A Strategy For Church Planting Among The Ewe-Speaking People Of The Volta Region, Ghana

Emmanuel Osei
Andrews University

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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING
AMONG THE EWE-SPEAKING PEOPLE
OF THE VOLTA REGION, GHANA

by

Emmanuel Osei

Adviser: Douglas R. Kilcher
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING AMONG THE EWE-SPEAKING PEOPLE OF THE VOLTA REGION, GHANA

Name of researcher: Emmanuel Osei

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Date completed: August 1997

Problem

Since the Seventh-day Adventist Church came to Ghana over one hundred years ago, there has not been any concrete and coordinated plan to establish SDA churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region, Ghana.

Unconsciously or otherwise, the Volta Region has been left unentered by the church, particularly the area from Ho southward to the sea.

This study was undertaken to develop a strategy for reaching the Ewe-speaking people group (of the Volta Region, Ghana) through church-planting ministry by which converts won would be gathered to form congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
Method

In an attempt to develop a strategy to plant Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewe-speaking ethnic group of the Volta Region, Ghana, I used three approaches as a method to guide me in obtaining relevant information and data for the design of the strategy.

First of all, I began to study the available literature on the Ewe people group— their culture, worldview, traditional religion and ritual practices, their social structure, and traditional polity. This study gave me an insight into some essential factors to be considered so far as planting SDA churches in that target area is concerned.

Second, I interviewed some senior pastors of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to find out the reason why the church has not yet established its presence among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. The interview was also a tool used to find out the problems that hindered or militated against the initial attempts of the church to enter the target group.

Finally, I conducted a survey at Ho to obtain a clearer picture of the immediate context of the Ewes of the Volta Region for the development of a strategy to plant SDA churches among the Ewe-speaking people.

Results

In my studies pertaining to the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region, I learned of some problem areas and some essential factors which altogether helped me much to come up
with three approaches which I pulled together to form a strategy to plant SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region, Ghana.

Conclusion

The strategy developed in this project will help the SDA church plant churches among the Ewes in more meaningful and relevant ways. Out of this developed strategy came, as a conclusion, recommendations that will help the South Ghana Conference in its endeavor to enter the Volta Region in an effective church-planting ministry.
A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING
AMONG THE EWE-SPEAKING PEOPLE
OF THE VOLTA REGION, GHANA

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

by
Emmanuel Osei
August 1997
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Doctor of Ministry

by

Emmanuel Osei

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

[Signatures and titles]

[Date approved]
Dedication

To God my Creator and Sustainer; To my late grandparents, who taught me the love for church planting; and to my dear family--Esther, Diana, Abigail, and Emmanuel Jr., and to all those who prayed for me and supported me by their love and concern
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGC</td>
<td>Central Ghana Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGC</td>
<td>South Ghana Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAUM</td>
<td>West African Union Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Concerted Prayer Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Seventh-day Adventist</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIM</td>
<td>Sudan Interior Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASF</td>
<td>Adventist Students Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>AYET</td>
<td>Adventist Youth Evangelistic Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. P.</td>
<td>Evangelical Presbyterian (could also be Ewe Presbyterian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNAAS</td>
<td>Ghana National Association of Adventist Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VORAAS</td>
<td>Volta Regional Association of Adventist Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists</td>
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and more of your paternal love for your children and others.
May God bless you.
CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

One hundred and fifty years ago,¹ the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church began as a movement. Born in the era of the "magnificent disappointment,"² and nurtured by the great Advent Awakening Messages, the movement began to grow

¹The Seventh-day Adventist church celebrated its 150th anniversary in October 1994. In the 150-year anniversary issue ("A People of Prophecy," October 1994 Adventist Review, 8), Elder Robert S. Folkenberg, the president of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, mentioned that "about 150 years ago the Lord again called out a remnant, this time out of spiritual Babylon." In the same issue of the Adventist Review William G. Johnsson also wrote about the Seventh-day Adventist church as "a small group of Adventists, a tiny remnant left from 1844 but the kernel of a new movement." "The Impossible Dream," Adventist Review, October 1994 (Special issue), 2.

²P. Gerard Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1977), xiii, 99. The author stated that the Seventh-day Adventists look back and refer to October 22, 1844 as "the great disappointment." It is in this event that Adventist doctrine is rooted and derives strength from (p. xiii).

No wonder Mervyn Maxwell refers to this same event as the "Magnificent disappointment" by stating that "The great disappointment of 1844 was a dark cloud for those who experienced it, but its brilliant silver lining has turned it into a magnificent disappointment for everyone who has perceived its true meaning." Magnificent Disappointment (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1994), 175. See also 173, 174.
steadily through group Bible studies, prayer meetings, and Bible conferences.¹

Recognizing its uniqueness as a divinely called movement, a remnant raised up to undertake the gospel commission in a special way, the SDA church accordingly assumed its missionary role right from inception.² Thus the evangelistic thrust of the church, as observed in its missionary outreach programs and activities, has led to the planting of more new churches and a tremendous membership growth.

Many lay persons and denominational workers went about preaching and establishing churches. M. B. Chechowski planted little congregations in Europe.³ Others worked in Asia, India, Africa, and South America. Thus the tiny


²In his article, "A People of Prophecy," 8, 9, Robert S. Folkenberg briefly explains the SDA church's divine call, her claim as the remnant church, and the identifying manifestation of her prophetic call which is not observed in any other religious body but the SDA church. He then mentioned, "Thus we Seventh-day Adventists should realize that we are a prophetic movement specially called out by God to do a unique work." Robert H. Pierson, former president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist church, also mentioned earlier that "the Seventh-day Adventist church is not in the world today as another ecclesiastical organization. The Advent movement was heaven-born. It has been heaven-blessed through the decades of its existence and, thank God, it is heaven-bound." See Robert H. Pierson quoted in Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant, 5.

³Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant, 145.
Sabbath-keeping bands that started in North America multiplied themselves at home and abroad through church planting and within 150 years the movement grew from their small number to more than 9 million from almost every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

Today the SDA church is experiencing a kind of growth where "about 2000 new members join the church every day from more than 200 countries." According to the latest statistical report (as of first quarter, 1997), the church numbered 9,364,746. Beginning with 125 churches in 1863, the clergy and the laity together worked assiduously to multiply churches, establishing printing presses and learning and medical institutions. The SDA church now has 57,728 congregations blanketing the globe.

These soul-winning and church-planting successes did not just come by chance. The missionary focus and its raison d'être have so much influenced the SDA church that all along the church has been vigorously planning with

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2General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Office of Archives and Statistics, Annual Statistical Reports (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of SDA, 1993), 1.


4GC Secretary’s Statistical Report--Quarterly as submitted by the GC Office of Archives and Statistics, 1st quarter, 1997.
strategy to reach out to the world to make disciples for the coming King, Jesus Christ.

The last three decades particularly reveal the intensified evangelistic thrust of the SDA church. MISSION '72 was to encourage and direct lay people and ministers to hold evangelistic meetings to proclaim the everlasting gospel to all people around the globe. This successful evangelistic thrust was extended to 1973 and code-named MISSION '73.

The "One Thousand Days of Reaping" was another vigorous evangelistic thrust that followed MISSION '73. It called for a strong worldwide emphasis on evangelism and also to average one thousand accessions a day. Thus, one objective of the "One Thousand Days of Reaping" program was to add one million new members to the SDA church during the one thousand days of the evangelistic thrust.¹

The 1985 General Conference session officially marked the end of the one thousand days of reaping. At this same time, a new comprehensive evangelistic program, HARVEST '90, was launched with an objective of adding two million believers to the church during the five-year period from July 1, 1985, to June 30, 1990.

HARVEST '90 became a church-strengthening endeavor, a focus that united the global SDA church for fervent

¹The "One Thousand Days of Reaping" evangelistic thrust covered a period from Sept. 1982 to June 1985.
missionary work. The total accessions for the entire HARVEST '90 period amounted to 2,490,105 baptisms.¹ Through this evangelistic emphasis thousands of converts were won, baptized, and added to the global SDA church on an average of over two thousand baptisms a day.

When the HARVEST '90 program was about to end, the SDA church cast another new look at the world and, with earnest prayers and conscientious planning,² came up with an exciting and challenging evangelistic thrust, a new outreach program based on the people-group concept. This is a mission to the world which the SDA church calls "Global Mission."

The Global Mission program of the church places special emphasis on reaching the unreached with three main objectives.⁴ (1) To enter all the Earth's people groups,

¹Annual Statistical Reports--1990, 2.


³Ibid. Kit Watts reports that Neal C. Wilson, the former president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist church, first called upon the church to develop a global strategy at the 1986 Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro. The global strategy program was a challenge to establish, at the very least, 1,800 new churches if the church wants to accomplish this by the year 2000.

⁴Annual Statistical Reports, 1993, 1.
(2) to establish the Adventist presence worldwide, and (3) to foster expansion where the church now exists.

It is in accordance with the great gospel commission of Matt 28:18-20; and in the light of the evangelistic thrusts of the SDA church, particularly the Global Mission emphasis, as well as the missionary focus of the researcher that this study was embarked upon in order to develop an evangelistic strategy to plant SDA churches among the over one million Ewe-speaking people of Volta Region in Ghana.

It is also my conviction that the planting of churches should become the primary focus of the SDA church in all its missionary endeavors. These local congregations are not only centers to receive new members for nurturing, but they are also training grounds for the training and educating of church members to become disciple-making believers.

1In the Minutes of the Meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee, it was recorded: "The General Conference proposes to establish by the year 2000 a Seventh-day Adventist presence in every populated segment of one million as identified at the beginning of the decade 1990-2000. (This also includes a presence in each of 271 languages spoken by one million or more.) . . . This goal requires entering a new population of one million every other day for ten years (3 per week, 15 per month, 180 per year). It also means starting work in 35 new languages in which we have not worked in 35 new languages in which we have not worked."

"An Adventist presence is defined as established local congregations." See General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, "Minutes of the General Conference Executive Committee" (Washington, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 10 October 1989), 89-473.

2All biblical quotations are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise indicated.
It is in this light that Ellen G. White wrote:

Upon all who believe, God has placed the burden of raising up churches, for the express purpose of educating men and women to use their entrusted capabilities for the benefit of the world, employing the means He has lent for His glory; He has made human beings His stewards. Gladly and generously they are to use the means in their possession for the advancement of righteousness and truth. They are to employ His entrusted talents in building up His work and enlarging His kingdom.¹

In the desire to finish the Lord’s work, the SDA church needs to develop a dramatically new strategy, otherwise "we will continue to evangelize those people who are the easiest to evangelize--those who live closest to us and think most like we do--and ignore the others."²

Statement of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop an evangelistic strategy to plant SDA churches among the Ewe-speaking people of Volta Region in Ghana.

Justification of the Project

Below are listed the reasons for this project:

1. The Ewe-speaking ethnic group has not as yet been penetrated with the Adventist message. Since the Seventh-day Adventist church came to Ghana over one hundred years ago; and I am persuaded of the urgent need to reach this mentioned group.


2. The gospel commission given by our Lord Jesus Christ, and the New Testament teachings on the church and church planting warrant the Seventh-day Adventist church to proceed with the gospel truth — witnessing to people and planting churches.

3. The Global Mission strategy of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church emphasizes reaching the unentered areas and people groups of the world and planting churches within them. The Ewe-speaking people belong to this set of unreached peoples.

4. The Roman Catholic church and the Protestant denominations, as well as other Christian organizations and other mission societies, have demonstrated conscious efforts, trying hard to find possible entry into Ghana’s Volta Region with the intention of saturating the region with Sunday-keeping churches. Their example and efforts are worthy of emulation. Thus the Seventh-day Adventist church in Ghana is to seriously consider this region. Hence the need for such a project.

5. In a letter addressed to me from the president of the South Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in connection with the Conference’s intention to enter the Volta Region, the president states: “Your project would be
of great help to us, now that we are planning to open up this region."

6. I have had the unique privilege of planting churches in other parts of Ghana and since I know I will do much of the same work when I return, I would like to sharpen my skills in the area of church planting in unentered territories, hence such a project.

Organization of the Project

Chapter 1 of this study covers the general introduction, the statement of the project, its justification and description, as well as the organization of the material and limitations of the project.

Chapter 2 of this project addresses biblical and Spirit of Prophecy foundation for church planting. In this chapter church planting is defined and the great gospel commission (Matt 28:18-20) is discussed in the light of church planting. Other subjects addressed include the witnessing thrust of the apostles, the house churches planted, and the nature and mission of the church. The Spirit of Prophecy foundation for church planting is also addressed.

Chapter 3 addresses the Ewe-speaking people, their historical background, social pattern, and their traditional polity. Their religious background and worldview are also

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1P. O. Mensah, President, South Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, to author, 20 August, 1995.
mentioned. Chapter 4 presents the Christian mission activities among the Ewes.

Chapter 5 presents the data and how it was gathered. It also presents the analysis of the gathered data and the findings from the analysis.

Chapter 6 presents the recommended strategy for the planting of Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewe-speaking people of Volta Region, Ghana; and chapter 7 forms the conclusion and presents some recommendations.

**Problem**

Since the Seventh-day Adventist church came to Ghana, a little over one hundred years ago, the Ewe-speaking ethnic group of the Volta Region in Ghana has not yet been actually penetrated with the Adventist message.

The only organized Seventh-day Adventist church within the mentioned ethnic group, planted in 1972 and with a membership of eighty-five as of February 1996, is located at Ho, the regional capital.

The membership analysis indicates that 80 percent of the congregation are members (from other parts of Ghana) who are in the regional capital by virtue of their employment and/or business transactions. Twelve percent are the local indigenous people, many of whom are not actively participating in church programs. The remaining 8 percent comprise missing membership.
The above gives a clear picture of the fact that the local indigenous people are somehow not attracted to the Seventh-day Adventist church; and even the few of them in the church do not show enough vibrant, active participation in church programs and soul-winning activities.

The basic problem is how to penetrate and reach the local indigenous people, witness to them, attract and congregate the converts into vibrant, energetic, witnessing congregations on fire for Jesus Christ.
CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL, SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATION FOR CHURCH PLANTING

Introduction

The preaching of the gospel, winning converts, and planting new churches on a global level have become the focus of many Christian denominations and mission boards.¹ Some even claim that the most direct way to fulfill the

¹About three decades ago, Donald A. McGavran and Winfield C. Arn observed that "A great vitality is evident in church planting: outside North America one thousand new churches open their doors for the first time every Sunday! Five thousand new churches are planted each year in Latin America alone." (Ten Steps for Church Growth [San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1977], 19. This observation is as valid today as when it was first made. Thus, when the World Consultation and Frontier Missions convened from October 27 to November 1, 1980, "More mission agencies sent delegates to this conference than has been the case at any other time in history. The watchword for this meeting was 'A church for every people by the year 2000'"

Elmer Towns, Getting a Church Started (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1985), 5, mentions Wendell Belew, of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, who plans to plant over five hundred new churches in America every year.

Recently, the Discipling-A-Whole-Nation (DAWN) movement laid down concrete plans to plant about seven million new churches around the globe by the year 2000, according to a report by James H. Montgomery, founder and president of the DAWN ministries. See "DAWN Movement Spreads Rapidly," Global Church Growth 31 (January-March 1994):14.
gospel commission (Matt 28:18-20) is to establish Christian congregations within easy access of every person, of every village and city neighborhood, of every class, kind, and condition of people.¹ C. Peter Wagner makes the categorical statement that "the single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."²

Because church planting has become one of the main methods of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ and His kingdom, and because there is a surge in the church-planting endeavors of many Christian denominations, this chapter attempts to investigate the biblical, Spirit of Prophecy, and historical basis for church planting.³

**Church Planting Defined**

In defining church planting, first of all I address the entity that is to be planted—the church. Webster’s New International Dictionary gives several meanings of the English word "church" which embraces a variety of concepts.⁴

¹Montgomery, 14.

²C. Peter Wagner, Church Planting for a Greater Harvest (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990), 11.

³According to Talmadge R. Amberson, The Birth of Churches (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 11, in many church-planting endeavors, the biblical bases are "assumed" rather than explicitly set forth.

⁴Webster’s New International Dictionary (1961) gives nine definitions of the word "church" in its noun form. The church has been defined as (1) a building set apart for public worship, especially Christian worship, (2) a place of worship of any religion, (3) a church service or divine worship, (4) the organization of Christianity or of an
This word stems etymologically from the Greek kuriakon, meaning "belonging to the Lord." Originally it applied to a church building.¹

The Greek word for "church" is ekklesia, which, in secular Greek, means an assembly, primarily of citizens in a self-governing city.² The word also was used to designate the congregation or assembly of the Israelites (Acts 7:38), especially when they gathered for religious purposes, and more specifically, for the purpose of hearing the Law (Deut 4:10; 9:10; 18:16; 31:30; Judg 20:2 in LXX). Thus, to the Greeks, the word "church" designated an assembly of people, a meeting, either as a regularly summoned body or simply a gathering of people.³

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³Ibid.
The New Testament gives the word *ekklesia* a variety of meanings. In the gospels, *ekklesia* occurs only twice (Matt 16:18 and Matt 18:17). In the first instance (Matt 16:18), Jesus uses it to refer to the larger universal meaning of the church which is composed of God's people, the whole body of believers throughout the world in all ages. In His second use of the word (Matt 18:17), Jesus refers to the church in its visible, local, concrete, and physical setting.

The Bible portrays the church as a divine institution, calling it "the Church of God" (1 Cor 1:2; 10:37) or "the Church of Christ" (Rom 16:16). These expressions with a distinctive Christian meaning are provided by the apostle Paul. He sets the Christian assembly/gathering/community apart from all other secular or religious groups.

In this project, I attempt to develop a strategy for gathering Christian believers into new visible believer groups or churches for the purposes of worship, fellowship, instruction in the Word, the celebration of the Lord's

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1The New Testament uses *ekklesia* in four different ways: (1) the universal church to which all believers belong (Matt 18:17; Acts 5:11; 1 Cor 4:17); (2) a particular local church such as the church at Corinth, Thessalonica, or Laodicea (Matt 16:17; Acts 9:31; Eph 1:22); (3) the actual assembly of believers in a given place for worship (1 Cor 11:18; 14:19, 23); and (4) a household assembly of Christian believers such as those that met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19). *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 1:458.

2Ibid., 459.
Supper, service to all mankind, and worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The process of beginning and growing new local churches, according to the gospel commission (Matt 28:18-20) and Jesus’ statement in Matt 16:18, is what I term here as church planting.

Current missiological literature seldom uses the phrase "church planting." When it is, it is not readily understood.1 "Church growth" is the more familiar expression which has taken over.2 Cliff Bedell, however, argues that "church planting" is an appropriate and descriptive term which accurately gives a kind of self-explanatory definition. He states: "We who are involved in missions might need to remind ourselves that an entity, in order to 'grow' needs to exist, to be begun or 'planted.' I doubt that the term church planting/planter will fall by the wayside."


2Elmer Towns states that the term "church growth" refers to three different facets of the growth of the church. The first deals with the numerical growth of the church in terms of attendance, offerings, baptisms, and membership. The second dimension is church planting. Thus the church of Jesus Christ grows by planting new churches. The third deals with the scientific base of research. It employs scientific methods used by all disciplines to determine principles and methodologies of evangelism. Elmer L. Towns, "The Beginning of the Church Growth Movement," Global Church Growth (Summer 1994): 18. Compare with Bedell, 86.

3Bedell, 86.
The term "church planting" is metaphorical, involving as it does the thought of a gardener who plants seeds in the earth. The seeds germinate, burst into tender plants, and grow through their natural process to yield much fruit.

Such is the case of a new church. It is started in a given locality, grows through Bible study and prayer, and matures through the propagation of the gospel. As church members actively engage themselves in different facets of soul-winning programs, many people are convicted by the Holy Spirit. As more people become members, the church has the option of growing numerically as one large congregation or of fragmenting into two or more smaller congregations—in other words, engage in "church planting."

When each group of Christian converts is formed, it becomes a planted church, a new body in Christ according to the Scriptures (Eph 5:23, 30; Col 1:24). Through each newly planted congregation, God extends His salvation to others.

In this light, Talmadge R. Amberson writes:

The imperative to plant new churches is firmly grounded in the biblical revelation concerning God's interest in all mankind, as well as the procedure which God has used to communicate his message of love and salvation to men everywhere throughout the years. The foundation for church planting, as is true with all evangelism and mission endeavors, begins with the general missionary thrust of the Bible.¹

¹Amberson, 12-13.
With Amberson’s quote in mind, my endeavor here is to establish a biblical and Spirit of Prophecy foundation for church planting.

**Biblical Basis**

The Bible contains the purpose and pattern of making disciples and establishing new congregations. It also gives the history of God’s people and the birth of the Christian churches in the New Testament. Hence, we need to establish the biblical foundation for church planting, particularly as observed in (1) the nature of the church, (2) the gospel commission (Matt 28:18-20), (3) the missionary thrust or activities of the apostles, and (4) the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**The Nature of the Church**

The first biblical foundation considered here as a basis for planting new churches is seen in the nature of the church which is best understood when viewed from its Old Testament roots. God chose the people of Israel as His people and called them out of Egypt’s slavery and bondage to go forth to show the glory of God and His redemption to all nations (Isa 49:6; 42:1-10). They were designated "the church" in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), and they received a symbolic baptism when they passed through the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:2). Their election was a call to service, involving a duty to witness and be a light to all nations.
Since they were a divine choice, they were referred to as "a kingdom of priests" and a "holy nation" (Exod 19:5, 6), God's holy people (Deut 28:9; Lev 26:12), His church that is set apart for His own purpose. These designations portray the new nature of the people who, at first were not even a nation but were now the people of God.

Peter develops this Old Testament background particularly well. He points out to the believers in Jesus Christ: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people" (1 Pet 2:9). Thus, according to Peter, the believers were (and still are) a divinely chosen, called people, people who are called to a special responsibility—to "proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9).

From this new nature, one notes the missionary obligation placed on the chosen people of Israel. They were called, and thus they were constituted into a people of God for His own purpose of reaching out and extending salvation to those not yet redeemed (Isa 56:6-8). Their mission as God's people among the heathen nations (Isa 56:8) was to witness so the people in these nations would come to acknowledge the mighty deeds of the Lord, His sovereignty, and His redemption. Through Israel as a chosen nation, God desired "to create the largest church on earth—a church where representatives of all nations of the world would come
to worship, learn of the true God, and return to their own people with the message of salvation.1

This is what church planting is all about. It is to establish God’s church among the nations for the glorification of God, the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer.

From this Old Testament background, we can now turn to the metaphoric descriptions of the church in the New Testament. In the New Testament, the nature of the church is described in various terms such as the ekklesia of God (1 Cor 1:2), the body of Christ (Eph 1:22, 23), and the custodian and a manifestation of the "manifold wisdom of God" (Eph 3:9, 10). In addressing the disciples who were called together to begin His church,2 Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt 5:14) and "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt 5:13). These designations not only describe the nature of the church but connote as well its movement and penetration. Thus, the church is to grow by moving out to establish its presence among all nations where God is not known. If the church is to carry the light to the Gentile world, spots of light must be established in every community to proclaim the praises of God. The preaching of the gospel is not an empty and purposeless


proclamation; rather, it is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God with a very definite aim—to gather people into the communion of the Kingdom.

Another aspect of the nature of the church which provides a foundation for church planting is that the ekklesia is the same or body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27; Rom 12:5; Eph 1:22, 23; 4:12; 1 Cor 10:16, 17; 12:12, 14) or the body of which Christ is the Head (Eph 4:15, 16; Col 1:18). The church as the body of Christ shows the interconnectedness among all who make up the church. Millard J. Erickson points out that "Christian faith is not to be defined merely in terms of individual relationship to the Lord. There is no such thing as an isolated, solitary Christian life."

Paul's concept of the church as the body of Christ is clear. He states that "all the members of the body, though many, are one body" (1 Cor 12:12). As a body, believers are to meet to fellowship and share their concerns together. In Hebrews we read: "Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb 10:24, 25).

1Millard J. Erickson, Christian Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 1037.
Thus, the members of the church, as the body of Christ, gather themselves together for the purposes of edification, worship, fellowship, and evangelization. It is with this understanding that Erickson notes:

We should therefore emphasize the importance of every believer’s becoming an integral part of a group of believers, and making a firm commitment to it. Christianity is a corporate matter, and the Christian life can be fully realized only in relationship to others.¹

Another point to consider when the church is presented as the body of Christ is the implication that the church is a living organism. As such, it is not exempt from the principle of life which necessitates nourishment, growth, and reproduction. Thus, as the church reproduces itself in communities, it shows itself more and more as the body of Christ in the midst of humanity.

William O. Carver described the church in its multiplication as the "extension" of Christ’s incarnation, the concrete presence of His body. He states: "A local church is the manifestation of Christ in its community."²

In this regard, Charles L. Chaney points out that:

When we plant churches among any people, we make it possible for the character and beauty of Jesus to become incarnate in that culture. That is how the

¹Ibid., 1047, 1048.

church which is his body, [becomes] the fullness of Him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23).

Through the planting of new churches, the gospel becomes established far and wide within communities, and the "body of Christ" is brought to its reality as Christian believers come together to praise and worship God, to proclaim the good news of salvation, and to bring in more converts to form congregations of the Lord.

The Gospel Commission (Matt 28:18-20)

A study of the great commission reveals how the planting of new churches is embodied in what Jesus told His disciples: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20). This text is vital to understanding the great commission. It lists four important factors, namely, go, make disciples, baptizing, and teaching.

The go dimension of the text is a circumstantial participle which could be understood to mean "as you are going." Thus, wherever the disciples were or wherever they went, whether itinerant as Jesus was (Luke 13:22) or living in a localized life, the command to "make disciples" was

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1Charles L. Chaney, Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1982), 21.
heeded accordingly. The go aspect, to the disciples, meant reaching out with the gospel.

The divine imperative command to make disciples (Matt 28:19) includes the beginning and the continuing ministry of discipling people. It is a command to win people, obviously through the proclamation of the word. Those who come to believe in the gospel become adherents, followers, or disciples. Sakari Pinola points out that "The Great Commission in Greek contains but one imperative verb in the whole sentence, namely matheteusate, and its primary biblical meaning is to enroll in a school or to persuade to become a follower."¹ Thus, the concept of discipleship becomes evident.

A disciple accepts and identifies the self with the master. He/she accepts the teachings of the master, learns of the master’s ways, and follows closely. Joana Dewey defines a disciple very cogently: "A disciple is first of all one who learns, a pupil, an apprentice, or more generally speaking, an adherent, a follower."²

In nearly all religions and in many philosophical schools, the normative tradition is established, preserved,


and transmitted through a process of discipleship. The concept of discipleship connotes a group of people coming together to study (and be bearers of a normative tradition) under the personal supervision and leadership of an accredited master. Those who come together obtain accreditation after receiving instruction for a period of time to become capable of instructing others by example and personal direction.

The imperative command to make disciples is a process whereby followers are grouped together to learn from the master. Making disciples is an effective way to spread the good news and to win many more converts. In this sense, Bill Hull writes, commenting on Matt 28:19;

> The imperative command of the text is make disciples. This is the formula for evangelizing the world and the methodology required to bring reproduction and multiplication to world mission. The Great Commission without multiplication is evangelism paralyzed from the neck down. By specifically commanding the making of disciples, Jesus specified the work product of the church.

The command to "make disciples" is a sure instruction that leads to multiplication (of believers). This is the key to reaching out into new areas to make more converts. Multiple groups of these new converts are an obvious result and the ultimate objective of evangelizing new areas.

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disciples cannot be made without grouping the people being discipled. Since church planting is primarily concerned with making disciples and grouping them to become part of the "body of Christ," which entrusts them with the proclamation of the kingdom of God in every segment of society and in every culture and language of man, it fulfills this divine imperative.

Baptizing and Teaching

As disciples are won, two qualifiers come into active play—"baptizing and teaching." The newly won disciples not only receive baptism into the church but also receive doctrinal instruction (teachings) to observe all things that Jesus commanded His body of believers.

Baptism is a divine ordinance entrusted by God to the administration of the church. It is "the rite of entrance to the church." The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes that by baptism, "we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in the newness of life. Thus, we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members of His church." Baptist, then, is a public renunciation of the world and a

1 [Damsteegt], Seventh-day Adventists Believe, 144.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 180.
public declaration that one is joining self to Christ Jesus (Gal 3:27) and His body on this earth. Therefore, disciples are not baptized into nothingness. They are baptized in the name of the triune God into the church family, the body of Christ. The one baptized no longer remains an isolated individual but a fellow citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Baptism unites the new believer to Christ and it "always functions as the door to the church. Through baptism the Lord adds new disciples to the body of believers—His body, the church."\(^1\) As new disciples were made and baptized, the apostles did not omit the second qualifier. They continued steadfastly to teach the new disciples in the word of God (Acts 2:42).

Teaching new disciples the word of God brings to mind the concept of discipleship which requires followers or adherents to be grouped and taught by their master. The teaching provides a sense of direction to the group of believers. It defines the message for those who come to believe and serves as a bond that unites believers as each one seeks to "observe all things" that Jesus has commanded. This aspect of making disciples—teaching as in the concept of discipleship—requires followers, a body of believers, who by the hearing of the word of God receive also faith (Rom 10:17).

\(^1\)Ibid., 187 (cf. Acts 2:41; 1 Cor 12:13).
These factors, "baptizing and teaching," provide support for church planting in the sense that it is only the church that is entrusted with the truth to teach (1 Tim 3:15, NIV) and an ordinance of baptism to administer (Matt 28:19). In this context, churches need to be planted in every segment of the community to undertake the gospel commission within the community and beyond. A church is needed in every community to receive into itself those baptized for nurturing, fellowship, and edification.

This great task of church planting receives its biblical foundation not only from the gospel commission, as expounded above, but also from the example of the missionary and evangelistic activities of the apostles.

The Missionary Activities of the Apostles

The book of Acts of the Apostles records the missionary thrust of the apostles which resulted in the remarkable growth of the church in Jerusalem and beyond. As the word of God was proclaimed by the apostles, many people were converted and brought into fellowship with Christ. In this apostolic endeavor, the church begun with the twelve disciples continued to grow numerically not as one big church in Jerusalem, but into many churches established here and there under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The missionary efforts of the apostles who turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6) and the accompanying results of churches that emerged into existence to cover a large
geographical area provide a strong biblical basis for church planting.

One might say it all began on the day of Pentecost when the apostle Peter preached the Word. Luke reports that "Those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41). On another occasion, after Peter and John had preached the gospel, "Many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). The apostles made more disciples and "believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women" (Acts 5:14). Apparently, the large number of converts won did not meet in one place. Churches were established (planted) as more and more disciples were made in Jerusalem and the surrounding regions.

Persecution of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) scattered the saints throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. Philip fled from the persecution to the city of

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1Donald McGavran points out that the 3,000 who believed in Christ and were baptized on the day of Pentecost did not meet in one place, but more likely, in dozens of places in Jerusalem. On the basis of the list of names in Romans 16, he argues that there were six house churches in Rome before Paul got there. Also, since there is no record in the entire New Testament about the church of a single building, and since all archaeological excavations reveal church foundations not earlier than 150 A.D., McGavran concludes that when Paul wrote to the churches in Corinth, he did not write to a single congregation, but to small gatherings of followers of Christ meeting in several places. "House Churches: A Key Factor for Growth," Global Church Growth 29 (January-March 1992): 5.
Samaria where he preached the gospel, made disciples, and planted a church (Acts 8:5-8, 12-17). He also preached in several cities along the Mediterranean coast (Acts 8:26-40).

Peter preached the gospel in the cities of Lydia and Joppa. From Joppa he proceeded to Caesarea where Cornelius, the Roman soldier, and other Gentiles were converted and baptized (Acts 10:1-48). Throughout Palestine, in the cities around Jerusalem, Philip, Peter, and the other apostles preached the gospel, made many disciples, and planted churches. It is recorded that after the persecution, "the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit they were multiplied" (Acts 9:31).

Johannes Verkuyl points out that the gathering of converted people into a community of God is an essential part of the message. He states:

According to the New Testament, proclaiming the Messianic message must always be accompanied by gathering, preserving and adding to the people of God. When Jesus invites us to become his disciples, he calls us to join a community and become members of the people of God, not to stand isolated and alone. . . . His interest was not merely in converting individuals, but in forming a new people. . . . The Apostles carried on the work begun by Jesus. They established a new community of faith among the various peoples whom they met.1

Through the missionary activities of the apostles and the Christian believers, many were converted to Christ and many churches were established. W. Ward Gasque points out that by the middle of the second century, "flourishing churches existed in nearly all the provinces between Syria and Rome."¹

Thus, the growth of the church as observed in the number of churches that were planted throughout Jerusalem and the surrounding cities shows how the missionary activities of the apostles created new churches. Again, these experiences in the Bible set an example for gospel believers everywhere to follow in the missionary spirit and to plant new churches.

