at the core of their being. Unless they are animated by Christian principles at the core of their being, aberrant expressions of religion may show up sooner or later.

Second, education in spirituality and spiritual guidance should not be terminated when the ministerial students graduate from college. The nurturing of the pastor's life should continue even in the field. In the SDA system of organization, some pastors are designated as ministerial directors. Such pastors should focus not only on promotional work of evangelism but also minister to the spiritual needs of the pastors. They should continue educating in spirituality as they sense the needs in

churches and church districts. In fact, ministerial directors should be made adjunct professors of the theological college. In such an arrangement it will be possible to integrate meaningful pastoral wisdom, experience, and theoretical learning in school. This arrangement could also foster continuous joint efforts to enhance ministerial spirituality.

APPENDIX A

PHASES AND STAGES OF THE OSCILLATION THEORY

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At each phase or stage of the oscillation theory there is a short description of what happens depending on whether the religion is functional or dysfunctional.

1. Phase of Regression to Extradependence

    Functional-- Confident approach to God as caring Father.

    Dysfunctional--Defensive regression, withdrawal to self. Religious practice without meaning leading to **nominalism.**

2. Mode of Extradependence--An experience of relatedness and reliance upon God.

    Functional-- Engage in contemplation of glory, love, and power without losing sense of reality.

    Dysfunctional--Regression is incomplete, inadequate. Person is ill-prepared for transition to normal living. Looks for magical answers to prayer. This leads to **folk religion.** Symbol may be accorded greater reverence than what is symbolized, leading to **fundamentalism.** Doctrine of group leader may dominate, leading to fanaticism.

3. Transition from Extradependence

    Functional-- Feelings of being between God and world. Feels possession of God's attributes and oriented to every day world demands.

    Dysfunctional--No assurance of forgiveness and freedom. Sinks into retarded state of **ecclesiasticism** or religiosity without change. Dissatisfaction may lead to blaming others, fight and flight. This becomes root of **sectarianism.**

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4. Phase of Transformation to Intradependence

    Functional--   Realities are seen in light of experience
                    at Extradependent mode. Like safe
                    descent from mountaintop experience to
                    the valleys of real life. Behavior
                    reflects relationship with God.
    Dysfunctional--Impotent, disappointment, untransformed.

5. Mode of Intradependence

    Functional--   Willingness to face real world,
                    willingness to pick up one's share of
                    life's demands.

    Dysfunctional--Desire to be noticed as paying attention
                    to God, leads to state involvement,
                    creating **civil religion** (e.g.,
                    Constantine A.D. 321). Religion may be
                    interpreted in secular terms, God demoted
                    to second place, and thus leading to
                    secularism. In secularism, Church takes
                    over state task. In civil religion,
                    state takes over Church tasks.

6. Transition from Intradependence

    Functional--   Feelings of uncertainty, anxieties,
                    doubt, weakness, guilt.

    Dysfunctional--Incapacitated, desire to flee harsh
                    realities of life. Conscious Rational--
                    pursues secular program. Unconscious
                    Irrational--regresses to extradependence.

        The chart on the following page illustrated the
process of oscillation as researched by Grubb Institute of
Social Research. The implications of this theory to the
life of the Church are far-reaching.

THE DYNAMICS OF RELIGION

Stage in Oscillation Process	Types of Religion								
	Functional	Key stages for different dysfunctional patterns of behavior							
Regression to E/D	Apostolic	Nominal-ism							
E/D Mode	"		Folk Religion						
Transition from E/D	"			Ecclesiasti-cism	Sectarian-ism				
Transformation to I/D	"					Proselytism			
I/D Mode	"						Civil religion	Secularism	
Transition from I/D	"	Nominal-ism	Folk Religion						Cults
E/D = extra-dependence					I/D = intra-dependence				

Redrawn from Bruce Reed, *The Dynamics of Religion: Process and Movement in Churches* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1978), 94.

APPENDIX B

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION,

PSYCHOTHERAPY, AND COUNSELING

SPIRITUAL FRIEND

	Psychotherapy	Pastoral Counseling	Spiritual Direction
SUBJECT	Disordered patient wanting cure.	Disordered (troubled) client wanting help.	A soul searching for God; not a disordered but a sacred situation.
GOAL	Resolution of psychic conflict and adjustment to society. (Medical Model.)	Healing, sustaining, reconciling, and guiding. (More holistic model.)	Being and becoming in God.
METHOD	Techniques employed on client for desired results.	Helping acts resulting in benefit to client.	Allowing self and relationship to be a vehicle of grace, of the will of God. Primary method: surrender; letting go whatever is in God's way.
ATTITUDE OF HELPER	Responsible for cure of patient. *My* will be done.	Client or the relationship is responsible. *Our* will be done.	Only God is responsible for whatever healing/growth occurs. *Thy* will be done.

