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Baptism As Ordination Into The Gospel Ministry: With Practical Guidelines For The Strengthening Of The Seventh-Day Adventist Ministry In West Africa

Japheth Larwerh Agboka
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Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

BAPTISM AS ORDINATION INTO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY
WITH PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE STRENGTHENING
OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST MINISTRY
IN WEST AFRICA

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

by
Japheth Larwerh Agboka

May 1979
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NOTE

This Doctor of Ministry Project falls in a category described in the Andrews University Theological Seminary Bulletin as "Project II" in fulfillment of requirements for an alternate curriculum plan under which the candidate prepares two related papers—a theological position paper that addresses some issue or problem that exists in the church in a theological setting and a professional paper that addresses that issue or problem from a standpoint of ministerial practice.
DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated in its entirety to Juliana, my wife, for whose loving understanding, encouragement and sponsorship this work has become a reality. To her this degree Doctor of Ministry is conferred; and also to my lovely daughters, Hilda Dede and Ivana Kokor whose cheer have lifted up my spirits when the days seemed dark.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many individuals who have, consciously or unconsciously made this academic attainment possible. My gratitude goes to Dr. Gottfried Oosterwal from whom I first had the insight which has grown into a research project like this.

Mention should also be made of the numerous help and advice given by Dr. Arnold Kurtz, the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program, who, also serving as a member of my committee, rendered all the assistance to make the completion of this research possible. Further thanks and appreciation go to Drs. Norman K. Miles and Abraham Terian chairman and member respectively of my committee. The numerous hours they spent to get this work into this shape will ever remain fresh in my mind.

My profound gratitude is extended to Dr. Thomas H. Blincoe, the Dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary of Andrews University. Dr. Blincoe has been a great inspiration to me and I have cherished his counsels and concern by providing funds for my training in times of need. The same thing is to be said of Dr. Wilfred Futcher whose openness and friendliness my family greatly admires. Then to Mrs. Hattie Archie, formerly of Detroit, the "mother" of my wife and I and my children's grandmother who opened the doors of her heart and home to my family when we sojourned in Detroit, Michigan in 1974-75.
My very special thanks go to my typist Mrs. Dorothy Berger whose professional competence and dedication made her devote all her time and energy into transforming my manuscripts into a polished work as this.

I cannot forget to say Thank You to Juliana, my life's companion, who has labored together with me day and night, assisting, sharing ideas and encouraging me to get this work done.

Finally, but not the least, without God's help, blessings of health and means and above all spiritual blessings, this research project could not have taken off from its launching pad.
PREFACE

Under the alternate curriculum plan described as "Project II", I am presenting a theological research work entitled "Baptism as Ordination into the Gospel Ministry." This theological research is Part I of this research project. Here Biblical and theological support was rallied in support of the thesis. The study of baptism especially as it relates to the Cross gave the basis for the believer's new life in Christ. This new life having been incorporated into the Body of Christ, makes the Body a living organism. When the Body of Christ lives, it lives beyond its bounds in the spirit of its covenant relationship. God's Holy Spirit gives gifts to each member which are to be used for the ministries of the Church. Giving of these gifts does not depend upon academic training, how rich a person is, how old or young, whether male or female, but rather how dedicated and committed the one is to the principles of God.

This being the case, the Spirit of God works in all lives who surrender themselves to the will of God. So that every member who has received spiritual gifts has been ordained into the gospel ministry.

The difference was drawn between ordination by means of baptism and that of laying on of hands. Biblically there is one call into ministry. Whenever a person receives spiritual gifts and uses them effectively for the building of the Body of Christ, the Church
shows its recognition of the gift and sets apart that individual into a full-time or special ministry (of leadership) in the Church.

The professional paper, captioned "Practical Guidelines for the Strengthening of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministry in West Africa", zeroes in on the mandate of the Church to recognize those endowed with spiritual gifts and signify such recognition by the laying on of hands for a full-time or special ministry to the Church. The ordinands thus can lead out as pastors in the Church's work of ministry.

Taking the Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Africa, evidence was adduced to the fact that the growth rate of membership exceeds that of its pastoral ministry, and in one conference the ratio of membership to pastor is 1200:1. In the face of this, the proposal was made for ordaining local elders who have proved their calling as pastors of their local congregations. Such a move will help congregations have their own pastors who will nurture and equip the congregations for the work of ministry so the whole Church can prepare this lost world for Christ's second coming.
The title "Baptism as Ordination into the Gospel Ministry" may sound somewhat strange, yet, giving it a second thought, it is Biblical. In the Evanston Report on the Laity the World Council of Churches declared:

We must understand anew the implications of the fact that we are all baptized, that, as Christ came to minister, so must all Christians become ministers of his saving purpose according to the particular gift of the Spirit which each has received, as messengers of the hope revealed in Christ.¹

Hence, my task is to undertake a study of baptism in the light of the New Testament teaching and to find what meaning and significance the New Testament writers give to that rite.

At present, however, the term ministry or gospel ministry is understood in different ways. First of all, to some ministry is a function which God, in His divine wisdom, has entrusted to the clergy. As such, within the Church, the minister--the one who is engaged in ministry--is the clergy or the pastor of the congregation. He performs the task which God has assigned to the Church and the Church in turn supports him with financial means. Secondly, to others ministry represents the total function of the Church. As a definition, the

Church is an embodiment of people who have responded to the call of God and have repented. Through baptism these have been united as a Body in fellowship with one another, and to Jesus Christ, their Lord and Master. This is a call to discipleship of Jesus Christ—a call to hearing and doing of the Word of God, to repentance and faith in the risen Lord. As Christians or members of this Household of faith; they share the burden of making Christ known to the world and in so doing they open the door of the Church for all who may come in. This group sees the ministry of the Church as Christian outreach. It is this concept of ministry that H. Richard Niebuhr calls "the providential call." In this, the Church senses its call to ministry as an act of providence and recognizes within itself the gifts which God has given to its members as a Church. The recognition of these gifts is shown by setting aside persons whose gifts are so pronounced through ordination by the laying on of hands. The duties of such persons are to serve and help in the development and regulation of the total ministry of the Church. It is a ministry of the Church and which at the same time is part and parcel of the Church's total ministry.

1 Eph 4:1-4. (Unless otherwise indicated, Scriptural references in this work are from the Revised Standard Version.)


3 In Acts 6, the ordination of the deacons was an action of the Church as a whole. The initiative, selection, and ordination was a total action of the Church which recognized the individual gifts. The word deacon from διακονέω, to serve, here acquires an extended meaning, i.e., as a "bearer of a specific office" within the Church. Beyer contends that their office was the same as that of the twelve apostles for they took "their place with the evangelists and apostles in disputing, preaching and baptizing." Hermann W. Beyer, "διακονέω" Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), p. 90. (Hereafter to be referred to as TDNT.)
T. W. Manson calls the Church "a society within a society."¹ It is a society whose aim is to discharge a task in the world as well as maintain its own inner life. In other words the Church seeks a two-fold purpose--apostolic in relation to those outside and pastoral in relation to those within. These two serve one purpose—that of building up the Body of Christ whether through quantitative or qualitative building. Quantitatively, the good news is proclaimed to the world to bring converts into the Church; qualitatively, the pastoral task sees to instruct the new members in Christian truth and train them in Christian worship and witness. Both of these are aspects of a single life.

Thus, the primary task of the Church of God, God's elect, the household of Israel, the community of faith, or the Body of Christ, is that of reconciliation.² In saying that "I have left you an example," Christ reminds His Church that just as He came into the world from heaven to reconcile man with God, so must His earthly representatives and disciples, the Church, reconcile one another back to God. Webster's definition of reconciliation—to restore to friendship, harmony, and communion—presupposes an estrangement, an alienation, a broken


² Pierre Widmer explains that the ministry of reconciliation as a Christian task involves at least three dimensions: (1) the reconciliation of man to God, where alienation has come because of human sin, (2) the reconciliation of man to himself, since human sinfulness also estranges man from himself causing conflict within his own being, and (3) the reconciliation of man with his fellow men from whom he is alienated by all that sin does to blight, frustrate, and destroy harmonious human relationships. Pierre Widmer, "The Holy Spirit and Reconciliation," The Witness of the Holy Spirit. Proceedings of the Eighth Mennonite World Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, July 23-30, 1967 (Elkhart, Indiana: Mennonite World Conference, 1967), pp. 88-92.
relationship. This has come about because of the presence of sin in this world and man's involvement in it. God calls the Church to carry on this task of reconciliation. She must respond to the call. It is then that the world will be redeemed, restored to that new relationship whereby salvation comes to mankind.

All these are one single task which must be performed by the clergy and laity alike, as our study of the meaning and implication of Christian baptism indicates. Such a study shows no difference between the ordained ministry and the laity. In fact, as Lukas Vischer notes, "the common calling of God's people is manifested in the baptism of all its members in the one, same name of Jesus... Our common baptism makes it plainly evident that we must all take our active share in the one service, each in the way that God has opened to him."¹

In the chapters that follow, great care has been taken in laying the necessary foundations to a Biblical understanding of baptism and its relationship to ministry. In so doing the true meaning of baptism as a call to discipleship comes to the forefront. It is hoped that when the people of God thus understand their calling--how they were called and why--that they as one army will move forward into the ministry of reconciling a lost world to Christ.²


²2 Cor 5:14-20.
CHAPTER II

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS
OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

Baptism as it comes to us today finds its origin in pre-New Testament times. The practice of baptism is an acknowledgement of the presence of sin in this universe and man's need of redemption. Hence baptism is the central teaching of the God-man encounter. As the sinner is baptized in the name of Christ, he becomes a participant in the redemption of Christ. This participation becomes to him the means of his deliverance from sin, the acceptance of a new way of living, a fount of renewal and a hope of eternal life.\(^1\) Inasmuch as a person's past life and severed relationship with his Creator necessitates baptism, his acceptance of it focuses his entire life to the eschatological kingdom. The baptized by the power of Christ enters into a new order. He becomes a new creation. Having had his sins washed away and entering into a union with Christ, the new believer ceases to live for himself. The eschatological kingdom of the parousia has been realized in his life. Beasley-Murray makes this summary statement:

Naturally in baptism... we do more than simply look back; we participate in the event whereby the kingdom came! That means that the forward look in baptism is much more than a wistful longing for a place in the kingdom that is to be; we have been united with the Christ who brought the kingdom in His death and

resurrection and shall complete it in His parousia, and we have received the Spirit who mediates the powers of the kingdom and is the binding link between the two appearings. The forward look of baptism, therefore, by reason of its participation in the event that inaugurated the kingdom, is an anticipation with joyous confidence of the event that shall consummate it.¹

The fact that baptism is closely linked with the death, burial, and resurrection begins to come into focus. The Pauline comparison of baptism to the death and resurrection of Christ² cannot, therefore, be accepted merely as proof for the mode of baptism. It is on the other hand, also, an affirmation of the close link baptism has with redemption which the cross brought about. Baptism and the cross, therefore, stand at the heart of the Apostolic kerygma. By submitting to baptism, Christ looked forward to submitting Himself to death—both submissions on behalf of humanity. Consequently, the believer's acceptance of baptism in the name of Christ is his participation in the saving death of Christ. Standing, therefore, in the watery grave of baptism, the believer appropriates the saving powers of Christ's death and with that enters into a new life which culminates at Christ's parousia.

Antecedents of Christian Baptism

Even though Christian baptism is unique in that its meaning and import centers in Jesus Christ in whose name baptism takes place, there are lustrations in the Old Testament and various practices among Jewish communities that bear resemblance to Christian baptism. It is my intention to summarize these similarities and in so doing bring out

¹Ibid., p. 292.

²Rom 6:3, 4. "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (The New International Version).
the distinctive basis of Christian baptism.

Old Testament Lustrations

There are several instances in the Old Testament where lustrations of washing and sprinkling had been used as means of cleansing. These lustrations were used to bridge the Holy God—sinful man dichotomy. In every aspect of the life of God's ancient people, God constantly urged His people to be holy. The temple services and worships were aimed at cleansing and consecrating a people for the Lord.

In the Old Testament lustrations, water and blood play a significant role. Both are agents of cleansing. Whereas water symbolizes cleansing of filth, blood symbolizes the cleansing from sin. In this chapter, water will be discussed as a means of cleansing in Old Testament times.