Another biblical basis for church planting is the ministry of Paul. His missionary work resulted in the planting of many churches. When Saul² was converted, he became a great missionary to the Gentiles. He proclaimed Christ in other nations throughout the Roman Empire. The church in Antioch, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, commissioned Paul and Barnabas to work among the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-5). In connection with Paul’s missionary assignment, Roland Allen points out that "St. Paul did not


²The apostle Paul was known as Saul before his conversion (Acts 13:9).
go about as a missionary preacher merely to convert individuals; he went to establish churches from which the light might radiate throughout the whole country round."1

In expounding on the missionary work of Paul, Allen states:

In a little more than ten years, St. Paul established the Church in four provinces of the Empire, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia. Before AD 47 there were no churches in these provinces; in AD 57 St. Paul could speak as if his work there was done, and could plan extensive tours into the far West without anxiety lest the churches which he had founded might perish in his absence for want of his guidance and support.2

This expounds the biblical account of the missionary work of Paul and Barnabas. Their first missionary journey took them to Seleucia, Cyprus, Iconium, Lystra, Derby, and Pamphilia. As they returned to Antioch, they visited the new believers (in the cities they had already worked), encouraging and strengthening them in the Lord (Acts 14:21, 22).

When Paul and Barnabas rehearsed before the church in Antioch (Acts 14:27) what God had accomplished through their ministry, they described a sequence of activities as recorded in Acts 14:21-23. They preached the gospel, made disciples, and brought the converts to a sense of their corporateness as members of Christ's body and custodians of the gospel of the Kingdom. Thus, Paul and Barnabas

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2Ibid., 3.
organized their new converts into local congregations and even appointed elders in every church to be overseers for smooth administration and growth (Acts 14:23).

Writing about the missionary task of Paul and the accompanying results of new churches, Arthur F. Glasser points out that Christians need to be gathered together in their respective communities to form churches because the missionary task is incomplete if it stops short of planting new churches.¹ In their ministry, the apostles worked assiduously to plant churches which were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in numbers daily (Acts 16:5).

Paul's strategy for the spread of the gospel seems to be the planting of churches in strategic cities. His interest and concern for the churches established is seen in the letters² that he wrote to give direction, instruction, encouragement, and strength to these churches.

Besides the references to churches in specific cities, references are made to churches meeting in individual homes.


²Paul wrote several letters to the churches in Rome (Rom 1:1, 7; 16:1-27), Corinth (1 Cor 1:1, 2; 2 Cor 1:1), Galatia (Gal 1:1-3), Ephesus (Eph 1:1), Philippi (Phil 1:1), Colosse (Col 1:1; 4:6), Thessalonica (1 Thess 1:1; 5:27; 2 Thess 1:1). In fact, in his ministry, his deep concern was for "all the churches" (2 Cor 11:28).
In sending greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, Paul greets "the church in their house" (Rom 16:3-5; 1 Cor 16:19). In his letter to the Colossians, he writes, "Give my greetings to the brethren at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house" (Col 4:14, KJV). In Philippi, some believers met as a church in the house of Lydia (Acts 16:14-15), said to be the first church in Europe. Other Christian believers met as a church in the house of Gaius (Rom 16:23, TEV) and Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15). A church also met in the house of Philemon (Phlm 2).

Paul mentions many other house churches in his epistle to the Romans (Rom 16:1-27). In Jerusalem alone, some estimate there were 1,500 congregations meeting in houses. The planting of these household churches worked quite well because those who were reached were group-oriented people rather than members of an individualistic society.

Del Birkey writes, "If you had asked another for directions to a church in any important city of the first century world, you would have been directed to somebody's private home." As the nuclei of the Christian community, these churches meeting in houses formed the base of

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2 William C. Tinsley, Upon This Rock (Atlanta, GA: Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1985), 20.

3 Birkey, 40.
operations for the propagation of the gospel message. Vincent Branick points out that "most probably the conversion of a household and the subsequent formation of a house church formed the key element in Paul's strategic plan to spread the gospel to the world." Regarding the witnessing thrust of the apostles and the planting of churches, Amberson notes that:

The foundation for church planting, as is true with all evangelism and mission endeavors, begins with the general missionary thrust of the Bible. It is then undergirded by the fact that those people who have responded to God's love through faith, thereby becoming rightly related to him, are used by God as instruments or vessels to communicate his message to others. Finally, the foundation was firmly and securely laid when, in the New Testament, churches clearly came into existence, church planting simply took place as the believers of the first century witnessed of Jesus Christ and individuals responded to accept him as Lord and Saviour.

A. R. Tippett also writes of the essence of church planting when he says that "Any idea of mission without some type of church planting or group formation is a contradiction." In another place, he writes that "If there is any validity at all in bringing men and women in conversion to Christ, the corollary must also be valid, that

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1Vincent Branick, The House Church in the Writings of Paul (Wilmington, DE: St. Mary's Press, 1989), 19.
2Ibid., 18.
3Amberson, 13.
converts must be incorporated into congregations of fellowship."¹

If there was the need in the time of the apostles to gather believers for edification, encouragement, and the propagation of the gospel, it is even more needed now as we realize the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul exhorts believers not to forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb 10:25). But how can believers assemble together without an organized body—a church? Matthew Henry comments on Heb 10:25 and points out:

It is the will of Christ that his disciples should assemble together, sometimes more privately for conference and prayer; and in public for hearing and joining in all the ordinances of gospel worship. There were in the apostles' times, and should be in every age, Christian assemblies for the worship of God, and for mutual edification. . . . The communion of saints is a great help and privilege, and a good means of steadfastness and perseverance; hereby their hearts and hands are mutually strengthened.²

To Paul, churches were important divine institutions for which he showed tremendous love, concern, and deep interest. In all the toils, perils, and weariness, through the cold and sleeplessness that he encountered in his missionary work, and in spite of all other adversities and oddities, Paul could say, "What comes upon me daily: My deep concern for all the churches" (2 Cor 11:23-27, 28).


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The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the establishment of new churches in the New Testament gives evidence of solid biblical basis for church planting, for the Holy Spirit was involved in the whole missionary thrust of the apostles, and the planting of churches began.

At first, Jesus told the disciples not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4, 5). He said: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The key to the success of the work of the disciples did not reside in their own abilities and strengths. Melvin Hodges notes: "Methods alone, even correct methods, will not produce a New Testament church. The mechanics of proper procedure must be accompanied by the dynamics of apostolic power."1 The enabling power of the Holy Spirit caused the disciples to spread the gospel and plant churches. J. Terry Young states:

New churches are born periodically because the Holy Spirit of God is still at work in God’s world. Indeed, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit there would be no new churches or any old churches either. The Holy Spirit is the life of the church; he is the One who gives life and vitality to the church. . . . He is the heartbeat of the church which the New Testament describes as the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is

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1Melvin Hodges, Build My Church (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1957), 97.
the source of growth of the church, both intensively and extensively. . . . he is responsible for the church duplicating itself in the birth of new church congregations, as well as winning new converts to Christ.1

Even during the persecution, through the power of the Holy Spirit the church successfully moved on. After the persecution, "the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied" (Acts 9:31). Thus, the multiplication of the churches was accomplished in the comfort of the Holy Spirit and in the fear of the Lord.

Within the church, the Holy Spirit worked (and still works) bestowing special gifts 2 upon the church for edification and empowerment as well as for the perfecting of the saints (Eph 4:12). In addition, the Holy Spirit led the members of the church into Christian ministry to produce the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

In the outreach missionary thrust of the apostles, the Holy Spirit directed and even singled out some individuals (Acts 13:3-5) from the congregation of Antioch to a ministry of church planting. The Holy Spirit directed members of the church where they should work (Acts 16:6-9; 8:26, 27, 39, 40) and provided the direction and motivation necessary to


2 Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:11.
accomplish the task (Acts 13:1-3). Terry Young remarks that "the Holy Spirit is as concerned today with planting new churches as He was in the days of the first faltering steps of the church. Indeed, He is constantly trying to enlarge the vision of the churches to see the opportunities for planting new churches."1 In the power of the Holy Spirit, the early believers in Christ worked and produced remarkable results in the growth of the church in membership and in the multiplication of local churches.

The Spirit of Prophecy Basis

The Spirit of Prophecy2 confirms and even elaborates what the Scriptures say about the nature and mission of the church and the divine mandate to go and preach the gospel to all the world. To begin with, Ellen G. White pointed out that "God has a church upon the earth who are His chosen people, who keep His commandments."3 This visible church,

1Young, 171.

2The Spirit of Prophecy (hereafter referred to as SOP) is an expression used in Rev. 19:10 to characterize the ministry of true prophets. The Seventh-day Adventist Church thereby applies "the term to the operation of the gift of prophecy, one of the 'gifts' of the Spirit (see 1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11, 28; Eph. 4:11-13), and thus to the literary productions of Ellen G. White whom SDAs regard as having been the recipient of the gift of prophecy in the Bible sense of a duly accredited and authoritative spokesman for God." Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 1976 ed., s.v. "Spirit of Prophecy." See also Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission, 308.

though divinely called, is composed of human beings—and thus imperfect. But "the church enfeebled, and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon the earth which Christ bestows His supreme regard."

In addressing God’s purpose for His church, Ellen White mentions that "the church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ," holding aloft the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. She also writes that God’s church on earth is His fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revoluted world. . . . From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work.

It is in the church that God, through His word and by the Holy Spirit’s guidance, nurtures His "called out" ones and prepares them to go on His errands.

In Acts of the Apostles, White writes:

The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world from the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the

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1Ibid., 49.


3Ibid.
repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and fully display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.¹

Such is the divine duty entrusted to the church where each believer is to work assiduously to bring in souls thereby multiplying the number of believers as well as congregations (churches) the world over.

Concerning the planting of new churches, White refers to the work of the early church, stating, "The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel."² Again she points out that "in the early history of the church when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained."³ As far as missionary work is concerned, White’s emphasis almost always is on the need to enter new areas and to plant new churches. She writes:

Everywhere the light of truth is to shine forth, that hearts now in the sleep of ignorance may be awakened and converted. In all countries and cities the gospel is to be proclaimed.

¹Ibid.
²Ibid., 91.
³Ibid., 92.
Churches are to be organized and plans laid for work to be done by the members of the newly organized churches. This gospel missionary work is to keep reaching out and annexing new territory, enlarging the cultivated portions of the vineyard. The circle is to extend until it belts the world.¹

White also notes the urgent need of the extension of the gospel work in foreign fields. She states:

There are places which are now a moral wilderness, and these are to become as the garden of the Lord. The waste places of the earth are to be cultivated, that they may bud and blossom as the rose. New territories are to be worked by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. New churches must be established, new congregations organized. At this time there should be representatives of present truth in every city and in the remote parts of the earth. The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth. The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples.²

She appeals to ministers of the gospel, and to all who believe in Christ, to get involved in the planting of new churches. To the ministers she writes that their labor should not be so much in the already existing, matured, and advanced churches but directed more to new places to win sinners to the Saviour. She states, "Place after place is to be visited; church after church is to be raised up. Those who take up their stand for the truth are to be organized into churches, and then the minister is to pass on to other equally important fields."³


³Ibid., 7:20.
She calls upon Christian believers to play their active part in the planting of new churches. She writes, "Upon all who believe, God has placed that burden of raising up churches, for the express purpose of educating men and women to use their entrusted capabilities for the benefit of the world, employing the means He has lent for His glory."¹

White recognizes the fact that the planted congregations are memorials² to God and are "working agencies for the Master."³ She writes:

The establishment of churches . . . is only a further manifestation of the love of God, and in this work all God’s people should have a part. Christ formed His church here below for the express purpose of showing forth through the members the grace of God. Throughout the world His people are to raise memorials of His Sabbath—the sign between Him and them that He is the one who sanctifies them.⁴

**Historical Basis**

In the history of the Christian church, particularly during the first 150 years, the planting of churches was an obvious outcome in the missionary activities of God’s people. During the Dark Ages and the Reformation, God sustained His church and empowered Christian believers to hold fast to the gospel message and to move forward with the

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¹White, Medical Ministry, 315.
²White, Testimonies for the Church, 7:105.
³White, Medical Ministry, 317.
truth. Thus, in every age the Lord has had His watchmen who have proclaimed the gospel; and "when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work."\(^1\) In the modern history of the Christian church there has been a surge for church planting. A few of the many individuals, Christian bodies, and missionary movements or agencies that have worked to provide a historic basis for church planting deserve mention.

Sidney Rooy studied the missionary thrust in the Puritan tradition. He says:

The planting of Christian churches was the primary task. Propagation of the gospel meant the bringing of the church to places where it had never been before. Most of the Puritan effort concentrated upon the gathering of immigrant believers on American shores into churches. It included, however, the gathering of assemblies of believers among the Indians with gradual church organization.\(^2\)

The mission of the Puritans, as reflected in the Magnalia,\(^3\) "was to a large degree identified directly with the establishment of organized churches in new places and indirectly with the maintenance of its purity."\(^4\)

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\(^3\)The Magnalia Christi Americana, as described by Rooy (p. 252) is a special kind of historical document reflecting the Puritan's understanding of missions.

\(^4\)Rooy, 253.
Many outstanding Christian believers involved in the Lord's work had church planting at heart. Richard Baxter, an English Presbyterian, outlined fifteen duties of the minister. The first four address missions: (1) preaching to the unconverted, (2) entreating repentance, (3) receiving and baptizing believers, and (4) gathering converts into churches.¹ Rooy quotes Baxter, pointing out that "The first duty of the sacred ministry is to make the world Christian and gather men into the church by teaching and baptizing them."²

John Elliot, a missionary to the Indians in New England, also thought that the missionary nature of the church was linked with church planting. Rooy quotes Elliot thus:

First, if there be any Heathen people that yet know not Christ, it is a work well-becoming any of these orders of councils, and all of them in their harmony, to seek out, and send forth fit labourers to such a work and service of Christ, to carry the Gospel, and preach Jesus Christ unto them; to gather and plant churches amongst them.³

William Carey, a Protestant minister, helped and encouraged the formation of mission agencies for the propagation of the gospel in heathen lands. Hudson Taylor established the China Inland Mission to work in China and to gather converts into churches.

¹Ibid., 97.
²Ibid.
³Ibid., 172.
Both Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson were actively involved in missionary and church-planting work. They independently arrived at the "three-self" principle for the mission societies to adapt and apply to the new churches. Venn and Anderson linked church planting to mission work and taught that "when the churches were functioning well, the missionaries should leave and go to 'regions beyond' where they would begin the evangelistic process once again." R. Pierce Beaver points out that "according to Anderson, the task of the missionary was to preach the gospel and gather the converts into churches."

Obviously, in the history of the church, the planting of new churches has been an integral part of the Lord's command to go and preach the gospel. In the spirit of the biblical, Spirit of Prophecy, and historical bases for church planting, I plan to present a strategy for church planting among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region of Ghana.


2Ibid., 201.

3Ibid.
CHAPTER 3

THE EWE-SPEAKING PEOPLE OF THE
VOLTA REGION, GHANA

In developing a strategy to plant Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewe-speaking people in the Volta Region of Ghana, it is of utmost importance to study the culture of the people. Lloyd E. Kwast states that "a thorough understanding of the meaning of culture is prerequisite to any effective communication of God’s good news to a different people group."¹

The culture of any given group is representative of the people constituting the group, what they do, how they think of their environment, and their perception of reality. To study the culture of the Ewes, therefore, is to study the people; their historical background; their traditional religious beliefs, practices, and worldview; their social structure; and traditional polity.

Such a study not only provides the church planter with a deeper understanding of the targeted people and their

culture but helps the church planter to discover the appropriate and effective ways to communicate the gospel, to make disciples, and to plant new churches.

This chapter, therefore, presents the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. It begins with a brief description of Ghana and the Volta region and is followed by a study of the Ewe-speaking people and their culture.

Ghana

The Republic of Ghana, formerly the British colonial territory known as Gold Coast, lies on the west coast of Africa. It is bounded by 334 miles (540 km.) of the Atlantic Ocean to the south, and by three French-speaking countries--Cote D'Ivoire on the west, Burkina Faso on the north, and Togo on the east.

Ghana covers an area of 92,098 square miles (33,770 square km.) and is divided into ten administrative regions (fig. 1). It has a population of 16,632,0001 (fig. 2), which is predominantly young people.2

The country stands out prominently as the first among the African countries under British rule to gain independence from British colonial rule on 6 March 1957. On 1 July 1960, Ghana adopted a republican constitution.

1PC Globe, Inc., Tempe, AZ, 1992, USA.

2In 1985, 47 percent of the country's population was under fifteen years of age (Collier's Encyclopedia, 1996 ed., s.v. "Ghana."
Fig. 1. The ten administrative regions of Ghana with regional capitals. Reprinted from Population Census of Ghana (Accra, Ghana: Statistical Service, 1984), 1.
Fig. 2. Population of Ghana. Source: 1992 PC Globe, Tempe, AZ.
Ghana’s People Groups

Ghana is a country of diverse ethnic groups with different languages, traditions, and religious systems. As many as fifty-one separate ethnic people groups can be distinguished if language is used as the criterion (see fig. 3). In the northern part of Ghana, the ethnography includes the large Gonja-speaking people, the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Kusasi, and the Wala peoples. The Kasena-Nankani, Frafra, Builsa, and Sissala tribal groups also occupy the central part of the northern region, while the Lobi-Dagarti groups are located in the northwestern part.

In the south are the Akan-speaking groups which form the largest cluster of peoples; namely, the Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Fanti, Akim, Akwapim, Kwahu, and the Nzima people.

From Accra eastward to the Volta River are the people groups speaking predominantly Ga-Adangbe. Proceeding eastward from the Volta River to the Ghana-Togo border live the Ewe-speaking people group that constitute 12 percent of the population of Ghana. In fact, the Ewe-speaking people extend further eastward from the Ghana-Togo border and occupy the southern half of Togo, forming 21 percent of the population of Togo.

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1Collier’s Encyclopedia, s.v. "Ghana."
Fig. 3. Location of the people groups of Ghana according to language spoken. Reprinted from Ethnologue Languages of the World, 12th ed. (Dallas, TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1992), 264.
Religion in Ghana

Ghana is a country where Christians constitute 63.1 percent of the population.\(^1\) It is projected that by the year 2000 adherents to the Christian religion will represent 75 percent of the country's population.\(^2\)

The Christian denominations in Ghana are mainly the Protestant churches; namely, Methodist, Presbyterian, and the Evangelical Presbyterian churches.\(^3\) The Roman Catholic church is established also far and wide across the country. Many other Christian denominations have been established, also, including the Seventh-day Adventist church, the Salvation Army, and the Anglican church.

Besides the Christian denominations mentioned above, several independent Christian churches\(^4\) exist such as the Twelve Apostles' church, the Apostolic Revelation Society

\(^1\)1992 PC Globe, Tempe, AZ.
\(^2\)Ibid.
\(^3\)These churches are the three largest Protestant denominations. In 1970, 12 percent of Ghana's population professed to be Presbyterians and 11 percent Methodist. See World Christian Encyclopedia, 1982 ed., s.v. "Ghana."

\(^4\)Wilson Awasu pointed out that these independent Christian churches are referred to by different names. In South Africa, they are known as "Separatists" or "Zionists." In East, West, and Central Africa, they are called "Independent churches." In Ghana, they are popularly referred to as "The Spiritual Churches." Wilson Awasu, Religion, Christianity and the Powers in the Ewe Society (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1988), 186.
(ARS), Eden Revival, and many others. By 1970, over 420 of these independent indigenous denominations were active.¹

The traditional religion to which 21 percent² of Ghana's population adheres is rapidly shrinking (from 45 percent in 1960) due to the many conversions to Christianity.³ Islam has its stronghold in northern Ghana where most northern tribes are about 30 percent Muslim.⁴

The Ewe-Speaking People Group

The Ewe-speaking people constitute one of the ethnic groups in Ghana. The Ewes, as a whole, occupy the southeastern part of the country—precisely the area bounded by the Volta River in Ghana and the Mono River in Togo (fig. 4). This area extends from the Atlantic coast inland to about latitude 70° 6"N in the east and latitude 70° 20"N in the west. The territory is divided into three geographical areas— the southern lowland region, a central plain, and a northern upland-and-valley region (fig. 5).

The Ewes occupy the southern half of the Republic of Togo and Benin, while in Ghana they occupy the southeastern

¹Ibid.
²1992 PC Globe, Tempe, AZ.
³Ibid., World Christian Encyclopedia, s.v. "Ghana."
⁴Islam is stronger among the Dagombas (60%). The Wala tribe is almost entirely Muslim. The World Christian Encyclopedia gives the following statistics of Islam adherents in the northern tribes: Chakossi (30%), Dagarti (30%), Kokomba (25%), Mamprusi (35%), and Vagala (20%).
Fig. 5. The Volta Region of Ghana.
territory (fig. 6). Thus, the Ewe-speaking ethnic group has been divided and is under three independent countries—Ghana, Togo, and Benin. Over one million Ewes currently live in Ghana, but the estimated population of Ewes as a whole people group scattered among the three countries may be three to four million.

Even though the Ewes recognize themselves as essentially one people sharing a common language (with numerous variations in dialect) and social customs, there are, however, a number of subtribes. On the subject of cultural uniformity and the subtribes, Manoukian points out that

the Ewes as a whole show a sufficiently high degree of cultural uniformity, of which the people themselves are conscious, to justify describing them as a tribe. Nevertheless, they are not culturally entirely homogeneous. There are, in particular, numerous variations in dialect. ... Moreover, the people's awareness of cultural unity, which seems to have increased during the last fifty years or so, has not, until very recently, led to any aspirations for political unity among the Ewe tribe as a whole.

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2*Ethnologue Languages of the World*, 266.

3Ibid.

4Amenuemey, 3.

Fig. 6. Showing the Ewe-speaking ethnic group scattered among the three countries of Ghana, Togo, and Benin.
Amenumey mentions that at the end of the nineteenth century, there were about 120 of the Ewe subtribes or political units. Some of the more powerful subtribes that occupy the inland immediately behind the coastal areas are the Peki, Adaklu, Ave, Tove, and Ho. In northern Eweland are the Kpando, the Watsi, and part of the Atakpame. All these polities or subtribes were constitutional monarchies.

The Anlo subtribe is the largest political unit within Eweland. In fact, the Anlo dialect of the Ewe language is used to teach the Ewe grammar published in 1856. Most current Ewe literature is based on the Anlo dialect.

Occupying a narrow strip of land sandwiched between the sea (to the south) and the lagoons (to the north) is the Anlo subtribe where people make their living mainly by fishing. Their settlement along the coast and their fishing enterprise has earned them the name "Pan Africa fishermen."

Although the Ewes are scattered and occupy the three mentioned geographical areas in Ghana, Togo, and Benin, a sentimental bond still unites them all as one whole people group. This bond stems from their historical tradition of common origin, their migration experience, one common

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1Amenumey, 1; cf. Manoukian, 89.

2Ibid.

3Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard, Peoples of the Earth, vol. 2 (Danbury, CT: Danbury Press, 1972), 78.

4Ibid.
language (though there are many dialects), their trading or commercial network, as well as the operations of the Ewe Presbyterian Church.¹

**Historical Background of the Ewes**

The traditions of common origin and the migration experience of the Ewes are of more than historical interest "for in them we have a mythological charter for most of the ritual functions obtaining in the society."² Oral tradition and literature on the Ewe-speaking people agree that the Ewes came to their presently occupied territory through a series of migrations and settlements.³

According to Manoukian, the Ewes migrated from Ketu (also called "Amedzofe" or "Mawufe"), a town sited somewhere east of Niger or the southern part of Dahomey (Benin). The date of migration was estimated to be around the 10th century.⁴ In Ketu also lived the Yoruba and the ancestors of the present people groups of Aja, Fon, Ada, and Ga, who are considered to be the Ewe-stock.⁵ Thus, according to Ewe

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¹ Amenumey, 28.


³ Manoukian, 12.


⁵ Ibid., 2, 3.
tradition, Ketu, a town whose foundation was laid by the human sacrifice of one of the inhabitants of Ewe,\(^1\) forms the place of origin or the initial migration of the Ewes.

A century later, around the end of the 11th century, the Ewes moved from Ketu to a town in Togo called "Notsie"\(^2\) (also known as "Agbome" or "Glime," meaning "an enclosure within walls"). Their migration from Ketu was precipitated by the expansion of the Yoruba people whose superior numerical strength, constant invasion, and bitter wars pushed the Ewes and the other groups westward.\(^3\)

Notsie was a town well known for its fortified walls\(^4\) within which lived the entire groups of people who were all

\(^1\)Ibid. According to E. Parrinder, The Story of Ketu (Ibadan, Nigeria: n.p., 1956), 16, a number of ruined villages or settlements, one of which was called "Ewe," was situated a few miles to the north of Ketu. Ansa K. Asamoa is inclined to believe that the name of that village called "Ewe" was chosen for the Ewe ethnic group. Asamoa, 4.

\(^2\)There have been varied accounts of the origin (of the Ewe-speaking people) given by different people and scholars. One of them, E. K. Paku, describes Notsie as one of the several temporal settlements of the Ewes and refers to Notsie as the eighth settlement. He maintains that the original home of the Ewes is Asia where the Ewes are referred to as Amedzofe or the origin of humans. From Asia, Paku mentions that the Ewes migrated southeast, settling temporarily at various places in their long migration, which took several centuries, until they got to the territory they currently and permanently occupy. Awasu, 21, 22.


\(^4\)Amenumey mentions that "as late as 1927, the walls of Notsie which have been ravaged by centuries of exposure, still measured 5.5 meters in thickness and 1.8 meters in height." Amenumey, The Ewe in Pre-Colonial Times, 4.
under one supreme king. The early kings of Notsie ruled with expedition, and the Ewes would have settled at Notsie were it not for King Agokoli who, when installed, became so exceptionally tyrannical and wicked\(^1\) that his rule became not only scary but unbearable and perilous, threatening their very existence. Many of the groups in Notsie decided to escape, but due to the surrounding high walls it was almost quite impossible. Yet, continuing to live in Notsie meant severe servitude, imminent death, and possible genocide.

Awasu mentions an oral tradition which describes the escape of the Ewes from Notsie as a divine intervention—a miracle which freed the people from such heinous bondage.\(^2\) During their escape from Notsie, the Ewes split into three main groups, namely, the Northern group, the Middle group, and the Southern group—each migrating and settling in their presently occupied location.\(^3\)

\(^1\)King Agokoli is alleged to have killed all the elders of Notsie. He also waged an uncalled-for war with the sole purpose of wiping out his subjects. Amenumey, *The Ewe in Pre-Colonial Times*, 3.

\(^2\)An account was given that one of the older men, Atiakposo, who survived King Agokoli's tyranny was prompted by a divine impulse to perform a ritual after which he pointed his dagger to the sky and said a prayer thus: "O Mawu, we are in great adversity. Deliver us!" Then touching the wall three times with the tip of the dagger, sections of the wall began to crack, and with little effort, a few people pushed against the cracked wall, sections fell out, thus paving a way of escape. Awasu, 22, 23.

\(^3\)Amenumey, *The Ewe Unification Movement*, 3.
The Northern group came to settle in the northern part in the upland-and-valley region where they began to spread and founded the towns of Hohoe, Matse, Peki, Kpando, Awudome, Alavanyo, Kpalime, Agu, Ve, Kpedze, and Wodze. The Middle group founded the settlements of Ho, Akovia, Takla, Kpenoe, Hodzo, Klevi, Sokode, Abutia, and Adaklu. The Southern group moved in two sections led by Amega Wenya and his nephew, Sri. The group led by Amega Wenya settled on the long sand-spit between Keta Lagoon and the sea where his two sons, Akagya and Awanyedo, founded Keta. The group led by Sri continued along the coast and came to settle finally beyond where Wenya's group settled. Later on, Sri and Wenya joined forces to establish the state or subunit of Anlo (also known as Awuna) with the capital being Anloga (or Awunaga), a town a few miles south of Keta. More and more groups came to increase the population of the Anlo state. They began spreading all across the southern coastal area, absorbing some pre-Ewe groups like the Avatime, Logba, Nkonya, Santro Kofi, and Akpafu.

Although the migration was over, all was not yet peaceful. A number of wars erupted between the groups. During this period of warfare, the Ashantis invaded Ewe territory between 1868 and 1871. In 1874, the Krepi were aided by the British who wanted to raise forces from among

1Manoukian, 12.

2Ibid.
them and other Ewe subtribes to assist in subduing the Ashantis.

Colonial Rule

Britain was the first European country to exercise colonial rule over the Ewe territory in 1850. However, it did not completely rule the entire territory until the Germans arrived in 1884. Then, in an attempt to cover much more territory to keep the Germans out, the British established their colonial rule over the rest of the Ewe territory.

The Germans aggressively counteracted the British moves in order to gain more territory. All these territorial struggles were due partly to the fact that the Ewe coast and the territory east of the Volta, in general, were known for their slave trade. In fact, all the principal Ewe towns on the coast functioned as slave markets. The slaves usually were sent from the interior (Krepi and beyond) in exchange for salt from the coast.

In 1899, a territorial agreement placed the Krepi and Anlo under British rule, while the rest of the Ewe-speaking people came under German rule. Thus, the British ruled over the Ewe territory in the Gold Coast, while the Germans

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1Amenu, *The Ewe Unification Movement*, 3.

2Amenu, *The Ewe in Pre-Colonial Times*, 35, 36.

3Manoukian, 13.
ruled over the Ewe states or subtribes of Togo. The Ewes were further partitioned among the three colonial powers of Britain, Germany, and France.

During World War I, the Germans were forced to leave their territory to Britain and France. From these two colonial powers, the three countries (Ghana, Togo, and Benin) in which the Ewes are found today obtained political independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

**Ewe Unity**

The Ewes, though divided and scattered among three countries, are unified not only by their tradition of origin but by their common language, culture, religion, and worldview.

Their sense of oneness in language has been a strong and significant unifying bond which has kept the Ewes more or less as a culturally homogenous ethnic group. Amenumey mentions that the adoption of one variant of the Ewe language (Anlo) as the basis for literary Ewe has helped to diminish the linguistic differences between the various Ewe dialects. It also has helped tremendously to bring togetherness among the Ewes who traditionally express their sentiments in their language. Awonoor describes the Ewe language as "a language whose strength lies in its emotional appeal to sense and feeling . . . a language for elaborate

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1Amenumey, *The Ewe Unification Movement*, 29.
libation, invocation and prayer, and it is full of proverb, aphorism, and folklore."¹ Thus, the emotional appeal of the language and its fitting and elaborate use in religious matters attract and provide a kind of adhesion for the Ewes.

Another unifying cord that binds the Ewe subgroups together into a united whole is their culture which expresses their common customs; ritualistic patterns; their drums, music, dances; and their communal lifestyle.² Awasu mentions that the Ewes have maintained their traditions with but marginal local adaptations. However, the most outstanding bond of ethnicity for the Ewes lies in their traditional religious system.³

Their religious beliefs and ritualistic practices that have been commonly observed and their view that the world is controlled by spiritual powers have made the Ewes a people known to be very religious. They also are known to be very receptive of any kind of religion that will provide for their spiritual needs.

In recognition of this openness and receptivity of the Ewes, and the need to provide the biblical truth to them, I attempt to develop a strategy to plant Seventh-day Adventist churches among them. These churches will help in the

²Awasu, 25.
³Ibid.
propagation of the gospel, the teaching of biblical truth, and the providing of spiritual direction and support for the people in Eweland.

**Ewe Religion**

The Ewes are spiritually minded people who, more often than not, look at the reality of life from a spiritual point of view. They assign good or bad spirits or divinities as the cause of every event that occurs. A religion that tends to deal with these spiritual beings permeates every fabric of their lives.\(^1\)

The Ewes hold as part of their traditional belief that spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs. As pointed out by Gailyn Van Rheenen, human beings, consequently, "must discover what beings and forces are influencing them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power."\(^2\) Thus, in the Ewe mindset, these two categories of powers,

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\(^2\)Ibid., 230.

"Spiritual beings and impersonal forces"\textsuperscript{1} exist side by side.

In the light of this belief system, the Ewe traditional religion can be described as being animistic at its very core. Edward B. Tylor defined animism as "the doctrine of spiritual beings."\textsuperscript{2} He also pointed out that "Animism, in its full development, includes the belief in soul and in a future state, in controlling deities, and subordinate spirits . . . resulting in some kind of active worship."\textsuperscript{3}

This is characteristic of the Ewe traditional religion.