Redrawn from Tilden H. Edwards, *Spiritual Friend* (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 130.

APPENDIX C

ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory of Personal Development underlines the fact that human life, like any other life, involves growth, change, and tensions. This theory shows that the human person negotiates growth with tension between the self and the social environment. Positive growth occurs when tensions are properly resolved, and specific virtues are developed by the person to make human life more meaningful. If tensions are not properly resolved, then a person may be crippled socially. The same principles may apply in spiritual growth.[1] This may be illustrated in comparison with some of the biblical images which Jesus used like the seed which sprouts, puts forth the blade, the ear, and finally the full grain (Mark 4:26-28). Jesus also used the parable of the sower whose seeds fell on different soils (Mark 4:3-20).

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[1] For elaboration on implications of Erikson's construct to pastoral spirituality, see Ben Campbell Johnson, _Pastoral Spirituality: A Focus for Ministry_ (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 50-65.

	SIGNIFICANT RELATIONS	Psychosocial Crises		SPIRITUAL CAPACITIES /VIRUTES
75	HUMANKIND MY KIND	INTEGRITY VS. DESPAIR	VIII	UNION WITH GOD/WISDOM
60	DIVIDED LABOR SHARED HOUSEHOLD	GENERATIVITY VS. STAGNATION	VII	STEWARDSHIP/CARE
40	PARTNERS IN FRIENDSHIP SEX, COOPERATION	INTIMACY VS. ISOLATION	VI	COMMITMENT DISCIPLESHIP /LOVE
20	PEER GROUPS, OUT GROUPS MODELS/MENTORS	IDENTITY VS. ROLE CONFUSION	V	IDENTITY WITH CHRIST /FIDELITY
10	NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL	IV INDUSTRY VS. INFERIORITY		GOOD WORKS/COMPETENCE
5	BASIC FAMILY	III INITIATIVE VS. GUILT		COURAGE TO RISK /PURPOSE
2	PATERNAL PERSONS	II AUTONOMY VS. SHAME & DOUBT		SELF-AFFIRMATION/WILL
BIRTH	MATERNAL PERSONS	I BASIC TRUST VS. BASIC MISTRUST		FAITH/HOPE

Psychosocial Crises

Copied from Ben Campbell Johnson, *Pastoral Spirituality: A Focus for Ministry* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 56, Figure 3.

APPENDIX D

COMPARISON BETWEEN ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY
OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOWLER'S
STAGES OF FAITH

Psychosocial and Faith Stages: Optimal Parallels

Levinson's Eras and Erikson's Psychosocial Stages	*Fowler's Faith States*
Era of Infancy, Childhood, and Adolescence	
Trust vs. Mistrust	Undifferentiated Faith (Infancy)
Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt	1. Intuitive-Projective Faith (Early Childhood)
Initiative vs. Guilt	
Industry vs. Inferiority	2. Mythic-Literal Faith (School Years)
Identity vs. Role Confusion	3. Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Adolescence)
First Adult Era	
Intimacy vs. Isolation	4. Individuative-Reflective Faith (Young Adulthood)
Middle Adult Era	
Generativity vs. Stagnation	5. Conjunctive Faith (Mid-life and Beyond)
Late Adult Era	
Integrity vs. Despair	6. Universalizing Faith

Redrawn from James W. Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 113, Table 3.3.

APPENDIX E

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Day	Activity	Time
FRIDAY	PRELIMINARIES	3:00-3:30P
	-Introduction and Procedural Details	
	DEVOTIONALS	3:30-4:00P
	-Musical Selections & Scripture -Prayer	
	LESSON DISCUSSIONS	4:10-5:00P
	FELLOWSHIP GROUPS	5:10-6:00P
	-Testimonies & Faith Sharing -Experiences, Group Counseling & Guidance	
	LESSON DISCUSSIONS & GUIDED MEDITATIONS	7:45-8:45P
SABBATH	GUIDED MEDITATIONS AND PRAYER	5:00-6:00A
	LESSON DISCUSSIONS	6:10-7:00A
	LESSON DISCUSSIONS	3:00-3:50P
	FELLOWSHIP GROUPS AS ABOVE	4:00-4:50P
	LESSON DISCUSSIONS AND GUIDED MEDITATIONS	5:00-5:50P
SUNDAY	GUIDED MEDITATIONS, PRAYER, LESSON REVIEW, AND CLOSING REMARKS	6:00-7:30A

NOTE: Celebration Sabbath has additional activities.

APPENDIX F

GUIDED MEDITATIONS

GUIDED MEDITATIONS

Guided Meditations on New Life in Christ

1. How does the new life in Christ begin? John 3:3-8; 1 John 3:1, 2; Mark 1:4, 15; Matt 3:2, 8-10; 4:17; Rom 6:3f; Acts 2:38; 3:19.