Throughout history, water has been seen as a cleansing agent. In the Old Testament God specifically required ancient Israel to cleanse, purify, and sanctify themselves with water before they came near His presence. At Sinai, God commanded all the people to wash their garments and to consecrate themselves in anticipation of Yahweh's appearing. Moses led his people through this consecration. The whole camp of the children of Israel, including the priests, washed their garments. Since no sinful man can stand in the presence of the Lord and live, this washing symbolized cleansing—the removal of filth and sin and an acknowledgement of God's holiness. All through the

1Exod 19:10, 14, 22.

2Exod 33:20-23
Pentateuch are found numerous regulations concerning cleansing and holiness. These regulations cover all aspects of life—private, social, public, and even worship. Some common regulations of cleansing are noted in the next two paragraphs.

Leprosy is regarded as sin and the leper is, therefore, unclean. Because of his uncleanliness the leper was required to go through the act of cleansing. In Naaman's case, the prophet Elisha's instruction was: "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean." When Naaman finally did as he was instructed his leprosy was removed and he was cleansed.

Cleansing was also required for people who came into contact with lepers. According to the law they had been defiled and they too needed to be cleansed. Other areas of uncleanliness were those who touched the dead body of a person or of an unclean animal. Such persons were unclean for seven days and were required to cleanse

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2 2 Kgs 5:10. Also see the priestly requirements for detecting leprosy and the cleansing of same in Lev 13, 14. Note particularly the cleansing aspect of this rite of washing. Lev 13:45-46: "The leper who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry, 'unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp." When he is well, he reports back to the priest who declared him unclean and a ceremony of purification takes place (Lev 14:1ff). He then washes his clothes, bathes himself in water on two occasions at seven days interval in order to be clean.

3 Read 2 Kgs 5:11-14.

4 Lev 13.
themselves with water on the third and seventh days.\textsuperscript{1} Natural and diseased emissions from the body were regarded as defilement.\textsuperscript{2} Others who were unclean were mothers who had given birth; all women after menstruation. These were unclean and had to undergo a lustration at the end of their prescribed period.\textsuperscript{3} Exodus 19:15 even suggests that marital sex or sexual intercourse is defilement when the person or persons were to appear in the presence of the Lord.\textsuperscript{4} These ceremonial ablutions were meant to declare the cleansee holy. The water washes his guilt and he has a right standing before his society, the congregation and God.

**Jewish Baptismal Practices and the Qumran Community**

In time, attempts by Jews to keep the law and to cleanse themselves as a condition for experiencing the saving deed of God became more radical. As such ablutions were not only required of specific cases spelled out in the levitical code but also demanded of all Jews. Because of the strict regulations that come with these lustrations of washing and cleansing as a means of standing holy before Yahweh and also the priestly involvement in this ablution, Beasley-Murray has good reason to write that the beginning Jewish baptismal practices coincided with the rise in influence of the Chasidim, who sought to live in strict accord with the Law's demands and from whom the Pharisees later developed; it is possible that the Jewish baptizers came into being as a result of the same

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1}Num 5:1-5; 19:1-13; 31:19, 20.
  \item \textsuperscript{2}Lev 5:3.
  \item \textsuperscript{3}Lev 12.
  \item \textsuperscript{4}Lev 15:18 calls for a bath with water in a normal conjugal relation.
\end{itemize}
enthusiasm for the Law.\textsuperscript{1}

Grounds for this presupposition is laid and strengthened upon the fact that the Qumran group—so called because of the location of its headquarters—originated from within the levitical priesthood. For this reason strong emphasis was made on ritual law and observances especially those that called for purity and cleanliness. As time went on the practice took the form of immersion of the whole body and provision was made for bathing facilities in the synagogues.

The practice of frequent lustrations (immersion) was the main reason for the Qumran convenanters to consolidate their practice and settlement by the Jordan River. Living and building a community by the Jordan, they had access to running water in which their baptismal practices were carried out. These Essene convenanters had separated themselves from the main Jerusalem temple worship and priesthood appealing to Isaiah 40:3, "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." The Manual of Discipline of the Qumran covenanters makes the following requirement of the initiates who had completed their period of preparation:

They will separate themselves from the midst of the habitation of perverse men and go to the wilderness to clear the way of the Lord.

Beasley-Murray makes this comparison:

These 'covenanters' have gone out into the desert, as ancient Israel did in the exodus, with the intention of entering into the new covenant of the last days and of preparing for the advent of the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{2}

As true as it is that the ceremonial ablutions of the Qumran

\textsuperscript{1}Beasley-Murray, \textit{Baptism in the New Testament}, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 13.
sect were frequent and often repeated, the covenanters did not only see it as an act of ceremonial purity or moral purity, but an act which must be preceded by a genuine sense of repentance. Repentance was very vital in seeking a right relationship with God. Despite its frequency, its goals were that of Christian baptism, namely, that through that rite the person or believer, through personal acquaintance with the Lord, would be regenerated and hence live a new life. Repentance of one's previous life and acceptance of God's truth with an indwelling of the Holy Spirit are the vital prerequisites to a life of holiness and moral purity which the "waters of purification" impart.

H. H. Rowley, on the other hand, sees these lustrations as no baptisms. Because of their frequency, he does not see any resemblance between them and John the Baptist's, for example. The practice of such frequent lustrations was meant to be a daily purifying act. It was not an act of initiation and those required to undergo these rites were bona fide members of the Qumran community who had already served their period of probation. Using John's baptism as a basis for Christian baptism, Rowley makes a comparison with the ceremonial ablutions of the Qumran community.

John the Baptist used baptism as a rite of initiation. If the sect had an initiatory rite of baptism, then it doubtless anticipated him in this practice. The only references either in the Qumran texts or in the accounts of the Essenes, however, merely tell us that the new convert did not share in the waters of purification for a year. There is no reference to any water rite of initiation, though the first daily ritual lustration may have been given a special significance.¹

¹H. H. Rowley, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), pp. 14-15. In this work, Rowley discusses the differences between life in the Qumran and early Christian communities. The communal aspect of the early church was temporal whereas Qumran's was not. The disciples who brought their substances to
In his work, *Wars of the Jews*, Josephus gives the impression that baths of purification of the Essenes were given at least three times a day—before each meal and even after the passage of a stool.\(^1\)

It must be noted, however, that the lustrations of the Qumran community had no effect upon its adherents if they did not manifest a spirit of penitence and submission to the will of God. This penitence and submission to the will of God gave credibility and power to the lustration.

**Jewish Proselyte Baptism**

The silence in pre-Christian writings, the writings of Philo, Josephus and in the Holy Scriptures, particularly of the New Testament of proselyte baptism has been a puzzle to many Biblical scholars.

Lay at the Apostles’ feet were definitely new converts and were not required to do so at the end of the second of their three-year probationary period as was required of the members of the Qumran sect. There is also no evidence from the New Testament that the early Christian converts were not allowed to partake in the rite of purification by means of baptism until they had passed through the first stage of their probation. In the first century, the new converts among the Essenes were allowed to be partakers in the waters of purification after a year. In Acts 2, we read that the three thousand converts Peter made were baptized into Christ that same day. So was the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:36ff), the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:33), and Cornelius (Acts 10:47, 48). These were not subjected to a one-year waiting period. Instead they were baptized right away. Also the Qumran sect was a secret society unlike John who proclaimed his message openly. These considerations lead Rowley to conclude that the Christian church quite clearly did not take this practice of baptism over from the Qumran sect. In Christian baptism, the person of Christ remains at the center whereas in the Qumran experience the ablutions were not only self-imposed, but also were not Christocentric.

and theologians. Despite this silence, it must not be concluded that proselyte baptism has a late origin, i.e. a post-New Testament practice, for throughout the Old Testament, it is made abundantly clear the status of the Gentile in relation to that of the Jews. The Gentile was considered unclean because he had not ascribed to the levitical regulations concerning purity—circumcision and ablutions being part of this regulation. As a result of his state of uncleanness, he was not admitted into Jewish communions. In what he calls oversimplification, Beasley-Murray argues:

> For if Gentiles were unclean "as a matter of course", by virtue of their not observing levitical ordinances, they must have been so viewed from the time that the Jews adopted those regulations; then, since Israel had always known the "stranger within the gates", proselyte baptism is as old as the levitical code!2

Provision had been made for the proselyte to be clean. First of all, he had to be subjected to the rite of circumcision. Secondly, he had to immerse himself under water for levitical purification; and thirdly, he had to offer a sacrifice in which blood was poured out for his atonement—a function which the high priest carried out. Before his baptism, the proselyte had to exercise faith in the Yahweh of the Jewish people, and had to have a profound knowledge of the requirements of the laws of Moses. For his baptism, the proselyte was to

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2Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament, p. 21. The actual date of this practice is outside the scope of this study. However, there are others, like Zeitlin, who believe this practice has a first century A.D. origin, 65 A.D. to be precise, a date which is hotly challenged by L. Finkelstein, "The Institution of Baptism for Proselytes," Journal of Biblical Literature Vol. 52, 1933, pp. 207ff.
immerse himself, in the presence of Jewish witnesses,\(^1\) possibly in running water; when this was done, he was considered ceremonially clean and he would then have access to the community and its sacrifices. The Gentile's participation in the sacrificial services did imply repentance and forgiveness of sins which a born again Christian would experience. Though through this baptism the proselyte did not become a Jew in the strictest sense, his conversion from heathenism to Judaism implied a new life or new birth. Of this new life, the Talmud says: "One who has become a proselyte is like a child newly born."\(^2\) Such proselytes were also seen through their baptism as dying and rising again.\(^3\) We see, therefore, in the Jewish rite of proselyte baptism, an act of initiation whereby Gentile converts came to be regarded as Jews and as such became a part of the covenant people of God. According to the "Zadokite Fragments", initiation into the sect, which was by baptism, was regarded as initiation into the covenant relationship. The whole movement stood for a return to the old landmarks of the Mosaic Covenant. After his repentance, the proselyte took an oath to return to the Torah of Moses, and was baptized after a visible change

\(^1\) Howard adds these details: the proselyte was stripped, after having both his hair and nails cut. The self immersion was before those witnesses who were designated the "fathers of the baptism." He then made a fresh confession of his sins and his new faith by reciting the Law to which keeping he has committed himself. See J. K. Howard, New Testament Baptism, (London: Pickering and Inglis, Ltd, 1970), p. 17.

\(^2\) Yeb 229. This ritual bath, tebilah, constitutes new birth in which "the ger is like a child just born" (Yeb 48b). He must bathe "in the name of God"—"Lehem shamayim"—that is, he must from then onwards assume the yoke of God's Kingdom imposed upon him by the one who leads him to baptism or else he is not to be admitted into Judaism (Gerim vii 8).

\(^3\) See Pes 91b. "One who separates himself from his circumcision is like one who separates himself from the grave."
of life was seen in him. Thus far, we have seen proselyte baptism as a rite by which men and women entered into God's covenant declaring by their action the "cutting loose from the past in order to make a fresh start as members of the people of God." ¹

**Baptism in the New Testament**

From John the Baptist and throughout the New Testament, baptism takes on a new dimension quite different from the ablutions practiced in pre-New Testament times. Self-washing gave way to a baptism that was performed on the repentant sinner. Stressing the fact that he who comes to him for baptism must first repent, ² John the Baptist sought to teach through his baptism, in the name of the Coming One, that forgiveness of sins and salvation is only possible to a life that has been surrendered to the will of God. This will of God reaches its climax eschatologically with the coming of the kingdom of God. As a baptizer, John's mission was to prepare a people for this kingdom. Repentance is one way of preparing oneself for this kingdom. Baptism, on the other hand, is an initiatory rite into this kingdom in its realized form, i.e., the church. In accepting baptism from John, Christ who had no need of repentance, accepted the eschatological significance of John's work. Matthew gives a reason for Christ's acceptance of John's baptism; namely, οὗ τῶς γὰρ πρεσβύν ἐστὶν ημῖν πληρώσας πασὰν ὀλκαλοσύνην (for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness). Baptism, in order to fulfill all righteousness, gives an inkling

¹ John Heron, "The Theology of Baptism" Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 8, 1955, p. 41. (Hereafter SJT will be used to abbreviate the Scottish Journal of Theology.)