Within the Ewes, especially the Anlo subtribe, it is quite obvious and intriguing to see the dominating, all-pervading influence of religion in the intimate life of the family and the community. Visible shrines of idols and idol worshippers are seen from village to village,\textsuperscript{4} in the towns, and in the suburbs of cities. Almost every family unit or household worships a deity. Fiawoo points out that no atheists or agnostics are among the Ewes. Everyone is a

\textsuperscript{1}Gailyn Van Rheenen explains the difference between personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces that interact with living human beings. He explains that spiritual beings include God, gods, ancestors, ghosts, totemic spirits, nature spirits, angels, demons, and Satan. The impersonal forces include the power behind the use of magic, astrology, witchcraft, the evil eye, and other related phenomena. Ibid., 21.


\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., 11.

\textsuperscript{4}Fiawoo, 39.
staunch believer in, or a worshipper of, one or more divinities.¹ He states that

in such a dense religious atmosphere, the diversity and multiplicity of divinities are not strange phenomenon. The sea, the lagoon, the river, streams, animals, birds, and reptiles, as well as earth with its natural and artificial protuberances, are worshipped as divine or as the abode of divinities.²

The quest for worshipping divinities, the many shrines built at the compounds of households, and the many religious institutions worshipping varieties of deities stem from the very fact that the Ewe people use every possible means to seek protection from any threatening events that confront them. They sought for supernatural power to overcome, survive, subdue, and dominate the very threatening wars and calamities that confronted them in their migration and settlement experience. Thus, in the face of perilous situations where the natural environment posed threats to the life of the individual and the community, and where they were flanked by warlike tribes and neighbors, the Ewes, typical of many African tribes, found help in the "hidden" forces and in personal ancestral spirits.³

In such calamitous situations one finds the clue to the Ewe philosophy of life⁴--to preserve life--which is the core

¹Ibid.
²Ibid.
⁴Fiawoo, 41.
or the underlying foundation of the Ewes' search and attraction to the numerous divinities and the accompanying religious practices. Westerman puts this thought of life thus: "Life is the great thing which matters. To preserve life is the real aim of religious practices. . . . Life in the African sense includes health, abundance of food, and a happy environment."¹ Thus in the mind-set of the Ewe, all life, public and private, is pervaded by the worship of the spirits.²

The desire to overcome and a feeling of inability necessitate a search for help and a means of maintaining and strengthening life in the midst of a thousand dangers.³ What the Ewes, therefore, believe and practice in their religious system—the obvious surface-level phenomena of cultural and religious practices—stems from a deeply submerged level core of formed opinions which constitute a profound core value system usually termed "worldview." This Ewe worldview⁴ has influenced and conditioned the Ewe mindset to believe that the spiritual world has much interplay with this physical world. Hence, their staunch belief in supernaturalism.

²Manoukian, 46.
³Westermann, 84.
⁴The Ewe traditional worldview is addressed under the topic "Ewe Worldview."
The Ewes strongly believe that there are supernatural powers operating in the universe. These powers are both worshipped and supplicated, and are spoken of in myths. Rituals are performed to honor and appease them when they are believed to be angered by an offense committed against them by an individual or by the community as a whole. The Ewes classify these supernatural powers into four different categories:

1. The Most High God (Mawu)
2. The Spirits (Trowo)
3. The Earth gods (Anyimawuwo)
4. The Ancestral spirits (Togbenoliwo).

The interconnectedness of these supernatural powers as perceived from the Ewe traditional religious system is shown in fig. 7.

How the Ewes perceive and understand these supernatural powers and how these powers interact—if they do—and function in the physical world has become a study which is paramount to this project since such a study reveals the underlying foundation of the Ewe traditional magico-religious beliefs and practices. Even more so is such a study essential and pertinent, especially in the light of developing a strategy to plant Seventh-day Adventist churches as a means to reach effectively the Ewes with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
Fig. 7. The interconnectedness of the supernatural spirits as perceived from the Ewe traditional religious system.
To begin, I first of all address the Ewe concept of the Most High God (Mawu).

The Most High God (Mawu)

The concept of the Supreme High God is traditional to the West African. Bishop Peter Kwasi Sarpong, in addressing this concept of God among Ghanaians, points out that "the belief in a Supreme Being is in fact basic to the Ghanaian's traditional way of life." In fact, this old concept "has nothing whatever to do with missionary influence nor is it to be ascribed to contact with Christians or even, I believe, with Mohammedans." Among the Ewe subtribes, especially the Anlo subtribe, the concept of the Most High God (Mawu) is "one of the oldest and the most fundamental articles of faith."

To the Ewe, the Most High God, Mawu, is the only high and Supreme Being who comes first in all things. He is the first cause, the Creator of the universe and all that is in it, including man. He was not created by anyone else.

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1 Fiawoo, 44.


4 Fiawoo, 44.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.
Him only do the Ewes ascribe the attributes of omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, invincibility, and invisibility. He is viewed to be the all-wise and all-loving creator of the fountain of life and the giver of all good things.

The Ewes not only recognize the supremacy and creatorship of God, but they also believe that Mawu, though very close to human beings yet living far away in the invisible sky, is the overall high or sky God who must be revered above all. The Ewe concept of Mawu, the Supreme High God, their reverence to Him, and their belief in Him is replicated in the names given to their newly born babies, and to many of their learning and health institutions as well. Some Ewe names express God’s presence, His goodness, love, and other attributes. These may include: Mawuto (God’s own), Mawuena (God has given), Mawunyo (God is gracious), Vomanu (revere God), Mawunyega (God is great), Mawule (God is here), Mawuko (God alone or only God), and Mawunedinam (may God help me). Many more of such inscriptions appear on passenger busses and trucks. The proverbs and myths of the Ewe cultural heritage also give a clear picture of their view of God (Mawu).

In the pouring of libation to any deity, Mawu is first addressed in words expressing praises and honour that are due Him. Libation prayers are usually said in words such as:

1Manoukian, 43.
In the beginning, God, the first cause
MAWU SOGBILLISA (the Father)
MAWU KITIKATA (the source of life through the rays of the Sun),
MAWU ADANGUWOTO (the blessed Trinity)
who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient.¹

In their traditional beliefs, the Ewes view God as the one who governs the whole universe. His guiding principles and laws hold up the whole world and provide the code of conduct. It is even believed that God gave His laws to man when He finished His creation and sealed His laws with the blood of "SE," a spotted four-footed animal.² In connection with this, Mamattah states:

The forest animal "SE" has therefore become "SE-La" literally "law-meat." That animal has become a taboo to all chiefs since they exercise juridical functions over their subjects. Breaking this taboo knowingly or consciously implies undoing the ten commandments and subsequently granting extreme license to all his subjects to live in a state of nature, of lawlessness, and of anarchy.³

With such a concept of God and their belief in Him as the creator, sustainer, and a lawgiver, one would expect that the worship of this great high God would be a prevailing phenomenon among the Ewes. But the situation is quite different. Although God is the supreme, divine source of all life and power and constantly is in the minds of Ewe traditional worshippers, He has no special set of

²Ibid., 161.
³Ibid., 160, 161.
worshippers and no special shrines. Nevertheless, to the Ewe, God is the object of indirect attention even when other deities are the focus of a ritual act.

In my field research at Ho, I interviewed ten elderly Ewe people concerning the Ewe concept of God. I found that there are two schools of thought. The first view reflects that Mawu is a distant, unapproachable creator who is too exalted and very busy to be so concerned with constant involvement in the everyday life of billions of people of this world and the many other worlds He has made. He therefore created the lesser gods and the many deities and delegated them, with accompanying power and authority, to oversee and govern human beings in their daily affairs.

The second school of thought also maintains that the Most High God, Mawu, is so great, holy, powerful, and exalted that human beings in their frailties and sinfulness are not worthy at all to approach God directly. To go before Mawu without a more appropriate and qualified being is considered disrespectful, dishonoring, and, in the case of God, possibly worthy of death.1 Hence, God created the

1The concept that God, Mawu, should not be directly approached is obviously reflected in the relationship existing between chiefs and the subjects of their respective communities. The Ewe chiefs and people who have acquired or been exalted to a very high social position are not to be directly approached whatsoever. The subjects who appear before the chief and the village elders have no right to speak directly to the chief. The chief's linguist is always addressed and he, in turn, rephrases the speaker's words and conveys the message in a more respectful and humble manner to the chief. A personal experience I had during my field
numerous spirits (known as *trowo*) to be intermediaries between Himself (God) and man. Thus, existing side by side with the belief in Mawu is the concept of the spirits, ancestral veneration, and other supernatural forces that are worshipped. But worshipping the only one Most High God through intermediaries is what Bolaji Idowu designates as "diffused monotheism."¹

In these two schools of thought, there is, however, one common belief that runs through. It is the belief that God (Mawu) created the intermediaries—in the form of lesser gods and the spiritual forces—to administer for Him (see fig. 8). Thus, according to Ewe religious tradition, the very existence of these supernatural spirits is essentially bound up with human experience.

Fig. 8. The relationship between God (Mawu), His intermediaries, & human beings.

Research at Ho gave me firsthand information. In my attempt to see the Volta Regional Administrative officer at Ho, I had to go through one of the elders of the town who is his close friend.

Concerning the spiritual powers, Manoukian wrote:

He created the trowo to act as intermediaries between himself and mankind, and to protect and watch over the inhabitants of the earth. For this reason the trowo are sometimes called Mawuviwo (children of Mawu) or Anyimawu (earth gods). All sacrifices and prayers to Mawu are made through the trowo, and all sacrifices to the trowo are ultimately transmitted to him.¹

The fact that Mawu is worshipped through the trowo suggests that in the traditional setting there are not Mawu priests or Mawu cults. Thus, according to Westermann, the "Ewe belief in God is only a philosophy rather than a living faith."² However, when one examines the concepts, beliefs, and practices in Ewe religion, Westermann's position is not really correct because the Ewes' living faith in God is expressed in their worship to Him through these spirits (known as trowo).

The Spirits (Mawuviwo)

In the expression of their strong belief in the Most High God (Mawu), the Ewes also believe in other supernatural powers and worship them. The three main categories of supernatural powers recognized by the Ewes are the

¹Manoukian, 45.

supernatural spirits,¹ the ancestral spirits, and the earth
gods.

The nature spirits and the other deities are believed
to have been created by God to act as intermediaries between
Himself and mankind, and to watch over, protect, and provide
for the inhabitants of the earth.² These tutelary spirits
are classified into two main groups, namely, the malevolent
spirits and benevolent spirits (fig. 7).

Malevolent spirits

The spiritual powers that feature negatively in Ewe
socio-religious life are the practice of witchcraft and
sorcery. These powers cause terror and instill fear in
individuals, consequently leading many to seek divine
protection and guidance from the benevolent spiritual
powers. In this section I briefly address these two
malevolent powers, beginning with witchcraft (Adze).

Witchcraft (Adze)

Many beliefs commonly are held by the Ewes about
witchcraft, which is referred to as Adze. These beliefs

¹The supernatural spirits and even the earth gods are
thought of as being either male or female. They are even
thought of as being capable of marrying and bringing forth
new spirits or new earth gods. The example given in the
Peki subtribe is that the sky god (Dzingbe) is married to
the earth god (Anyigba). Manoukian, 47.

²Ibid., 45.
pervade every aspect of Ewe life and cast fear on the people when they hear disturbing facts about what witches can do.

The witch spirit (*Adze*) is an evil spirit which is believed to be transferred to a person by a close relative of a nuclear family or by a member of an extended family. Thus the power to perform witchcraft is almost always by inheritance. The recipient of such a spirit may be unconscious of the transfer. Most often the transfer is accomplished through food or a gift given to the recipient from a witch relative. The witch usually chooses one who she/he loves most in the family.

Once the gift is passed on and accepted by the recipient, the witch spirit is said to be taken internally. The witch spirit then possesses the recipient and makes him/her a slave so far as nocturnal evil activities and malicious deeds are concerned.

Witches are almost always females who can range from age six and older. Witches misuse valid and good power for invalid and evil ends. People believe witches can fly and report having seen them fly at night in a big ball of fire, emitting flames with droplets of fire forming around them as they travel individually to their nocturnal meetings where they plan evil against individuals and plot the death of (a) relative(s) for the purpose of consuming the flesh.

Witches are very covetous, always seeking to bring down and sabotage the progress of the community and,
particularly, of prosperous and potentially successful individuals in their respective families and in the community. The witches are detrimental and a nuisance to the community. Their deeds are very destructive, and their purpose is the destruction of what is good and peaceful, especially those processes that enhance good life and make for success.

They are believed to have the power to inflict material loss, thus making one lose his/her money, job, and position. They also can cause a person to become a drunkard, get sick, or even go insane. They are believed to cause accidents, mysterious and premature deaths, sterility, impotence; they damage peoples' properties and cause many other kinds of calamities.

Witches are believed to be conscious of their activities and possess powers to instantly transform themselves into various types of plants and animals.¹ With regard to their obnoxious and destructive activities, E. Thomas Lawson wrote, "Witchcraft is a threat to public order, an unbearable strain on traditional social organization, a challenge to revered tradition."²


Due to the mischievous activities of witches, the Ewes, realizing their complete helplessness in counteracting the evil deeds of the witches, seek spiritual protection from other supernatural forces. Thus charms and amulets are often seen worn around the neck, arms, and more often around the waist and legs of the many individuals who claim to be protected from witches by those charms and amulets they wear.

The only power that overcomes and stops the evil deeds of witches and exposes the witch is the power of the fetish priest. The spiritual church leaders also are believed to cast out demons and witch spirits (Adze) from possessed individuals. Anyone caught as a witch by the local fetish priest is made a public reproach and the person is forced to tell all the malicious deeds she/he has committed. Failure to do so may end in the death of the witch. The local idol for the people in a village exercises its power and eliminates witches that are caught by it.

Sorcery

The practice of sorcery, like witchcraft, has been viewed by the Ewes as clandestine and obnoxious. Sorcery is one of the malevolent impersonal forces used by some individuals (referred to as sorcerers) to bring harm upon

1Spiritual church leaders and how they deal with witchcraft are addressed in chapter 4.
people and their enterprises through spiritual and magical means.

The sorcerer derives and uses power from the evil spirits that already exist. The evil power acquired by the sorcerer is not as internal as it is in the case of a witch spirit. Rather, as Van Rheenen defines it, "it is the use of magical paraphernalia and rituals to harness spiritual powers to maliciously and premeditatively harm other people."¹

Sorcerers are perceived to be enemies of progress of other people and against the development of the community in which they live. They use their magical powers to inflict harm on others. They are believed to cause death of the innocent, tearing down and destroying promising individuals. They thwart and attempt to destroy the progressive development within their communities, causing confusion among village leaders so they will not be united to undertake any meaningful development project for the betterment of the people. Jealousy, hatred, revenge, evil intentions, and greed are the motives for the practice of sorcery.²

¹Van Rheenen, 215.
It is in this light that anyone caught dabbling in sorcery is made a public reproach and punished—sometimes by death—by the local fetish priest who claims to have much power over the malevolent spirits.

**Benevolent Spirits**

The spirits also are said to manifest themselves to the living in many forms to provide help when calamity strikes, and security and support in times of pestilence, fear, and distress. These spirits are believed to have the power to dwell in objects of nature such as trees, rivers, seas, lagoons, mountains, and the like. Such a belief indicates that the concept of animation is also present in the Ewe traditional religion which views the world as a living organism animated by spiritual powers, giving these possessed objects a type of personhood.

Even though such beliefs in the personhood of objects are disappearing in the face of urbanization and technology, many people in Ewe cities and, even more so, those in traditional rural Ewe villages still adhere to them.

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1. It is only the specialized practitioners who, in their supernatural powers, are believed to be able to discover, catch, and conquer the witch or the sorcerer.

2. Animation is the belief or concept that spiritual beings can influence and possess parts of nature, animals, human beings, and inanimate objects.

3. Van Rheenen, 239.
In many instances man-made objects or carvings are believed to be animated by the spirits when they are invoked by the diviners or the fetish priests. These man-made objects are kept in shrines as idols and are worshipped. Numerous shrines serving as abodes of these spirit gods are seen built in the homes of individuals and in community compounds. Fiawoo states that

a traveller in Anlo is struck by the predominating, all-pervading influence of religion in the intimate life of the family and the community. . . . There are the ubiquitous Legbawo and Agbonuglawo (idols). Within and without the compound, here and there, may be seen an individual or a cult group deep in prayer, invocation of the spirits or offerings to ancestral beings.¹

The shrines and the multiplicity of divinities or spirits indicate how much the public and private lives of Ewe people are pervaded by the worship of spirits which are believed to be the supernatural, hidden force. Thus, the Ewes, through the appropriate rituals and worship, seek these spirits for guidance and protection when an individual or a community is threatened. The trowo, therefore, play an extremely important role in the spiritual life of the Ewes. They are believed to be guards of their wards, to bring blessings such as rain in periods of drought, human fertility, and soil fertility, and to deflect danger, sickness, and epidemics. They can also bring misfortune and calamities when they are offended. In the Ewe traditional

¹Fiawoo, 39.
religion, several types of tro are prevalent in the communities are classified into two large groups: Personal Tro and Public Tro.

Personal Tro

The personal tro are those special divinities or spirits worshipped by individuals. They are believed to provide for the individual’s wealth and good health as well as success and promotions at work, and to help the potential individual obtain political power, recognition, and position. Asamoa states that these tutelary gods are believed even to shape one’s destiny and to protect the individual who seeks and worships them.

The acquisition of a personal tro is made only through a diviner or a fetish priest. My attendant pastor, Sampson Adjare, mentioned to me that in the process of acquiring a personal tro, a talisman or something believed to be from the spirit gods is given out by the diviner and kept by the individual who is seeking to possess that particular tro.

1Tro is the plural form of tro. The tro is the Ewe name for the god of special divinity or spirit worshipped.

2Asamoa, 33.

3In the process of acquiring a personal tro, the individual sometimes has to take a bath with water diluted with a concoction from the fetish priest or a diviner. Sometimes people are made to swallow a small "medicine" from the spirit. When an individual had completed the specific requirements, she or he is given a talisman or something from the spirit god that has become the individual’s personal tro.
With the talisman, the individual can invoke that particular spirit (tro) he/she has received.

Once I was permitted to witness a 35-year-old illiterate woman (a mother of three) who had invoked her personal tro into a large shiny brass bowl (about 60 centimeters across and 20 centimeters deep) full of water. A talisman as big as her fist was floating in the bowl of water. The woman was possessed by the spirit. She was sitting beside the bowl, gazing intently into the water, and swaying back and forth in a rhythmic fashion, though no drumming was audible. She also was shaking all over as she swayed. She was perspiring and, at times, would communicate in an ecstatic and unintelligible gibberish. Nine of us, including her children, were in the room. An interpreter told us what the possessed woman said. This spiritual invocation and communication took about two hours. Three people asked for protection in their impending journey. A young man asked for insight into whether a trading enterprise he was about to enter would prove successful. Absolute quietness prevailed in the room and everyone paid keen attention and was absorbed in the whole act, watching in anticipation for something either strange or a good omen.

The worship of personal trowo is very prevalent—more so because of what individuals claim these personal trowo do for them in their daily lives. Consequently, the trowo worship has become an intrinsic part of the Ewes. In fact,
in many of the subtribes, the worship of personal trowo is even more important than that of the clan or subtribal trowo which originated from the personal trowo of successful people.¹

Public Trowo

The personal trowo, in most cases, becomes not only the trowo for the individual who acquired it but for the entire nuclear family² of the individual as well. The father of a nuclear family may establish his own individual trowo.³ Then, with his wife and children, they form a closely knit, small cult group, thus making the family trowo more of a public asset than a trowo for the father alone. Sometimes extended family members also come to join and worship the trowo, thus enlarging the circle of those who acknowledge and worship that particular trowo. In such a case, the trowo no longer remains personal; it assumes a public status.

The spiritual power of a personal trowo in predicting the future and providing the spiritual needs and direction for people tends to attract more and more people from the nuclear family, extended family, from the clan, and ultimately, depending on how powerful the trowo continues to be, it becomes recognized as one of the tribal or

¹Manoukian, 47.

²Some nuclear family members may not be part of such personal trowo. This instance may, however, be rare.

³Fiawoo, 54.
regional-political trowo. Thus, in the Ewe traditional religion, the public trowo[^1] fall into three groups.

1. Regional-political trowo are the trowo recognized, accepted, and worshipped by the people, irrespective of their tribal origin. Such trowo exercise power and authority over the whole regional territory. So far as Eweland is concerned, the regional-political trowo are referred to as national trowo. The trowo in this case warn the Ewes of impending catastrophe—be it flood or drought, war, misfortune, epidemic or any calamity. They tell the nation what to do to deflect any calamity.

2. Subtribal trowo are those recognized by a subtribe as their own and that cater for the subtribe. Similarly, the subtribe trowo do what the regional-political trowo do but on a subtribal level. The authority of a subtribe tro is exercised only within the subtribe.

3. Clan trowo, as the name implies, is the trowo for the clan. A clan is composed of a number of families who trace patrilineal descent from a common ancestry and follow the same chieftaincy. The clan trowo are also known as hlotrowo. Thus, the members of each clan are more or less held together by the clan trowo that constantly remind them

[^1]: Due to urbanization and Christian influences, the public trowo are losing their grip on the people. It is the clan trowo, the nuclear family trowo, and the individually owned or personal trowo that are more recognized and accepted. This happens because the individual’s interest can be sought from these trowo.
of their ancestral bond. The power and authority of the clan tro are exercised only within the clan that accepts and recognizes that particular tro.

Earth Gods (anyimawuwo)

Besides the worship of the Most High God and the spirits (Mawu and the trowo), the Ewe traditional religion also allows the worship of many different earth gods.1 Ewe people believe earth gods are created by God and are assigned specific duties to be performed in behalf of and for the benefit of living human beings.

There are family gods, clan gods, tribal gods, and many other countless personal gods that are kept and worshipped by many individuals. Kwabena Amponsa points out that "gods range from the great tribal gods to little private deities. Those which are of tribal significance are worshipped by the entire tribe and festivals are observed periodically for the gods."2

Personal gods do not have shrines built for them. However, shrines are built on the family compound for the family gods. The clan gods also have shrines built for them on a piece of land that belongs to the clan—usually at the


outskirts of the town or village. Shrines for the tribal gods are built on public land at the outskirts of the town.

The tribal god is more or less a public god that caters to the whole tribe. Apart from the tribal god, individuals in the tribe may have their own private and personal god as well as be worshippers of the family god and the clan god. Table 1 outlines some of the recognized public gods.

Due to the immediate surroundings—the lagoons, the Volta River, and the sea with its vast amount of water and huge space—the sea god (referred to as Nyigbla or Atsiafu-Mawu) has become one of the greatest and most important gods in Ewe traditional religion. Its influence is not restricted to the coast alone, but extends beyond. Sacrifices are offered to the sea god yearly to ensure an abundant supply of fish. The sea god has priests who see to it that religious rites and rituals are performed at the appointed time and in a manner acceptable to the sea god. The lagoons and the rivers also have spirits or gods. Shrines are built for them, and priests attend to these gods.

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1Curriculum Research and Development Division, Cultural Studies for Junior Secondary Schools, 2:118.
Table 1 — Public-Recognized Gods of the Ewe and Their Respective Duties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deity</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God of the harvest</td>
<td>In charge of crops, fruits, and the food stuffs that are to be harvested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of the land</td>
<td>In charge of maintaining the equilibrium of the earth so as to prevent natural disaster such as earthquakes, volcanoes, etc., and to make the land fertile for producing abundant food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of the rivers</td>
<td>To provide fish and water to moisten the soil and to prevent flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of rain and thunder</td>
<td>To cause rain to fall to prevent drought and to prevent thunder and lightning that may strike to cause calamity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of the village/town</td>
<td>To protect the inmates from epidemics, catastrophes, and premature death; also to protect the entire people from evil spirits seeking to strike with misfortune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God of the sea</td>
<td>To provide protection and guidance for the fishermen; to calm the sea from storms and the raging and boisterous waves that can be fatal; to help fishermen obtain a bountiful catch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ancestral Spirits (Togbenoliwo)

In addition to the interaction that goes on between the tutelary spirits, the gods, and the living, the Ewe traditional religion has a variety of religious beliefs and practices that focus on the spirits of the ancestors. The core of ancestral veneration or worship is the belief that the soul of the dead never dies but lives in the land of the spirits where life is in many ways similar to the one in the visible world.

Akin to this belief is another about the continuing existence of the ancestral spirits who are believed to be in close relation with the living and also are believed to influence the affairs of the living. They are ever present, maintaining a lively interest in this visible world and interacting in everyday life providing guidance,

1Not all who are dead are to be considered qualified or worthy to be accorded the title of "ancestor" within Ewe traditional religion. They are rather those primal persons to whom a line of descent can be traced, or those whom the ancestral headship and authority came down to, by virtue of becoming or inheriting the headship of a family, lineage, clan, or tribe. The ancestors, therefore, are usually the kings or queen mothers, the founder of a village or town, or a strong and courageous leader who has fought many battles and has successfully led his or her people throughout adversities and/or battles.

2Fiawoo, 56-62.

3The Ewes, by several manifestations, portray their acknowledgement of the immediate presence of the ancestral spirits. For example, when drinking to quench thirst or otherwise, or when eating a meal, one would first pour out to the ground a drop of the drink or water, or throw the first morsel of food to the ground for the ancestral spirits who are believed to consume spiritually the food or the
protection, and the necessary help that their respective lineages or clans may ask from them. They are believed to be another strong source of power for the living.

Ancestral spirits (see fig. 10) are understood to be closer to the living than any other spiritual being. The Ewes believe ancestors have been human beings before and have passed from life to death. Consequently, they can better understand the physical and spiritual problems and dilemmas that confront the living, hence, the worship and veneration of the ancestral spirits.

However, it must be pointed out that there are two kinds of ancestors: "family ancestors" and "deified ancestors." E. Thomas Lawson's description that distinguishes these two kinds of ancestors is very applicable to the Ewe recognition of their ancestors. He wrote,

What distinguishes these two kinds of ancestors from each other is that the family ancestors are venerated exclusively within the context of the descent group, whereas the deified ancestors are the objects of worship of a specific cult tied not to a family but to a locality.¹

The deified ancestors, often referred to as lineal ancestors, are tied to the history of the cities or to important events in the development of the Ewe traditional drink even before it reached the ground. See M. J. Field, Religion and Medicine of the Ga People (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 196.

¹Lawson, 66.
culture. These ancestors have shrines that are located in the outskirts of town and throughout the locality, not in the home compound. Ritual practices are performed to honor and to appease them. Manoukian points out:

Taking the literature on the Ewes . . . as a whole, there are innumerable references to the authority of the lineal ancestors; as the "real owners of the land," as protectors, as a source of good and fount of fertility, for those who please them, but an instrument of punishment for those who do not, and as always in need of attention from the living. . . . The ancestors are never forgotten. . . . Their influence is too pervasive to be easily isolable for analysis.1

The ancestors are thought of as the spiritual and supporting backbone of their respective clans and lineages. The living seek from them physical and spiritual security in the form of good fortune, strength, success at work and studies, and victory. The ancestral spirits are also believed to have the power to deflect evil calamities and evil consequences that may befall the descendants.

They are viewed as the spiritual power guiding the leadership of their respective families and clans. Through the living heads of the families, lineages, and clans, the ancestral spirits are believed to rule, approving or disapproving the behavior of their descendants. Any act of

1Manoukian, 50.
defiance\textsuperscript{1} shows disrespect and dishonor not only to the living headship but to the ancestors as well.

The prevailing supervision of the ancestral spirits over the family, clan, or a lineage, and the desire of the living to honor and please them, coupled with the conscious efforts of the living to uphold and maintain the good name for their respective families or clans, have instilled in the Ewes a deep sense of filial respect, honor, and obedience towards the heads of the families and lineages. The word of the head is undisputedly carried through. In fact, the heads are more often regarded as tin-gods to some degree, because they administer their subjects in conjunction with supernatural ancestors. They also occupy the stools of the ancestors.

Religious Practitioners

In the defense of the people against malevolent spirits and in venerating and worshipping the sacred powers (the ancestral spirits, the earth gods, and the benevolent spirits), the Ewe traditional worshipper always seeks and goes to a traditional religious practitioner for supernatural power, protection, and for mediation between the particular sacred power and the seeker. Religious

\textsuperscript{1}Defiance is any act that breaks the social norm that causes reproach upon the family. Acts include incest, rape, theft, breaking taboo days, and showing disobedience to the ruling heads.
practitioners and their function, therefore, play a very vital part in the Ewe traditional religious system.

The religious practitioners usually consulted are the household heads, the heads of the clans, the priests, and the diviners (see fig. 9). The religious practitioners operate in different contexts yet serve the common religious purpose of mediating between man and the sacred.

The first context for mediation is that of the household. In this situation, the head of the household is the key figure who maintains ritual relationship with the family ancestors. He also acts as the mediating agent between the household members and the family ancestors and "represents the people to the ancestors by sacrificing to the ancestors on behalf of the people, and he represents the ancestors to the people by informing the family members of their obligations to the ancestor."[1] The head of the clan functions similarly but in a wider scope of the clan.

Where there is a household god, and usually there is, the head of the household attends to it, offers sacrifices to it, and acts as a priest of the family god to his family members. Thus, heads of families and of clans are highly esteemed and obeyed.

The second context for mediation is that of the shrine, built mainly for the earth gods. In this context, the priest performs the mediating role between the members of

[1] Lawson, 64.
Fig. 9. Communication links and relationships existing between the sacred powers and the Ewe traditional worshipers.
the cult and the god that is worshipped. Apart from family and clan gods, almost every village or town has an appointed priest who caters to the entire community and attends to the particular god of the village. In the cities, shrines built for cults and clan gods are found in the suburbs.

Through the powers of the god, the priest is supposed to know and foretell future calamities as well as offer the necessary sacrifices and perform rituals to prevent any calamitous events. Any unpreventable misfortune that hits a village or an individual is interpreted as an act of a grievously offended village god. In such a case, the priest is expected to find the cause and rectify it through rituals and sacrifices. The priests also track down witches and other malevolent spirits in the community and dispossess them of their evil powers.

The kings in the villages and towns also are regarded as priests by virtue of their direct descent from the original kings and by occupying the sacred ancestral stool. Their priestly mediatorial role, however, is not displayed publicly as does the village priest who often attends to the god by dancing and drumming.

The Ewe king performs rituals and offers sacrifices to the ancestral god as well as to the god of the village. He does this in the secluded ancestral stool-room in the king's palace. In this act, the king can represent the entire people of the village or town and its environs to the god of
the village. The king can perform other public mediating roles such as leading a procession on festival occasions.

The third context for mediation is that of the diviner who is considered the mediator between the spirits and the people. Through divination the diviner finds causes of problems, their solutions, and the process by which to deflect or extirpate the problems of his clients. People believe the diviner has supernatural power to track down the sorcerers and other evil powers in the community and to dispossess them of their evil powers. Divination, therefore, is very widespread among the Ewes because many have a sense of insecurity. Consequently, the people seek divine protection and guidance.

Religious experts, such as the prophets, priests, and healers, have devised their own divination and incantations to deal with the human and spirit worlds and to serve as mediators supplicating the spirit world on behalf of humans. Depending on his success in providing spiritual protection, healing, and the revelations of the future, a religious practitioner may attract many people. Suppliants tend to switch allegiance from one petitioner to the other depending on the lack of satisfaction in his/her search for spiritual answers to his/her problems.

Lawson's definition of divination is quite appropriate and applicable here. He defines it as "the ritual acts performed to diagnose the reasons for a misfortune or the means to the solution of some misfortune of human problem." Lawson, 20.
Ewe Religious Worldview

Having provided an insight into the Ewe traditional religion, I must point out the underlying foundation or the worldview of the Ewe religion. The core of Ewe worldview is that the world and reality are supernaturalistic. The Ewes interpret the whole universe in terms of spiritual powers. Awasu points out:

They do not divide the universe into sacred and secular as the Westerners do. . . . The invisible world of Spirit being is as real to the Ewe as the visible. For example, it is common knowledge in Eweland for the spirits of departed relatives to communicate messages to the living through a living person (a medium of their choice) whether supplicated or unsupplicated.1

Kofi Awoonor examines the Ewe religious worldview and makes a statement similar to the one by Awasu. He points out that in the Ewe mind-set, "everything in the universe possesses, to a varying degree, the sanctity and power of Mawu, the Creator."2 Therefore, the trees, rivers, mountains, herbs, rocks, and many more such objects are regarded as potential mediums which the evil spirits, the gods, and the ancestral spirits can possess. The Ewes believe that through the mediums, the spirits and the gods provide the needed help for the benefit of mankind. Hence, many specialized practitioners exist in Eweland to explore

1Awasu, 47.

spiritually, to obtain, and to control the powers possessed in such mediums so as to help the living.

Thus, to the Ewes, nothing is attributed to coincidence, luck, or chance. Supernatural causes occur for every earthly calamity that befalls a community or an individual. Supernaturalism has pervaded much of their cultural systems¹ and, besides their strong belief that Mawu the Creator is the all-powerful God, their worldview has led them to hold some basic assumptions.