2. How is the difference between the old unchristian life and the new life in Christ expressed? Rom 6:4, 5; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10.

3. How is the growth of the spiritual life expressed? John 15:1-17; Matt 13:3-8, 31-33; 5:48; 25:14, 19-29; Mark 4:34; 2Cor 3:18; Eph 3:14-19; 4:11-16; Phil 3:12-15.

4. How is the intimate relationship between God and the Christian(s) expressed? John 14:10, 11, 20, 23; 15:1-17; 17:20-26;1John 1:3; Rom 6:3-4; 8:1; 12:5; 1 Cor 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; Eph 2:20, 21; 3:17; 5:22f; Phil 4:21; Col 1:2; 2:6; 1 Pet 2:5-8; Rev 19:7.

5. How should spiritual persons relate to one another? Matt 22:37-39; Luke 10:30-37; John 13:5-13, 34-35; 1 John 4:13-20; 2:10-11; 3:11, 23; Rom 13:8-10; 1 Cor 8:1; 12:31-14:1; Eph 2:21f; 1 Thess 3:12; 4:9, 18; 5:11; Col 3:9, 13, 16; Heb 10:24-25; Jas 5:16; 1 Pet 1:22; 4:8.

Guided Meditation on Disciplines of the Spiritual Life

1. **Meditation**

    a. What did the psalmist say about meditation and how did he pray about it? Psalms 1:2; 119:15, 78, 97; 145:5; 19:14; 104:34.

    b. Which Pauline passage expresses the idea of meditation? Phil 4:8, 9.

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2. **Prayer**

    a.   Meditation on Christ's model prayer: Matt 6:9-13.

    b.   Why is prayer important? 1 Thess 5:16, 17; Heb 5:7; Jas 4:8; 5:13-15.

    c.   What is the purpose of prayer? 1 John 1:3, 6.

    d.   The power of prayer: Luke 18:10, 14; 11:13; Eph 6:18.

    e.   What are some of the specific hindrances to prayer? Psalm 66:18; 1 Pet 3:7; Jas 1:5-7; 4:3; Matt 5:23, 24; Mark 11:25.

3. **Fasting**

    What did Jesus say about fasting? Matt 6:16; 17:21.

4. **Study**

    a.   What did Paul say concerning that which should occupy Christian minds? Phil 4:8

    b.   What did Paul say about the mind which seems to relate to the change of life? Rom 12:2

    c.   What is expected of a spiritual leader? 2 Tim 2:15

    d.   What did Paul say in connection with studying self? 2 Cor 13:5.

5. **Simplicity**

    a.   How should Christians relate to materialism? Matt 6:19-21, 24.

    b.   What message did Jesus give in connection with attachment to money and things that money can buy? Luke 6:24; Mark 10:21-24.

    c.   What should be the Christian's attitude towards genuine material needs? Matt 6:25-34.

    d.   What admonition did Paul give in connection with material things? 1 Tim 6:6-11.

6. **Silence and Solitude:** Psalm 46:10; Mark 6:30, 31.

7. **Submission**

   a. What is the basis of Christian submission? Jas 4:7-12; Mark 8:34; Matt 20:20-28; Phil 2:2-11.

   b. Submission between husband and wife: Eph 5:21.

   c. What are the limits of submission? Acts 4:19; 5:29.

8. **Service**

   What is the basis of Christian service? Matt 20:25-28; John 13:3-11; Phil 2:3-11.

9. **Confession:** Psalm 32:1-5; Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:8, 9; Jas 5:16.

10. **Worship:** Acts 2:42; John 4:24; Rev 13:8; 14:7; Heb 10:24-25.

11. **Sabbath:** Ex 20:8; Deut 5:12; 31:15; Jer 6:16; Matt 11:28; Heb 4:3-11.

12. **Fellowship:** John 17:11, 21-23; Matt 18:23-35; Heb 12:14-15.

13. **Celebration:** Luke 2:10; John 15:11; Gal 5:22; Phil 4:4.

14. **Conflict, Pain, Struggle, and Suffering**

   a. How did Jesus express the inevitability of conflict within a Christian's life? Matt 10:34-36; 24:9-13; 5:11, 12.

   b. How did Paul portray the Christian's intrapersonal struggle? Rom 7:13-25.

   c. How did Paul state the reality of suffering in God's world? Rom 8:17-25.

   d. What good does suffering accomplish? Rom 5:3, 4; 1 Pet 2:20, 21; Heb 12:5-11; Rev 3:19.

   e. How did Paul suffer as a Christian? Acts 9:15, 16; 2 Cor 6:4, 5; 4:8, 9; 11:24-28.

   d. How will suffering end according to God's promise? Gen 3:15; Rev 21:1-4.

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