² Matt 3:5, 6, 8, 11.
of the saving-event that undergirds it. This phrase must perhaps be understood not primarily as an expression of Christ's humility, but rather putting stress on the παγάν as meaning: "This is the proper way for us to act in order to make the righteousness or salvation of God available to all men."¹

Christ's mission to this universe is summed up both in His baptism and death. A. T. Hanson contends that Christ's mission comprised of three things: He must obey, He must witness, and He must suffer. By doing these things, Christ, as the Servant, would be carrying out God's redemptive purposes for Israel and the world.² Similarly the Fourth Evangelist records John the Baptist's testimony of Christ when He (Christ) came to the Baptist to be baptized. By referring to Christ as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,"³ John links Christ's ministry to His baptism and His obedience to undergo the administration of that rite. In the same way Paul writes:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried, therefore, with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.⁴

Here Paul makes it plain that baptism "into Christ" means baptism into Christ's death. This is precisely what Christ meant when

¹Heron, SJT, Vol. 8, pp. 41-42.
³John 1:29.
⁴Rom 6:3, 4.
He gave His commission\(^1\) to His disciples in all ages. The authority with which baptism is to be carried out in Christ's name is that which Christ received on account of His death. Paul notes that on account of His obedience

\[ \text{unto death, even death on a cross...} \]

\[ \text{God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.}^2 \]

Christ's death gives power to His own baptism and that of His followers.\(^3\) His baptism points forward to His redemptive sacrifice for mankind and His redemptive sacrifice gives meaning to His baptism. Oscar Cullman makes a very strong point in this regard.\(^4\) He sees the Lord's going down into the Jordan and His coming out of it after His baptism as stepping down to His death as the Suffering Servant, the Lamb that was to be slain,\(^5\) who would bear the sins of the world and His resurrection, coming out of His grave with new life\(^6\) for all who

\[ \text{1 Matt 28:18-20.} \]

\[ \text{2 Phil 2:8-11. cf Acts 4:12, "For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Christ is the central focus of baptism. He is both the revelation of the Father and the representative of the Holy Spirit. In His name stands the meaning of baptism.} \]

\[ \text{3 Oepke equates the reconciling action of God in Christ with the atoning death of Christ and sees baptism as deriving its power from it as they are one and the same. Baptism "places us objectively in Christ, the Second Adam... thus removes us from the sphere of death of the First Adam to the ζωῆς and divine sonship. Albrecht Oepke, "βαπτίζω" TDNT, Vol. 1, pp. 540-541.} \]

\[ \text{4 Oscar Cullman, Baptism in the New Testament (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950), pp. 18ff.} \]

\[ \text{5 Rev 5:9, 12.} \]

\[ \text{6 Rom 6:4.} \]
believe on Him. In a similar way, the Christian's baptism points back
to Christ's death and thus he shares in that event which brings sal-
vation to all mankind.

The humility with which Christ sought baptism at the hands of
John can be clearly understood as the Righteous and Sinless One being
numbered among the "sin of the many" whose baptism was to be pre-
ceded by repentance. It is the same humility that leads the Servant
of the Lord, as the Righteous One, to accept death on behalf of sin-
ful mankind for the salvation of all who believe. Thus baptism's
meaning is hazy without Christ's death and resurrection. Even the
disciples of Christ could not comprehend the full implications of bap-
tism until after the resurrection of Christ. They witnessed the
preaching of John and the baptism of Jesus at which time the Spirit
descended upon Him in the form of a dove. They had also heard John
the Baptist's prediction that Christ would baptize "with the Holy
Spirit and with fire." None of these events gave them a deeper meaning
of baptism until they became witnesses of Christ's historical death.
It was then that they realized the spiritual nature of Christ's king-
dom. They understood baptism as a spiritual event inseparable from
the spiritual impact of the crucifixion. The in-depth meaning of bap-
tism yet had to be explicated by Paul. He combined into the formula
εἰς τὸ ὄνομα—in vital connection with the Name, the Person of Christ--
the concept of baptism as a sign for the remission of sin and the
ushering in of a new kingdom made possible "in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt 28:19). Such an under-
standing sees baptism not only as the washing away of sin but more so
a realization of Christ as the Sin-bearer whose acceptance brings
about the forgiveness of sin and the reception of the Holy Spirit.¹

The only passage of the Pauline writings where we have the impression that Paul was familiar with the expression ἐν τῷ ὄνομα (Ἰησοῦ) χριστοῦ is 1 Cor 1:13. Elsewhere he uses the expressions like οὐκέταφημεν ὀνῦν αὐτῷ (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12); εἰς χριστοῦ ἐβαπτίσθητε (Gal 3:27); ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς χριστοῦ (Rom 6:3); to express the same idea. Doubtless Paul was familiar with the expression "in the name of Jesus Christ" but uses εἰς χριστοῦ in an abbreviated way. In a very special way, the Christian's baptism εἰς χριστοῦ is a reference to both Christ's baptism and His death and resurrection. In other words, in accepting that rite upon himself, the Christian shares in the experience of Christ, that saving experience, which brings hope and salvation to mankind. As Robinson suggests, we find in the baptism of Jesus a summary of His entire existence—the Lord of heaven who came as a Suffering Servant "not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).² In the same manner the baptized Christian is raised into a new life—a life that must give itself to minister for the salvation of others.

Commenting upon Christ's baptism in the hands of John, Robinson states:

The baptism is the anticipation of the Cross, in which Jesus in Jordan foresuffered all, and as such it gives to the Cross and all that lies between the two events its own character of a baptism.

But—and this is equally significant for the understanding of Christian baptism as the act in which the Christian not merely


dies but also rises with Christ (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12)—the baptism of Jesus is likewise the anticipation of this resurrection and ascension.¹

The saving activity which characterizes the mission of Christ to this world is seen clearly as one that finds its accomplishment in Christ's baptism and the Cross.

Professor Markus Barth sees Christ's baptism, and for that matter, the baptism of His followers as wholly "evangelistic." Analyzing Christ's baptism he writes:

Jesus Christ's baptism is not His entering into a sacred little circle of holy people; it is (a) an amazing step out of security and hiddenness, into the midst of the crowds that have to confess nothing else but sin, (b) a shameful, public, binding act by which He declares His solidarity with these sinners, (c) the conscious acceptance of and entering into the ministry of the Servant who lays down His life for the many. This baptism is "evangelistic" in each one of its aspects. And this baptism is the only one which is, according to the New Testament, directly and immediately sanctioned by a royal declaration from the Father and by the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is probable that baptism "into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" should be understood, within the context of Matthew's Gospel, as a baptism into Jesus' kind of uncompromising way to sinners, pledged solidarity with sinners, and ministry for sinners.²

Barth, therefore, sees Christian baptism in this light—"a public declaration of God's right over rebels, of this way to them, and of the way of repentance and hope in forgiveness as the people's only preparation"³ to be a people awaiting the parousia.

John came baptizing with water that Christ "might be revealed to Israel" (John 1:31). This is precisely the reason underlying baptism. Every person who is baptized owes it a duty to himself, the

¹Ibid., p. 261.

²Markus Barth, "Baptism and Evangelism," SJT Vol. 12, pp. 35-36.

³Ibid., p. 36.
church and the Lord to reveal Christ, not only to Israel but to the
world at large. A Christian's total life must be in service of God.
This service must be public for whosoever is ashamed to confess the
Lord's name in public, the Lord in turn will be ashamed to confess
his name before the Father in heaven (Luke 9:26; Mark 8:38). The Chris­
tian must glorify God in his life, by his attitude, among all with whom
he comes into contact. Peter's reference to baptism in connection with
the salvation of Noah and his family attests to the evangelistic na­
ture of baptism. The context in which that passage falls deals with
the righteous suffering in order to bring the unrighteous to God. By
living a holy and righteous (new) life the Christian con­
vert must "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks
you to give the reason for the hope that you have." Such a witness
must be done "with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience." In a similar way Peter uses the expression "the pledge of a good con­
science toward God" to describe the baptismal ceremony. Could it mean
that for Peter the rite of baptism is the Christian's pledge to be­
come a part of the salvific mission of Christ who came and died for
our "sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring
you (us) to God?" The answer seems plausible, for having been "put to
death in the body ... (and) made alive by the Spirit," "he went and
preached to the spirits in prison." M. Barth notes that the point of

1 1 Pet 3:8-22.
2 1 Pet 3:15.
3 1 Pet 3:16.
4 1 Pet 3:21.
comparison between baptism and preaching to the "spirits in prison" "is only the fact that the 'righteous' and all the elect exiles have to suffer from, and thereby to 'bring message' to the spirits in prison, i.e. to the world in which they live"¹—to people who through their acts of disobedience have defied God's Word and thus have alienated themselves from all that is godly thereby becoming unrighteous. These "spirits in prison" the Christian must seek out. As we have seen above, John, in his Gospel, makes the fact "plain that only testimony to Christ before the many, and revelation of Christ to Israel, is the raison d'être of baptism."²

Baptism also derives its power from the Holy Spirit. Heralding the coming of the Messiah, John announced that when Christ comes, He would baptize, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit and fire.³ In other words, Christ, when He comes, will bring about a new type of baptism—that in which the Holy Spirit, symbolized with fire, will be a manifesting evidence. At His baptism, the gospels record⁴ that the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God, descending in the form of a dove, rested upon Him. A voice from heaven proclaimed Christ as God's beloved Son in whom God is well pleased. It must be noted here right after the Spirit had descended upon Christ, the voice from heaven, bath kol, declared His divine Sonship. Lampe makes this observation:

Sonship and Spirit-possession are in fact identical. Hence the descent of the Spirit does not represent a possession by an

¹N. Barth, "Baptism and Evangelism," p. 37.
²Ibid.
³Matt 3:11.
impersonal force, but a state of personal union with the Father. The "resting" of the Spirit is of a different quality from the partial and temporary inspiration of a prophet. The Spirit descends, according to Luke, "in bodily form" as a dove, resting upon the Messiah with the fullest endowment of divine power.¹

For Cullman, the voice that spoke at the time of the baptism of Christ, conferred upon Him "the role of the suffering Servant of God, who takes on Himself the sins of His people."² There was a marked difference between the baptism Christ received and that of the Jewish masses. Whereas theirs was for the forgiveness of their own sins, Christ's was for the forgiveness of the sins of the entire kosmos--sin in which He had no share. Cullman reconstructs the utterance of that voice as saying fundamentally:

Thou are baptized not for thine own sins but for those of the whole people. For thou art he of whom Isaiah prophesied, that he must suffer representatively for the sins of the people.³

In effect the presence of the Holy Spirit at Christ's baptism was a confirmation of the fact that he who had just been baptized has entered into a ministry that seeks forgiveness and the washing away of sins through the cross to all who believe on His name. Such a believer is united with Christ through baptism, for

By virtue of participation in Christ's death and resurrection the Christian likewise receives the promise of the Spirit, but the Spirit is now, so to speak, recognizable as the Spirit of Christ and it is as being in Christ that the Christian is in the Spirit.⁴

For the Christian, the presence of the Holy Spirit with him is

³Ibid.
⁴Lampe, pp. 170-171.
an evidence of the presence of Christ.¹ This Spirit gives life to the Christian and the Church. By Him the Christian is able to "quench all the flaming darts of the evil one."² Also, "when he comes, he will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment."³ It is this Spirit who makes the Christian witnessing possible. He makes the Christian strong and aids him to spread to the world the message of Christ's mission of salvation.

**Baptism and Justification**

Before concluding this chapter, I will attempt to set forth the Biblical link between baptism and justification.

Catholic theology views baptism as a sacrament—a teaching which carries with it special grace conferred through the sacramental act itself. This *ex opere operato* belief led to the idea of infant baptism—a means whereby the child's salvation is assured in case the child died before achieving adulthood. To this notion Luther dissented and held on to the statement that "the just shall live by faith."⁴ Unfortunately Luther did not go all out to affirm the teaching of utter salvation through faith. The practice of infant baptism which his

¹See Matt 28:20b, "and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Also before His ascension He said in Acts 1:4ff: And while staying with them He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, 'you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' This 'promise of the Father' when He comes will bear witness of Christ and guide the Christian in all truth (John 15:26, 27; 16:13-15).