1. God, the Creator, created the spirits, gods, and all the spiritual forces that minister to the living. Ewes believe that God created all things to function in their own prescribed way for the betterment of the physical world. Hence, the spirits, gods, and all the spiritual forces are created and commanded (by God) to mediate between God and man and to minister to man's needs.

2. Human life consists of three phases, namely, the unborn, the living, and the dead.

3. The unborn and the dead are living in an invisible spiritual world (fig. 10) that is considered as real as the visible physical world. In fact, many make the strong assumption that one who is born into this physical world comes from the invisible spiritual world, and when one dies,

¹In their traditional religion, the Ewes believe that their political and social systems, as well as their educational, economic, transportation, and health systems, are all pervaded by the spiritual powers that be.
one returns to the spiritual world where she/he came from to be born. To the Ewes, this is the human life cycle.

Fig. 10. The human life cycle

4. A close relationship exists between the spirit and the human worlds. For that matter, the living should search for that link in order to be connected to the spiritual world for spiritual power to confront the malevolent forces of the spiritual and the physical worlds.

5. Another strong assumption is that when a person dies, his/her soul does not die but wanders around from the spiritual world, either to haunt or to help the living.

6. The ongoing cosmic spiritual struggle is centered on the human race, hence the need for the living to possess a powerful spirit for protection, guidance, and for any other form of help that is needed to fight the spiritual and physical warfare that confronts humans during their lives.

\[^1\text{Awasu, 122.}\]
In order for one to plant churches, the gospel must be communicated to the people first. However, "communication never takes place in a social vacuum; but always between individuals who are not only part of a total social context"\(^1\) but are under a politically organized community. Thus, so far as church planting is concerned, two other essential areas must be addressed in this project: the social structure and traditional polity of the Ewes.

Among the Ewes, these two dimensions are of particular importance: first of all, both affect the decision-making process of an Ewe community and of individuals within the community. Second, these two areas shape and guard the peoples' beliefs in spirits and deities. The Ewes govern themselves and maintain their status quo and traditional relations among themselves as one people. Eugene A. Nida points out:

This aspect of communication within the social structure is particularly important from the religious point of view. For wherever there are tribal or national gods, these deities inevitably occupy special positions of importance in the social structure, either as mythical ancestors or as guardians of the social pattern and mores of the people. One thing is sure, these deities can usually be depended upon to conserve the status quo and in this way help to regulate the traditional relations between people.\(^2\)


\(^2\)Ibid., 428, 429.
This section addresses first the social structure of the Ewes; second, their traditional polity. I also point out the effects of these two dimensions on church planting among the targeted people.

Ewe Social Structure

Two main types of social structures organize Ewe relationships and build their social groups: the traditional social structure and the modern metropolitan social structure. Both structures came into existence through events and experiences of the Ewe people.

Ewes, in their traditional setting, are a communally oriented people. Their early historic migration and settlement experience, the constant threats of wars that bothered them, and their beliefs in many deities and powers somehow shaped their group formation. They formed political subtribes to defend themselves from enemy attacks, to fight and to conquer and acquire portions of land for settlement and farming, and to appeal collectively to their group gods and ancestors for guidance and protection in times of need.

This communalism led to their traditional social system where the welfare of a community always has been the concern of all who live within the community. As John Mbiti puts it, "The individual is conscious of himself in terms of I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."¹

Unlike a person in the Western world where the emphasis is strong on individualism, freedom, and insistence on one's own right, an Ewe person considers himself or herself more as a social being who is born, raised, and buried in the company of his/her fellow humans.¹ For the benefit of all within a social group, the traditional Ewe person yields his/her personal interests and decisions to that of his/her immediate social group. The high degree of belongingness, caring, and togetherness makes the Ewes appear inward-looking, ethnocentric, or tribalistic.

The Ewe traditional social structure patterns itself along three main lines, namely, the household² as a social unit, the clan³ as a social and kinship group, and the subtribe as a social block. Of these three, the household social unit exerts much influence on the household members, even though the clan and the subtribal social groups are present and operating.


²A household in this case is defined to be a group of close relatives that trace their descent to an immediate ancestor and live together in two, three, or four adjacent houses clustered together in a given location. Such households may contain three or four nuclear families.

³The clan is a composition of a number of households that trace their descent patrilineally from some remote common ancestor. The clan members are thus adhered together by their common ancestor and the binding religious institution which is an agglomeration of native customs and beliefs.
The household is the immediate social unit that one is born into and brought up in, in spite of the nuclear family. Members of a household are linked by a patrilineal kinship that tightly binds them so that the individual members are ensured of a great deal of security.

All the household members provide for the individual member who is sick and/or without food. An individual member is supported financially by the household to obtain his/her education, or to marry, or to buy a field for farming, or to undertake any great economic venture. The individual also enjoys the spiritual protection of the household deities and the ancestral spirits. Each household member also plays an active part in the upbringing of a child born into the household.

Within each household there is a household head who is usually the most senior male of the household. In the household head is invested political, legal, and ritual authority. Thus the household head is the rightful person to oversee the household. He settles quarrels between household members and leads out in performing ceremonies and rituals pertaining to the birth of a household child and to the marriage of a household male.

In case of a death in the household, it is the household head who performs the necessary rituals and presides over the funeral arrangements and ceremonies. Unless he delegates his authority to an elderly male in the
household, the household head coordinates all contributions donated by household members to support another member. More importantly, the head acts as the mediator between the household members and the gods and ancestors of the household. He also sees to it that clan and tribal decisions and stipulations carefully are followed by the household in order to avoid any misfortunes that might come upon the household should a household member offend the gods or the ancestors. In fact, this lineage head is almost always consulted on any major undertaking upon which an individual household member plans to embark. Thus, within the household as a social unit, the head has much traditional authority and power of leadership.

The clan and the subtribe heads perform similar functions as the household head, but unlike the household head, the clan and subtribal heads oversee the people groups in a wider area. The clan head oversees the many households (within the clan) that live in a given locality or community; the subtribal head oversees a whole group of people living in a given geographical area.

The traditional social structure as observed in the three areas mentioned is characterized by a homogenous society. Eugene A. Nida pointed out that in such traditional social structures, almost all of the people participate in the common life in more or less the same way. Such groups may have class differences and distinctions of leadership and positions of authority, but the society is nevertheless
an integrated whole, sharing much the same system of values; it is not merely an aggregate of subcultures which operate along quite different lines.¹

The traditional social structure hedges in an individual from exercising his/her own personal freedom and individualism.

The urban social structure is quite different from the traditional. It cuts across households, clans, and subtribal social groups. It is a conglomeration of people from different subcultures living together in a new heterogenous social setting. Hence, people in this kind of social setting are more open to other views of religious matters. At the urban social structure level, the administration of the urban centers and the cities rests not with the most senior male heads but with educated and qualified administrative personnel.

Thus, in the urban social system, many different associations and classes of people cater socially for the individual within the city. Professional associations, businessmen’s associations, traders’ unions, student associations, youth associations, and many more of such social groups are in evidence.

Due to the influence of Christian missionaries and the educational program they provided for the people, coupled with urbanization, modernization, high technology, and exposure to Western and other cultures, the urban social

¹Nida, 430.
structure gradually has emerged from the urban centers or the cities. The effects of the traditional social system as more obviously observed in the rural areas is gradually giving way to the urban social structure. However, in spite of that, the traditional social system probably will not be wiped out by the urban social system. The two social systems will co-exist. The former more remarkably will be observed in towns, villages, and hamlets, while the latter will be observed in the urban centers and cities.

Ewe Traditional Polity

In their migration and settlement experience, the Ewes organized themselves into political units or subtribes. Each political unit (referred to as du, plural duwo) occupied a given geographical area. The people settled together forming towns, villages, or hamlets. The location where the ancestors of a given political unit first made their settlement was chosen as the capital town (also known as Fiadu) of the political unit. Such capital towns began as a small settlement point. As people moved in, the initial town grew to become a large town where the traditional head became the paramount chief or traditional head of the subtribe or the political unit.

Each town, village, or hamlet of a political unit has a traditional head (known as the Togbe). His team of elderly men form the governing body. Usually, the elderly and most senior male who is next in the ancestral line is automatically chosen and appointed a successor—the traditional head who inherits the lineage stool.

Thus, the Ewe traditional polity is characterized by a gerontocratic system of leadership where the elders, by virtue of their age, their great deal of experience in life, and their occupancy of the ancestral stool, are accorded high reverence that gives them a unique opportunity to constitute the governing body of the towns, villages, and hamlets.

Most even believe that the spirits, the deities, and the ancestors govern the people through the appointed traditional elders, be they a household head, clan head, or a subtribe head. In their interaction with the supernatural, the traditional heads are believed to be invested with ancestral spirits and are empowered by the spirits and the deities to govern the people. As such, the heads are given honor, respect, and dignity. They are more often than not regarded as living tin-gods. Consequently, they greatly influence the decision process of the community and of individuals within the community. Their official statements regarding a household, a clan, or the subtribe
are taken as messages from the gods. Hence, these traditional heads are obeyed without hesitancy.

**Points of Contact: Ewe Traditional Religion and Christianity**

The Ewe traditional religion, their social structure, and traditional polity abound in channels for the integration of biblical Christianity and the formation of churches. Awasu quotes Sundkler noting that "the great Biblical terms for the church—the people of God, the Body of Christ, the Household or Family of God—find a vibrant sounding-board in the structures of African social patterns, particularly of the clan."  

Here we might consider some of the main points of contact between Christianity, on one hand, and the Ewe traditional religion, social structure, and traditional polity, on the other hand. Such contact points pave the way for healthy communication of the gospel and, consequently, enhance the success of planting new churches as the gospel is communicated and the converts are grouped into local churches.

**The Relational Dimension**

The Ewe traditional religion and the social structure is a relationship. There is a relational ideal between the

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1 Awasu, 223.

2 Ibid.
living and the supernatural powers. The household, clan, or subtribe has its identity based on being part of and not on what one possesses or what one can do.\(^1\) In a similar way, Christianity is a relationship, not a religion. It is a relationship with Jesus Christ, the God who came down to dwell with men. We are His by nothing less than being (John 1:1-3, 14; 3:5; 1 Cor 6:19; Gal 2:20).

Community or Group Formation

The Ewes are a communally oriented people. Their traditional religion and their social structure provides avenues for people to identify themselves with social groups and with spirits. So far as their social system is concerned, each individual identifies himself/herself as a member of a household, a clan, or a subtribe. With respect to their traditional religion, individuals identify themselves with a personal trowo or a public trowo. Social and religious norms keep people bound in groups, carry out their activities in groups, and, in most instances, decide in groups. Likewise, Christianity is observed as a group formation. There is always a group of believers that carries forward the gospel truth of the Bible to others. Those who believe in the gospel are baptized into a local fellowship of Christian believers. Alan Tippett says that although salvation is an individual affair with God, yet "it

\(^{1}\)Mbiti, 130-133.
demands incorporation into a fellowship group as a concomitant."

Spiritual View of Life

Both Christianity and the Ewe traditional religion accept the spiritual view of life. The Ewes, in their traditional religion, need not to be persuaded of the existence of the supernatural powers, the many and various deities, the spirits, and God the Most High and Creator of all. Christianity also acknowledges it as such (Eph 6:12; Heb 1:7, 14; 1 Tim 4:1; 1 Cor 12:10; Acts 19:12, 13; 1 John 4:1).

Meeting the Needs of the Individual

The Ewe traditional religion and social structure also provide for the well-being and the needs of the individual. A sense of love, concern, care, and oneness is observed among the Ewes. The principle is not just formal equality but true love and mutual reciprocity. The welfare of the community is also the concern of all who live within it.  

Such is what Christianity is all about. It teaches love for one another and to do good to one another, thus fulfilling one another's needs (1 Cor 13:1-7; Matt 25:31-33, 34-35; 1 John 2:9-11; 3:15-19; 4:7-10). Christianity also

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2 Awasu, 224.
casts off evil spirits to set free those in spiritual bondage (Acts 16:16-18).
CHAPTER 4

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES OPERATING AMONG THE EWES

The propagation of the gospel and the planting of Christian churches among the Ewes in the Volta Region of Ghana has been a task mainly undertaken by two streams of institutionalized Christian churches, namely, the historic orthodox mission churches and the "spiritual" independent and indigenous Christian churches.

The evangelistic and church-planting work was initiated by Christian missionaries from abroad, while the work of the "spiritual" independent and indigenous churches has been organized by the indigenous local Christian believers.

This chapter concerns the work of the mission churches, especially the two leading churches—the Evangelical Presbyterian (Bremen Mission) Church and the Roman Catholic Church. Also addressed are the activities of the second stream of Christian churches—the "spiritual" independent Christian churches.

1The "spiritual" independent African churches are addressed under a subtitle, Spiritual Churches.
Christian Mission Churches: 
Historical Perspectives

Christian missionary activities in Ghana date back to 1481 when Christianity was introduced to the west of Africa by the king of Portugal. Concerning this, Blyden wrote: "The Roman Catholic came first. In 1481 the King of Portugal sent ten ships with 500 soldiers, 100 labourers, and a proper complement of priests as missionaries to Elmina."¹

These European missionaries arrived in the wake of trade and colonization "to Christianize the African tribes."² Thus from Elmina,³ Christianity began to spread gradually to other parts of Gold Coast. But the Romish mission thus founded lingered for a while and disappeared.⁴

On the 5th of May, 1847, the North German Missionary Society (Norddeutsche Mission), also known as the Bremen Mission to the Gold Coast, commissioned four missionaries led by Lorenz Wolff to begin the Christian work in Nigeria. When their mission proved impossible, the missionary party (of four) left Nigeria by sea. They made their initial stop

²Ibid., 47.
³Elmina was a slave trade center in the then Gold Coast, now Ghana.
⁴After a period of 241 years, the Romish mission had made no impression, except upon their immediate dependents, and even the little impression they made on them was soon totally obliterated. See Blyden, 48.
at Cape Coast (in the then Gold Coast). They then consulted the Basel missionaries who had arrived in Christianborg in December 1828, after a vain attempt to undertake missionary work in Liberia.¹

Lorenz Wolff and his party were offered the Ewe territory east of the Volta River.² The Bremen Mission, therefore, became the first Christian mission to undertake Christian missionary work among the Ewes of the Volta Region. Amidst pestilence, calamities, and even death, the Bremen Mission sent more missionaries to join the surviving missionaries to open Christian mission stations. Between 1847 and 1859, five mission stations were opened at Peki, Keta, Waya, Anyako, and Uegbe (Kpalime) near Ho.³

The work opened at Peki by Lorenz Wolff and his party marked the birth of Christian churches among the Ewes. As the work continued to grow from Peki, the Bremen Mission in 1854 sent Rev. Benhard Schlegel from West Germany to work among the Ewes and, particularly, to study the Ewe language. He was stationed at Waya. In five years he learned the Ewe language and even produced the first Ewe primer, Ewe grammar, Ewe dictionary, a translation of some Bible

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³Ibid., 271.
stories, and the four Gospels of the Bible into Ewe.\textsuperscript{1} His work, however, was cut short when he died at Anyako on May 1, 1859.\textsuperscript{2}

Paganism, sickness and death, hostility from fetish priests, slave raiders, and the indigenous warriors delayed the planned work and its progress at the five stations of the Bremen Mission. Undaunted by these hazards, the Bremen missionaries worked assiduously, consolidating the work at the mission stations and paying much more attention to establishing village schools at the mission stations. They began a formal education program for the indigenous people, some of whom were periodically sent overseas for further training and for an "on-the-spot" study of European Christian living.\textsuperscript{3} A seminary also was opened at Anyako in 1864, and later moved to Keta. After twelve years, it was moved again to Ho.\textsuperscript{4} Presently, the seminary is located at Peki.

The Bremen Mission continued to work until the church became well established with some trained local, indigenous Ewes. During its first synod held at Kpalime in 1922, the

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., 283.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., 282.
Bremen Mission church was first named "Ewe Church."¹ Four years later, during the second synod at Ho, held 6-7 October, 1926, the name "Ewe Church" was changed to "Ewe Presbyterian Church." As a result of the expansion of the Bremen Mission work beyond the Eweland, the name "Ewe Presbyterian Church" gave way to "Evangelical Presbyterian Church"² at the synod held at Kpedze in 1954.³ From this historical background, we learn that Christianity has been propagated in the Eweland for a century now.

The E. P. Church: Community Development and Church Planting

Besides its main focus of preaching the gospel to Christianize the Ewe subtribes and planting churches among them, the E. P. Church, as a means to reach the Ewes, worked to nurture the concept of Ewe unity and established first and second cycle learning institutions and medical institutions. The church also undertook a number of development projects.

This section first addresses the approach the E. P. Church used to reach the people, then it shows the churches

¹E. P. Church Calendar Review Committee, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana Calendar 1994 (Ho, Ghana: E. P. Church Headquarters, 1944), 2.

²Henceforth, the abbreviation E. P. Church is used for Evangelical Presbyterian Church (also known as Ewe Presbyterian Church).

³E. P. Church Calendar Review Committee, 2.
planted by the church. The role played by the church in the unification of the Ewes is considered first.

In addressing the task of Ewe unification,¹ the Bremen Mission proved to be the most effective of the many agencies that nurtured the concept of Ewe unity. From the embryonic stages of Ewe unification—that is, from the period of World War I to the 1920s—the Bremen Mission helped to maintain a tradition of cooperation and played a significant role in unifying the different sections of the Ewe people scattered under the three countries and split into many subtribes.

In the early stages, the Bremen Mission remained an indivisible whole whose affairs were directed by one head and one governing body administering the Bremen Mission churches among the Ewes in Togo and Gold Coast. Through the use of the same Bible translation and hymnbook, periodically holding the general synod together, and preaching and educating the people on what Ewe unity could bring, the Bremen Mission contributed a good deal to the diffusion of the spirit of Ewe unity and also maintained a healthy cooperation across the frontier between Togo and Gold Coast.

¹With the Ewe people scattered among the three countries of Ghana, Togo, and Benin, and further split into a number of subtribes (chiefdoms and paramountcies), the concept of Ewe unity initiated by the coastal Ewes after World War I was to bring all the scattered and split Ewes under a single administration. Hence began the formation of the Ewe unification movement. See also Amenumev, The Ewe Unification Movement, 1, 28.
Another significant step towards the Ewe unification was the formal training the church provided for the indigenous Ewes. The educated people were made aware of the events around them. They became the proponents and the backbone of the Ewe unification concept and the Ewe Unification Movement which emerged from the Ewes' awareness of their ethnic homogeneity.

Apart from its initial participation in creating Ewe awareness and working out plans for Ewe unity, the Bremen Mission (now the E. P. Church) began to establish educational and medical institutions, and developed agricultural and other projects.

Statistical data pertaining to the activities of the Bremen Mission from the beginning of its missionary work to the first synod of the church are not available. When I met the Rt. Rev. J. Y. Ledo at the E. P. Church headquarters at Ho, he told me much of the information I needed was not available. However, he did direct me to the synod clerk the Rev. L. J. K. Dzakpasu, and he provided me with the statistical information contained in their booklet entitled "Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana--Calendar 1994."

From that booklet the data of Table 2 were extracted to show the extent of the work accomplished by the E. P. Church in Volta Region, particularly among the Ewes.
TABLE 2
THE PRESbyterIES, DISTRICTS, CONGREGATIONS, AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE EVANGELICAL PRESbyTERIAN CHURCH (1847-1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbyteries (fields)</th>
<th>No. of districts</th>
<th>No. of congregations</th>
<th>No. of communicants</th>
<th>No. of non-communicants</th>
<th>No of youth &amp; children</th>
<th>Total no. of Each presbytery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Western</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5,590</td>
<td>4,151</td>
<td>14,984</td>
<td>24,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Southern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4,672</td>
<td>3,434</td>
<td>14,160</td>
<td>22,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Eastern</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>10,650</td>
<td>6,408</td>
<td>21,627</td>
<td>38,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Northern</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>4,341</td>
<td>2,317</td>
<td>7,596</td>
<td>14,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Central</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6,501</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>8,987</td>
<td>18,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Upper North</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>1,669</td>
<td>4,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 West Volta</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>9,822</td>
<td>5,218</td>
<td>8,868</td>
<td>23,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>42,579</td>
<td>25,888</td>
<td>77,891</td>
<td>146,358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These statistical data show that there are seven presbyteries (fields) of the E. P. Church in Ghana. Five are in Ewe territory and two are outside Eweland. Data also indicate that of the total 739 national congregations, 517 of them with a total membership of 118,418 are among the Ewe people. Thus the Ewes alone constitute about 81 percent of the total membership of the E. P. Church in Ghana, and 19 percent of the membership outside the Ewe territory—an

1The five presbyteries (fields) established within the Eweland are the Western, Southern, Eastern, Northern, and the Central presbyteries. The two others, the Upper North and the West Volta presbyteries, lay outside Eweland.
indication of how the E. P. Church is tilted toward working within Eweland.

From 1847 to 1994, an average of 85 converts a year were won into the church. Table 3 shows the number of churches planted every decade beginning from when the church was first formed (in 1847).

**TABLE 3**

**NUMBER OF CHURCHES PLANTED EACH DECADE (1847-1994)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in decades</th>
<th>1847 to 1857</th>
<th>1858 to 1867</th>
<th>1868 to 1877</th>
<th>1878 to 1887</th>
<th>1888 to 1897</th>
<th>1898 to 1907</th>
<th>1908 to 1917</th>
<th>1918 to 1927</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of churches planted</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of churches planted</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many other institutions were established by the E. P. Church among the Ewe-speaking people of Volta Region. These are shown in Table 4.
### TABLE 4

**E. P. CHURCH INSTITUTIONS AMONG THE EWE-SPEAKING PEOPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Institutions</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergartens</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior secondary schools</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior secondary schools</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training college</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medical Institutions</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazareth healing complex</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health post</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Institutions</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social service center</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church farms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. P. Church Institutions Outside Eweland</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training college</td>
<td>1 (Bimbila)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>1 (Saboba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture station</td>
<td>2 (Saboba &amp; Chereponi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's hospital</td>
<td>1 (Sovie)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Christian Mission Activities

The task of propagating the gospel, Christianizing the Ewe tribes, establishing Christian churches, and providing early Christian education was not left to the Bremen Mission alone. Other Christian denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church, the A.M.E. Zion Church, the Apostolic Church, the Salvation Army Church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church also came to propagate the good news of Jesus Christ in Eweland.

The Roman Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church started its missionary thrust in Ghana from Elmina. The work continued and expanded from Elmina to other parts of the country. In May 1890, the Roman Catholic priests from Agovie (in Dahomey) made their first visit to Keta where they later settled and established schools. Two priests, Rev. Fathers Wade and Thuet, made several frantic efforts to establish schools at Agbosome, Anyako, and Tegbi, but their efforts failed.

Finally, in 1897, the priests opened a school at Dzelukofe. Other successful schools were opened then at other places, namely, Denu (1903), Adafienu (1906), Adina (1907), Aflao (1908), and Dzodze (1912). Wade and Thuet evangelized through the established schools because they found it was extremely difficult to convert the people from their traditional religion. The church mainly worked along the coastal Ewe territory within the Anlo subtribe. By
1923, some 4,000 people were members of the church.\(^1\) That same year, Bishop R. R. A. Herman was appointed the first bishop for the Trans-Volta territory.\(^2\)

Residential priests also were appointed for the Catholic circuit at Denu, Dzodze, Abor, and Dzelukofe. Table 5 shows the data\(^3\) pertaining to the institutions established by the Roman Catholic Church.

The total estimated membership of the Roman Catholic Church is over 80,000.\(^4\) The number of Roman Catholic congregations as of February 1995 is estimated at 300.

\(^1\) Fiawoo, 177.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Data on the institutions of learning established by the Roman Catholic Church in the targeted area were obtained from the Volta Regional Education Office by Sampson Adjare, my special attendant and helper when I was conducting my survey at Ho.

\(^4\) Data pertaining to the membership and the number of congregations of the Roman Catholic Church were not readily available. The Roman Catholic father stationed at Ho could not provide any data I wanted.
TABLE 5

INSTITUTIONS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN THE SEVEN DISTRICTS OF EWELAND (FEBRUARY 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Institutions</th>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ho</td>
<td>Ketu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior sec schools</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior sec schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregations</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Christian mission organizations such as the A.M.E. Zion Mission and the Salvation Army joined the Christian mission workers who first operated within the territory of the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. Like the first missionaries, the A.M.E. Zion and Salvation Army missionary workers from abroad established schools and community service centers and planted new churches. However, these mission churches did not work more extensively in terms of establishing schools and planting churches as the E. P. Church had already done. In fact, the E. P. Church had won so much the admiration and reception of the people that later mission churches never experienced the
acceptance of the Ewe people to the extent they had accepted the E. P. Church.

Only one particular mission church established later successfully reached the people—the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Even though missionaries from abroad were not those who led the Seventh-day Adventist Church to enter the Volta Region of the Ewe-speaking people, the Adventist Church still is considered by the Ewes as a missionary church. This is because missionaries from abroad led out in the church when it first came to Ghana. We now review the witnessing activities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—the church I believe should plant more churches among the Ewe-speaking people of Volta Region.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Seventh-day Adventist Church entered Eweland long after many of the mission churches and the indigenous "spiritual" churches were established, yet the church gradually is gaining more and more acceptance among the Ewe-speaking people. Conscious efforts are being made by the present churches to plant more churches among the Ewes through the proclamation of the gospel.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church first entered the southern section of Eweland in October 1974, when Pastor Matthew Ango Bediako conducted an evangelistic effort at Ho.

1The plans and efforts of the Seventh-day Adventist churches are addressed fully in chapter 6.
The converts won gathered together to form a church which continued to meet for prayers and Bible study at the Social Welfare Center at Ho. Before 1974, Adventists had started working in the northern section of Volta Region—from Hohoe northwards—and had planted a church at Jasikan and another in Hohoe.

Throughout the Volta Region the Seventh-day Adventist Church has established thirty-seven congregations with a total membership of 1,049. Of the thirty-seven congregations, twelve are in the southern section of the Volta Region. The total membership of these twelve churches in the south (among the Ewes) is nearly 260. Table 6 shows the statistical data on congregations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Volta Region.

**TABLE 6**

**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CONGREGATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP IN VOLTA REGION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of congregations</th>
<th>Total membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jasikan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hohoe</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aflao</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The statistical data of the Seventh-day Adventist congregations and membership and the number of village schools established were compiled and provided by S. B. Nyanned, a clerk at the headquarters of the South Ghana Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Volta Region is part of the South Ghana Conference.
When one considers evangelizing and planting churches among the Ewes of the southern part of Volta Region, one must remember that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has only one organized church at Ho with ten smaller churches within the Ho District. The total membership of these eleven Adventist congregations is 257. The two churches at Ho and Mamfi-Kumasi are the largest with memberships of 103 and 115, respectively.

During my field research in Volta Region, I studied the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the southern part of the Volta Region. The statistics I found are shown in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total membership</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of indigenous Ewes</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of other ethnicities</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing members</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of a total membership of 257, about 30 percent constitute indigenous Ewes; 57 percent constitute membership from other ethnic backgrounds (mainly Akans who have settled
in the area for employment, marriage, family relations, or otherwise); and about 30 percent missing members.

Further study of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at Ho revealed results similar to the analysis of the entire membership of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in the southern section of the Volta Region.

I found that of the total membership of 103, 25 percent are indigenous Ewes. Many of these do not actively participate in church programs (such as the Sabbath School, the personal witnessing program, and evening prayer meetings). Ten percent of the membership are backslidden; 15 percent are missing members. Fifty percent of the church membership are Adventists of other ethnic groups (mainly Akans).

Besides planting congregations, the Seventh-day Adventist Church also has begun to establish schools. Table 8 shows data concerning educational institutions established by the Church within the seven districts of the southern part of the Volta Region.
TABLE 8

S.D.A. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITHIN EWELAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten/preschool</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school(s)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior secondary school(s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior secondary school(s)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first Seventh-day Adventist primary school was established at Ho during the 1984/85 academic year. In 1989, a second primary school was opened. The third and fourth primary schools were opened at Kpetoe and Kporta in 1991 and 1992, respectively. The only junior secondary school was established December 1994 at Mamfi-Kumasi.

Success and Failure of the Mission Churches

The efforts of the mission churches to reach the Ewe-speaking people (of Volta Region) with the gospel were successful in one aspect and a failure in another. The success was centered on the means—such as establishing village schools, centers for civic education, and community health institutions—to get the gospel to the people rather than actually planting churches among the people through the proclamation of the gospel.
Establishing schools in the villages became paramount. The missionaries thought schools should be established first before church and Christian community. Wilson Awasu quotes Wilkie to buttress the shift of focus: "The nucleus of our work is usually the village school. We start with that and use it to approach and win the confidence of the people. Then comes the church and the Christian community."¹

The missionaries assiduously worked to educate the people. Awasu quotes Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of the Republic of Ghana, thus, "Our primary education in fact goes back as far as 1752 and was begun by missionaries and continued by them for a very long time. . . . It must be admitted that we owe a considerable debt of gratitude to the missionaries for the contribution they made."² Due to the emphasis on education and such projects, the original goal—"Church followed by Christian community"—was never actually fulfilled, and, consequently, the people could not get any spiritual satisfaction and guidance from these mission churches as expected.³

Five main factors contributed to the lack of success by the mission churches in their initial effort to bring Christ to the people. These factors also led many of the converted Ewe-speaking believers to revert to their traditional gods

¹Wilkie quoted in Awasu, 184.
²Dr. Kwame Nkrumah quoted in ibid., 185.
³Ibid.
and spirits for either complementary or supplementary spiritual power and influenced some able individual believers to begin independent Christian churches of their own when they recognized the failure of the missionaries and the mission churches to satisfy the spiritual quest of the people.

Factor #1—Foreignness of Christianity

The historic mission churches were planted and more or less retained their foreign garb. Many missionaries used the tabula rasa approach which regarded any form of traditional African worship as paganistic and evil. Awasu pointed out that "instead of authentic biblical Christianity, the missionaries communicated Christianity highly contextualized in the West."¹ D. K. Fiawoo also noted:

Perhaps the most destructive single factor in Christianity is the uncompromising stand of the missionaries who believed that their religion is entirely opposed to the indigenous religious institutions and social customs and that it is his responsibility to supplant these. . . . The African is made to feel that he must renounce the essence of his African background in order to become a genuine Christian.²

Awasu also indicated that throughout the history of the mission churches in Ghana, Togo, and Benin,

African voices have protested their foreignness. These voices have, however, largely been ignored. . . . The

¹Ibid., 208, 209.

²Fiawoo, 192.
frustration thus engendered has led some Ewe to react by forming the "spiritual" churches, the second stream of bifurcated Ewe Christianity.¹

Factor #2—Educational Emphasis

Although the missionaries planted churches and won converts, their greater emphasis apparently was on "polishing up" the indigenous African by providing formal education and granting scholarships to some converts for further studies abroad. Thus the essential appeal and benefits of the missionary churches somehow were seen in terms of education, its accorded prestige, social power, and material goods.² Mission churches became synonymous with Western-oriented status. Consequently, Christianity was accepted only superficially and really did not integrate into the Ewe life—thus hampering the planting of churches among the Ewes.

Factor #3—Unmet Spiritual Needs

The mission churches did not meet the deepest spiritual needs of the Ewe people. The missionaries sought to modify behavior on the surface level without addressing the deeper level of beliefs and basic assumptions, values, and worldviews of the Ewe people. When traditional beliefs and practices of converted individuals were condemned and abolished, no substitutes were provided initially by the

¹Awasu, 186.
²Ibid., 209.
missionaries, other than schools, to give the people a complete and satisfying spiritual answer. The converted believers sang songs foreign to them—songs that were composed abroad with tunes and rhythms according to Western taste and culture.

A kind of religious vacuum was created and the indigenous converts could find neither fulfillment in their newfound faith nor assurance of security against the spiritual forces. The failure of mission churches to address issues pertaining to the world of spirits and their influence on the living made the average mission church member feel very much unprotected in the church. Consequently, though church members retained their names in the church records, they sneaked out to seek help and protection from their traditional religionists and participated in traditional or ancestral religious practices and rituals.

Factor #4—Syncretism

The early mission churches and their missionaries committed some fundamental mistakes that created fertile ground for breeding syncretism, the blending of traditional animistic beliefs with Christian biblical truths. This adversely affected the mission churches. The first mistake was made by both the Bremen and Catholic missions. Both sought to refine the outside of their followers by establishing educational institutions. They did not present
adequate or full biblical truths to encourage converts
either to divorce themselves from their traditional beliefs
and practices or to deal with their spiritual problems. In
other words, no truth was encountered. The converts
accepted the half-presented Christian message but still held
onto their traditional beliefs and practices.