³John 16:8 also 9-11.

⁴Rom 1:17 quoted from Hab 2:4.
followers, the Lutherans, adopted is exactly what he fought against. The Lutheran practice, therefore, exemplifies an irreconcilable contradiction between the theology of justification by faith and the theological support for infant baptism.¹

The Reformation which Luther championed against the Catholic Church had "sola Scriptura" as its slogan. By that Luther not only meant the Scripture to be its own interpreter, but that Scripture is God's infallible Word and the only source of revealed theology.² Bible translations were made and Luther himself translated the Bible into German. Erasmus, a humanist, translated the New Testament from Latin into Greek and encouraged its study. By 1517, Zwingli, another German-speaking priest, a contemporary of Luther, had become an admirer of Erasmus' humanism and had been wrestling with the New Testament Greek text. Moving to Zurich, Zwingli introduced the Reformation to Switzerland amidst some opposition especially from the people of Zurich. Within three years he had overcome the opposition thus championing the cause in Zurich.³

Zwingli's emphasis on teaching and disputation drew to him a group of gifted young humanists who were interested in the study of the Greek classics. Among them was a young scholar by the name of Conrad Grebel, a son of a member of the Great Council of the city of

¹See article IV "Of Justification" and IX "Of Baptism" in the Augsburg Confession.


Zurich. The group's admiration for Erasmus led them to be zealous for reform and their convictions drew them far beyond Zwingli's. In 1525 they broke with Zwingli and the Great Council of Zurich gave them two alternatives: either to conform to Zwingli's teachings or to face imprisonment. They opted for the latter. Shortly after, in January, 1525, they escaped from Zurich by night to the home of Felix Manx, near the Grossmunster where they baptized themselves pledging to be true disciples of Christ and to live lives separated from the world and to teach the gospel and hold the faith. Thus Anabaptism was born. The name was given to them as ridicule for their insistence on adult baptism while disregarding infant baptism which had already been administered. This was a high point of the Reformation. For the first time a group of Christians dared to establish a church along the New Testament lines. These Swiss Brethren, also known as Anabaptists, held to the view that baptism was a symbol of renunciation of the old life and the acceptance of the new in Christ. To achieve this the individual had to be convicted of his sins, be repentant of them and must affirm faith in Christ. In other words, baptism must be administered only

1 Ibid.

2 Fritz Blanke, "The First Anabaptist Congregation: Zollikon, 1525," The Mennonite Quarterly Review, Vol. 27 (January 1953), p. 28. In Blanke's article, he notes that Grebel and his group had already in 1524 reached the conviction that baptism must be preceded by repentance and that impenitent persons must not be baptized. It was, therefore, necessary that a baptized person must have reached an age at which he would be capable of repentance. They put their doctrine into practice in January 1525, when they administered baptism to adult repentant sinners.


4 Estep, p. 10.
after receiving the Holy Spirit—for the function of the Holy Spirit
is to convince the world of sin. ¹ Thus seeing baptism not as a sacra-
ment but as a symbol, the Anabaptists do not see any meaning in the
rite where faith in Christ is absent.

Faith is an integral element in the God-man relationship. Dr.
Balthasar Hubmaier of Friedburg, a great Anabaptist theologian of the
sixteenth century, insisted that baptism is "a public confession and
testimony of an inward faith" ² and also a pledge of discipleship in
which the candidate promises in the future to live according to the
Word and command of Christ not in his human strength but by the grace
of Christ which is imparted to him according to his faith. Hence Hub-
maier viewed the Great Commission as consisting, essentially, of three
things: firstly, preaching; secondly, faith; thirdly, outward bap-
tism. ³ Without faith then, there should be no baptism for it is the
Christian's profession of faith in Christ and his pledge of response
to the Gospel Commission. Hence the Anabaptists rejected infant bap-
tism because infants cannot profess faith in Christ.

Pauline teaching of faith is deeply interwoven with the accept-
ance of Christ. "So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard
comes by the preaching of Christ." ⁴ Salvation is also linked with
preaching and faith "because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus

¹ John 16:8.

² Estep, p. 150.

³ Ibid., p. 151. See Mark 16:15, 16. And He said to them, "Go
into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He
who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe
will be condemned." (emphasis mine)

⁴ Rom 10:17.
is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."¹ Paul comes out stronger when he states that the Gospel "is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith . . . for in the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith (ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν).² This concluding phrase, through faith for faith, according to C. H. Dodd, emphasizes that the righteousness of God is "a matter of faith from start to finish."³ James Denny similarly maintains that the revelation of the righteousness of God presupposes faith in the sense of believing acceptance of the Gospel. Faith coming out of the Gospel leads on to faith which is a saving reliance on Christ. The expression to Denny, therefore, would be that "in the revelation of God's righteousness for man's salvation everything is of faith from first to last."⁴

Obedience to the Gospel is faith at its best. In Pauline language they are synonymous.⁵ Bultmann renders ὑπακοήν πίστεως in Rom 1:5 as "the obedience which is faith."⁶ Faith in action is a person's willingness to respond to the Gospel proclamation by giving up what he has cherished in his old life and entering a new life in which he owes

¹Rom 10:9.
²Rom 1:16, 17.
⁵See Rom 10:16; 2 Thess 1:8. Also compare Rom 1:8 with 16:9.
all his allegiance to Christ his new Master. It is not a mere intellectual assent but a relationship of commitment to the saving Lord.

It is this faith which the believer has in Christ which justifies him. As a result he has peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.¹ This "peace with God" which comes to the believer who expresses faith in the Lord as his response to the demand of the Gospel cannot be anything other than the "newness of life" which comes to the believer who has been baptized.² Baptism is the Christian's expression of his faith. Through that rite forgiveness and pardon is granted for sins "through faith, by his blood."³ When faith is expressed in baptism, the Christian through that act, "from start to finish" or "from first to last", is justified. The believer is declared righteous and his Christian experience is one in which the will of God shines out of his life. In this situation, the words of Paul become the experience of the believer, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loves me and gave himself for me."⁴

By his crucifixion with Christ, Paul was referring to his own baptism. To him baptism is the believer's obedient response to the Gospel and his share in the crucifixion of Christ—a sacrifice which brings reconciliation of man to God. This reconciliation results in justification, newness of life, peace with God.

²See Rom 6:4.
³Rom 3:25.
⁴Gal 2:20.
Faith which justifies a man is the obedient faith. In Galatians Paul rules out works as means of justification. To Paul, works are man's deeds that do not emanate out of faith but out of the old self. Abraham's justification or righteousness was because he believed God and hence "men of faith . . . are the sons of Abraham" and hence heirs to the Promise.

Baptism is the believer's expression of faith in the crucified Lord and his claim of the Promise of Salvation. Upon his heart is placed the loving, tender, compassionate heart of his Lord. Christ's concerns for souls become his. His life is united with Christ's. His response to this challenge thrusts him out to engage in service with and for the Master. Having been justified he reveals God's righteousness to others. That is his faith at its best. When baptism stems out of faith in Christ, the believer is incorporated into the person and mission of the Lord. He no longer lives to himself, but, like Christ, he lives to set others free from the bondage of sin into a righteous and justified life in Christ.

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1Gal 3:6. Vincent Taylor contends that Pauline teaching of God's declaration of righteousness upon man does not depend upon merit but rather upon faith. Christ's death becomes the ground or basis for justification. For "justifying faith derives its moral content from the Christ in whom it rests and who freely gave Himself for the redemption of men." The Cross of Christ (London: Macmillan and Company Limited, 1956), p. 38. As the believer by faith accepts the full import of Christ's death through baptism the blood of Christ washes away his sin and he is justified, having been declared righteous in the name of Jesus.
CHAPTER III

BAPTISM IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Having discussed the relationship of baptism to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, I will now turn my attention to baptism as it relates to the Church as the Body of Christ. The question which comes up is: What is the New Testament concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, its nature and how through baptism this Church enters into a covenant relationship with the Lord?

What then is the Church? Primarily, the Church is a new community in Christ—a community comprised of people who in their individual lives have accepted Christ as their Lord, have professed faith in Him and have signified the same by being baptized in His name. Predominant characteristics of such a society of believers joined to their Lord will be their belief in Him as Christ, communion with Him, community and individual life deriving from Him and a life of growth both within and without the spheres of such community. This community is not just human. It is an assembly of the people of God—an elected assembly. In saying this, the human element of this community must not be denied. In his *God's Rule and Kingdom*, Rudolf Schnackenburg notes that

To do justice to every aspect of the Church . . . it would be advisable to complement this approach from above from the concepts of the reign of God and Christ with another approach from below: that of the earthly existence and constitution of the Church, its
relation to the kosmos and its heavenly "presence."¹

The Church can thus be referred to as the human response to God's calling. It is a divine initiative that brings her into being. "But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. . . . For, if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life."² This religious community comes into being through reconciliation to God as a result of Christ's baptism of the Cross in which Christians share through their baptism.

On this subject, the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual states:

To belong to the church of God is a unique and soul-satisfying privilege. It is the divine purpose to gather out a people from the far corners of the earth to bind them into one body, the body of Christ, the Church, of which He is the living Head. All who are children of God in Christ Jesus are members of His body, and in this relationship they may enjoy fellowship with each other, and fellowship also with their Lord and Master.³

The Abrahamic Covenant

The idea that throughout history God has sought to raise a people unto Himself is basic to the idea of the Church. Beginning from Adam through Noah and to Abraham God raised a people unto Himself. He promised to make the descendants of Abraham a nation that will be blessed by the Lord.⁴ The call of Abraham to be the father of the


²Rom. 5:8, 10ff. cf. 1 Tim 1:15ff.

³General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, 1971, p. 25.

⁴Gen 12:1-3.
faithful descendants of God marked an epoch in the history of God's
έκκλησία. They were to have a very close relationship with the
Yahweh of Israel and if they remained faithful Yahweh's offer of
salvation will be theirs. Professor Raoul Dederen observes that

God's special work for the salvation of fallen humanity and
the beginning of His church are related in the story of the
covenant He contracted with Abraham, His servant (see Gen 17).
It was through this alliance with Abraham and his posterity that
Israel was brought into a particular relationship with Yahweh,
different from the relation existing between God and the heathen.¹

God's purpose to raise up a holy nation and a kingdom of
priests² falls within His plan of salvation for which the Son of God
was sent to this kosmos so "that whosoever believes in Him should not
perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world not
to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."³
Just as the Son of God was not sent into this world on account of Him-
self, so the children of Israel were not raised as God's people on
account of themselves. Indeed, Israel was to be a witness for Yahweh
in the world. Of this kingdom of priests, God declares, "You are my
witnesses and my servant whom I have chosen."⁴

To be a witness of Yahweh, Israel was first of all to know
Yahweh in an experiential way, and then to herald His messages to the
gentile world. This was the sum of their existence. The reception of

¹Raoul Dederen, "Nature of the Church," The Ministry, Vol. 51,
July 1972.
³John 3:16, 17.
⁴Isa 43:10. We may note that Christ fulfills all that was ex-
pected of Israel. In this sense He becomes the "Servant" spoken of in
Isaiah.
God in their midst was to be their ground of attestation. As a result of this unique privilege of witness to the name of Yahweh, the Lord of Hosts declared: "In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

Their life was to be a justification of their existence. They were to know the will of the Lord of Hosts and, in turn, make this will known to other nations. As a nation of priests, Israel was to conduct the worship of Yahweh before the nations of the world. Having agreed to perform this task (they declared, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do" Exod 24:7), Israel entered into a covenant relationship with the Lord which Moses sealed when he threw the blood of the animal offerings upon the assembled congregation, declaring, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."

It is for this same covenant with Yahweh that Christ came from heaven, dwelling among mankind—Emmanuel, God with us—and to seal it with His own blood. Paul made reference to Christ's declaration, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood."

The New Covenant

The Christian Church is old Israel renewed by the blood of Christ. From the very beginning, God has had one people, and one

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1 Zech 8:23 (emphasis mine).
2 Exod 24:8.
4 1 Cor 11:25.
purpose. The Church after His first Advent was but a strengthened form of that before His first Advent.