The Bremen Mission failed to present vital biblical
teachings that address the deep, submerged religious beliefs
and worldviews of the Ewe people even though it repudiated
and condemned many aspects of Ewe traditional beliefs and
practices. Many converts, therefore, became church members
without changing their worldview. Philip Steyne notes,

As one becomes a Christian, particularly from
animistic beliefs, two types of encounter are experienced:
the "truth encounter" and the "power encounter." Upon
receiving the biblical message, the animist is converted
with the truth of the Bible. A struggle goes on in his/her
mind as the truth pierces through to give him/her
conviction, direction, encouragement, and strength. When
the power of the gospel (Rom 1:16, 17) is thus encountered,
the animist convert recognizes God, His nature and power, in
the truth which also presents a new paradigm through which
the convert perceives reality.

This encounter also reveals to the convert that God in
Christ has defeated the principalities and powers of Satan
in this world (Eph 6:10-13). The animist convert then, with
new perception and understanding, recognizes the
baselessness and the void of his/her animistic beliefs and
practices. The knowledge of God and belief in Him initially
becomes a shocking encounter, which Gailyn van Rheenen says,
might be called truth encounter (see van Rheenen, 61, 272).

The other type of experience is the "power encounter." This is when demonic and evil spiritual powers operating on
an everyday level of life are confronted and defeated by the
power of God (e.g., 1 Kgs 18:19-39; Eph 6:13; Luke 4:33-37;
8:26-34; Acts 13:6-12; 8:6, 7, 9-25). This encounter with
the demonic inroads of society, whether personalized or
institutionalized, is referred to as power encounter.
"Many . . . converts [hold] the Bible on one hand and their traditional religion in the other."¹

Another mistake of the Bremen Mission was its attempt to communicate the gospel to the indigenous people on an intellectual level rather than on the popular level of the common people. Thus the concept of spiritual power prevalent in the Ewe traditional religion was left unaddressed. The church avoided any form of power encounter. Instead, in its own Western thought, it dealt with the natural powers that could be empirically analyzed while disavowing any power that could not be perceived, studied, and analyzed by the five senses.

The church's neglect of addressing the spiritual problems and the traditional beliefs of the people left many converts confused and fearful. Many Christian believers attended the mission churches but secretly reverted to their old traditional forms of religion, thus blending two religious beliefs and reflecting a type of syncretism. Gailyn van Rheenen, in the light of such situations, points out that

when Christianity does not address the problems dealt with by low religion, new converts will respond in one of two ways. Each of those responses reflects a type of syncretism. The first response is reversion to the traditional practices of low religion. . . . The second response is surface accommodation.²


²van Rheenen, 62.
A different mistake that created and strengthened syncretism among the Ewe Christians was made by the Roman Catholic missionaries and their mission churches. The Catholic missionaries, in their desire to win many, baptized "converted" individuals into their churches while ignoring the traditional beliefs and practices the converts engaged in.

In this approach, the missionaries failed to present any biblical truth against necromancy (Deut 18:11), the worship of other gods (Exod 20:3-6), the world of evil spirits (Eph 6:10-12), the doctrines of demons (1 Tim 4:1), the state of the dead, and other vital Bible truths.

Factor #5—Conflicting Mixture of Christian Teachings

Both the Bremen and Catholic missionaries created a conflicting mixture of teachings and emphases that confused Ewe Christian believers and caused them to backslide into syncretism. Instead of dealing with issues from biblical perspectives, both denominations chose their own approach to the neglect of vital biblical teachings. Emery H. Bancroft addressed the essence of dealing with such beliefs and practices. He wrote:

It is evident that the relationship of the Scriptures on the doctrine of demons is vital and positive. Actual communication with unseen spirits, their influence on the acts and destinies of individuals and nations, and demon possession are taught clearly and unmistakably in both the Old and the New Testaments. These teachings are not occasional and incidental, but underlie all biblical history and doctrine. The Bible
recognizes not only the material world, but a spiritual world intimately connected with it, and spiritual beings both good and bad who have access to and influence for good or ill, the world’s inhabitants. The testimony of Scriptures and what is to be derived from sources outside the Scriptures are mutually confirmatory on this subject. The importance of a careful and un-prejudiced consideration of what the Bible teaches is apparent.¹

Another mistake the Roman Catholic Church made was its teaching and emphasis on the veneration of Mary and other Catholic saints. Many Ewe Christian believers could not see any difference between the veneration of Catholic saints and the veneration of ancestors who are considered to be African traditional saints. To the Ewe Catholic, their gods and their ancestors were equated with the Catholic Mary and other Catholic saints. Gwinyai H. Muzorewa states that "the ancestor becomes a saint, charged by God with the responsibility of insuring the welfare of the people of his tribe."²

Converts took symbols from the Roman Catholic Church and attributed animistic meanings to them. For example, the water used by the Roman Catholic priest to make a sign of the cross on a convert’s forehead (as a method of Roman Catholic baptism) was taken to mean that holy water could heal one’s sickness and protect one from evil spirits. The


Bible was considered a magic book that could protect, heal, and work miracles, especially when placed under the pillow of the sick, the worried, and those frightened by the evil spirits. Such beliefs make it apparent that Ewe traditional religious beliefs and the Roman Catholic beliefs and rituals have been blended.

These (five) main factors and others created the problem of double allegiance for the Ewe Christians and made many of them quite nominal. The lack of biblical teachings, coupled with the inability to provide for the spiritual hunger of the Ewe people, left many converts vulnerable to religious persuasion of all kinds, creating a religious dilemma. Consequently, many Ewes who had been converted into these mission churches retained membership in name only while they consulted traditional religionists and supplicated other religions for certain spiritual answers.¹

In their desire to find a way to fulfill their spiritual needs and to break down the foreignness and the spiritual stupor of the mission churches, many individuals broke away from their mother churches claiming to be directed by the Holy Spirit to begin a church that would provide the much-needed spiritual answers to the problems of the people.

These charismatic leaders and their activities (i.e., healing, organized prayer meetings, and retreats) led to the

¹Awasu, 3.
formation of diverse spiritual churches, winning many converts. These spiritual, independent, and indigenous churches became the second stream of Ewe Christianity.

**Spiritual Churches**

The spiritual churches are independent and indigenous African Christian churches which began after the mission churches had long established their presence in Ghana. They were established by local charismatic leaders who repudiated the mission churches and led in the formation of these indigenous congregations. This second stream of Christian churches is growing at a fantastic rate.

These African Christian churches are called "spiritual" churches because they emphasize concerns that were overlooked and/or neglected by the mission churches. We can consider these emphases here.

1. Unlike the mission churches, the African independent churches emphasized more faith healing,¹ prayers in the form of weekly all-night prayer meetings, and bi-weekly or, in some churches, monthly all-day prayer and fasting. They pray aloud at their worship services, shouting and crying for their prayers to be answered.

2. Whereas the worship services of the mission churches were cold and too formal, reducing worshippers to mere spectators without much participation, the spiritual churches were (and still are) characterized by many activities that allow members to actively participate in church worship. Many claim to speak in tongues in the form of ecstatic gibberish utterances. Such churches claim that speaking in tongues indicates the church is filled with the Holy Spirit as in the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11). Hence the church is a Spirit-filled church.

3. Many members of "spiritual" churches claim to be possessed by the Holy Spirit. They shake their bodies all over, some roll on the ground, and others prophesy, usually concerning a calamity or misfortune that is to befall an individual, group of people, or a community.

4. Some "spiritual" believers claim to experience forms of trance, visions, and dreams. As they narrate these experiences, others interpret the dreams and translate the tongues being spoken.

5. Many of the leaders of second-stream churches claim to be prophets or special messengers of God. They are referred to mostly by the title "Prophet." These leaders claim they have the power to heal all manner of disease and the ability to dispossess witches from their evil spirit. They claim they have the spiritual power to provide the much-needed spiritual protection for their church members.
and all those who come for consultation on matters that bother them.

6. At the worship services, the prophet-leader lights candles and burns incense to provide an aura of spiritual solemnity and to drive away evil spirits that may attempt to interrupt the spiritual programs of the church. Spiritual church leaders also bless containers of water brought to church by church members. The blessed water is considered holy and is believed to cure all manner of body ailments when applied where one has pain.

7. Church members believe that the issues of everyday life that bring pain, sorrow, frustration, discouragement, and disappointments are attacks from the devil and his fallen angels. When such calamities befall any member, that member is informed of the prophet-leader’s prayers and fasting on the member’s behalf.

These emphases show that second-stream Christian churches lay more stress on power encounter Christianity that seems to attract many of the members of the mission churches. Consequently, many mission-church members sneak to these spiritual churches for answers to their problems and to worship with the people.

Another aspect that initially enhanced the growth of these spiritual churches among the Ewes and throughout Ghana lies in the independence and indigenousness of the churches.

\(^1\)Awasu, 187.
They are referred to as independent because they are independent from mission support and control. They are referred to as indigenous churches because their worship is within the African cultural milieu. Their worship is characterized by drumming, hand clapping, dancing, and singing African-composed songs—songs that are pregnant with rich African rhythm, meaning, and touch.

In summary, one can say that the spiritual churches were established to tackle the issues of everyday life, to confront the spirit world, and to address the desire of the people for a more culturally relevant church. They communicate the gospel to the people on the popular level of low religion—not high (formal) religion. Sundkler puts it in a more simple but cogent way: the main concern of the second-stream Christian churches was to contextualize Christianity for the Ewe people. However, contextualization in most cases raises problems that may be very detrimental.

Problems of the Spiritual Churches

In spite of faith healing, other power-encounter activities of the spiritual churches, and the contextualized Christianity which appeals so much to the cultural and spiritual taste of the Ewe people, members of these second-

---

stream churches are falling into nominalism, losing their faith due to a variety of reasons. Some major reasons are pointed out here.

First, the problem of bifurcation is created by the existence of the two streams of Christian churches. This causes a dilemma for the unchurched because they actually do not know which of the two streams of Christian churches to join.

Second, the lack of biblical teachings in these spiritual churches is problematic. The organization has no moral standard, no church discipline, and no doctrinal direction. Therefore, no truth encounter convicts the people and shows them the right path. Awasu noted that "the spiritual churches did not present to the Ewe the 'whole counsel of God' (Acts 20:27) which we have called authentic biblical Christianity."¹

Instead of truth to consolidate members in the faith, power-encounter activities have been emphasized even to the extent of pointing out and informing some church members who of their respective family members possess witch spirits. These accusations, many unfounded and false, have caused much dissension, conflict, strong ill feelings, and litigations within many families.

Third, the spiritual churches are often money-making businesses where all the financial income (such as

¹Awasu, 210.
offerings, tithes—where tithing is practiced—and financial contributions during end-of-year financial harvest) goes to the prophet-leader. Hardly ever does the money go to set up learning and/or health institutions or other projects to improve the community as is done by the mission churches. The prophet-leader enriches him or herself solely. This practice has caused many to lose faith in the spiritual churches.

Fourth, some deceptions come in the form of visions the prophet-leader claims to have had about church members. In some instances, the leader instructs couples to divorce on the grounds of a received vision. Many a time the prophet-leader turns around and remarries the divorced spouse on the basis of another vision.¹ In the power of the "Holy Spirit," atrocities have been committed, pain caused, and disappointment brought to many husbands and wives attending these spiritual churches.

¹One young man, Bright Karikari, a one-time prophet and leader of a spiritual church, was converted (into the SDA church) during an evangelistic effort in 1989. In his public testimony praising the Lord for bringing him to the truth and to His church—the SDA church—Bright told of the demonic spirits the spiritual church leaders used to charm their respective church members. He also said that all the leaders meet once a year with the spirit of the sea (the goddess of the sea) and many other spiritual beings to consult and to ask for increased power to work miracles. He revealed many of their secrets. After the testimony, he told the church members that for what he had revealed, he would have to pay for with his life. He said he felt a compulsion to reveal what he knew and to stand for the truth even unto death. About two years later, Bright died.
Fifth, the leaders of these spiritual churches appear to be using a spiritual power different from that of the Holy Spirit. Many have come to realize that the spiritual churches offer nothing more than old traditional beliefs and practices in disguise. This has caused the spiritual churches to lose members—some reverting to the mission churches "despite the fact that Westernized Christianity does not meet their deepest spiritual felt needs."¹

To the unchurched, bifurcation has become a stumbling block. Members of both streams of Christian churches are confronted by a double allegiance where, in their state of spiritual confusion, they divide their allegiance between going to their respective Christian churches while consulting with traditional religious practitioners.

In short, the spiritual churches that began with vim and enthusiasm and mushroomed here and there, initially winning many converts, like the mission churches, have lost their influence and attraction. On this fact, Awasu wrote:

The spiritual churches also did not ascertain with accuracy the depth of Ewe spiritual yearning before they began and ended with meeting only some of the felt needs in a fashion similar to Ewe religious practices. . . . Then too, like the historic mission churches, the spiritual churches did not present to the Ewe the whole counsel of God. . . . For most Ewe people neither stream of Ewe Christianity has successfully forged a fitting improvement on Ewe religion.²

¹Awasu, 209.
²Ibid., 210.
With this disappointment and frustration, "many Ewe Christians continue to take recourse to traditional religious practices. They are caught, therefore, with two allegiances, both of which are nominal."¹

Because of the failure on the part of both streams of Christian churches and the desire of the Ewe people to seek the truth and look for the true church, I have developed a strategy to plant Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region.

¹Ibid.
CHAPTER 5

INTERVIEWS, SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, AND ANALYSIS OF THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT FOR THE PLANTING OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCHES AMONG THE EWES OF THE VOLTA REGION

Chapter 3 addresses the traditional religious beliefs, practices, and worldview of the Ewe people. The activities of the two streams of Christian churches among the Ewes are considered in chapter 4. Both chapters give the traditional picture of the Ewes, the Christian churches that operated among them, and the general response of the Ewes to the two streams of Christian churches.

This chapter presents the interviews and the survey that I conducted to gather data and the analysis of the data to obtain a clearer picture of the immediate context of the Ewes for planting Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Volta Region. The interviews come first, followed by the survey and its analysis.

Interviews

The objective of the interviews was to learn why the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not made much impact on the people. This interview was the tool used to discover the challenges and factors that militated (or are currently
militating) against the evangelistic work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Whatever hindrances there are must be identified and addressed in order to enhance the growth of the church in the Volta Region.

I began my research by seeking out periodicals, books, magazines, and SDA archives concerning the work of the church in the Volta Region. No written document on the earlier work\(^1\) of the church in the Volta Region immediately was available either from the office of the SDA South Ghana Conference\(^2\) (SGC) or the office of the West African Union Mission\(^3\) (WAUM).

In the absence of published work, I interviewed five Seventh-day Adventist ministers who had worked previously in the Volta Region. These were Pastors P. K. Asareh and J. K. Affum, both among the senior pastors who have worked in Hohoe and Jasikan area which is northwards from Ho; Pastor M. A. Bediako, who opened the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ho; and Sampson Adjare and C. K. Abia, who currently are among the pastors who oversee the few

\(^1\)The only document available contained statistical data (provided to me by Bro. S. B. Nyanneh) that cover the period from 1972 onwards. These data are presented in chapter 4.

\(^2\)The territory covered by the South Ghana Conference includes the Volta Region.

\(^3\)The South Ghana Conference of the SDA Church is one of the fields under the administration of the West African Union Mission with headquarters in Accra, Ghana.
Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Volta Region, especially the southern zone from Ho southward to the sea.

These interviews revealed some reasons why the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not had much impact on the Ewe people nor firmly established its presence in the Volta Region. Some of the major factors, as gathered from the pastors interviewed, are as follows:

1. The church did not make any conscious effort to study the Ewe people to find out the most appropriate and effective approach to work among the Ewes of the Volta Region. If the proclamation of the biblical truth presented by the SDA Church was combined initially with a proper knowledge of the Ewe people, their traditional religion, and their worldview, the most effective way could have been realized and many Ewes could have been converted for the Master.

1The ten people who helped me conduct my survey at Ho reported to me how surprising it was to learn that the majority (over 80 percent according to their estimation) of the indigenous Ewe people they contacted have not heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Yet it has been established there since 1972. The survey is presented later in this chapter.

2SIM International made a conscious effort to study the Ewe people in order to find out the best strategy that could be most effectively employed to enter the Volta Region in a church-planting ministry. See Howard Brant, "The Volta Survey: A Study Into Strategic Factors Related to SIM International's Possible Entry Into Ghana's Volta Region" (D.Miss. project, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Portland, Oregon, 1985), iii, 4.
2. The church, in its endeavor to enter the Volta Region, initially depended mainly on public evangelism. This method has been used over almost all Ghana as the means to convert souls to the gospel. I learned during the interviews that many major as well as modest public evangelistic efforts have been conducted by Ghanaian SDA ministers and even SDA preachers from abroad.

Even though the public-evangelism approach has worked in some parts of Ghana, it was not successful among the Ewes for three reasons. First, the Christian churches prevented their church members from attending public evangelistic meetings. The churches near where the public evangelistic effort was conducted organized programs in their own respective churches to hold the attention of their members and to keep them from attending the public evangelistic efforts.

Second, the public evangelistic meetings created conflicts between the SDA Church and the Christian churches in the other two streams of churches. The SDA Church was accused of "sheep stealing"¹ by the other Christian churches. Thus, the concerted action of both streams of Christian churches militated against the SDA Church.

Third, public evangelism does not appeal to Ewes who are involved in their traditional religion. Their felt

¹Sheep stealing is a term used to indicate one church working to get members from other existing Christian churches in the area.
needs and their spiritual problems are not addressed by the public preaching.

3. Initially, the church lacked trained ministers to present the gospel in a more appealing, convincing, convicting way without incurring conflict.

4. Traditional SDA beliefs were presented to the Ewe people in an uninteresting and, oftentimes, a controversial manner. Too often the speakers ended their preaching with arguments which caused the people to repudiate the biblical doctrines presented at the public meetings. The Sabbath, clean and unclean meats, earrings, and the law of God were some topics presented in a condemning way to the people, which made them very hard to accept. Therefore, the SDA church was regarded by the Ewe people and other Christian churches as very legalistic, strict, and encumbered with burdensome rules. This perception hindered many from accepting the Adventist message.

5. No initial power-encounter events were evident to convince people to accept the SDA Church.

6. The SDA Church did not enter the Volta Region with a strong, united program. Instead of declaring the region an unentered area where as much attention and resources as possible were to be directed—planning with and getting all the SDA churches within the South Ghana Conference involved in a season of concerted prayer and combined financial support—few SDA pastors were "pushed" into this
comparatively difficult territory. Some ministerial workers even felt that being asked to go work in the Volta Region was a form of punishment given intentionally by the church administrators to pastors who were considered uncompromising or a threat to their own leadership position.

7. Many traditional religionists and herbalists used evil spiritual powers to cast misfortune and calamity upon some innocent people. This, coupled with the evil deeds of the sorcerers and the witches and many other terrifying stories\(^1\) about the Ewes, made it extremely difficult to persuade national workers of other tribes\(^2\) to work among the Ewes in the Volta Region.

8. The eating habits of many Ewe people were a barrier that hindered some from accepting the Adventist message. Many of the seafoods and other meats consumed by the people were classified as unclean (Lev 11). The people found it extremely burdensome to give up their favorite foods in order to become Seventh-day Adventists.

\(^1\)The Ewes are noted as people who possess spiritual power to cast spells on other people to destroy them. Some even believe that some Ewes used to lay in ambush to kidnap people, especially children, and slaughter them and remove some body parts to make talismans and to sacrifice the rest of the body to their gods.

\(^2\)Initially the Akans were assigned mainly to work among the Ewes in the Volta Region. The SDA Church grew fast among the Akan-speaking people. Consequently, the Akans were the church workers who were transferred to begin the gospel work in unentered areas like the Volta Region.
In addition to their use of unclean foods, many Ewes, especially among the male ruling heads of the families, clans, and tribal heads, had a big problem with consumption of alcohol. To ask the people to desist from using alcohol and their favorite foods as preached by the SDA Church was tantamount to removing a very vital ingredient in their personal, social, and religious life. Such a prohibition was viewed as destroying their very life.

In their personal lives, strong drink has been highly regarded as part of man's diet. Strong drink is served at their funeral ceremonies and other social gatherings to keep the people happy and strong for whatever activities the people are engaged in. Locally made alcoholic drinks and, more often, imported gin were (and are still) used in their religious system (by the heads of the families, clans, and tribes, as well as traditional practitioners) to pour libations to the gods and the ancestral spirits. Failure to use alcohol to pour libation is to invite wrath and misfortune from the spiritual powers that be.

9. The proclamation of the Sabbath was another big problem for the Ewe people. Most of their funeral and social ceremonies usually are organized on Saturdays. The funeral ceremony is a socio-religious event that is not only organized for people to show their sympathy and condolence but also has attached to it some spiritual connotations.
It is commonly believed that when the funeral rite\(^\dagger\) is performed at the funeral ceremony, two important things happen: first, the dead person officially and finally is sent off to the land of the spirits. By this same rite, it is believed also that the ancestors come to the funeral ceremony disguised in the form of human beings, and some of them in their spiritual form come to welcome their family or clan relative (who has passed from the living to the dead) into the spiritual world.

Funeral ceremonies, therefore, are very important occasions for the reunion of the ancestral spirits and the living. It is also a send-off and a welcome ceremony for the dead. Funeral ceremonies, therefore, are organized amidst drumming, dancing, drinking, pouring of libation, as well as eating and throwing food before the shrine for the gods and the spirits.

Many other social functions and activities also take place on Saturdays. One minister told me that funeral ceremonies and social gatherings occupy so prominent a place in the life of the Ewes and that they are so deeply rooted in the people, that it will take a series of miracles from God to call the attention of the people to His holy Sabbath day.

\(^\dagger\)During the funeral rites, libations are poured to the ancestors and a long incantation is recited, tracing the major highlights of the family history. A prepared magical solution is sprinkled around the room and the house where the dead person had lived.
10. Finally, the SDA church initially overlooked the social structure and the traditional polity of the Ewes. The church did not realize how significant both aspects were in the decision making of the individual Ewe, especially when it comes to leaving the traditional religion to join a church of a different denomination.

Instead of adopting an approach that could lead to identifying the church with the leadership of society—the family heads, clan elders, and influential individuals within the society—the church ignorantly adopted the Western approach of communicating the gospel with the idea that conversion is only an individual experience. The SDAs expected individuals to boldly step out at their public evangelistic efforts to join the church and totally failed to recognize the validity of the corporate dimension of conversion.

The elders and the leaders in the society viewed the initial approach of the SDA Church as a demonstration that disregarded their leadership, social structure, and traditional polity. Thus the church was viewed by the elders as being very disrespectful. Such a view spread quickly amidst many other unfounded allegations against the church. Consequently, the few individuals who showed some interest in the church gradually withdrew due to ridicule and resistance from their respective family members,
friends, and elders. The opposition the church faced in this instance was more social than religious.

The Survey

In developing a strategy for the planting of churches, one vital step was needed. That was to gather current information about the people among whom the church-planting ministry was to take place. It was essential to obtain, know, and understand the immediate context for successful planting of churches in the Volta Region.

With that in mind, I used a survey as a tool to collect data for analysis of the immediate context of the Ewes. The survey was conducted in Ho, the Volta regional capital. Ho was chosen for the survey for several reasons.

First, I was told that Ho, the regional capital, is the place where all subunits are fairly well represented. It is an urban center where one can observe both the modern and rural types of structures that reflect the characteristics of the typical modern city dweller as well as the traditional mentality and its way of life.

Ho is also the regional administrative center, a comparatively large urban center where developments in science and technology, educational and cultural reforms, and many other ideas begin and spread outward to the uttermost parts of the region.

Furthermore, since I intended to focus initially on Ho southward to the sea for developing a strategy for planting
churches, I considered Ho the appropriate and most strategic place to conduct the survey.

Survey Assistants

While in Ghana to conduct the survey, I contacted Pastor Peter Osei Mensah, the then president of the South Ghana Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists. He recommended ten SGC workers to be survey assistants in conducting the survey. They would distribute and administer the survey questionnaire.

The assistants were chosen among individuals who come from the Volta Region and are well acquainted and well informed about the Ewe people. I conducted an orientation seminar in order to give them an insight into what the survey was all about, and how the survey questionnaires were to be distributed and administered.

Distribution and Administration of the Survey Questionnaires

Each of the survey assistants was assigned to a specific area of the regional capital to distribute and administer the answering of 100 survey questionnaires. By assigning specific areas, we had a fairly wide coverage of the city, thus avoiding the problem of surveying only one section of the city that would not be reflective of the cross section of the subunits represented in the city.

The assistants randomly selected people to answer the questions. They also used a method which enhanced the
retrieval of many survey questionnaires and made sure that no one person answered two questionnaires. In all, 1,000 survey questionnaires were given out, each survey assistant having 100. At the end of the exercise, 888 were collected.

The assistants gave out a questionnaire and waited on the respondents to answer it and then collected it right away. On the average, it took twenty minutes for respondents to answer a questionnaire. This approach enabled the assistants to give clarifications that respondents asked for. Also, they were able to collect about 90 percent of the survey questionnaires. The 10 percent not retrieved were mostly questionnaires given to respondents and left with them to be collected later. Some of the respondents travelled and did not leave the questionnaire with anyone. Others kept procrastinating until the data-collection exercise ended. Collection of the data for analysis took one week.

The Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire contained thirty-five multiple-choice questions to make it easier for respondents. It was also easier to prepare for computer quantitative analysis.

The main objective of the questionnaire was to obtain the current values and religious views of the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. Therefore, the survey questionnaire was designed to provide the current data
needed for computer analysis. It was divided into five parts. The questions in each part were designed in such a particular way that the responses could be analyzed to obtain the perspective of the Ewe people in the two streams of Christian churches, the Ewe traditional religion, their worldview, and their outlook of reality. The survey questionnaire used for the data collection is found in Appendix A.

Analysis of Data

From the total 888 survey questionnaires that were returned for computer analysis, the data indicated that 50.1 percent of the respondents were male and 49.9 percent were female. The survey, therefore, presents a balanced view of both genders on the issues that have been analyzed and presented.

Another essential factor considered in the analysis was the age groups of the respondents. The analysis reflected the views of those between the ages of 13 and 44 years. The analysis, therefore, is a reflection of the views of several generations. Of the respondents, 23.6 percent were between the ages of 13-17, 29.7 percent between 18-25, 34.1 percent between 26-44 years, 9.7 percent between 45-55 years, and 2.9 percent for those above 55 years.

1See Appendix B for the results of the computer analysis of the data collected through the survey. Analysis of answers given to question 1 shows the percentages of males and females that responded to the questionnaire.
The educational level of the respondents also was analyzed. The outcome shows that 4.9 percent of the respondents have no formal education, 24.7 percent had up to the level of elementary\(^1\) school (which forms the first cycle of formal education), and 66 percent had an education up to the second cycle\(^{2}\) educational level. University graduates constitute 4.4 percent of the respondents. This analysis reflecting the educational level of the people gives a clue

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\(^1\)Elementary-school education consists of the primary school and the middle school. The primary school is an educational facility which caters to pupils between the ages of 6-13. Education at this level starts from class one and ends at class six. The middle school caters to pupils in the 13-18-years group. At this level, education starts from middle form 1 and ends at middle form 4. These two stages (primary and middle school) form the first cycle of formal education. This first cycle prepares pupils for the middle-school leaving-certificate examination which is taken during the final year. It also prepares pupils to enter secondary school through the common entrance examination which is taken during the second or third year of the middle school.

\(^2\)The second cycle educational level includes not only the secondary schools, but the commercial/technical and vocational schools as well. The secondary school educational facility caters to pupils aged not less than 11 years old. Education at this level—for 5 years—leads to an award of General Certificate of Education—GCE Ordinary Level. A further 2-year course in three or four subject areas leads to an award of GCE-Advanced Level.

The commercial/technical schools cater to pupils aged at least 14 years and provides three or four years full-time training. The commercial training includes clerical duties such as typing, record keeping, and bookkeeping. Training in technical schools, on the other hand, includes carpentry, joinery, electrical installation, plumbing, autobody repairs, and refrigeration. Vocational schools offer training in cooking, sewing, home science, and home management. Students in these institutions are prepared for the Royal School of Arts (RSA), the Chartered Institute of Secretaries (CIS), or the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) Certificate examinations.
as to how to approach the people in the church-planting ministry.

Religious affiliation was another facet of the survey. The computer analysis revealed that 96.8 percent of the respondents are Christians, 1.4 percent are Muslims, 1 percent adhere to traditional religion, and 0.2 percent are atheists. This analysis shows how the new generation of the Ewe-speaking people is becoming more and more Christian rather than identifying with the Ewe traditional religion. The outcome of the analysis also confirms that the traditional religion is rapidly shrinking.

The analysis also shows that the Christian denomination most attended by Ewes is still the Ewe Presbyterian Church, with 46.1 percent of the respondents. Another 18.1 percent attend the Pentecostal/Charismatic Christian churches which form the second stream of Christian churches; 16.1 percent are Roman Catholics, and 1.2 percent are Seventh-day Adventists.

Of all the denominations in Eweland, the Ewe Presbyterian Church with a 70.5 cumulative percentage is

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1See Appendix B for the analysis of the answer to Q5.


3See Appendix B for the analysis of the answer to Q16.

4For cumulative percentage I added all the percentages for or against a statement or notion. Cumulative percentages are calculated in questions 7, 8, 10, 20, questions 23 to 31, and question 35.
the church the respondents are acquainted with most and is considered the "most popular"\textsuperscript{1} church among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. The Roman Catholic Church is next with a cumulative 53 percentage points showing respondents are acquainted with it. The least known Christian denominations in the Volta Region are the Baptist Church, which is known by 24.1 cumulative percentage of the respondents, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with 21.5 cumulative percentage of the respondents, and, finally, the Lutheran Church being the least known church with 10.9 cumulative percentage of the respondents.

From the analysis, a cumulative percentage of 36.8 of the respondents view a church as popular if it teaches morality and its doctrines are biblical. With this analysis, we realize that the Bible has become more accepted among the Ewes and the people regard it highly as an inspired word that should guide in the teaching of all Christian doctrines. The analysis revealed that 93.6 percent of the respondents strongly agree that "The Bible is the written word of God and it is totally trustworthy in all

\textsuperscript{1}According to the analysis of answers to question 22, the respondents' definitions of popularity or the acceptance of a church by the majority of the people are the following: 32.6 percent think that a church is popular if it has a comparatively large membership; 14.3 percent consider that a church is popular if it teaches good morals, and 21.5 percent think that a church is popular if its teachings are biblical.
that it teaches."¹ Those who disagree with the statement constitute 2.3 percent of the respondents.

An analysis was performed also on responses to questions pertaining to the creatorship of God, the state of the dead, and how the grace of God and obedience to Him is understood by the people. Further analysis was performed to find out what guides the Ewes in their decision making when it comes to joining a Christian church and their perception of other spiritual powers that be.

The analysis revealed that a 95.1 cumulative percentage of the respondents believe that "God created the world and everything in this world in six literal days";² that a cumulative percentage of 25.7 agree that "When people die their spirits go about helping and/or haunting people";³ and that 24.7 percent of the people are not sure about the validity of that statement. However, a 49.6 cumulative percentage of the respondents disagree with the statement. This shows that almost 50 percent of the respondents disagree. This is a major step that leads people away from one of the fundamental beliefs of the Ewe traditional religion.

According to another analysis, a 48 cumulative percentage of the respondents believe that "When true

¹See Appendix B for the analysis of the answer to Q23.
²See Appendix B for the analysis of the data for Q24.
³See Appendix B for the analysis of the data for Q26.
Christians die they go straight to heaven, but the unbelievers and the ungodly go straight to hell when they die",¹ but 19.4 percent of the respondents are not sure of the veracity of this statement, and a 32.7 cumulative percentage of the respondents disagree.

Touching on the subject of the good and evil spiritual powers, the analysis shows that a 54.6 cumulative percentage of the respondents disagree that "Besides the good powers of God, there are other higher powers that also guide and protect."² A 33.8 cumulative percentage of the respondents agree to the statement, but 11.6 are not sure. This analysis confirms one earlier analysis that the traditional belief of other good powers existing besides God’s power is gradually dying away. The people are adhering more and more to the Bible and its teachings about God and His power as the Creator.

It indicates that the old traditional bond that strongly united household members and forcibly pulled them into family ancestral veneration and the worship of other deities is breaking down gradually in the wake of education, science, and technological developments.³ Instead of the

¹See Appendix B for the analysis of the data for Q27.
²See Appendix B for the analysis of the data for Q28.
³In and around some towns and villages, some trees once regarded as abodes of the gods and, consequently, regarded as a taboo to be cut down have now been bulldozed without any expected calamities from the gods. Rivers that once were regarded as the dwelling place of some sea and river
household head being the first one consulted because family members believed that the power and authority of the family ancestral spirits were transferred to him, people now are consulting their parents first for important decisions. Parents are held by the youth as ones directly responsible for their upbringing in a good way.

When asked which close relatives a respondent would consult first when making an important decision, 35.3 percent said they would consult the mother and 34 percent would consult their fathers. Thus a cumulative percentage of 69.3 of the respondents would consult their parents first, not an uncle or their family ancestral heads. Another 8.6 percent would consult with a brother or a sister, and 3 percent would consult an uncle or aunt, and 7.2 percent would consult with a friend.

Data pertaining to question 10 show an interesting outcome that gives a clue as to what biblical message would have been.

It was taboo to eat the fish from them or to use the water from them for washing dirty clothes are now not regarded as such. Education, science, technological developments and Christian teachings have become a great eye-opener. Many of the educated young people are questioning many of the traditional beliefs and tearing down those beliefs that are unfounded and obsolete. No wonder many young people are turning to Christianity.

\footnote{\textit{Ghana Review International} reports a son who slapped his dead father twice on the face at Anloga. His reason for doing so was that his dad, when he was alive, did not cater well for him and, in return, he slapped his father for being irresponsible towards him. See "Son Slaps Dead Dad," \textit{Ghana Review International} April 22, 1996, 14.}

\footnote{See Appendix B for the analysis of data for Q9.}
be initially appropriate to use in reaching the Ewe people to plant SDA churches. Question 10 was posed to find out how important eight items are to the respondents. Responses show that 97.2 percent regard their health as very important. This immediately suggests the use of the health message of the SDA Church as an appropriate message to reach the people.

Other items considered important are given here in order from the highest to the lowest: 89.6 percent regard their job or career as very important;\(^1\) 89.3 regard religion as very important;\(^2\) 84.3 regard Bible study as very important;\(^3\) and 75.7 regard family/relatives (referring obviously to nuclear parents, as earlier analysis indicates) as very important.\(^4\) Next on this list are money and property--61.8 percent;\(^5\) last, their close friends--39 percent.\(^6\) From this analysis, health, job/career, religion, and Bible study are the four top items considered very

\(^1\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10g.
\(^2\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10e.
\(^3\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10f.
\(^4\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10a.
\(^5\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10h.
\(^6\)See Appendix B for the analysis of the answers to Q10d.
important to the respondents. This shows that the Ewes are still religious, very hard working, and love studying the Word of God. When developing a strategy for church planting, these factors must be considered and incorporated.

Another analysis was performed to discover the guiding factor(s) when it comes to making a decision of an Ewe to join a church. Eight items were listed in question 35 posed to learn how important each item is in helping one decide which church to join.

The analysis of answers to question 35, parts a to h, shows a 87.6 cumulative percentage of the respondents consider Bible-based doctrines an important factor in choosing which church to join; a 12.5 cumulative percentage do not consider it important. Thus a net percentage of 75.1 consider the Bible-based doctrines to be a very important factor. A 61.7 cumulative percentage of the respondents indicated that healing and miracles are a very important factor when deciding which church to join; a 38.3 cumulative percentage consider it not important. Thus a net percentage of 23.4 agree to the notion. A 79.9 cumulative percentage consider a caring and loving church as very important; a 20.1 percent think it is not important. Thus a net percentage of 59.8 is in favor of the notion. From this analysis we learn that the two important factors to guide one into joining a church are: (1) the Bible-based doctrine factor and (2) a caring and loving church. These factors
will be very much considered in the church-planting strategy.

In order to learn the responses of the Ewe people toward some of the fundamental beliefs of the SDA Church, questions were asked in connection with the second advent of Jesus Christ¹ and the righteousness by faith² (grace and law). The responses to these questions were analyzed and the following is the outcome.

The analysis of answers given to question 29 shows that a cumulative percentage of 83.1 of the respondents agree that "the second coming of Jesus Christ will be visible and audible"; 7.5 percent were not sure, and a 9.4 cumulative percentage disagree.

The analysis of the answers given to question 31 also reveals that a cumulative percentage of 92.3 of the respondents agree that "Christians saved by grace will keep all of God's commandments as an expression of their love for Him"; 3.9 percent of the respondents are not sure, and a cumulative percentage of 3.9 of the respondents disagree.

¹See question 29 of the survey questionnaire and its corresponding analysis (Appendix B). The second coming of Jesus Christ is one of the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventists (see [Damsteegt], 332–347).

²See question 31 of the survey questionnaire and its corresponding analysis (Appendix B). The doctrine of righteousness by faith, or grace and law, is also addressed in [Damsteegt], 242, 244.
Findings from the Analysis

The analysis of the responses to the survey questionnaires provides some interesting outcomes that will help to develop a strategy for planting Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region. These are summarized as follows:

1. The members of the upcoming generation, particularly those in the urban centers, adhere to the Bible and accept it as the Word of God that is trustworthy. The people of this generation also believe that the Bible is the book to guide all Christian teachings, as well as guide in studying which Christian church to join.

2. The traditional beliefs and the traditional polity are gradually breaking down and giving way to Christianity. This is especially observed in the urban centers.

3. The majority of the respondents are Christians who love to study their Bibles.¹

4. The Ewe Christians are looking for a church that teaches morals and has biblical doctrines.

5. The people believe in creation by God, the Most High.

¹In a given week, 31.2 percent of the respondents read their Bible once or twice. 22.1 percent read their Bibles three to six times; and 29.6 read their Bibles seven or more times. See analysis (Appendix B) to survey question 32.
6. The Ewe people already know and even accept the second advent of Jesus Christ, and the law of God and its relationship with the grace of God.

7. The majority of the Ewe people are not acquainted with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

8. The young people and the young adults¹ are more open to the biblical truths and, for that matter, more susceptible to a change from traditional religion to Christianity.

9. Students are more responsive to the Seventh-day Adventist message.

10. The Adventist health message can be an entering wedge used in reaching the Ewes.

How these findings can be helpful in developing strategy for planting SDA churches is presented in chapter 6.

¹See analysis of the response (Appendix B) to question 4; 95.6 percent of the respondents have had formal education.
This project has established the need to plant SDA churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region, Ghana. A brief historical and religious background of the Ewe-speaking people, their worldview, traditional polity, and social structure have been considered for planning an effective church-planting strategy.

Chapter 4 shows the work of the Christian churches among the Ewes. The strengths and weaknesses of these Christian congregations have been studied in order to discover an efficient and effective approach to reach the indigenous Ewes in a church-planting ministry. Chapter 5 presents the interviews and the survey conducted among the Ewe-speaking people to assess both the current situation and the cultural milieu that provide the immediate context of the targeted group to aid in the development of a strategy that will make the church-planting ministry among the Ewes both relevant and effective.

Having touched on all the above essential dimensions, this chapter presents a strategy to be used to plant
Seventh-day Adventist churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region. First, the word "strategy" is defined.

**Strategy Defined**

The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* gives four meanings of strategy. In each case the meaning conveys an element of a general plan, method, stratagem or means to achieve (a) goal(s). The meaning of the word also entails a military connotation. Thus, in the military sense, the word means an overall approach of tactics to attack and conquer the enemy.

In developing a strategy for planting SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region, I have used the word strategy in the sense of a plan, method, or series of outlined stratagems for obtaining specific goal(s)—which in this case is the planting of SDA churches. Strategy is a way or means of approaching defined problems and achieving the desired goal(s).

Dayton and Fraser give a clarification of the word strategy. One of their meanings best suits the way the word is intended here. They write, "A strategy is an overall approach, plan or way of describing how we will go about reaching our goal or solving our problem."

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Consciously or unconsciously, every person, institution, or organization uses a strategy in one way or another. It is how one goes about making plans to accomplish a desired goal.

Strategy is very important in accomplishing the divine task entrusted to every Christian believer. First of all, it forms not only the final tier of the various operations and components of the task performed, but also considers "the practical working out of the will of God within a cultural context."1 Second, it gives "an overall sense of direction and cohesiveness"2 and stands as "our statement of faith as to what we believe the future should be like and how we should go about reaching that future."3 It is "a way of communicating our intention to others . . . [and] helps us to communicate with one another within our own organization as well as with other Christian organizations and churches."4 Dayton and Fraser point out that as Christians we have a tremendous advantage in considering strategy. Because we have the word of God, a source of ultimate values and absolutes, we can most


[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.
appropriately develop grand strategy. . . . Our role is
to cooperate with him in bringing his Kingdom to
fruition.1

The strategy to reach out to save the human race from
sin to salvation originates with God. In His divine love
(John 3:16) for this sinful world, God planned redemption2
to save man from eternal destruction. By this divine plan
or strategy, Jesus Christ came to die, for He was "the lamb
slain from the foundation of the world."3

This strategy/plan of God was unfolded to humanity by
the incarnation, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ, "the
Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, of the great
plan of redemption."4 Referring to the ministry of our
Master and Lord Jesus Christ, Robert Coleman points out that
the Master disclosed God's strategy of world conquest.
. . . He lived according to that plan. . . . There was
nothing haphazard about His life--no wasted energy, not
an idle word, He was on business for God (Lk 2:49), He
lived, He died, and He rose again according to
schedule. Like a general plotting His course of
battle, the Son of God calculated to win. He could not
afford to take a chance. Weighing every alternative
and variable factor in human experience, He conceived a
plan that would not fail.5

1Ibid., 571, 572.

2Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets (Mountain


4White, Evangelism, 485.

5Robert E. Coleman, "The Master Plan," in Perspectives
on the World Christian Movement, A Reader, ed. Ralph D.
Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena, CA: William Carey
If the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Teacher and our Example, followed a plan or a strategy devised by God in His divine, infinite wisdom, why do we humans with limited, finite, and sinful minds not first sit down to consider or count the cost and plan as we endeavor to go on God's errand?

Throughout the Bible we learn of the many plans and strategies men and women of God laid as they undertook the various divine assignments entrusted to them. The book of Proverbs provides many pieces of advice concerning effective planning. Consider the following:

1. "The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Prov 16:9, NASB).

2. "Make plans by seeking advice; if you wage war, obtain guidance" (Prov 20:18, NASB).

3. "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed" (Prov 16:3, NASB).

The text in 1 Cor 9:26 illustrates that the apostle Paul did not go aimlessly about his divinely entrusted duty. Rather, he had a definite plan of action and a goal (Phil 3:13, 14) to reach. We, as God's agencies helping to carry

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"Examples of these strategies are recorded in Exod 18:13-26; Josh 6:1-20. Joshua followed a strategy in his victory over the Midianites (Josh 7:2-21). The Savior used a strategy in His communication of the truth in order to avoid as many undue controversies and hindrances as possible. He spoke to the Pharisees in parables and to the Samaritan woman at the well. His strategy of communication kept the woman engaged in their communication (John 4:1-26, 39-42)."
out His plan of redemption in whatever facet of gospel work, are to devise plans for the divine task.

Planning a Strategy

Developing a strategy to address a problem or task for a desired output is appropriate. It is the initial step needed to obtain success in any venture. The question posed by our Lord Jesus Christ is applicable to any task. He asks,

For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it. . . . Or what King, going to make war against another King, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? (Luke 14:28-31)

To sit down first to count the cost or consider any undertaking for a definite plan of action is the dimension of strategy which gives one the opportunity to:

1. Consider the whole issue, define and outline the problem(s), and set the specific goals

2. Find out the varied factors, the conditions, and the many options that may affect the process of reaching the goal(s)

3. Formulate the process by which the goals will be met, taking into consideration potential eventualities

4. Consider the resources, training, and the education needed along the process

5. Critically examine, compare, and contrast all factors, conditions, events, and options and, by careful
consideration and analysis, arrive at the most appropriate means, strategy, or plan of action to reach and maximize the desired goal(s).

Strategy, therefore, is the outcome of examining the entire problem, carefully considering its solution and the desired goal(s). It also provides a positive and defined plan of action that helps workers to stay focused, working assiduously and steadily to reach the set goal(s).

With these definitions and clarifications of the word strategy, one realizes how indispensable strategy is in any undertaking. No wonder Charles Chaney, when writing on the ministry of church planting and the necessity of strategy, points out that "all of our agencies must develop deliberate, dedicated strategies to penetrate each and every social and cultural community--black, white, and ethnic."¹

Ellen G. White counsels gospel workers to devise plans² for reaching people who do not know the truth. She writes, "Let every worker in the Master's vineyard study, plan, devise methods to reach the people where they are."³ She again points out that

men are needed who pray to God for wisdom, and who under the guidance of God, can put new life into the old methods of labor and can invent new plans and new

¹Chaney, 28, 29.
²White, Medical Ministry, 318.
³White, Evangelism, 122, 123.
methods of awakening the interest of church members and reaching the men and women in the world.¹

Regarding effective planning and strategies of church-planting ministry, Wagner and McGavran write, "We must go on to devise and operate intelligent and adequate plans for establishing church after church throughout the whole populations."² White cautions gospel workers not to work in a careless, haphazard way. She writes,

All who are working for Him are to labor intelligently, not in a careless, haphazard manner. He would have His work done with faith and exactness, that He may place His seal of approval upon it.³

Ellen White stressed that it is even a sin to work in the Lord’s vineyard without any purpose and direction. She points out,

It is a sin to be heedless, purposeless, and indifferent in any work in which we may engage, but especially in the work of God. Every enterprise connected with His cause should be carried forward with order, forethought, and earnest prayer.⁴

Church growth seldom comes without bold plans. Engel and Norton, in their joint studies and analysis of what has gone wrong with the harvest, put forth their findings thus:

We need a Spirit-led research-based strategy to reach people with the Good News and to build them in the faith as they grow to spiritual maturity. Equally

¹Ibid., 105.


³White, Evangelism, 93.

⁴Ibid., 94.
important, this strategy must be designed and implemented by a properly functioning Body of Christ.¹

With a knowledge of the urgent need and importance of strategy and my great desire to do the Lord's work by planting churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region, I have developed a strategy with three avenues of approach.

A Three-Pronged Strategy for Church Planting

Avenue #1: The Concerted Prayer Action (CPA) Method

In developing a strategy for planting SDA churches among the Ewes, I believe prayer is basic, the fundamental block upon which all other plans for church planting depend. Hence, the Concerted Prayer Action (CPA) plan was developed. First, let me define prayer and show its importance and its urgent need.

The Place of Prayer

Prayer is an interaction with God in the form of words--audible or inaudible--which express one's earnest requests, adoration, confession, supplication, thanksgiving, etc. Prayer has as its tenets (1) "the belief in the transcendent and personal nature of the God who is revealed

¹James F. Engel and Wilbert Norton, What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), 152.
in the Bible as Lord of history and Creator of the world,″¹ and (2) "the acceptance of the intimate relation of God and man disclosed by the atoning work of the Incarnate Christ."²

When one prays to God, he/she realizes personal limitations and frailties and seeks the will and plan of God, His divine power and intervention in order to successfully accomplish a task in the Lord's work. Whatever we do, as Christian believers, we should think of God first. That is what prayer is all about. With this kind of definition I agree with Patrick Johnstone's remark that prayer is fundamental in the Kingdom of God. It is not an optional extra, nor is it a last resort when all other methods have failed. . . . Without prayer God's plan for the world cannot be achieved, we do not just pray for the work, prayer is the work.³

Prayer is heaven's unlimited power at our disposal. As such, Tom Wells puts prayer as an item of first priority in all our evangelistic endeavors. He states:

Prayer is our first work in the harvest. And the reason is not hard to find. It is this: the harvest has a "Lord." He oversees the harvest. Someone supplies the workers. Someone controls the progress. And that "someone" is God. Our first business is not to look at the size of the harvest. Our first business is to pray to our God.⁴

²Ibid.
David Hesselgrave adds that "prayer is more than the starting point. It is the continuing force behind the entire program of outreach."\(^1\)

**Prayer Used by Jesus**

Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, gave His followers an example. He emphasized the need and importance of prayer. From the very beginning of His ministry (Matt 3:16; 4:1-3) He made use of prayer in every step of the way. He prayed for Himself (John 17:1-5) and for His followers (John 17:6-19), as well as for those yet to join His fold of believers (John 17:20-26). Christ's prayer life (Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:29; 11:1-13) is the example for all believers and especially for gospel workers.

Knowing the necessity and importance of prayer, Jesus taught His disciples how to pray (Matt 6:5-13) and gave them many promises regarding earnest prayers. Note these scriptural quotations of the Saviour:

> Whatever things you ask, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (Mark 11:24)

> Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! (Matt 7:7-11)

With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible. (Mark 10:27)

The power of prayer in preaching the word, in overcoming many hindrances and attacks, in working miracles, and the many other precious promises regarding prayers are recorded in the Bible. E. G. White was moved to pose this puzzling question:

Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching, we are in danger of growing careless and deviating from the right path.  

The Apostles and Prayer

A careful study of the Acts of the Apostles reveals how the apostles made use of prayer in all their endeavors and the accompanying successes in their gospel propagation and soul-winning work. Even before the Christian church was born on the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were "continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:53). Luke further amplifies what the disciples were doing: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14).

The disciples prayed for the unction of the Holy Spirit and for divine intervention and help in all dimensions of


the work and in every prevailing situation—whether they were behind prison bars (Acts 12:4-6, 6-11, 12; 16:25-30), in the field proclaiming the gospel (Acts 4:31; 14:21-23), in choosing people to fill a position of responsibility in the church (Acts 2:23-26), or even when suffering martyrdom (Acts 7:59, 60). They met together and "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread and in prayers" (Acts 3:42). Victory crowned their efforts and through their ministry the Word of the Lord was spread throughout all the region (Acts 13:49), and many churches were planted. E. G. White states:

The greatest victories to the Church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or by favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power.¹

Need of Prayer Today

Whatever methods we use in the Lord's work, whether they are research-based or well analyzed, organized, and tested, we are to recognize the fact that "methods alone, even correct methods, will not produce a New Testament church. The mechanics of prayer procedure must be accompanied by the dynamics of apostolic power."²

Throughout the modern history of Christian missions we learn of many individuals who prayed as they reached out to

¹White, Patriarchs and Prophets, 203.
²Hodges, 97.
proclaim the gospel, won converts, established churches, and caused revivals within the Christian denominations. They have been people who prayed to change the world where they worked.

Bernard M. Lall wrote about the work of John (praying) Hyde, a missionary who turned India upside down through prayer. The success of Hyde's work in penetrating the unentered and difficult areas to win converts and establish churches was the result of earnest, agonizing prayer.

Prayer was a central part of Hudson Taylor's life. Paul Borthwick notes: "Taylor's prayers and actions helped change the nature of world missions." Taylor's successful work in conveying the gospel to the coastal cities of China was done mainly through prayer. He penetrated inland China and established China Inland Mission as well as influencing the founding of missions like the Africa Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, and many more.

Charles G. Finney, who brought revival to America, England, and many other parts of the world—winning converts and beginning churches—was a man of prayer. In one instance, "men in cocktail bars fell on their knees [before

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3Ibid.

4Lall, 80.
Finney] under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and asked Jesus to save them. . . . The source of Finney's power was the hours that he spent in prayer."

Jim Elliott, "one of the famous twentieth-century missionaries," was a man of prayer who believed that "the saint who advances on his knees never retreats." This has been found to be true, particularly in the case of missionaries who were forced to leave China. When hundreds of missionaries were ousted from China in the late forties, the work suffered great loss and nearly collapsed. However, Carl Lawson points out that a great awakening in China has started again. He notes that the great awakening sustained and happening in China today is because "those who left China on their knees never got up. They left physically but never spiritually." Carl Lawrence wrote:

They were not defeated; they simply continued to do battle in one of the toughest arenas of all: intercessory prayer. They were often maligned for not realizing that this was a "different world we live in, and there is nothing you can do for China." Few were (or have been) recognized for their contribution to the building of His kingdom. They nevertheless continued hour by hour, day by day, and year by year, remembering by name those they left behind in the villages and

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2Elizabeth Elliott, Shadow of the Almighty (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 59, 60.

3Ibid.

4Carl Lawrence, The Church in China (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1983), 117.
communities that spread across China. Their work was far beyond any job description which man might design.¹

**Prayer in Current Church Ministry**

Paul Yongi Cho shares the secret behind the phenomenal growth of the world's largest church—The Yoido Full Gospel Church of Seoul, Korea—and his twenty thousand cell groups that are active. He attributes this tremendous growth to prayer.² He writes,

In 1982, we led one hundred and ten thousand people to Christ. . . . In 1993, we had a total of one hundred twenty thousand new converts. Why are so many people being saved within a single church? We have seen the importance of developing and keeping a prayer life.³

David J. Hesselgrave points out that prayer is the first among a number of basic considerations to keep in mind as one prepares a strategy for entering a target area.⁴ He further comments:

First, the whole church-extension enterprise must be bathed in prayer as we enter a new area. It is not to be forgotten that whenever we enter a churchless community we are, in a real sense, walking on Satan's ground. Therefore, the Christian workers involved, any believers in the community, the public officials, the general populace—all must become the subjects of special prayer.⁵

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¹Ibid.
²Cho, 11-20.
³Ibid., 20.
⁴Hesselgrave, 188.
⁵Ibid.
Prayer for the Volta Region

The situation in the Volta Region calls for an effectively planned prayer network. The concept of spiritual beings and supernatural forces, the practice of sorcery and witchcraft, and the worship of ancestral spirits are embedded deeply in the worldview of the Ewes. These traditional beliefs and practices must be addressed first with intensive prayer action.

Paul Y. Cho pointed out: “We are living in an evil age, Satan, supported by the fallen angels and demons, is out to rob and destroy. Without depending on the power of prayer, we are not able to break Satan’s power.”

The Bible makes it plain that we are not wrestling with flesh and blood (Eph 6:12). Even as Paul solicited for a more concerted prayer action (Eph 6:18-20), so we are to organize an effective prayer action plan. David Bryant writes,

The forces of darkness which block the spread of truth and the growth of the church cannot be displaced by human plans and efforts. Only the Omnipotent Holy Spirit, applying the fruits of the finished work of Christ, through a church constantly awakened through prayer can deliver the lost from the power of Satan (Acts 26:17-18).

Paul Cho’s statement should constantly guide gospel workers, particularly those who are engaged in church-

1Cho, 34.

planting ministry. He writes, "There is no land too hard for the Holy Spirit to work. There is no church too dead. There is no country too closed to the gospel. The answer is prayer!" ¹

In light of the Master's example of a prayer life, coupled with the knowledge of the powerful evidences of prayer in the Bible and as observed or learned in the lives of Christian believers, and in my own personal life and in public ministry, ² I have developed Concerned Prayer Action (CPA) as the first avenue towards reaching the Ewes with the Adventist message.

**Concerted Prayer Action (CPA) Method**

**Defined Strategy—What Is It?**

The CPA method developed here to aid possible acceptance of the SDA church among the Ewe people of the Volta Region was organized and planned in such a way that all of the SDA churches within the territorial administration of the South Ghana Conference (SGC) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church could participate. In this plan, small groups, family units, and every individual

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¹Cho, 20.

²For the past 10 years, I have been in active ministry (excluding the 7 years of theological training at Andrews University Theological Seminary). The Lord has led me to plant over 25 churches. I realize that prayer kept me and my evangelistic team going vibrant, courageous, and strong to accomplish what was done. I also realize that no land is too difficult for the Lord to plant a church. With much earnest prayer and a strategy based on the Bible, the Lord always works to bring about success.
church member within the SGC and particularly those who live in the Volta Region are charged to participate actively. The concertedness of this plan is most important. It involves every church and every department of the SGC, as well as every individual church member.

The plan of CPA is to mobilize God's people to do something about the Volta Region church-planting program by getting involved and being united in prayer concerts. This effort is also to forge a coalition of praying people who regularly unite for the very specific purpose of spiritual awakening and the evangelization of the Volta Region through church planting.

In this plan, prayer sessions are organized during the following periods:

1. Daily morning prayer meetings
2. Sunday (night) Bible study and prayer meetings
3. Wednesday (night) mid-week prayer meetings
4. All-day prayer meetings
5. All-night prayer meetings
6. Prayer retreats
7. House Bible study and prayer meetings.

This variety of prayer meetings is planned to engage each local church as a collective body as well as its individual members in a more meaningful, relevant, and frequent prayer ministry. The more that believers pray together, the more leaders and church members will catch the vision and support
the course for which prayers are being offered. Let us consider the value of the three types of prayer meetings listed above.

**Daily Prayer Meetings, Sunday Bible Study Periods, and Wednesday Prayer Meetings**

Within the five fields of the SDA church in Ghana, the existing programs suggested for the local SDA churches are daily morning meetings from 4:45 to 6:00 to study the SDA adult Sabbath school lesson—one part at a time as subdivided in the Sabbath school quarterly. The Bible study period for the local churches is scheduled for Sunday nights from 7:00 to 8:30, and the mid-week prayer program falls on Wednesday nights from 7:00 to 8:30. In addition, the Friday Vesper service welcomes in the Sabbath. This program begins at sunset and ends thirty to forty-five minutes after sunset. In some churches, the youth program follows the Vespers (which usually begins at 6:00) and lasts from an hour to an hour and a half.

The CPA plan takes the programs specifically mentioned when the churches already meet and modifies them to ensure ample time for prayers for the target area and other specific prayer requests. The existing programs for these

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1Currently, the five fields of the SDA church in Ghana are: (1) the South Ghana Conference, (2) the South-West Ghana Mission, (3) Central Ghana Conference, (4) Mid-West Ghana Mission, and (5) the North Ghana Mission.
days usually follow the basic format indicated in tables 9, 10, and 11.

TABLE 9
BASIC PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR THE DAILY STUDY
OF THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Welcome, introduction &amp; opening hymn</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Opening prayer</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sabbath school lesson study</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Questions &amp; answers on the study</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Closing remarks &amp; closing hymn</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Closing hymn &amp; prayer</td>
<td>5-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 10
BASIC PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Welcome, introduction &amp; opening hymn</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Opening prayer</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bible study</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Questions &amp; answers on the study</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Closing remarks &amp; closing hymn</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Closing prayer</td>
<td>5-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 11
BASIC PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR
WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Welcome, introduction &amp; opening hymn</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Opening prayer</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Reading of the key Bible text for the prayer meeting</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Revival message</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Intercessory prayer time</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Closing remarks &amp; closing hymn</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Benediction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem with these programs (as shown in Tables 9, 10, and 11) is the inadequate time devoted to actual prayer. Only about seven to eight minutes of the sixty-five minutes for the morning program are allotted to prayer. On Sundays, about fifteen minutes of the ninety minutes of the whole program is devoted to prayer. Even Wednesday prayer meetings, which are supposed to be prayer packed, unfortunately have become a period of preaching, which takes up the major portion of the time. Of the ninety-minute midweek prayer program, only twenty-three to twenty-five minutes is devoted to prayer. Thus, prayer is not a major item of any of the programs. There is much sermonizing, more talking, and less prayer. Those who lead out in such
programs should concentrate more on prayer than preaching.

E. G. White wrote:

It is in the order of God that those who bear responsibilities should often meet together to counsel with one another and to pray earnestly for that wisdom which He alone can impart. Unitedly make known your troubles to God. Talk less; much precious time is lost in talk that brings no light. Let brethren unite in fasting and prayer for the wisdom that God has promised to supply liberally.¹

I have redesigned and modified the programs (as shown in tables 9, 10, and 11) to create more time for prayer. My suggested program outlines making more time for prayer are part of my CPA method. The modified programs are shown in tables 12, 13, and 14).

| TABLE 12 |
| CPA PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON EACH MORNING |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Congregational hymns (1 or 2) &amp; a season of prayer</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Adult Sabbath school lesson study</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Questions &amp; answers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Closing hymn</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Closing prayer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 13

**CPA PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY AND PRAYER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Congregational hymns (1 or 2) &amp; a season of prayer</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bible study</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Questions &amp; answers on the study</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Closing hymn</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Closing prayer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 14

**CPA PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Congregational hymn &amp; opening prayer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Scripture reading (key text) &amp; opening prayer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Testimony period</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Revival message (charge)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Season of prayer</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Closing remarks &amp; closing hymn</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Benediction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The outline shown in Table 12 allows much more time to a season of prayer. This helps believers assembled in the church, either for the daily Sabbath school lesson study or the Bible study programs scheduled for Sundays, to be better prepared for spiritual study.

In the season of prayer, as many believers as possible are encouraged to pray in groups of twos and threes. Church pastors, church elders, and the entire congregation are to pray for the gospel work in the target area. Problems of each individual believer are also brought before the Lord in prayer. This encourages many members and even non-members to attend the morning prayer and Sabbath school lesson study. Those who live too far from church should be encouraged to meet in their homes for the morning prayer meetings.

On Sunday nights, the program outline suggested for the Bible study and prayer meeting is as shown in table 13.

Prayer requests during the prayer periods of church programs should be clearly defined. Members should be informed with progress reports and new developments that need their prayers. As the local churches within the Conference are encouraged to follow these programs, the local SDA churches within the Volta Region particularly should be educated to show active participation and to pray more for the success of the work.
All-Day Prayers, All-Night Prayer Session, and Prayer Retreats

In addition to the prayer programs outlined in tables 12, 13, and 14, other prayer programs suggested in the CPA plan for the success of the church-planting ministry are the all-day prayer (table 15), the all-night prayer meeting (Appendix C), and the prayer retreat programs (Appendix D).

The all-day season of prayer suggested is to be scheduled monthly by local SDA congregations on either the first or the third Sabbath of every month. This program is designed in concert with fasting as believers fervently pray about pertinent issues, and for opponents and any problems that militate against the plan for the planting of churches. When E. G. White wrote about fasting and prayer, she pointed out:

>Whenever it is necessary for the advancement of the cause of truth and the glory of God, that an opponent be met, how carefully, and with what humility, should they [the advocates of truth] go into the conflict. With heart searching, confession of sin, and earnest prayer, and often fasting for a time, they should entreat that God would especially help them, and give His saving, precious truth a glorious victory, that error might appear in its true deformity, and its advocates be completely discomfited.1

Again she wrote, "Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-

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1White, Counsels on Diet and Foods, 188.
They should set aside days for fasting and prayer."\(^1\) Regarding planning and devising strategies to undertake any divine task, Ellen G. White wrote,

> The wisdom of any human agent is not sufficient for the planning and devising in this time. Spread every plan before God with fasting [and] with the humbling of the soul before the Lord Jesus. . . . The sure promise is, He will direct thy paths.\(^2\)

She pointed out one of the many instances where "fasting and fervent prayer to God have moved the Lord to unlock His treasures of truth."\(^3\) In the Bible, Jesus our Lord stated that some kinds of problems require fasting and prayer (Matt 17:21).

The all-day prayer program which follows the divine service is designed to bring together as many church members as possible for an active prayer season. On such an occasion, prayer-request items to be considered should include the following:

1. The evangelistic workers in the target area
2. The lay leaders and members of the SDA churches in the target area
3. The progress of the work in the target area
4. The indigenous people in the target area
5. The specific problems encountered in the area

\(^1\)Ibid., 188, 189.


\(^3\)White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 2:650.
6. Individual or personal prayer requests

7. Community problems of concern to the church.

At such prayer meetings, items presented should include revival sermons that lead to (a) specific prayer request(s). Congregational hymns are included and individual believers should have the opportunity to express their gratitude, thanks, and praise to God in testimony. Believers should reflect on the promises of the Lord and should ask for the Lord’s promises to be fulfilled in their lives. As believers get together in such a united prayer action—praying and seeking the Lord’s way—the Lord Himself promises to bless His people and answer their prayers (2 Chr 7:14-16). The outline for the all-day program suggested by the CPA plan is shown in table 15.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginning time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Led by</th>
<th>Time allowed (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Sabbath school begins</td>
<td>Sabbath school supt.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Personal ministries (PM)</td>
<td>PM leader</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:30</td>
<td>Divine worship</td>
<td>Preacher</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-1:00</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Pastor/ elder in charge</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-1:15</td>
<td>Congregational hymns/special song(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15-1:40</td>
<td>Revival message I</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:40-2:00</td>
<td>Season of prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-2:30</td>
<td>Period of testimonies</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-2:45</td>
<td>Congregational hymns/special song(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45-3:10</td>
<td>Revival message II</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15-3:45</td>
<td>Season of prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45-4:05</td>
<td>Report from target area</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05-4:20</td>
<td>Congregational hymns/special song(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15-4:40</td>
<td>Revival message III</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:40-5:10</td>
<td>Season of prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:10-5:35</td>
<td>Period of testimonies</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:35-5:55</td>
<td>Pastoral closing message</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:55-6:00</td>
<td>Closing hymn &amp; benediction</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to this all-day prayer session is the prayer retreat program. In this, the participants move from their homes to a campsite for a three-day prayer retreat that begins on a Friday evening and continues through Sunday noon. It is a time when church members and non-Adventists can get away from their normal routine of work to a relatively quiet place for meditation, reflection, and prayer, and there are no interruptions.