For all that, however, the new covenant inaugurated by the Lord Jesus and sealed by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was but the covenant of old, restored, fulfilled, resumed, and renewed. The Christian church identified itself clearly with God's true Israel of which it was the remnant.¹

Professor Timothy Smith affirms that the New Testament usage of the language of Christian faith stems from covenant theology. By covenant language, he refers to the covenant theology in which God made His will known to ancient Israel through the giving of the law. By obeying God's will, Israel was to be a witness for Yahweh. Their refusal to obey spelled judgment upon themselves. Yet God did not leave them in this state. The prophets prophesied that the covenant would be renewed and fulfilled in the coming of a suffering servant who would die as a lamb through whose death Israel—representing God's people—will be sanctified through the ministry of the Spirit.²

In Christ's nocturnal discourse with Nicodemus He "linked together fulfillment of the covenant in the gift of the Spirit to the proclamation of God's faithfulness to it in the grace of the Cross."³ It is only when the Holy Spirit gives birth to man through baptism that he can see the Kingdom of God. This is the covenant fulfilled when the broken relationship between man and God has once and for all been re-established.

¹Dederen, Ibid.

²Timothy L. Smith, "The Cross Demands, the Spirit Enables," Christianity Today Vol. XXIII February 16, 1979, p. 23. Hereafter this article will be referred to as "The Cross Demands".

³Ibid.
Under this new or renewed covenant, Christ has become the Head of the Church, the chief cornerstone of the building and the Head of the Body of Christ.¹ The power which the Spirit imparts to the Church enables her to honor her covenantal obligations.

Christ's mission to Calvary becomes the foundation stone for the Christian Church. As seen above, this Church is referred to also as Christ's own body of which He is the Head. By His death, Christ has brought about reconciliation between sinful man and God. For

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ.²

By His death Christ has redeemed us from the hands of evil forces that war against God and He has brought us "near" by the power of His blood. By faith in Him, the Christian responds to Christ's mission of "peace" by his baptism and he is made an heir, a member of the Body of Christ and a participant of the mission of gospel proclamation.³

Explaining what is the "mystery of Christ," Paul defines it as "how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."⁴ Giving a further description of "partakers of the promise . . . through the gospel," Paul writes: "Of this gospel I was made a minister according

²Eph 2:12, 13.
³Eph 3:6-12.
to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of His power."  

Hence, by his incorporation into the Body of Christ by virtue of his baptism, the Christian, like Paul, ought to respond to "the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" and minister "according to the gift of God's grace" which has been given to him. Paul's response was patterned after Christ's example: for through the cross man's reconciliation with God was assured. Rising out of death into new life, Christ "came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."  

From the life of Christ, this evangelistic fervor is not surprising for He Himself declared, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work." Christ is saying, in other words, that all I live for, all I am here for, is to do the work for which My Father has sent Me to this earth. This work or the will of the Father is the bringing of the gospel of peace and reconciliation

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1 Eph 3:7

2 1 Cor 12:13. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit." Also note in Eph 4:4, 5 where Paul discusses how the Christian is called into one body and into one Spirit and one hope through "one Lord, one faith, (and) one baptism."

3 In the next chapter, I will examine the Biblical teaching of spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ.

4 Eph 3:17, 18. The parallel drawn in v. 16-18 and 1 Pet 3: 18, 19 is striking. For both Paul and Peter, Christ's resurrection was followed by "preaching" of "peace" "to you who were far off and peace to those who were near" (Eph 3:17), or generally speaking to the "spirits in prison" (1 Pet 3:19). Compare also with Col 2:14b, 15.

5 John 4:34.
to mankind so that none should perish but rather that life eternal will be the lot of everyone who believes in Him who was sent,¹ and is thereby incorporated into the Body of Christ.

**Baptism and the Body of Christ**

The concept of σῶμα is all embracing in Pauline theology. By his usage of τοῦ σώματος τοῦ χριστοῦ, Paul refers in a very special sense to the crucified body of Jesus Christ.² Without qualifying this body, Paul speaks of body as living body, the body as the seat of mortal life,³ the instrument of human suffering,⁴ the organ of man's activity,⁵ etc.

Pauline usage of σῶμα χριστοῦ as Body of Christ, and hence the Church, unmistakably places it at par with baptism. Baptism ἐν χριστῷ is baptism into the Church, for the Church rightfully is the Body of Christ (σῶμα χριστοῦ).⁶ The Body of Christ with Christ Himself as its Head cannot exist without its members. So with its members the Body ceases to exist without the Lord, the Head of the Body. Beasley-Murray dwelling upon the unity between Christ and His Body says:

The unity is such that Christ cannot be separated from His members nor the members be thought of as members without including

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¹John 3:16.
³2 Cor 5:6; 10:10.
⁴2 Cor 10:10; Gal 6:17; Phil 1:20.
them in Him. Yet the members are the Body only because Christ has made them so. . . it must be insisted that baptism takes place in the name of the Lord Jesus, not in the name of the Church. The believer is ingrafted into the Body because he is united with Christ in His saving work of the Spirit.¹

Being incorporated into this "Body", its members recognize themselves as being "in Christ" who is the Head of the Body. This recognition directs their minds to the person of Jesus Christ. By this incorporation, individual identities cease to function, though each individual is and plays an important part in the functioning of the "Body". To be in Christ and to be baptized into the Body of Christ is one and the same thing. By both expressions the individual becomes a member of Christ's body, a community of the faithful where Κοινωνία is present. Within this fellowship the presence of Christ annuls the divisive distinctions that people have. Through Christ all believers are united into one faith.

The concept of the Church as the Body of Christ with Christ Himself as its Head denotes the strong relational bond between Christ and the Church—a bond which allows for growth within the body. Professor Dederen, speaking on the relational bond between Christ and His body, notes that:

. . . the concept of the church as the body of Christ, probably more than any other symbol, underscores the degree to which Christ fills His Κοινωνία with the riches of His glory (Eph 1:18-23). He continually distributes in His body gifts of ministries in order that its members might reflect His traits of character in their own lives and work out His purposes of grace (Eph 4:11-16). Christ is the head of the church insofar as He is the source of its nourishment, growth, direction, and unity. Because Christ is the animating spirit, the life of the church, all members are to be modeled on Him until Christ is formed in them (see Gal 4:19). There is no room here for division or schism

¹Ibid., p. 281.
since it is "one body" (Col 3:15) of which all believers are members.¹

Since Christ is the source of nourishment, growth, direction and unity of the body, the Church or the ἐκκλησία then apart from Him the church or body looses the meaning for its existence.² The Church then is the Body of Christ and its life is the continuation of the Messianic ministry. The records, presented in the gospels, of Christ's public ministry is a description of the nature of the Church's task. Christ came to serve not to be served. In so doing, He would give His life a ransom for many. Likewise, every function of the members of Christ's Body is a διακονία for Christ Himself is the primary holder of every διακονία.³

Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Body

Inasmuch as the Church cannot function without its Head, so can it not function without the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit at Christ's baptism is an ever present reality in the ministry of Christ. Through the Holy Spirit Christ gives gifts to His Church. This is the Church's source of power and direction in its witness to the world.

The Church cannot exist without the Holy Spirit. The effective presence of the Spirit is no less essential to the life of the church than the continuing presence of Christ. The very faith that characterizes the believer is, according to the New Testament, the work or gift of the Spirit: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord!' except under the influence of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 12:3, N.E.B.). As the Lord promised, the Spirit would

¹Dederen, p. 281.
²Ibid.
"guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Without the presence and work of the Holy Spirit the church is inconceivable.\(^1\)

Inasmuch as the presence of the Holy Spirit was vital in the baptism of Christ so is His presence within the Body of Christ. As the Holy Spirit dawned upon Christ at His baptism to testify to Christ's Sonship, so He must dawn upon the Christian, at his baptism, to declare him a son of God\(^2\) and a member of the household of faith.\(^3\) The Holy Spirit led Christ in His ministry. In the same way, He leads God's children into ministry—a ministry which seeks to exalt the crucified and the risen Lord. As the early church was advised to wait in Jerusalem for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit,\(^4\) so the Body of Christ, His Church must have the Holy Spirit. Professor Smith adds:

The baptism of the Holy Spirit, poured out initially in a dispensational way at Pentecost upon the whole of the church . . . signaled the fulfillment of God's covenant not just with Israel but with all humankind. The experience was, therefore, normative for all Christians; it was the source of that divine grace which sanctified their hearts and minds. Preachers must have it, and they must lead their converts into it. By this means alone could such righteousness prevail in individual and social life, in church and nation, as the Lord had ordained for His people.\(^5\)

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit that gives the Church its power; power to minister one to another and to spread the gospel of salvation to the ends of the world.

Christian Baptism, therefore, becomes possible through the Spirit and the Spirit, at the same time works through Christian Baptism.

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\(^1\) Ibid.

\(^2\) Rom 8:14; Gal 4:6.

\(^3\) Gal 6:10; cf. Eph 2:19.

\(^4\) Acts 1:4.

There is no distinction between "water Baptism" and "Spirit Baptism."

Forgiveness of sins and the activity of the Holy Spirit are in like manner the same. Schlink observes:

The statements about Baptism through the Holy Spirit are the basis for the common Christian conviction that through Christ's death and resurrection the turning point which the prophets of the Old Covenant had foretold had been reached. The time of the Messianic salvation has now come, the Holy Spirit has now been poured out, and He washes sins away and creates new hearts.¹

A study of Rom 8:14 "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God," shows how interchangeable the phrases "in Christ" and "in the Spirit" are. Hence, there is a close connection between the activity of the Holy Spirit in the individual and corporate life of the Church, and the Lordship of Christ over both the individual Christian and the Church. Schlink further observes the self-evident fact that:

Baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is at the same time Baptism by the Holy Spirit, if it is presupposed that through Baptism in the name of Christ the baptized is assigned to Jesus Christ Himself. The exalted Christ is active through the Holy Spirit. If we have been assigned to Christ through Baptism we have therewith been given into the Holy Spirit's sphere of activity.²

It is the Spirit that transforms the baptized Christian from a state of death to that of new life—a life in which service is its new order.

This service is performed in the reciprocal love of those who have received the Spirit, and at the same time it moves out of this community and turns to the world. Since God's love in Christ has reached out to the world, no one has the right to keep the Spirit's gifts for himself. On the contrary, by His very gift the Holy Spirit places men into service to the world.

²Ibid.
This service consists above all in the witness to Christ.¹

The baptism of which the New Testament speaks is an act of God's self-proclamation and hence an act of evangelism. When the Church receives power after the Holy Spirit has descended in her midst, the Church will be Christ's "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the world."²

**Baptism into the Church and into the World**

For an ecclesiological understanding of baptism, the inseparability of baptism as incorporation into the Church and the Church as a unified Body should be stressed. The Church as an ἐκκλησία, in Peter's words,³ is a "chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" called out of the world and yet sent into the world that they "may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." The Church exists in this dual capacity—called out of and sent back into. The worship life of the Church, therefore, must reflect this dual capacity for within this worshiping assembly

God again and again gathers those who are scattered in the world, unites them, and makes them one with Christ. Here at the same time God sends the assembled into the world and authorizes them for service to the world.⁴

God, through Christ, calls people out of this world and imbues them with the Holy Spirit so they can bear witness of Him into this

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¹Ibid., p. 62.
²Acts 1:8.
⁴Schlink, p. 78.
This is the mission of the Church, it is its essence but not a "churchly activity." Schlink, therefore, warns

If the church can no longer be called out of the world, her service to the world will lead to secularization. But the church becomes a part of this world also when she becomes introverted and withdraws herself from service to others.

It is solely by God's grace that He has raised a kingdom of priests unto Himself. Within this kingdom, God has placed His gifts at the disposal of those He has called. In a similar way, He expects those who are recipients of these gifts to share the same with others as a service of love. Peter likens this kingdom to a spiritual building and charges,

Come to Him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones by yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The offering of "spiritual sacrifices" is the Christian's way of response to the offer of salvation that is his by his baptism. The believer's response is an expression of his faith—faith that works out of obedience. Schnackenburg puts it this way:

As Christ had to utter an obedient "Yes" to His dying, so man must render the obedience of faith, i.e. to do in faith everything that is demanded of him.

Concerning the Christian's utilization of God's spiritual endowments, Schnackenburg continues,

Since God's gifts are always at the same time tasks laid upon

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1 Schlink, p. 78.
2 Ibid.
3 1 Pet 2:4, 5.
us, great obligations grow from the sacramental event (baptism), namely of holding firmly the peace with God that has been made and of preserving the life of God in the service of God yielded in our earthly walk (Rom 6:13).¹

Christians as they are incorporated through their baptism into the Body of Christ are given gifts. As members of this Body, they must grow and live as persons who have been raised in Christ by the Spirit in baptism. The baptized person must live his hope; for baptism means hope.² In Peter's words, "By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."³ The baptized Christian's hope is the eschatological parousia when eternal life will be a reality to all who believe and he accepts and becomes a participant in the saving purpose of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus. It is only when the real significance of baptism is translated into the life of the Church that the Church will seek to live beyond its walls and to conduct others to the Cross.

¹Ibid.
³1 Pet 1:3.
CHAPTER IV

FROM BAPTISM TO MINISTRY

In the previous chapter, attention was focused on baptism as the believer's commission to participate in the salvific mission of Christ—a mission which was achieved once and for all through Christ's baptism and death. There baptism was seen as an initiatory rite into the Body of Christ which is charged with the ministry or word of reconciliation. Through baptism, therefore, the baptized believer is ordained to this ministry of reconciliation and hence becomes an ambassador of God into the world. To this end, the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Evanston, Illinois, declared:

We must understand anew the implications of the fact that we are all baptized, that, as Christ came to minister, so must all Christians become ministers of his saving purpose according to the particular gift of the Spirit which each has received, as messengers of the hope revealed in Christ. Therefore in daily living and work the laity are not mere fragments of the Church who are scattered about in the world and who come together again for worship, instruction and specifically Christian fellowship on Sundays. They are the Church's representatives, no matter where they are. It is the laity who draw together work and worship; it is they who bridge the gulf between the Church and the world, and it is they who manifest in word and action the Lordship of Christ over that world which claims so much of their time and energy and labor. . . . They (Christians) are called to it because they belong to the Church, although many do not yet know that they are thus called.1

In view of this background, I approach baptism as consecration or ordination to the ministry of Christ. Having seen that baptism is incorporation into the Body of Christ which is the Church, and that baptism εἰς τὸ ὄνομα χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ and baptism ἐν πνεύματι are one and the same (for Christ is the Spirit), we should now focus our attention on the Spirit’s activity within this Body and how His presence affects the Church’s ministry. My basic concern is to define "ministry" by bringing out its Biblical meaning, especially as the work of the Holy Spirit calls forth. Such a meaning should in no way jeopardize or undermine the present authority of the "ordained ministry" of the Church but rather to supplement, uphold and empower the "minister's" role and efforts to make the Church that for which it was called into being.

Ministry—Christ’s Gift to the Church

In Eph 4, Paul comes down in specific terms to underscore what Christian vocation is and how the exercise of this vocation is necessary for growth within the Body. Through the Spirit which gives authenticity and power to baptism, Christ gives specific gifts to the Church as a Body and to individual members of the Body as well. These gifts symbolize God's grace.

But grace was given to each of us according to the measure

1 vs. 16, 12c.

2 Pauline reference to "leading a life worthy of calling" (v. 1) may be another rendering of the newness of life. If this is so, then the Christian call may be another rendering of baptism. As already seen, the gift of the Spirit and baptism go together. This life-giving Spirit gives life to the members of the Body through the granting of gifts. Baptism as a "call" would be for the exercise of such ministry as the Spirit imparts.
of Christ's gift. . . . And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.  

In his treatment of Eph 4, of which the above Scripture is a part, Kraemer points out that there is no justification for the comma which the Revised Standard Version and others use to separate "for the equipment of the saints" and "for the work of ministry". The insertion of that comma, Kraemer contends, has altered, in a radical way, the meaning which Paul is putting across. For Paul, the New Testament conceives of the saints as the children of God—called to be members of the Body of Christ. As such, they are ministers and servants to the upbuilding of the Church.  

God gave these various gifts to the Body of Christ, the Church, for a purpose—that of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry—the building up the Body of Christ until her members grow into mature Christlikeness. It is this same ministry that Paul speaks about in 2 Cor 5:18-20. A ministry that is given to mankind through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. It is the ministry of reconciliation in which in the primary sense Christ, through His death, reconciled the whole of humanity unto God. As a result of His death, Christ "gave us the ministry of reconciliation." The recipients of this gift of ministry are the members of the Church, the Body of Christ, which consists of individuals who have accepted the Lordship of Christ Jesus and have

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1 Eph 4:7, 11, 12.

2 Hendrik Kraemer, A Theology of the Laity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), p. 140. It is note-worthy that the New English Bible brings the two thoughts together, i.e. "to equip God's people for work in His service."
been incorporated into Him through baptism. Therefore, members of the Church must respond to their calling as "ambassadors of Christ". They must respond to God's appeal for men of goodwill who will proclaim the message of peace and reconciliation on behalf of Christ to humanity.¹

To this end, the Holy Spirit has been given to each individual believer. The power of witness that "Jesus is Lord" is from the Holy Spirit.² The gifts described in Eph 4 have their amplification in 1 Cor 12. Listed among the varieties of gifts are those of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, the ability to distinguish between spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.³ Others are apostleship, teaching, helping and administration.⁴ Paul draws an analogy between the Body (of Christ) and the physical body and contends that inasmuch as the members or parts of the physical body are many and their duties varied, nevertheless each part is equally important to the perfect functioning of the human being--so are the

¹2 Cor 5:18-20.

²1 Cor 12:3. Note also that throughout this chapter, Paul describes what he calls "spiritual gifts". These are gifts which the Holy Spirit imparts to each individual member of the Body of Christ "for the common good", for the upbuilding of the Body. Even though the members are many and the gifts are diverse, under one Spirit the Body is united.

³Ibid., vv. 4-10.

⁴Ibid., v. 28. In this verse, Paul lists two types of gifts that function in the Body of Christ--"helps" (δυναστεία) and "governments" (κυβερνήσεις). The RSV translates the latter as gift of administration. Earle Hilgert sees it rather as a nautical term denoting the act of piloting a ship. In the development of the language, this word was used in the metaphoric sense to mean guiding, governing, and particularly of governing the state which is often symbolized as a ship. Earle Hilgert, The Ship and Related Symbols in the New Testament (Assen, The Netherlands: Royal Vangorcum Ltd., 1962), p. 128.
individual members of the Body of Christ.

The "ministry" is, therefore, not reserved for a specialized segment of the Body. The whole λαὸς of God has been called into ministry. λαὸς, meaning "people," has its roots in the Old Testament where it is often opposed to τὰ ἑλένη and is used to designate "the people of God," distinct from the Gentiles (the Ἴλλα). The adjective of λαὸς is λαυκός from which we have our word "lay" which is not found anywhere in the Bible. The Latin word laicus was similarly derived from the Greek λαυκός. In time, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the word layman first appeared in the European vernaculars. Coming to us from the Middle Ages, the words layman and laity have acquired a meaning quite different from the Biblical. It became the opposite of clericus, the priest or member of a religious order, and derived a negative meaning of secularism, i.e., worldly, unholy, evil over against the sacred or the religious. With the passage of the years this false dichotomy widened. The layman was looked down upon as an inferior or lower quality Christian with the clergy as a far more superior Christian. The clergy was thus accorded "special rights, exclusive privileges, and authority over all things. The Church was the clergy" through whose ordination special charisma of

1See Exod 19:4-7; Deut 7:6-12. In the New Testament the term is applied to the Christian community which is the new Israel. Luke 2:32; Rom 9:23; 2 Cor 6:14.


4Ibid.

5Ibid., p. 105.
wisdom, power and work has been bestowed. In contrast to the clergy, therefore, the layman today is seen as one who is devoid of the clerical charisma and hence lacks skill, knowledge and technical competence. Within the Church, he is without any authority.

It was to this background that Luther reacted. He vehemently contended that the Body of Christ is one in which there are no divisions. Through baptism, therefore, the Christian is consecrated a priest. Within the Body of Christ, there is no dichotomy—layman and clergy. All are one people—the people (λαός) of God through whom God seeks to accomplish His work.¹ The Church as the Body of Christ has one ministry and all who have received baptism in the name of Christ Jesus have been ordained to this task of making the Lord known to the ends of the world.²

Gifts to All the Church

We have already seen the Church as one Body which knows no division. The members of the Body, being equal, are God's people, the λαός. To these God has given gifts. These gifts belong to the Body as a whole and are to be used for the upbuilding and edification of the household of faith.

In giving gifts to the Church, the Holy Spirit, the Giver,

¹Ibid, quoted from Martin Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, Tischreden, Werke Vol. 6 (Weimar: H. Bohlans, 1912), p. 408.

²Ellen G. White confirms this fact that: "All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the Gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellowmen. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ." Desire of the Ages (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898, 1940), p. 822.
stands as the empowering figure behind the Church. To build up the Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit, through the recipients of His gifts, strengthens the laity and assists them in the ministry of our Lord. These ministries are varied and specialized. They are to be carried out by the laity—the whole of God's people. Very often, preachers are solely thought of as being engaged in ministry. Paul is very clear that preaching is just one of the gifts of the Spirit. Similarly, gifts of evangelism and pastoring are but two of the gifts representing the ministry of the Church. To understand the ministry of the Church, the gifts need to be examined in their totality, noting that none is more important than the other, neither were they given to create separation within the Body of Christ.

Arnold Bittlinger defines the gift (χάρις) of the Spirit in these words: "A charisma is a gratuitous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, working in and through, but going beyond, the believer's natural ability for the common good of the people of God." In creating man, God has endowed him with definite unexchangeable talents which are empowered through His gift of the Spirit for the benefit of the individual and mankind in the Church on the spiritual level and in society on the social level. Care must be taken to differentiate between talents and spiritual gifts. They are not synonymous, nor are they mutually exclusive; yet God in His mighty wisdom can take the human talent, consecrate and empower it, and thus make it a gift. When a person opens up himself to the Holy Spirit, he finds his original endowment (talent) enriched and God makes use of the disposition that

lies within him in order to make available to the world salvation through His grace and the Spirit. To this end the believer must be in constant touch with and dependent upon God, for if these gifts are neglected and not put to use, they will be lost.

Ellen G. White makes the following statements:

As God so liberally bestows His gifts on you, remember that it is in order that you may return them to the Giver, multiplied by being imparted. Bring into the lives of others light and joy and peace.¹

Uncalled for and unused, the spiritual gifts bestowed on them have dwindled into feebleness.²

The gifts are already ours in Christ, but their actual possession depends upon our reception of the Spirit of God.³

A person's willingness to broaden his talents is very significant proportionately to his use of the spiritual gift bestowed on him. Bittlinger contends that a person with a narrow horizon who lives and thinks solely on matters of piety, will deliver a correspondingly narrow prophecy, if he was to be endowed with a charisma of prophecy. On the other hand, the one who through interest has widened his horizon through studies in politics, economics, art and Scriptures will be able to utter a prophetic message in these spheres if he is granted the charisma of prophecy.⁴

¹Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the Church Vol. 7 (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1902), p. 273. These series of Testimonies to the Church will hereafter be referred to as Testimonies.


⁴Bittlinger, Gifts and Ministries, p. 19.
Variety of Gifts

Mention is made in the New Testament of charisma mostly in the writings of Paul. A discussion of charismata and how they function in the Body appears in Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12. A study of these show that the gifts cover a wide spectrum— from singing to prophecy, from healing of the sick to giving of thanks.

Broadly speaking, these gifts can be classified under four headings:

1. Gifts of proclamation—These will include such gifts as prophecy, teaching, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, evangelism, apostleship, exhortation, shepherding.

2. Gifts of service—Included will be such gifts as administration, administration of money, stewardship of possessions, helping, hospitality, chaplaincy, acts of mercy, deaconship (male and female), leadership roles, giving, gifts of speaking in and interpretation of tongues.