Prayer is the main item at the prayer retreat. Revival and biblical sermons should be planned to inspire, prepare, and lead participants to a season of prayer with much faith and hope, believing that their prayers will be answered (Mark 11:24). As believers pray for the target area, individual prayer requests also are attended. Enough time is set aside as a period of testimony when people are encouraged to share with each other what the Lord has done for them. Pastors and the church elders are allowed ample time to give progress reports of their respective churches and to report any church-planting ministry in the target area. Some time is set aside to pray for the worldwide evangelistic networks of the Seventh-day Adventist church and for trouble spots the world over.

On this occasion a pertinent biblical doctrine that may be causing misunderstanding or controversy can be brought before the people and a biblical exposition of the topic can be presented by a knowledgeable minister to the assembled
believers. It is only as believers pray and seek the Lord in united prayer that divine light is shed on difficult Bible texts. Praying, fasting, and studying the word of God consolidate the faith of believers in the truth. More and more people will become actively involved in the Lord’s work as they understand His word and catch the vision of planting churches to win souls for nurturing, training, and further proclamation of the gospel for more souls to be won.

This prayer retreat program is suggested to be held once a year (in addition to the daily, weekly, and monthly prayer programs) at Ho and Aflao. The eleven churches in the Ho district could meet in Ho and the ten churches in Aflao district could converge at Aflao for the prayer retreat. The prayer retreat program could be implemented effectively by the SGC within the entire conference territory. Special prayer retreat directors and speakers need to be assigned to the prayer retreat to be held within the Volta Region. The outline suggested for the prayer retreat is shown in Appendix C.

Another prayer program that can be implemented in the local SDA churches is the all-night program. This program is similar to the prayer retreat but shorter. A sample basic format program for the all-night prayer meeting is shown in Appendix D. In the CPA plan, I recommend that the all-night program be organized for the local churches each quarter.
Besides these organized programs, Adventist family units and households in the Volta Region should be encouraged to have prayer and Bible study together each day in their homes. These varied prayer programs will help to educate participating church members to make prayer a part of their lives—a breath of the soul. This will help them to gain power to overcome the spiritual beings and supernatural forces about which they are so fearful and often interact and live with. E. G. White noted:

> Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted and health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience.

David Bryant also points out that, through prayer,

> "structures and powers, injustices and crises, cultures and languages, persuasions old and new that raise formidable barriers against the advancement of the kingdom of God are broken down."

If these seven prayer action programs suggested in

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1Where a simplified guide into the study of the Bible for small groups is not available, the adult Sabbath school lesson quarterly is recommended for small groups and family units.


3Bryant, 20.

4These seven prayer programs are: (1) the morning prayer and Sabbath school lesson study meeting each morning, (2) the prayer and Bible study meeting on Sundays, (3) mid-week prayer meetings on Wednesdays, (4) all-day prayer
this CPA method are implemented effectively, carefully monitored, and lived by the people,\(^1\) prayer can be a powerful tool that not only will cause revival and reformation but, through it, many will be won to the faith and gathered into the churches.

As believers pray for more SDA churches to be planted in the Volta Region, they actually are praying for power to move them into action, otherwise, their petitions will avail nothing. E. G. White wrote concerning this: "Men may pray 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven'; but if they fail of acting out this prayer in their lives, their petitions will be fruitless."\(^2\)

As we pray, we also must make plans and lay them before the Master Pilot for approval and direction. Van Rheenen states: "Making plans while praying and searching for God's will is not a denial of divine sovereignty but an acceptance of the fact that God works through faithful servants."\(^3\)

In addition to this prayer method, which is basic to the church-planting strategy, I propose two other avenues

\(^1\)See below the subsection entitled "The Church Planter and His Team of Workers."


\(^3\)Van Rheenen, *Missions Biblical Foundation of Contemporary Strategies*, 141.
that can enhance the planting of SDA churches in the Volta Region. The second plan considered is the house-to-house ministry and house-group formation.

Avenue #2: The House-to-House Ministry and House-Group Method

The second plan I propose for planting SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region is house-to-house ministry and house-group formation. The main goal of house-to-house ministry is to start establishing groups in Adventist homes or households, perhaps even non-Adventist households.

In house-to-house ministry, a number of people meet on a regular basis in a home to study the Bible and to pray. This naturally formed group can eventually become a church in a house. This was one of the main methods used in the early church for the planting of churches. David J. Hesselgrave wrote: "From the very beginning and throughout the New Testament era, house gatherings were a common feature of Christian corporate life."¹ Joseph A. Grassi points out that "it was through the Greek 'households' that the new faith spread rapidly in St. Paul's world. The Greek oikos or oikia formed the basic social unit that was best fitted for the extension of the church."² In his ministry,

¹Hesselgrave, 290.

Paul used families and households as his base of operation to establish churches in each area he evangelized.\(^1\)

In the book of Acts, we learn that Cornelius and all his family were devout and God-fearing (Acts 10:2). To the jailer at Philippi, Paul said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31). The jailer took Paul and Silas home and after they preached the word to the entire family, the jailer and all his family were baptized (Acts 16:33). It was at Philippi also that Lydia and her entire household were baptized (Acts 16:15). At Corinth, Crispus "believed on the Lord with all his household" (Acts 18:8). Greenway and Monsma write that "scattered throughout the Epistles are other references to households where Paul stayed, preached, and established his first converts (1 Cor 1:15-16; Col 4:15; Phlm 2).\(^2\) Howard A. Snyder wrote: "I believe church planting will be more successful and less problematic if a solid nucleus of believers is built up in home meetings."\(^3\)

As a group meets in homes, the close family ties make the unchurched family members natural prospects for Christ and for the church that the family members attend. In


\(^2\)Ibid., 19.

research conducted by the Institute of American Church Growth, Win Arn shows the importance of the principle of family ties as a major factor in leading people to Christ and to a church. As mentioned above, over 14,000 lay people were asked the question, "What or who was responsible for your coming to Christ and your church?" Malphurs notes:

One to two percent listed a special need, 2 to 3 percent said they simply walked in and stayed, 5 to 6 percent listed the pastor, visitation was responsible for 1 to 2 percent, 4 to 5 percent listed the Sunday School, an evangelistic crusade was responsible for 1/2 to 1 percent, and 2 to 3 percent listed the church's program. Finally, 75 to 90 percent listed a friend or relative.¹

In another survey of sixty-one churches planted in Portugal, the result was that 38 percent started in homes, 28 percent began in a rented or loaned hall, and 9 percent resulted from open-air meetings. Literature distribution accounted for 9 percent, and 7 percent grew from an evangelistic campaign. Another 9 percent began through various other ways.²

Research shows that the family- or close-relative bond helps make one a normal prospect for the Lord and for His church. Realizing the power of such a bond lends itself to successful home and household-group worship. Howard A. Snyder wrote: "Unconnected individuals do not make for


stable congregations. The church should be built on the family and the home, . . . The Christian home should be the center of the community which the church aims to build up."¹

In an ethnic group such as the Ewes, where the family or household affinity is very strong, house-to-house ministry for planting home groups becomes very appropriate and practical. From the survey about planting churches I conducted at Ho in the Volta Region, I learned that the family/relative bond is very important (to the average Ewe) due to their social structure and the traditional religious rituals and practices within the family circle.

In the survey, I listed eight items² and asked a question to learn how important each item is to each respondent.³ In all, 93.5 percent indicated that family/relatives are very important.⁴ In another question, I asked, "Which of the following close relatives do you always consult first when making important decisions?"⁵ Here again, 69.3 percent chose father and mother. This choice far exceeded the percentages of the other relations listed.⁶ From an analysis of my questionnaire, I learned

¹Snyder, 29.
²Question 10 of Appendix A.
³Ibid.
⁴Appendix B, Analysis of Question 10, parts a to h.
⁵Question 9 of Appendix A.
⁶Appendix B, Analysis of Question 9.
about the bonding within the families and the households. It gave me a clue as to how to approach the people in a church-planting ministry.

The last question of the questionnaire was, "How important are each of the following in helping you to decide which church to join?"¹ I listed seven items; the responses showed: 61.4 percent responded it is family/relatives, 64.9 percent indicated it is the influence of the pastor or priest, 87.6 percent indicated Bible-based doctrines, and 79.9 mentioned the caring and loving nature of the church.²

From my studies of the Ewe culture and my survey analysis, I learned that in the Ewe traditional life, the home or the household is the place for caring, loving, and security—both spiritual and physical. My analysis also shows an expression of the strong bond between members of a family or a household. Interestingly, the pastor’s influence also is felt within the home. The people have high respect for their pastors. More intriguing is the fact that the people now regard Bible-based doctrines to be a major factor that leads people to church. Here we observe the interplay of the home, the pastor, and Bible studies.

I also observed that the house buildings holding family units or a household have outer courts. These provide a natural and appropriate setting for family or household

¹Question 35 of Appendix A.

²Analysis of Question 35 in Appendix B.
group meetings. During my field research, I had the opportunity to hold four house meetings at Ho. Three of the meetings were held in the houses where church members were staying. One was held in a house where no Adventists were present. Each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday night (from 7:00—8:00) of that week we had a house ministry meeting. The average attendance was about twenty-five adults. The interest of those gathered for the Bible study and prayer meetings far exceeded my expectations. The most interesting thing was that on the Sabbath following the week of home meetings, twelve non-Adventists visited the church, and four of them decided to join the church. This helped me to realize fully that with this strategy we can effectively reach others, win them, and bring them to the truth. No wonder Ellen White was presented with this plan. She wrote:

The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by the one who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for the unbelievers also.¹

In the summer of 1995, I conducted a seminar in the Ghanaian SDA church in Berlin, Germany, on house-to-house Bible study and prayer group meetings. The first Sabbath before the seminar, twenty-five people attended church. The week following, we had six house meetings in the apartments of church members. Non-Adventists living close by were

¹White, Evangelism, 115.
invited to these house meetings. In all, we had a total of fifty-five non-Adventists who attended the six house meetings. The Sabbath following the house meetings, church attendance increased from twenty-five to sixty-five. This was the result of prayer and Bible study in the homes of people we were trying to reach.

In the house-to-house ministry and house-group formation method, a group of laymen will be trained to organize and conduct the Bible study and prayer meetings in the homes of church members and, possibly, in those of non-Adventists, too. Special singing groups could be organized to sing at the house meetings. The program followed basically can be as simple as the one outlined below.

1. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. A special singing group sings for about fifteen minutes. (In the absence of a singing group recorded Christian music is played on a tape recorder.)

2. Opening prayer (2 mins.)

3. Greetings, welcome, and introduction of the program (2 mins.)

4. Bible study (25 mins.)

5. A season of prayer (15 mins.)

6. Benediction (1 min.)

'Training is an essential dimension of church-planting ministry. It is addressed therefore in a below subsection of this dissertation entitled "Training People for the Church-Planting Ministry."
If ten lay people could be trained as leaders for such home meetings, and if teams of two leaders (supported by a number of church members) conduct house meetings, then five house meetings could go on simultaneously. If each team of two could conduct two house meetings at two different houses on two different days, ten different house meetings could be held in a week. This is a tremendous step in reaching the people.¹

In this plan, the church members are challenged and provided with a vehicle (of house meetings) to reach out to those in the neighborhood. This provides an opportunity for church members to use a method that demonstrates their love, care, and concern towards those the church is attempting to reach. Thus, the effectiveness of such a program calls for each church member to be a model and a channel, a model for

¹In 1978-80, when I was the youth leader of the Amakom SDA church in Kumasi, Ghana, I organized a youth evangelistic team. To begin with, we targeted five houses (each home contained about four to five families—about 40 people altogether) and we arranged to meet with each household once a week. Thus, from Monday to Friday we had a house to visit each night from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. We were welcomed in each of those homes we visited. We had a singing group that sang to the people, followed by the usual protocol of greetings, welcoming ourselves, and introduction. The Bible study followed, after which a special season of prayer was organized for the occupants of the house. The people were touched as we prayed for them individually by name. The result of the entire program was overwhelming. First, it brought revival into the local church, and second, many church members got involved in the house-to-house ministry and house gatherings. Third, many people were won each Sabbath and the church grew in membership to a point of dividing the church into two. A third church was being organized when I left.
what is being preached and taught at group meetings and at church, and a channel through which the Holy Spirit is to pass to reach out to others.¹

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Second Avenue

House meetings and house-group formation is a method for the planting of churches that has many advantages and, of course, disadvantages. First, I address the advantages and then point out the disadvantages. Some suggestions are made to address the disadvantages.

Advantages

The advantages of the above method include the following:

1. It brings the church to a personal level—people meeting in the home.

2. It makes it relatively easy for neighbors, friends, and acquaintances to accept invitations to the house meetings where they are easily assimilated into the small group.

3. It eliminates the isolation and loneliness some new members experience in their newfound faith.

4. It provides a healthy atmosphere that encourages strong interpersonal relationships, mutual recognition, and friendship. People are able to open up and interact.

¹See below the subsection entitled "The Church Planter and His Team of Workers."
5. It is very productive. "The most productive learning experiences occur when the church membership, grouped into small cells within geographical proximity of their residences meet together in homes to sing, to pray and inductively study God's word."¹

6. It gradually forms the nucleus of a new church.

7. It provides an opportunity for each member to work hard to bring a friend or a neighbor to the group meetings. Thus members develop the interest and the spirit of being disciple-making church members.

8. It enhances the participation of many church members.

9. It does not cost much, neither is it cumbersome or complex. It is rather simple and attractive.

10. It is easy for small groups to grow and split into other smaller groups in homes.

11. It tends to be very active in worship and attendance and is also very encouraging.

12. It encourages decentralization. Consequently, more church members get the opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts and to grow as they minister in a unique way to nurture and edify fellow believers.

13. It fosters in a local church where many of the members engage themselves in house-to-house ministry and group formation.

¹Faircloth, 103.
14. It embraces the converts into a church that increases as house-to-house group formation becomes an effective program of a church.

Disadvantages

In the house meetings the disadvantages can be categorized into two main groups: (1) lack of trained leaders and (2) quarrels, fighting, and litigation within the home of meeting or among the members who meet.

In the first situation, a lack of trained leaders sometimes results in stale, dry, uninteresting meetings. Instead of Bible study that is encouraging, uplifting of minds to the Saviour, and providing direction, it can deteriorate into argument and showmanship. Thus, lack of trained leaders could cause membership decline and even destroy the group.

Second, in the case of litigation, fighting, and quarrels in the house where meetings are held, the spirit of those who come to participate could be quenched. Petty squabbles among members who attend could diminish the spirit of worship and even destroy the group.

Resolving the Disadvantages

When using the house-church plan, care must be taken when choosing places of meeting. House churches, first of all, should be started in the homes of church members who are active in the church and those whose homes are a model
of what is preached or taught from the Bible. Homes in the area that are suspect should not be used to begin a house group church.

Second, laypersons should be periodically, carefully, and effectively trained¹ to enhance effective leadership in the church-planting ministry. Leadership coordination of activities (such as visitation, Bible passages to be studied, time of meeting, settling petty issues, etc., and the quality and spirituality of the program of the house group are altogether dependent on the people chosen to lead the group. As such, any church member chosen to take up such responsibilities must have leadership training first to learn not only how to lead but how to love the people and how to provide direction.

Avenue #3: The Campus Ministry and Establishment of Adventist Student Fellowships (ASF) Method

Another plan developed for the planting of SDA churches within the target area is the mobilization of students into the church-planting ministry. The Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region are among the first ethnic groups to have the initial advantage of education from missionaries. Since then, education has been emphasized among the Ewes.

¹Training of the laity and the clergy for soul winning and church-planting ministry is an essential element in this strategy. The training aspect of the gospel work is addressed below under a separate title, "Training People for the Church-Planting Ministry."
Due to this early education, Ewes occupy many responsible positions in the educational and public sectors, in government, civil work, and the military. They are noted for their educational aspirations.

A student in a second or tertiary institution of learning is highly respected and accepted within his community and beyond. Students receive this recognition because as young people who have received or are receiving exposure to the knowledge of sciences and arts and, thus, are considered informed, they are regarded as potential bright stars to shine fully one day in the communities. Students also are regarded as potential leaders of the community and of the nation of Ghana. Since it takes members of a whole family and, at times, an entire household to educate a child, families and households are always proud of the students within their household. Thus, students are quite important and influential. In response to question 4 of my survey and analysis, over 70 percent of the respondents expressed their opinions as to the value of Bible study and prayer. What a nice opportunity to establish ASF for this purpose!

Recognizing the acceptance and influence of Ewe students within their respective communities, I thought it would be beneficial to plan a program to mobilize and organize students for the church-planting ministry. Other
reasons that also gave me a clear conviction of such a plan to gather and mobilize students include the following:

1. Historically, Christian student organizations are important. In the history of Christian missions, students have played a tremendous role in world missions since the 1700s. Out of such student activities as prayer meetings, Bible conferences, and spiritual retreats, many student organizations have developed for gospel work. In the 1800s, many more student groups were born, including the Student Volunteer Movement. David Howard wrote: "In the history of modern missions, probably no single factor has wielded a greater influence in the worldwide outreach of the church than the Student Volunteer Movement."  

The interest and involvement of students in the Lord's work were further demonstrated by a group of seven outstanding students referred to as the "Cambridge Seven," who sailed to join the China Inland Mission to proclaim the gospel in those unentered areas in China--winning converts and establishing churches. The Student Volunteer Mission for Foreign Missions (SVMFF) was also another organization that led many students into unentered areas of the world.

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2Ibid., 216.

3Ibid., 213.
The watch word of the SVMFF was "The evangelization of the world in this generation."\(^1\)

Paul Borthwick wrote about some 575 students who were brought together for the first time in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in 1946 for a student-mission conference of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.\(^2\) This student group began to pray and set forth their priorities to worship the Lord, to let Him change them, and to reach out in His name. Many of these students, such as Jim Elliott, David Howard, Ralph Winter, and J. Christy Wilson, became missionaries and great Christian leaders.\(^3\)

In 1977 when I was a student at the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, a group of us who were Seventh-day Adventists revived the almost dead Fellowship of Adventist Students at the university. The result is worth mentioning as an example to be followed.

First of all, the faith of the Adventist students at the university was rekindled and many of them were revived. Second, the students began to visit some of the second-cycle institutions of learning in the city of Kumasi with an aim to establish an Adventist Student Fellowship (ASF) in each of the nearby institutions visited. Students began with


\(^2\)Borthwick, 56.

\(^3\)Ibid.
weekly prayer and Bible study meetings at those institutions every Sunday afternoon. Soon, many students became interested and were won into the newly established group of Adventist students. Within two years, three ASFs were established at the Kumasi High School, Kumasi Academy, and the Kumasi Advanced Teaching Training College.

Third, the university ASF began another program to establish SDA churches in the villages and towns around the university. Before I left the university in 1980, two churches were planted at Ayeduase and Ayigya. Concerning such activities, E. G. White wrote:

> Wherever possible, students should, during the school year, engage in city mission work. They should do missionary work in the surrounding towns and villages. They can form themselves into bands to do Christian help work. Students should take a broad view of their present obligations to God. They are not to look forward to a time after the school term closes, when they will do some large work for God, but should study how, during their student life, to yoke up with Christ in unselfish service for others.¹

During vacation, members of the various ASF also got involved in the churches of their respective villages, towns, cities, and wherever they went to spend their vacation. Above all, many of the students, upon completing their course of study, became church members and, currently, some of the pioneer members of ASFs established at the colleges and the university are in responsible positions in

the church as Union treasurers, Conference presidents, and district pastors. Today there is a strong Ghana National Association of Adventist Students (GNAAS). But, sad to say, not one ASF is established in any of the second-cycle institutions of learning in the Volta Region. Hence my interest in the area of working to establish ASFs in the second-cycle institutions, getting them assimilated into GNAAS, and using them in the church-planting ministry.

2. Students constitute a strong and formidable force to reckon with. When gathered together, trained and directed, students can accomplish much to the glory of God. E. G. White pointed out that "we have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged." She again wrote that, "with such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"

3. Due to their youthful energy, exuberance, and desire to accomplish something, students, when organized, can effectively work far more extensively. On this, E. G. White stated:

Young men are wanted. God calls them to missionary fields. Being comparatively free from care and responsibilities, they are more favorably situated to engage in the work than are those who must provide for

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1White, Christian Service, 30.

the training and support of a large family. Furthermore, young men can more readily adapt themselves to new climates and new society, and can better endure inconveniences and hardships. By tact and perseverance, they can reach people where they are.

4. Students, with their youthful influence, can more appropriately win their peers, friends who are not in schools, and even their families. Ellen G. White again pointed out that "the youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence. Preachers, or laymen advanced in years, cannot have one-half the influence upon the young that the youth, devoted to God, can have upon their associates."¹

Again White pointed out that "the student who has a conscientious regard for truth and a true conception of duty can do much to influence his fellow students for Christ."²

The examples of the Christian students cited, their devotional life, activities, and involvement of past and recent times, and the counsels and guidelines of Ellen G. White on students and their Christian activities gave me much thought that resulted in the development of a strategy to win Ewe students and mobilize them for the church-planting ministry within their own ethnic group.

¹White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 517.

²White, Messages to Young People, 204.

³Ibid., 415.
The Strategy

In this strategy the first step will be campus ministry of the board second-cycle institutions of learning at Ho and Aflao. In these district capital towns, there is an SDA presence; in addition, able church members from the local SDA church could be trained and used to reach students and to establish ASFs in the target institutions.

To begin with, an appropriate period is sought in the target institutions for a program to be conducted by the local SDA church. There are eight institutions of learning plus a Police Training Center (at Ho) which, if possible, could also be a target institution. In these institutions, proper arrangements could be made for programs to be performed on one of the Saturday entertainment nights. In order to create interest in the students and the staff, and to maintain a positive influence without redundancy of programs, the local SDA church could perform a program once a quarter or, at most, twice a quarter in some of the

1During my survey at Ho, I learned that Saturday nights (7:00–9:30) are set aside as an entertainment period for the students and staff of all the second-cycle institutions of learning at Ho and Aflao. At this period, a variety of programs (such as musical concerts from choirs and singing groups, educational drama/Bible plays, or video shows) are organized for the school.

institutions. Programs that could be performed at the target institutions might include:

1. Musical concerts
2. Educational drama (Bible plays)
3. Christian video shows (such as the Ten Commandments, the life of Christ, etc.)
4. A combination of some of the above programs.

Through these programs, students could be enrolled as members of ASF, and permission (from the school authorities) could be sought for them to meet for a weekly one-hour program of Bible study and prayers on an appropriate day and time when the students are at school.

The students won into their respective local branches of ASF could be organized, trained, and directed to perform student Bible plays, educational drama, or to run the Christian video programs at other institutions of learning so as to reach out to their peers, win them, and thus establish ASF from one institution to the other. "Thus even while attending school, students may, if true to their profession, be living missionaries for God."

The second means of reaching Ewe students, besides the Saturday night programs, is the official worship periods of the school. The worship which usually is scheduled for Sunday nights (7:00-8:30) is non-denominational by nature.

\[\text{White, Messages to Young People, 406.}\]
As such, the local SDA church could secure one Sunday night in a quarter to conduct the worship.

Special singing groups from the local SDA church could make arrangements to sing for the school, after which would follow the preaching of the word and a season of prayer. Participating in the worship in this manner creates a healthy rapport between the students and the SDA church, as well as provides a healthy growth and consolidation of ASF on the campuses of the target institutions.

**Student Activities During Vacation**

Another means this strategy seeks to use to mobilize and organize the students who are won into ASFs is the Congress of the Volta Regional Association of Adventist Students (VORAAS). This Congress, which is proposed to be organized annually during vacation, is to be sponsored by the SGC for the first time. For it is the SGC (in conjunction with the GNAAS) that is to give birth to the VORAAS and to set the purpose for the newly born Association. Sponsoring the first Congress of VORAAS will also enable as many Adventist students as possible to attend the Congress and to catch the vision that is to be set before them by the SGC.

At the Congress, all members of the various ASFs established within the Volta Region are brought together in one of the institutions of learning for Bible study, prayer, training, and direction. It is also at such a meeting that
the purpose of the group is to be set and officers of VORAAS appointed and charged to uphold the aims and objectives of the group. It is when students are given the chance to self-govern themselves that they work in a tremendous way to achieve the fivefold purpose proposed for VORAAS as outlined below:

1. To lead students to a deeper devotional life of Bible study, prayer, and worship on the Sabbath, and to live a life wholly consecrated to Christ the Saviour

2. To maintain an intelligent, sympathetic, and active interest in church attendance, church activities, and in the church programs of reaching out to save people

3. To lead students to a thorough consideration of the urgent need of proclaiming the gospel, winning converts, and establishing churches through prayer, house Bible study, and prayer groups, and through any other possible means that conforms to biblical teachings

4. To seek to establish ASF in all the learning institutions within the Volta Region

5. To seek to spread the Adventist message to all the people of the Volta Region.

Other activities that students could be engaged in during vacation are that they could form evangelistic teams to conduct revival meetings for the local SDA churches in their respective areas or help in the house group meetings. E. G. White wrote that
Christ desires to use every student as His agent. You are to cooperate with the One who gave His life for you. What rich blessings would come to our schools if teachers and students would consecrate themselves, heart, mind, soul, and strength, to God’s service as His helping hand!  

Also, since they have tremendous influence over their associates in other schools, and on those friends who do not even attend schools, students, at vacation period, could also organize the youth (those in school and those not in school) in the villages, towns, and cities into Adventist Youth Evangelistic Teams (AYET), a group of young people that meets once a week to pray, study the Bible, and lay plans and then move ahead to establish such groups wherever possible to gather the Ewe youth for Christ. For "the Lord has appointed the youth to be His helping hand" and "with such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!"  

Students could also be organized to engage themselves in literature evangelism. This will not only help students earn their living but open avenues for students to convey the Adventist message to the people of the Volta Region. If the youth are thus organized into such varied and busy activities of praying, Bible studies, training, making

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1White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 555.

2White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 7:64.

plans, and following up plans to reach the lost, their self-esteem will be raised as they labor for the salvation of others, and they will have no time to wander into sin, degradation, and destruction once they continually focus on the Master leader in all their activities. We are therefore to organize the young people for service in whatever activity that may seem appropriate and practicable. Writing to counsel young people in this way, E. G. White points out:

Young men and young women, cannot you form companies, and, as soldiers of Christ, enlist in the work, putting all your tact and skill and talent into the Master's service, that you may save souls from ruin? . . . Will the young men and young women who really love Jesus organize themselves as workers, not only for those who profess to be Sabbath keepers, but for those who are not of our faith?

Let young men and women and children go to work in the name of Jesus. Let them unite together upon some plan and order of action. Cannot you form a band of workers, and have set times to pray together and ask the Lord to give you His grace, and put forth united action?

Areas to Be Considered for a Successful Church-Planting Strategy

In the strategy designed in this dissertation for the planting of SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region, some basic essential areas are to be considered also in order to ensure maximum success. Six areas of urgent need that are to be addressed in this section are:

1. The church planter and the team of workers

2. The people to be reached

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White, Christian Service, 34.
3. Beginning points and goal setting
4. Training people for the church-planting ministry
5. Materials to be used in the strategies
6. Meeting the financial cost.

The Church Planter and His Team of Workers

In the church-planting ministry, particularly the missionary church-planting approach (that which I recommend as the initial method in the planting of SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region), there are some essential qualities that the church planter must possess. These essential qualities are pointed out by Monica Hill as: faith in God, clear call, clear vision, clear message, obedience, power, and understanding the mission field.²

Roger N. McNamara also points out that "God can use anyone to establish a new church, but there are certain characteristics which stand out in the lives of those He

¹There are about eight ways of planting churches. These are (1) the missionary church planting where a "missionary" pastor goes to an unentered area, starts a church, and does not remain but moves on to new territory after the newly established church has had leaders appointed and the church is stable, (2) pioneer church planting, (3) associational church planting, (4) parent-daughter church planting, (5) partnership church planting, (6) cell groups, Bible study method of church planting, (7) church-split church planting, and (8) bivocational church planting.

²Monica Hill, ed., How to Plant Churches (London: British Church Growth Association and The Evangelical Fellowship for Missionary Studies, 1985), 54, 55.
He points out that a church planter needs to be:

1. spiritually mature
2. a lover of people
3. a soul winner
4. a leader, a self-starter
5. a disciplined, focused person
6. flexible
7. financially responsible
8. a family man, and
9. educated and experienced.

The team of workers engaged in church planting is also to show a high degree of commitment and dedication. "The same gifts of leadership, faith, evangelism, preaching, and apostleship are necessary for a church planting team."2

The People to Be Reached

Having identified the target group to reach, another important factor is to identify the points of contact to reach and win the people. In the case of the Ewes, the first point of contact is their quest for spiritual protection and security.


2Malphurs, 91.
This can be met through the prayer groups where the pastor and church elders could offer special prayers for the bereaved family when scared of the harassment of a dead family member. Special prayer meetings could also be organized for the newly born baby where the baby will be dedicated to God. When calamities threaten the community, special prayer meetings are to be organized to pray for the intervention of the Lord. In all these instances, prayer meetings, if well organized in a solemn manner, will replace the traditional rituals performed at birth or death, or when a calamity threatens. Instead of appealing to the gods or the ancestors, the people are pointed directly to God, the Most High.

The other point of contact is the quest of the Ewes to always know about the most powerful force to provide protection, security, and direction. It is in this situation that the Bible studies on the power of God and His Son Jesus Christ become quite relevant and interesting to the people.¹

Another point of contact is their traditional house worship. This is patterned after the "me and my house" or "thou and thy house" system of worship in the Bible. The

¹In the house meetings I had the opportunity to organize at Ho, the Bible studies were based on the miraculous deeds the Lord worked through Moses in delivering His people (Exod 7:10, 12, 19, 22; 8:5-7, 17-19; 9:8-11). I could observe the keen interest of the participants in those Bible passages and how the meaning of the passage was to them "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb" (Ps 19:10).
house gathering for worship is therefore an appropriate form of worship where each person could express his/her request for prayers and open up also for Bible discussions.

The inquiring minds of the young people are another point of contact to be effectively tapped and directed to the truth. These young minds are often tearing down the Ewes' traditional beliefs. The youth therefore are a contact point to reach the others in the society.

Above all, besides identifying the people and the points of contact, the people to be reached must always feel the love, care, and concern of the church planter and his team of workers. At this point I would like to stress that the only one successful method in winning people when using the developed strategies is the method Christ used. Rebecca Pippert writes:

I believe that much of our evangelism is ineffective because we depend too much upon technique and strategy. Evangelism has slipped into the sales department. I am convinced that we must look at Jesus, and the quality of life He calls us to, as a model for what to believe and how to reach out to others.¹

Ellen G. White calls the attention of gospel workers to use the only one method that can give true success in winning souls. She writes,

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for

¹Rebecca Manley Pippert, Out of the Saltshaker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 13.
them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."¹

In this method, personal efforts of each and every gospel worker (be it church planter or any member of the church-planting team) are required in the form of showing genuine loving friendliness towards all. Love can break down barriers of opposition, and win those opposing the truth. It is only by His method, "accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer and the power of the love of God"² that true success cannot fail.

Beginning Points and Goal Setting

In all the strategies developed for the planting of SDA churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region, one important question that needs to be addressed is where churches should be planted first. Obviously, the answer is where the people live. In these designed strategies, church planting, if it is to be an effective and successful ministry, is to begin from the urban centers and then proceed to the towns designated as the district capital towns, and on to the surrounding towns and villages.

There are a number of reasons for church-planting ministry to begin from the urban centers. Some of the major reasons include the following.

²Ibid., 143, 144.
1. To begin church-planting ministry from the urban centers/cities is biblical. The apostle Paul used this urban center approach in his church-planting ministry. Hesselgrave points out that, "in the Book of Acts, when Paul’s extensive missionary endeavors are related to a specific area, the reference is usually to a city. He considered an area evangelized when a church was planted in its major city."¹

Writing about the missionary activities of Paul, Roland Allen also pointed out that all the places Paul planted churches "were centers of Roman administration, of Greek civilization, of Jewish influence, or of some commercial importance. The places Paul touched were centers where education was established."² They were "cities which occupied an important place as leaders of the provinces. They were foremost in every movement of policy or thought."³

In the history of the early church and, particularly, in the ministry of the apostle Paul, we learn that "the New Testament pattern for church planting was to concentrate on the cities, the population centers. The outlying districts were then evangelized by the local churches."⁴

¹Hesselgrave, 97.
²Allen, 14.
³Ibid., 15.
⁴McNamara, 6.
Some of the cities the apostles reached to plant churches were: Antioch (Acts 11:19-26), the third city of the Roman Empire; Ephesus (Acts 18 and 19), one of the largest cities of the Roman world; Corinth (Acts 18:4, 8; 1 Cor 9:20), the capital of the Roman province of Achaia; Jerusalem (Acts 15), the city that became the capital of Judah; and Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel.

2. Cities, regional capitals, and urban centers designated as district headquarters are the strategic centers from where the gospel spreads in every direction to the surrounding towns and villages.