3. Gifts of special power—Such gifts as these will be included here: faith, healing of the sick, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, exorcism, deeds of power, discernment, miracles.

4. Gifts of prayer—The following will be included: singing, praying in the Spirit, interpreting, giving thanks.

These gifts of grace are given to each person who has been incorporated into Christ's Body through baptism. The exercise of such a gift is to facilitate the growth of the individual believer in Christ and also that of the Body as a whole for "... when each part (of the Body) is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."  

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1 Eph 4:7. "But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." There are Bible scholars who hold on to the view that to each believer has been given just one gift. This teaching, to me, cannot stand the test of the gifts of the Spirit.

2 Eph 4:16.
It is essential that each part of the Body functions properly if growth is to be evident. These gifts are given to the Body for the purpose of διακονεῖν—service, contribution, help, support, missions. In the ecclesiastical realm today, the ministry has come to mean an exalted office in which honor and prestige is accorded the minister as opposed to the status of the laity.

The New Testament usage of the word ἀρχή, office, denotes a leader who is endowed with ruling power and authority. The word is commonly used in connection with the high priestly office and also of members of the high priestly family. In the New Testament, it is used in connection with Christ as the Chief Shepherd (ἀρχιπρεσβύτερον). Generally in the New Testament, it is used in connection with Jewish or heathen ecclesiastical authorities who have amassed power and authority—the president of a synagogue, ἀρχισυνάγωγος, is an example. This expression is never used in reference to the ministry within the Body of Christ. Neither is the word τιμή, honor, respect, recognition, price, value used to describe any office holders within the New Testament community of believers. τιμή, in a special sense, is used to

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1 The verb διακονεῖν means to serve, wait on, care for, see after, provide for. It is also used to describe the office of a deacon—that of service (1 Tim 3:10, 13).


3 τιμή is used generally to describe the entire membership of the Body of Christ and as such all Christians are said to possess "honor" (1 Pet 2:7). "They get a share in the honor of Christ because they are fitted as living stones into the holy house whose foundation is Christ, the elect whom God holds in honor. The saying is not eschatological... According to 1 Cor 12:23, 24 special honor in the whole organism of the community is to be granted to those Christians to whom is given no striking τιμή. By the τιμή shown them they are set on an equal footing with the other members of the community." J. Schneider "τιμή" TDNT Vol. 8 ed. Gerhard Friedrich
describe the high priestly office of Christ in Heb 5:4, an honor which by association passes on to the believer. The Septuagint uses the word *λειτουργία*—service, ministry—to describe the priestly office. In the New Testament the only use is in Rom 15:16; otherwise it is not used to designate a ministry within the Christian Church.

Instead of the descriptive terms above, the New Testament rather uses the word *διακονία*. This is a word that does not carry with it any position of dignity or power. Under this term offices such as overseers (*ἐπίσκοποι*), elders (*πρεσβυτέροι*) and servants (*διάκονοι*) appear as performing a ministry or ministries to the local congregation. The same word *διακονία* is used for the ministries of the whole church as listed in Eph 4:11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. These ministries do not attract to themselves a dignity of honor or prestige but rather honor to the Body of Christ. Thus the concept of ecclesiastical ministry as a position or power is unbiblical. Gifts are not imparted through assumption of church offices. If that were the case, the minister could boast of special graces that came to him through his office, and thereby have cause to claim preeminence over the layman who holds no church office.

So that instead of the ministry calling forth the gifts, it is rather the gifts that call forth the ministries of the Church. The working of the gifts in the building up of the Body is due to the Spirit of Christ standing in the midst of the congregation, directing the ministries toward their God-given ends. To this end or call the Christian responded by his baptism. As an act of God’s grace, gifts of

service were given. Kasemann lays weight on the fact that God's gift has the character of power. This gift is to become a power in all those who believe. The reception of God's gifts binds all Christians to the Lord's service and places man truly under the Lordship of Christ.¹ Cullman likewise notes that Christian baptism calls for human response.² The exercise of charisma is a "willing action."³ By this action, the Christian shows his readiness to give out to others what God has placed in him for the building up of the Church.


CHAPTER V

THE CALL TO MINISTRY:

BAPTISM OR ORDINATION

Now that the Biblical and theological support for the thesis that baptism is the Christian's ordination to the gospel ministry has been adduced, my present task in this chapter is to determine to what extent this baptismal ordination is analogous to what we know as ordination into the Gospel Ministry by means of laying on of hands. In order to do this, first, we ought to determine what ordination is--its theology and significance and secondly how it compares with baptism.

With the ecumenical demand for a "theology of the laity" the church has been awakened to the fact that God's call to the individual which is signified by the rite of baptism, is indeed his call out of the world into Christ and His Body, so he in turn can return to serve the world on behalf of Christ. The question, therefore, is: If the whole of the laity of the Christian Church are God's ministers to the Body and the world, what need will an ordained Ministry serve? Or, Is the ordained Ministry a duplication of baptism? Furthermore, it can be asked: What does the ordained "clergy" have which the "laity" does

\[1\] For a differentiation between the ministries of the church as a whole and that of the ordained minister, I will use "Ministry" specifically for the latter and "ministry" for the former.
not have?\textsuperscript{1} Or more pointedly: What is a Minister that a layman is not?\textsuperscript{2}

There have been many views of the Ministry. Such a Ministry is always associated with a Minister--an ordained Minister, so to speak. The same Ministry is very often referred to as "the Gospel Ministry". For the Catholic Church the Minister or priest is Christ's Ambassador to men. He stands between and, in fact, represents God in ministering to mankind. In a joint work entitled "The Canterbury Statement" Roman Catholic and Anglican theologians concluded that the ordained Minister is a "servant, both of Christ and of the Church."\textsuperscript{3}

In this role, he is a steward of the Word and sacrament. His authority to serve as a priest comes from the Lord through his body and through the bishop acting for Christ and Christ's body. This priest or Minister "is given a special responsibility as a preserver and proclaimer of the Christian faith and for the sacrament of ordination which commissions others to act for the community in sacramental roles."\textsuperscript{4}


\textsuperscript{2} I am using the terms "minister" and "layman" as they are used in the ecclesiastical setting today. Note the difference between this usage and the Biblical which brings no distinction between the two.


acceptance or retention of the name "priests" within the Catholic Church has given rise to the exaltation of that office above the rest of the Christian community. The New Testament teaching is very clear that there is only one priest now; and that is the high priest, Jesus Christ. Through Christ's incarnation and sacrifice, the Levitical priesthood was annulled and made void. The ministry of the priesthood as middlemen was removed and God's immediacy to man in Jesus Christ and man's immediacy to God in Jesus Christ was established. George E. Sweazey describes the breaking up of the priestly monopoly this way:

In the Hebrew temple only the high priest was allowed to go behind the veil into the symbolic presence of God, and only the priest could come back from the Holy of Holies, bearing God's mercies to those who waited outside. But at the moment of Jesus' death "Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt 27:51). In that instant the priestly monopoly was ended. The barrier which shut the unordained from the holiest place was torn away. Because of Christ, the humblest believer can go into the very presence of God, and can come from there to minister to a needy world.

The New Testament concept of priesthood refers not to Ministers but the λαός as ministers of God. The assembly, the ἐκκλησία constitute the holy and royal priesthood of God.

From this we see the Ministry not as a highly exalted one but one that is part and parcel of the ministries of the entire Church. The highly exalted Ministry is the High Priestly ministry in the person of Jesus Christ. The ordained Ministry, like the ministry of the

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1 See Heb 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; 8:1; 9:11.


Church, is thus part of the "holy and royal priesthood of God." The
role and function of this Ministry is a "relationship" between itself
and the ministry of the Christian community. One cannot stand without
the other. They need each other to survive in accomplishing the
God-given task.

But what is the ordained Ministry? What is the Adventist concept of the Ministry? At best what can be done is make a gleaning of statements here and there in an attempt to construct an Adventist doctrine of the Ministry, since there is no clear-cut doctrine of the same within the Adventist Church. The Seventh-day Adventist Manual for Ministers defines ordination as "the setting apart of the man to a sacred calling, not for one local field alone, but for the entire church." Expressions like "sacred calling," which appears in the above definition, are also seen in the writings of Ellen G. White, who held the ordained Ministry in the highest regard. She used expressions like "a sacred and exalted office," "divinely appointed" Ministry, one of which could be said there is "no work more blessed of God." Such expressions presuppose the exaltation of the ordained Minister over the unordained even though in a clear statement, the


3White, Testimonies vol. 2, p. 615.


5White, Testimonies vol. 6, p. 411.
Manual for Ministers has stated:

Ordination was not instituted to build up a religious hierarchy, for that would be a departure from the fundamental principle of ordination. ... The ordained minister is not exalted to a place of special privilege. ...

Ordination then is a call to leadership within the church. He who is thus called is saddled with the responsibility of taking care of the church and feeding the flock of God but never to exalt himself above the Body of Christ. Despite these admonitions, articles appearing in official denominational publications give the impression to the contrary.

Through baptism, God has called a people unto Himself and has

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1 Manual for Ministers, p. 17.

2 Charles Scriven, "Ordination and the Ministry of the Laity: A Possible Free-Church Interpretation." (Typewritten) n.d.

3 Ibid. Scriven quotes from three sources to prove his point. (1) Manual for Ministers states that the service of ordination "should be conducted in such a way as to exalt the office of the ministry in the eyes of the people" (p. 19). (2) C. B. Rock's article entitled "New Men" in The Ministry Vol. 44, No. 1 (January 1971) (The Ministry is the official publication of the Adventist Ministry), in which he boldly declared: "We ordained ministers are undershepherds of Christ ordained for tasks legitimate for no other group on earth, and recipients of the spiritual enlightenment ... available to no other group on earth" (p. 7, italics added). (3) An ordination charge by W. J. Blacker, a Union Conference President entitled "The Charge and Welcome to Newly Ordained Ministers" which was published in The Ministry Vol. 45, No. 5 (May 1972) addressed newly ordained ministers that they are now recognized as "representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (p. 14) as though they were not representatives of the church before their ordination. If even during the period of their internship and probation they are not representatives of the church, the laity will the more be relegated to an inferior status as representatives of the church. Others are statements like "consecration of those who minister in Christ's stead" appearing on p. 49 of the Afro-Mideast Division Working Policy (1971 ed.) published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. With unordained interns now allowed to do the work of the ordained Minister, ordination has in reality become a reward.
given them missionary responsibilities. God accordingly has given gifts to each member of the Body—the exercise of which will lead to the accomplishment of the Church’s mission. To achieve the maximum potential use of these gifts, God further calls, from within the Body, persons who have been endowed with gifts to lead out in the missionary work of the Church by equipping the saints within the Church for the work of ministry to which the entire Church has been called. The Church has been called to perform “the sacred work of the ministry.”

In order to keep the Church tuned to its ministry there is the need of having such members of the Body who have felt themselves called of God to devote their entire time and gifts to the Church. Such a person is commonly called a Minister. Bittlinger sees him as a charismatic who has become conscious of his calling, according to his charisma, to a ministry due to the activity of the Holy Spirit, and whose calling has been recognized and confirmed by the Church (cf. Gal 1:15ff; Acts 13:1ff; Gal 2:7ff). All ministries are functions of Christ the Head of the Church.¹

The consciousness of a person’s calling is his recognition of his own charismata and his willingness or determination to put his charismata into active and fruitful use (ἐνεργής) for the service (διακονία) of the entire church.²

Having given proof of the acceptance of the responsibility that a person’s charismata calls forth, he is to function within the Body as one who helps to develop other people’s charisma. When the Church so

¹Bittlinger, Gifts and Ministries, p. 24.

²Michael Green in his book Called to Serve lists four functions of the Church as a living organism: (1) pneumatica, functions assigned by the Holy Spirit, (2) charismata, gracious opportunities or gifts of service together with a God-given ability to fulfill them, (3) energe-mata, putting into active use one’s gifts, and (4) diakoniai which emphasizes that the purpose of the Spirit’s gifts is service to the Body as a whole. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press), p. 22.
recognizes his charismata, they set him apart for a specific ministry within the Church. This Minister who has been called, like everybody else, into the Body of Christ and has been given a gift, like all else, has had his charisma so pronounced and so predominant that the Church has taken recognition of his graces and had assigned him to a specific office in the Church through ordination by the laying on of hands. Thus the "call" to the Gospel Ministry is not different from the call into the Body of Christ through baptism.