3. Sociologically, cities are the focal points of change. Hesselgrave quotes George Foster, the anthropologist, that "most changes first occur in the city among the upper classes and spread downwards to the lower classes and outward to the countryside."

4. Urban centers hold crowds of people who are, compared to the rural dwellers, more exposed and open-minded, and many of them are in transition and, because of this, are easily winnable.

5. More often than not, rural dwellers are so stereotyped in their convictions regarding their faith or religion that they do not easily lend themselves to persuasion. These are the isolated and self-contained.

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¹George Foster, quoted in Hesselgrave, 98.
²Hesselgrave, 99.
These can best be approached by their rural counterparts who are tied to the city. This is the type (of the rural societies) that is "tied to the city in the sense that the city is the source of much resources, whether of finance, material goods, or new ideas and values." 

6. It is in the urban centers that many second-cycle institutions of learning and even the tertiary institutions are located. It is the place to begin with students, and it is also the best place to begin the house-to-house strategy.

With the aforementioned reasons, the goal set in my proposed church-planting ministry is to begin to strengthen the SDA churches in Ho and those in the District headquarters and use the churches to plant more churches in the cities as shown in table 16. These are the centers to be considered first for church planting among the Ewes of the Volta Region.

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
TABLE 16

LOCATIONS SDA CHURCHES
SHOULD FIRST BE PLANTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (urban center)</th>
<th>Description of Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ho</td>
<td>Regional capital town as well as a district headquarters for the district. Ho needs more than one SDA church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hohoe</td>
<td>Hohoe district headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpandu</td>
<td>Kpandu district headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adidome</td>
<td>A district headquarters for the Adidome district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akatsi</td>
<td>Akatsi district headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketu</td>
<td>Ketu district headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keta</td>
<td>Keta district headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sogakope</td>
<td>Sogakope district headquarters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training People for the Church-Planting Ministry

One of the important dimensions to be considered if the church-planting ministry is to be successful is the training of the team of church planters who are going to be involved in the planting of churches among the Ewes of the Volta Region. Initially, the church-planting team will be the few denominational workers, the local SDA churches, and the lay leaders of these churches. As students are won into the Adventist Student Fellowships, special training seminars to direct the students to the understanding of the ministry as well as to catch the vision of winning souls and
establishing groups will also be organized for them. These training sessions are to be organized annually.

Through training, the vision for the planting of churches is to be clearly set before the people being trained. The biblical as well as the Spirit of Prophecy foundations for church-planting will be given. Bible promises for divine help in this ministry are also presented. The overall goal(s) is/are clearly defined, the strategy for the church-planting ministry will be presented, the plan of action explained, and the methods to be used to accomplish the defined goal(s) will be stated.

It is also at this training that the resources for the church-planting ministry are carefully addressed. The three areas of resources will be personnel, study materials, and money. The last two are briefly addressed under separate subtitles. As already mentioned, the personnel in this case will be the denominational workers, the lay leaders, and the entire membership of the local SDA churches. They periodically receive training to keep them on course for the Lord with a continued zeal and enthusiasm and in the Spirit of the Lord, who is the divine Person directing the entire church-planting ministry in the target area.

These training sessions, mingled with and supported by the Concerted Prayer Action strategy, will empower the laity and the denominational workers to work assiduously and in unity using Christ’s method. E. G. White wrote that if the
work of believers is "accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, and cannot, be without fruit."¹

The annual training sessions on church planting could as well be a monitoring system. This is because at the training session, special reports on the church planting work will be given² by all the districts. A committee appointed to study and analyze the reports will also give its analytical reports and assessment or evaluation of the strategies and the entire church-planting ministry and, accordingly, propose reviewed or modified strategies, plans, and methods to achieve maximum output of the church-planting work. Due to the amount of work—study, reports, evaluation, prayer session—involved, this dissertation recommends that training sessions begin on Wednesday night and end on the following Sunday noon (see Appendix E).

Besides the annual training sessions, a special program on church planting is to be organized by qualified

¹White, The Ministry of Healing, 143, 144.
²Prior to the training session, written progress reports of the church-planting ministry will be submitted to the SGC by the various districts within the target area. A committee will be appointed to study and analyze the entire reports and, at the session, present its findings—the process, strengths and weaknesses, problems, and limitations encountered—and evaluation of the entire work and its proposal.
personnel in the local SDA churches. Such a program could begin Friday night (7:00-9:00) and continue the entire Sabbath where divine service will be geared towards an aspect of the church-planting seminar that is being conducted in the local church. The whole Sabbath afternoon (short break after the divine service which ends at 12:30 p.m.) will be devoted to the church-planting seminar (i.e., from 1:30 p.m.-sunset). Where possible, Sunday (from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon) is to be added. A special theme for such a weekend church-planting seminar should be chosen, one that will capture the attention of church members and get them ready for action for Christ. Thus, throughout the church-planting work, training—a vital dimension of the ministry—is to be conducted constantly to keep church workers, lay leaders, as well as the entire church, active for the Lord's work.

Resource Materials

The study materials for the church-planting ministry must be simple, relevant, and financially uncumbersome. To begin with, the Bible (in Ewe and English versions) being the main resource book is to be made available for sale to church members and the new converts. The Sabbath school lesson quarterly, which will be used for daily morning Bible

1Those who have attended the complete training session and are certified are eligible to lead out in such local church programs.
studies, is also to be made available for sale by the Adventist Book Center of the South Ghana Conference.

Other materials (such as the Voice of Prophecy lesson study series) that the SGC currently uses in its outreach evangelism could also be used. Besides these resource study materials, a committee is to be appointed to develop simple and relevant resource study materials that could be given to church members as well as non-Adventists as a lead into Bible study. Resource materials are also to be designed for house Bible study and prayer meetings. Handout materials on church-planting seminars/workshops are to be made available to be used by personnel to lead out in church-planting programs at the various local SDA churches within the target area.

Meeting the Financial Cost

The area of finances is another essential dimension of such a church-planting ministry in any unentered area like the Volta Region. Like all new territories of work, the tithe income from church members in the Volta Region is inadequate to support even the few denominationally paid workers. In a telephone conversation with Mr. E. A. Odonkor, the treasurer of the SGC, the following information was provided. The amount quoted here below in this section is given in cedis.\(^1\)

\(^1\)The cedi is the Ghanaian currency. Currently, one dollar is equivalent to 1,980 cedis.
1. Denominationally paid workers in the target area = 8
2. Average monthly salary of a worker = 120,000
3. Annual average tithe returns from the target area (and including Jasikam area) for the last three years (1994-96) = 13,000,000

The financial statistics given, plus the cost of the church-planting project in the Volta Region, together will place the SGC in an unbearable financial position so far as the work in the Volta Region is concerned. The estimated annual budget for the church-planting ministry in the Volta Region is as outlined below:

1. Salaries of 10 church-planting workers at an average monthly salary of 120,000 cedis per worker per month for a year = 1,200,000
2. Cost of organizing a workers' and lay leaders' church-planting training seminar/workshop for 60 people = 820,000
   a. Cost of renting a place of meeting (accommodation & auditorium)
      60,000 cedis a day for 3 days = 180,000
b. Cost of feeding 60 participants
   at 10,000 cedis per person per
day for 3 days = 1,800,000

c. Estimated cost of producing
   handouts on church-planting
   ministry & other helpful
   resource study materials = 720,000

3. Budget for campus ministries and
the establishment of Adventist
Students' Fellowships

a. Transportation rentals to perform
   programs in the second-cycle
   institutions of learning (a rental
   of 50,000 per week for 36 weeks
   of the year) = 1,800,000

b. Rental of video projector, screen,
   Christian video films (60,000
   per week for 36 weeks of the
   year) = 2,160,000

c. Cost of study and evangelistic
   materials = 400,000

d. Cost of organizing Adventist
   Students Congress
   (1) Cost of renting a place of meeting
   (accommodation & auditorium) for up
to 100 students, to begin with,
for 60,000 cedis a day for three
days = 180,000

(2) Cost of feeding 80 students at
10,000 cedis per person per day
for three days = 2,400,000

4. Miscellaneous expenses = 5,000,000

5. Total Annual Budget for the Church-
Planting Ministry = 15,660,000

A means for income to meet the estimated budgeted expenses of the church-planting work will be embarked upon. First, the South Ghana Conference is to embark upon small-scale income-generating projects¹ (such as operating a small engine-powered boat for fishing, a garri² factory, etc. This will not only provide income for the funds to be set aside by the SGC for the church-planting ministry, but it will provide job openings for church members. Second, students could be engaged in literature evangelism within the target area and even beyond its borders. Third,

¹David Sarfo Ameyaw, in his D.Min. dissertation, developed small-scale income-generating projects for local churches, conferences, and missions. This work will be of much help for a choice of an income-generating project for the local SDA churches in the target area, or the Conference could operate such a project for the churches in the Volta Region. David S. Ameyaw, "Strategy to Develop Small-Scale Income-Generating Programs Among Seventh-day Adventist Lay Members in Ghana," (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, 1996).

²Garri is one of the local foods made from cassava.
individuals could be approached for sponsorship of the church-planting project. Table 17 presents the annual budgetary income to meet the annual expenses to be incurred in the church-planting ministry.

**TABLE 17**

**BUDGETARY INCOME FOR CHURCH-PLANTING PROJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Amount (Gh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual tithe income</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation from the SGC</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriation from the WAUM</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from projects</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from sales of Christian literature</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from individual sponsors (100 people each donating 100,000 cedis per year)</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income for church-planting project</strong></td>
<td><strong>26,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1In my evangelistic and church-planting activities in Ghana, I had some national sponsors (like Evelyn Boateng, Matilda Agyekum, Pauline Osei, Lt. Col. Opuni-Mensah, and Dorah Bemah) who were financially supporting and sponsoring the entire program. Plans were even made to extend our program to the Volta Region. An initial amount of 180,000 cedis was deposited in 1988, prior to my departure from Ghana for further studies.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The choice of the Ewe-speaking ethnic group of the Volta Region, Ghana, is a very strategic one. By language and bond of ethnicity, the people link up with one of the major ethnic groups—the Ewe people in the south of Togo, and with "the Ewe cluster" in the south of Benin. Altogether, they form a population of over 3,000,000 people among whom the presence of the Seventh-day Adventist church is not yet established. For this reason, I chose to study the Ewe-speaking people group of the Volta Region (over a number of other unentered ethnic groups in Ghana) in order to develop strategies for the planting of Seventh-day Adventist churches among them. If this target group is effectively reached, I believe, the ripples of the presence and the work of SDA churches will spread outward to reach the Ewe stock in both countries of Togo and Benin.

In this study, the culture, traditional religion, worldviews, social structure, and traditional polity of the Ewe-speaking people are brought together as factors considered for the development of the strategies outlined in this dissertation for the planting of churches. A survey
was also conducted to obtain a clearer picture of the immediate context of the Ewes for planting SDA churches among them.

The three main strategies developed for the planting of SDA churches among the Ewes are the Concerted Prayer Action Strategy, the House-to-House Ministry and House-Group Formation Strategy, and the Campus Ministry and ASF Strategy. These strategies, especially the first one, will unite all the districts within the South Ghana Conference in a concerted action of prayer. By this also the SGC will effectively focus on the Volta Region and support the church-planting ministry through prayers and other means as have been suggested in this dissertation. In developing these three strategies for the church-planting ministry, the cost factor was also considered so as not to put unbearable financial constraints upon the conference.

Eight district urban centers were earmarked as the beginning points of the church-planting ministry. Among them, Ho is the first on the list, for the church at Ho needs to be strengthened, to grow, and to actively work within the neighborhood and within the second-cycle institutions within the regional capital. The second and third places are Keta and Aflao, respectively. The rest of the listed urban centers can follow in any order, or there can be a simultaneous launching of a church-planting ministry at these places at the same time. The eight
centers are the strategically chosen urban centers from where the Adventist message could reach out to the surrounding towns and villages.

In order to mobilize, organize, and motivate the denominational workers, the lay leaders, and the entire membership of the SDA churches established among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region, Ghana, and for a progressive and effective work of church-planting ministry, and for a close administrative supervision of the gospel work in the Volta Region, the following recommendations are given.

1. The South Ghana Conference should declare the entire Volta Region as an unentered area that needs immediate and urgent attention from the SGC, the West African Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventists, and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC). In this case, the Volta Region could benefit from the Global Mission fund of the GC. As a declared unentered territory, the already established but inactive congregations of the SDA church would become aware and step up their efforts to reach out aggressively instead of following the normal tempo of an easy, slow, laissez-faire kind of attitude that characterizes the Adventist work that has been going on for over twenty years.

2. The South Ghana Conference should map out the entire Volta Region and create it as a mission station.
This will enhance proper and close administrative oversight of the work from within the region instead of the administrative oversight extending to the region from Accra, where the headquarters of the SGC is located. As a mission station, an urgent awareness is created within the denominational workers and all the Seventh-day Adventists in the region of the three self-principles—self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting. Unless the Volta Region is detached from the SGC, it will continue to linger and look up to the Conference for direction and growth, and thus unconsciously or otherwise neglect to do that which it is capable of doing without the SGC.

3. The SGC should appoint indigenous Ewes to officially lead out in the Seventh-day Adventist work in the region. The Ewe-speaking ethnic group exhibits an innate desire for self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting in all their associations and groupings. Any attempt to override such a positive desire is tantamount to quenching their earnest and eager spirit of active work and their leadership acumen.

Thus, for a healthy leadership and for the growth of the gospel work in the region, indigenous Ewes are the first to be given the chance to lead out in the mission station. Any church planter who goes in to join the team of denominational workers is to be posted there mainly for the
purpose of the church-planting ministry and not as administrative personnel.

4. The South Ghana Conference should begin a quarterly denominational newsletter focusing on the gospel work of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Volta Region. It is through the dissemination of the information contained in the newsletter that the SDA churches in the region will be informed, challenged, encouraged, as well as motivated to work harder, praying together over the problematic and challenging issues which confront them. Besides, King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, pointed out that "the light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report makes the bones healthy" (Prov 15:30).

5. The South Ghana Conference should immediately seek to support the SDA churches at Ho and Aflao to begin an active campus-ministry program in the second-cycle institutions of learning and establish Adventist Student Fellowships—a step in the right direction to plant SDA churches among the Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region.

To conclude, the following are a few quotes from the pen of inspiration:

Let there be the wisest planning for the success of the work. Decided efforts should be made to open new fields in the north, the south, the east and the west. . . . The fact that the presentation of the truth has been so long neglected should appeal to our ministers and workers to enter these fields and not give up the work until they have clearly given the message.1

1White, Evangelism, 19-20.
Those who are endeavoring to build up the work in new territory will often find themselves in great need of better facilities. Their work will seem to be hindered for lack of these facilities; but let them not lose their faith and courage. Often they are obliged to go to the limit of their resources. At times it may seem as if they could advance no further. But if they pray and work in faith, God will answer their petition, sending them means for the advancement of the work. Difficulties will arise; they will wonder how they are going to accomplish what must be done. At times the future will look very dark. But let the workers bring to God the promises He has made, and thank Him for what He has done. Then the way will open before them, and they will be strengthened for the duty of the hour.¹

Above all, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has promised. He says, "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen" (Matt 28:20).

APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
## I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. **Gender**  
   1. Male  
   2. Female  

2. **Age**  
   1. 13-17 years  
   2. 18-25 years  
   3. 26-44 years  
   4. 45-55 years  
   5. Above 55 years  

3. **Marital Status:**  
   1. Married  
   2. Not married  

4. **Highest level of education:**  
   1. No formal education  
   2. Elementary school  
   3. Secondary/Training/Commercial School  
   4. University graduate  

5. **Religious affiliation:**  
   1. Christian  
   2. Muslim  
   3. Traditional religionist  
   4. Atheist  
   5. Specify any other: 

## II. PERSPECTIVE ON RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK AND LIFESTYLE

6. The Christian churches in your area are relevant to the way you live today.

   1. Agree strongly  
   2. Agree somewhat  
   3. Not sure  
   4. Disagree somewhat  
   5. Disagree strongly
7. How much confidence do you have in these institutions?

a. Public schools
   A lot [ ]   Some [ ]   Not much [ ]   None [ ]

b. Christian churches
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

c. Hospitals & health care organizations
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

8. How much confidence do you have in these persons?

a. Teachers
   A lot [ ]   Some [ ]   Not much [ ]   None [ ]

b. Pastors/priests
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

c. Lawyers
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

d. Medical doctors
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

e. Traditional rulers (e.g., chiefs)
   [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

9. Which of the following close relations do you always consult first when making important decisions? (choose only one response)

1. Father [ ]
2. Mother [ ]
3. Sister/Brother [ ]
4. Uncle/Aunt [ ]
5. Friend [ ]
6. Other (specify) ____________________________

10. How important are the following to you?

    Very important Somewhat important Not too important Not at all important
a. Family/Relatives [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
b. Health [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
c. Your time [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
d. Close friends [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
e. Religion [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
f. Bible study [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
g. Your career/job [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
h. Money/property [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
11. Which of the following takes the most of your time?
   1. Friends [ ]
   2. Studying [ ]
   3. Family [ ]
   4. Work [ ]
   5. Other (specify) ____________

III. CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

12. During the past week, did you attend a small group meeting for Bible studies?
   1. Yes [ ]  2. No [ ]

13. During the past week, did you volunteer free time to help a church?
   1. Yes [ ]  2. No [ ]

14. In a typical month, on how many weekends would you attend church worship services?
   1. One [ ]
   2. Two [ ]
   3. Three [ ]
   4. Four or five [ ]
   5. None [ ]

15. About how long has it been since you last attended a church worship service?
   1. Less than 3 months [ ]
   2. 3 to less than 6 months [ ]
   3. 6 to less than 12 months [ ]
   4. One year or more [ ]
   5. None [ ]

16. Which of the following churches do you attend frequently?
   1. Baptist [ ]
   2. Lutheran [ ]
   3. Methodist [ ]
   4. Pentecostal/Charismatic/Fellowship [ ]
   5. Presbyterian [ ]
   6. Roman Catholic [ ]
   7. Seventh-day Adventist [ ]
   8. Other (specify) ____________
17. Are you presently an official member of a church?

1. Yes [ ] 2. No [ ]

18. How long have you been a member of your present church?

1. 0-1 year [ ]
2. 2-3 years [ ]
3. 4-5 years [ ]
4. 6-10 years [ ]
5. 11-19 years [ ]
6. 20 years & above [ ]

19. During the last six months, have you invited a friend or acquaintance to attend church with you?

1. Yes [ ] 2. No [ ]

20. Indicate how well you are acquainted with the following churches:

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<tr>
<th>Church Type</th>
<th>Very well</th>
<th>Well</th>
<th>Not very well</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>a. Baptist</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>b. Lutheran</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Methodist</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Pentecostal/charismatic</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Presbyterian</td>
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<td>f. Roman Catholic</td>
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<td>g. Seventh-day Adventist</td>
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<td>h. Other (specify)</td>
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</table>

21. Which church do you consider to be the most "popular" among the Ewe-speaking people?

Specify __________________________

22. Which of the following reasons best explains why you think that the above-mentioned church is so "popular" among the Ewe-speaking people? (choose only one reason)

1. It is a church for the common people [ ]
2. It is a church for prominent/influential/educated people [ ]
3. It teaches good morals [ ]
4. Its doctrines are biblical [ ]
5. It is a church that practices healing [ ]
6. It is a church which truly cares for its members [ ]
7. Other (specify) __________________________________________
IV. CONTENT OF FAITH

How do you respond to the following statements in questions #23-31?

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<tr>
<th>23.</th>
<th>&quot;The Bible is the written Word of God and is totally trustworthy in all that it teaches.&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>24.</th>
<th>&quot;God created the world and everything in this world in six literal days.&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<tr>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25.</th>
<th>&quot;God watches over people and answers their prayers.&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>26.</th>
<th>&quot;When people die their spirits go about helping and/or haunting people.&quot;</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>27.</th>
<th>&quot;When true Christians die they go straight to heaven but the unbelievers and the ungodly go straight to hell when they die.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>28.</th>
<th>&quot;Besides good powers of God, there are other higher powers which also guide and protect people.&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>29.</th>
<th>&quot;The second coming of Jesus will be visible and audible.&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
30. "A person is saved solely by grace, and not by the works of the law." [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

31. "Christians saved by grace will keep all of God's Ten Commandments as an expression of their love for Him." [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

V. GROWING SPIRITUALLY

32. How often do you read the Bible in a typical week?

1. 0 [ ]
2. 1 to 2 days [ ]
3. 3 to 6 days [ ]
4. 7 days [ ]
5. None [ ]
6. Never [ ]

33. How often do you pray in a typical week?

1. 0 [ ]
2. 1 to 2 times [ ]
3. 3 to 6 times [ ]
4. 7 or more times [ ]
5. Never [ ]

34. How often do you share your faith or beliefs with others?

1. Seldom/rarely [ ]
2. Occasionally [ ]
3. Regularly [ ]
4. Not at all [ ]
35. How important are each of the following in helping you to decide which church to join?

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Friends and mates attend</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Pastor's/priest's influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Bible-based doctrines</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Healing &amp; miracles</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Caring &amp; love church</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Makes members prosper</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Other (specify)</td>
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APPENDIX B

OUTPUT OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS
OUTPUT OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

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Valid cases 868, Missing cases 20

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Valid cases 690  Missing cases 198

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Valid cases 667  Missing case 221

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Valid cases 661  Missing cases 227
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Valid cases 680  Missing cases 208

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Valid cases 666

Missing cases 222

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Valid cases 330

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Valid cases 811

Missing cases 77

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Valid cases 824

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APPENDIX C

A PRAYER RETREAT PROGRAM OUTLINE
(AS SUGGESTED BY THE CPA STRATEGY)
A Prayer Retreat Program Outline
(As suggested by the CPA strategy)

Friday Night:

7:00 p.m. Congregational hymns (20 mins)
Welcome and introduction (5 mins)
Opening hymn (2 mins)
Opening prayer (2 mins)
Scripture reading (2 mins)
Special song . . . congregational/singing group (3 mins)
Revival message—based on the theme of retreat
(40 mins)
Season of prayer (40 mins)
Closing hymn (2 mins)
Benediction (1 min)

Sabbath Morning:

4:45 a.m. Congregational hymns (1 or 2) and a season of
prayer (30 mins)
Revival message—based on soul winning (20 mins)
Season of prayer—break into groups of three (10 mins) (focusing prayer on the day’s
activities and on individual prayer requests)
Closing hymn (2 mins)
Closing prayer (2 mins)
6-8 a.m. Preparation for worship
8:00 Breakfast
9:30 Sabbath school (75 mins)
10:45 Personal ministries promotion (15 mins)
11:00 Divine service (75 mins)
12:30 Lunch

Sabbath Afternoon and Evening:

1:30 Congregational song (15 mins)
Activity I (Lecture): The Promises of God
   Regarding Prayer (35 mins)
Activity II: Season of prayer (at times separate
   into groups of 2 or 3) (40 mins)
   Focusing on:
   i) Ewe-speaking people of the Volta Region
   ii) denominational workers in the target
       area
   iii) SDA churches in the area
   iv) house-to-house group meetings
   v) campus ministry program
   vi) individual prayer requests
   vii) any other prayer requests
Activity III: Testimony period (60 mins)
Sharing experiences in the Lord, and singing hymns together
Activity IV: Free time/socialization (30 mins)
Supper (60 mins)
Activity V: Sundown worship (30 mins)

6-7:00 Preparation for the night’s program

7:00 Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Short play on house-group meetings (45-60 mins)
Season of prayer for the growth of the small groups (30 mins)
Short biblical message (15 mins)
Closing prayer focusing on Adventist families in the Volta Region (5 mins)
End of the program for the day

Sunday Morning:

4:45-6:00 Bible study and prayer meeting

6-7:00 Preparation and cleaning

8:00 Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Consecration service (40 mins)
(A charge to participants to go back to serve and lead converts into the fold)
Special prayer of rededication and consecration (20 mins)
Closing hymn (3 mins)
Benediction (1 min)
AN ALL-NIGHT PRAYER MEETING
PROGRAM OUTLINE (10 p.m. - 5:00 a.m.)

10:00
Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Welcome and introduction (5 mins)
Opening hymn (2 mins)
Opening prayer (2 mins)
Scripture reading (2 mins)
Special song . . . congregational/singing group (4 mins)

Activity I: Revival message based on the theme for the program (35 mins)
Season of prayer - separating at times into groups of 2 or 3 (30 mins) Focusing on:
   i) the Lord's guidance and protection during the night
   ii) forgiveness of sins
   iii) indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Activity II: Some examples of prayer warriors (e.g., Daniel, our Lord Jesus Christ) and church collective prayers already answered (40 mins)
Season of prayer (40 mins) focusing prayer on the:
   i) SDA churches in the target area
   ii) church-planting ministry
   iii) church-planting team
   iv) peculiar hindrances of the gospel
   v) traditional heads, etc., etc.

Activity III - Message: How God Answers Individual Prayer (30 mins) focusing on faith, obedience, and the will of God - conditions for answer to our prayer requests
Season of prayer (30 mins)
   Individual prayer requests of church members/ friends, etc.
   Communities confronting problems

Activity IV: Congregational hymns and testimony period (60 mins) Intermingled with thanksgiving prayers

Activity V: (40 mins) Separation into 2 groups to discuss and pray on problems confronting Adventist families and How families can be powerful witnessing groups
   Congregational hymns (10 mins)
   Other prayer requests (20 mins)
Activity VI: Morning Bible study and prayer meeting (45 mins)

5:00

Closing hymn (1 min)

Benediction (1 min)
APPENDIX E

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM OUTLINE FOR AN ANNUAL TRAINING SEMINAR ON CHURCH PLANTING AMONG THE EWES OF THE VOLTA REGION
Seminar on Church Planting
(A suggested program outline)

Wednesday Night:

7:00
Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Welcome and introduction (5 mins)
Opening hymn (2 mins)
Opening prayer (2 mins)
Scripture reading (2 mins)
Special song (3 mins)
Revival message based on the theme of the seminar (40 mins)
Season of prayer by pastors and elders (20 mins)

Thursday Morning and Part of Afternoon:

4:45-6:00 Morning Bible study and prayer meeting (60 mins)
Preparation for morning session (60 mins)
Breakfast (45 mins)

7:45 a.m. Congregational hymns or singing groups (15 mins)

8:00
Activity I "The Nature and Mission of the SDA Church" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)
Break (10 mins)
Activity II "Biblical Foundation for Church Planting" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)
Break (10 mins)
Activity III "Spirit of Prophecy Foundation for Church Planting" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)

12:30-2:30 Lunch/Rest/Socialization/Interaction (2 hrs)

Thursday Afternoon & Evening

3:00
Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Activity V "Elements of Successful Church Planting" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)
Break (10 mins)

4:45
Activity VI "Methods of Soul Winning" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)
6:05-7 Supper
7-8:00 Break
8-9:15 Revival sermon (40 mins)
          Season of prayer (15 mins)
9:30 End of the program for the day

Friday Morning & Afternoon

4:45-6 Morning Bible study and prayer meeting (60 mins)
        Preparation for morning session (60 mins)
        Breakfast (45 mins)
8:00 Activity I "Reports on Church Planting Activities
          or Plans for the Target Area" (45 mins)
          Discussion (20 mins)
          Season of Prayer (15 mins)
          Break (10 mins)
9:30 a.m. Activity II "Financial Reports on Church Planting
      Activities" (45 mins)
          Discussion (20 mins)
          Season of prayer (15 mins)
          Break (10 mins)
11 a.m. Activity III "Analysis of Reports, Findings &
       Recommendations" (45 mins)
          Discussion (20 mins)
          Season of prayer (15 mins)
          Break (10 mins)
12:30 Lunch
3:40 p.m. Preparation for Sabbath

Friday Evening

3:45 Congregational hymns (15 mins)
4:00 p.m. Activity IV "Promises of God’s Leadership in Our
      Gospel Ministry" (45 mins)
          Discussion (20 mins)
          Season of prayer (15 mins)
          Break (10 mins)
5:30-6:10 Vesper service to welcome the Sabbath (40 mins)
6:15-7:15 Supper
Friday Night

7:30 p.m. Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Activity VI Testimonies & special prayers (60 mins)
Season of prayer (20 mins)

8:50 Hour of meditation (a short biblical message) (15 mins)
Closing hymn (3 mins)
Benediction (1 min)

9:15 End of the program for the day

Sabbath Morning

4:45 a.m. Congregational hymns (15 mins)
Revival message (40 mins)
Season of prayer (20 mins)
Closing hymn (2 mins)
Benediction (1 min)
Breakfast (45 mins)

9:00 Sabbath school (1 hr, 40 mins)
10:45 Personal ministries promotion (15 mins)
11:00 Divine service (1 hr, 30 mins)
12:30 Lunch
Rest

Sabbath Afternoon & Evening

3-3:15 Congregational hymn or singing group(s) (15 mins)

3:15 Activity I" House-to-House Evangelism and House Group Formation" (45 mins)
Discussion (20 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)
Break (10 mins)

4:45 Activity II Questions, answers, reports from committees (45 mins)

5:30 Sundown worship (30 mins)
Season of prayer (15 mins)

6:15 Supper (60 mins)
Saturday Night

7:30  Congregational hymns/singing group(s) (15 mins)
     Activity III Video show on methods of winning souls (60 mins)
     Season of prayer (20 mins)

8:50  Hour of meditation (a short biblical message) (15 mins)
     Closing hymn (3 mins)
     Benediction (1 min)

9:15  End of program for the day

Sunday Morning

4:45  Morning Bible study & prayer meeting (60 mins)
     Preparation for morning session (60 mins)
     Breakfast (45 mins)

8:00  Activity I "Campus Ministries & the Formation of Adventist Students' Fellowships" (45 mins)
     Discussion (20 mins)
     Season of prayer (15 mins)
     Break (10 mins)

9:30  Activity II "How to Lead Out in a Small Group Bible Study and Prayer Meeting" (45 mins)
     Discussion (20 mins)
     Season of prayer (15 mins)
     Break (10 mins)

11:00 Consecration service (40 mins)
      Consecration prayer for participants (20 mins)
      Closing hymn (2 mins)
      Benediction (1 min)

12:00 Lunch
      Departure
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Tinsley, William C. *Upon This Rock.* Atlanta, GA: Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1985.


VITA

Personal Data

Name: Emmanuel Osei
Date & Place of Birth: February 19, 1951, Kumasi, Ghana
Marital Status: Married (children: 2 daughters and a son)
Spouse: Esther Osei

Education

1967-68 New Era Secondary School, Accra, Ghana
1968-72 Seventh-day Adventist Secondary School, Bekwai-Ashanti, Ghana
1972-74 Government Secondary School, Sunyani, Ghana
1975-80 University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana
1989-97 Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI, USA

Degrees Awarded

1972 General Certificate of Education - Ordinary Level, Ministry of Education, Ghana
1974 General Certificate of Education - Advanced Level, Ministry of Education, Ghana
1978 Diploma in Data Processing, University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana
1980 BSc in Computer Science, University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana
1992 M.Div., Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI, USA
1997 Doctor of Ministry, Andrews University

Work Experience

1975-80 Student leader in Campus Ministry - an outreach program which gave birth to Adventist Students Fellowships at the i) Kumasi High Secondary School, ii) Kumasi Academy, iii) Kumasi Advanced Teacher Training College (KATTC), Asanteman Secondary School, Kumasi

1980-81 National Service at the Headquarters of the Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Kumasi, Ghana
1981-83 Acting Director, Adventist Ministerial College, Bekwai-Ashanti, Ghana

Tutor, Seventh-day Adventist Secondary School, Bekwai-Ashanti, Ghana

1983-85 Departmental Director (in charge of Youth and Communication), Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Kumasi, Ghana

1985-89 Church Ministries Director in charge of Youth and Stewardship Seminars, and Seminars on Small Group Bible Study and Prayer Meetings in Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia

1981-89 Have planted a total of 29 churches. Within the Central Ghana Conference (24), the South Ghana Conference (3), and the Mid-West Ghana Mission (2)

1989-97 One of the leaders and coordinators of overseas evangelism targeting Ghanaians abroad

Have been secretary of the Coordinating Committee (1990-1992) for the Ghanaian Adventist Churches in USA

Have been instrumental in the planning of Ghanaian SDA campmeetings in North America (1990-92), Holland (1995, 1997), Germany (1996)

Have conducted church-growth seminars and lay training workshops for the Ghanaian SDA churches in Toronto, Canada; New York, Washington, Chicago, USA; Hamburg, Berlin, Dusseldorf, Germany; and Palermo, Italy

Associate evangelist and Bible instructor for the two evangelistic efforts (1991 and 1993) in the First Ghana SDA Church, New York

1997 Conducted an evangelistic effort in the Ghanaian SDA Church, Hamburg, Germany

Date of Ordination

January 9, 1988