Christ's calling of the twelve disciples and also of the seventy proves this point. The twelve were called so they would be with Christ. Being with Christ was a "full-time" commitment. There was no difference between the charges given to the twelve and the seventy when they were sent out into the world to proclaim Christ. Furthermore, no new graces were given to the twelve disciples when they were called. According to the Markan record Christ went up into the mountain and from among His disciples he called the Twelve "to be with Him and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons." The authority mentioned above is the authority every follower of Christ has been given. Similarly what Christ said to the Twelve, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men," He says to all His disciples that accept His call.

It is interesting to note that when Christ, Peter, James, and John returned from the Mount of Transfiguration, they found the other


2Mark 3:13-15. The Lucan account confirms the Markan but adds a few details like praying all night to God and the calling of the twelve whom he named apostles. That presupposed that the purpose of calling was, like Mark said, to be sent out (ἀποστέλλω).
disciples struggling without success to heal the epileptic child. They could not heal the child because, according to Christ, they had no faith. This episode is more striking when we are reminded that the event took place both after the calling and the sending out of the Twelve. In both the calling and the sending, they were given authority over demons. When the Twelve returned, they recounted how even the demons were obedient to them and the anointing with oil and the healing of the sick. The seventy returned to give the same report. Faith is, therefore, the issue. To every believer who has faith in Christ has been given the power or authority to perform miracles. No special graces accompanied the calling of the Twelve which has not been placed at the disposal of all of Christ's disciples throughout the ages.

Paul's call into the gospel ministry is a prime example of this. Four steps are notable: (1) On his way to Damascus to persecute the Christian Church there, the Lord appeared to him, called him into ministry, and this call was consummated through baptism. Later in his letter to the Church in Galatia, Paul contended that the Church as an organization had no part in his calling which became a reality through baptism.

(2) Paul gave full proof of his gifts in his home church at Antioch. When the Church had recognized his calling and gifts, they

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2 Mark 6:12, 13.
were urged by the Holy Spirit to set him apart through the laying on of hands for a special ministry among the Gentiles.\(^1\)

(3) Later on, the Church headquarters, seeing the fruits of his ministry, gave their recognition. Their recognition was not in the act of ordination, for the local church at Antioch had already ordained him. Instead, he was given the right hand of fellowship by the apostles in Jerusalem.\(^2\)

(4) Paul's apostolic call and consecration was real. His ministry was comparable to that of the twelve apostles. He had "the signs of a true apostle" and these became evident in his ministry.\(^3\)

Taylor sees this as a common experience of all the apostles, "They must have been conscious of an inner call from Christ, to which the Holy Spirit bore unmistakable testimony, and their call was recognized and endorsed by the church."\(^4\)

Ordination into the Gospel Ministry is, therefore, not a grace-giving act. Paul was not suggesting in his letters to Timothy\(^5\) that special graces and gifts are passed on to the ordained through the laying on of hands. Paul most probably would be using the expression "laying on of hands" to mean an act of recognition of the gifts in

\(^1\) Acts 13:1-3.

\(^2\) Gal 2:7-10.

\(^3\) 2 Cor 12:12.


\(^5\) 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6. Note how in the first text Paul writes that the laying on of hands was done by the elders (πρεσβυτέροι) but in the second text was by him (δία τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χερσῶν μου). Could this mean Paul and the elders ordained Timothy or Timothy had two separate ordinations? The former would seem plausible.
Timothy. This explanation seems reasonable in the light of the New Testament teaching on the gifts of grace to the Church as was experienced in the life of Paul himself. When the Church or "elders" ordain, they are simply placing "the seal of the Church" upon the gift God has already given the individual and a further recognition of the fact that the gifts have been used in a remarkable way in the building up of the Body of Christ. Ellen White in this regards counsels that "No one should be accepted as a laborer in the cause of God, until he makes it manifest that he has a real, living experience in the things of God." Ordination is, therefore, the Church's way of showing that recognition is given to an already existent gift. This recognition confirms the fact that "authority in the church rests in the church membership." By granting the ordination, the Church accepts the ordained as a leader in the Church with the responsibility of caring and feeding the members. The ordained Minister is a leader in the Church for "God has laid upon His chosen ministers the duty of deciding who was fit for the holy work." The already ordained Ministers are counseled to work with the Church in examining who should be given this added ministerial responsibility taking into account the individual's "manifest tokens of the Holy Spirit."

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1 White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 162.


3 *Church Manual*, p. 46.

4 *Scriven*, p. 8.

5 White, *Testimonies* vol. 1, p. 209.

6 Ibid.
Dr. Thomas H. Blincoe believes that Ellen White's use of "the church" would be a reference to the local church or the churches where the ordained has been laboring. The entire Church thus participates in the process of ordination. The unordained ministry of the Church cannot be inferior in status to the ordained Ministry. On the other hand they "share equally" in the "life, worship, mission and government" of the Church. The whole people of God, the laos, give authority and credibility to the ordination process. Scriven is convinced that

Through ordination the church says, in effect: We, the laity, through our ordained representatives, now validate your call to represent Christ to us through a ministry of serving leadership in the church. You may accept this validation in good faith that we, for our part, will respond by being faithful to our own vocation in the world. For without truly intending this, we could not (again through the ordaining minister) lay our hands on you and offer intercessory prayers on your behalf.

Since ordination is the Church's recognition of the energmata of one's already-given gifts, the Church must recommend those that have proved worthy of ordination from within her own ranks. Such candidates then, according to Ellen White's counsel, should be examined by previously ordained ministers and elders "of experience and of sound minds," and after their gifts and fruits have been validated, ordination by the laying on of hands should follow to signify "full proof that they have received their commission of God," and are being set apart to devote

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2 Oosterwal, Mission: Possible, p. 105.


themselves entirely to God's work.¹

This "entire devotion" is the kind that distinguishes the ordained member from the unordained. The latter would be a representative of God and his faith while he engages in his own desired vocation. The former has been ordained so he can be with his Master ready to be sent forth to preach and witness. The Afro-Mideast Division Working Policy sheds light on this.

The first office of one ordained to the ministry is that he should be with God. Only then is he qualified to go forth to men to preach the Word of God. One who is thus consecrated and who enjoys constant communion with his Lord will rejoice in the privilege of rendering complete service, refusing to be entangled in business for personal gain and other things of this world that he may, by the grace of God, give complete devotion to the cause he loves.²

The practice or ordination procedure of churches today, including the Adventist Church, does not reflect the Biblical teaching that the authority to ordain rests with the laity, i.e., the whole people of God. It is rather the opposite. Candidates are very often chosen from the top, validated by the Executive Committees, and the Church informed of the executive action. This is the approved General

¹Ibid.

²Afro-Mideast Policy, p. 54. Other church communions do not strictly practice the "entire devotion" of one's total time to the ordained Ministry. People who have proved their calling into the ministry of the Body of Christ are ordained into the Ministry while they practice their own vocations. Even though the Adventist Church has not conceded that far, it has become a practice to ordain into the Gospel Ministry people engaged in certain lines of work in the denomination that are not regarded as strictly ministerial. Examples of such are: (1) college presidents or academy principals, (2) college or academy teachers regardless of their teaching subjects, (3) doctors, (4) editors, (5) secretary-treasurers of conferences, (6) departmental and institutional leaders. The assumption is that these latter categories bear a witnessing influence on those they administer and teach and hence are engaged in spiritual work. We need not deplore the deplorable economic reasons undergirding such ordinations.
Conference "Procedure in Authorizing Ordination."

1. Inasmuch as the ordination to the ministry is the setting apart of the man to a sacred calling, not for one local field alone, but for the entire church, and therefore needs to be done with wide counsel, the following plan is the proper procedure, except in special cases where serious delay would result:

   a. The matter of ordination is first taken under careful consideration by the local field committee.

   b. In case of approval the local field committee submits the names of the candidates with their findings and convictions to the union conference committee for counsel.

   c. The decisions of these two bodies are placed in the hands of the committee on Credentials and Licenses at the field session on whose favorable report the field makes final decision in the case.

   d. In case the candidate to be ordained is not in the employ of a local field, the organization employing him would, of course, initiate the matter.

2. When circumstances make it desirable, a candidate may be ordained between regular field sessions, provided the union and local field committees have approved his ordination. ¹

It is very clear that the local congregation plays no part in both the selection and examination of the candidate for ordination even though the counsel of Ellen White expressly calls for just that. The Working Policy under study again declares that "examination of candidates for ordination" should be done "by ordained ministers only, and where there are present representatives of unions, divisions, or the General Conference, they should be invited to assist in the examination." ² Hence instead of coming down to include the local congregation in the exercise, the Church hierarchy is rather preferred to be involved in the examination of the candidates for ordination.

Until the Church begins to see ordination or the setting apart

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 55.

³See footnote 1 on page 68 where Dr. Blincoe clearly explicates this point.
for the ministry of equipping the saints from the Biblical viewpoint as one that arises out of the Body of Christ, i.e., the local congregation, the high and low, superior and inferior dichotomy will exist within the Christian Church. If, on the other hand, ordination is seen as the recognition of the Church of a member's already given gifts, then ordination embraces the Church as a whole. One's pastoral gift is recognized and authenticated by the congregation as a whole—the entire λαός. The whole Body of Christ will then set him apart to a life-long call of service. His ministry must thus be recognized and accepted by the global church for he has been called of God to labor, like the unordained laity, in the Lord's vineyard which is the world in its entirety. This removes the attention from the ordained, and instead of exalting "the office of the ministry in the eyes of the people" the whole Church is honored and exalted and empowered. Ordination then becomes "not only the formal validation of a call, but a kind of covenant between the person being ordained and the community he will serve, and at the same time, an occasion of reconsecration to God."  

Ordination and Women

My present intention is not to give a full-scale treatment of the question of the ordination of women. My task is just to make a projection out of my study of the Body of Christ and to see the woman's role within that Body. Perhaps in doing this, some light will be shed on the present controversy--pro and con--on the ordination of

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1Afro-Mideast Policy, p. 55.
2Scriven, p. 15.
women into full-time Ministry.

So far our study has shown that through Christian Baptism the believer participates in the salvific work of Christ. In a peculiar way the rite embodies "the Gospel of the saving acts of God in Christ and the response of the person submitting in baptism to that Gospel."\(^1\) Baptism directs the believer's gaze as well as that of the observers to Him whose death brought eternal redemption for the whole of mankind. The Christian claims this personal salvation and is thereby incorporated into the Body of Christ. With the gift of eternal life comes the gift of the Holy Spirit which assigns gifts to all believers for the building up of the Body of Christ of which Christ is the Head and also the Chief Cornerstone.

We have also noted that through baptism God has called both the individual and the Church into His service. The Christian as a result of his response to God's approach to him through the Gospel must confess Jesus as his Lord. Baptism is but a spiritual act and as such it is only possible after the Church becomes the locus of the Holy Spirit.\(^2\) The presence of the Holy Spirit springs the Church into action. The whole Church is, therefore, responsible for carrying on the mission of Christ and its related ministries. The concept of the \(\lambda \alpha \delta \varepsilon\) is all embracing. It has room for Christian apostles, fishermen, slaves, tent-makers, physicians, civil servants, merchants, children, and youth.\(^3\)

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\(^2\)Cullman, p. 10.

All the members of the Body must exercise the gift of their calling. The believer shares in the total ministry of the Church. With this gift he or she must serve both God and man realizing that these gifts are not his own, but God's, and that they are given to be used to God's glory and in expressing love to both God and man.\(^1\)

This being so, we ask: Does the Holy Spirit give gifts to women within the Body of Christ? Should the exercise of these gifts differ from that of the other members of the Body? Emphasis has been stressed above on the fact that within the Body there are no distinctions. Paul contends that as the believer puts on Christ through baptism he so unites himself with His Body that individual identities give way to a unified Christlikeness. As such "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."\(^2\)

The Holy Spirit, therefore, does not give gifts on account of male or female. He requires every recipient of His gift to use what has been graciously imparted for the good of the Body. By the use of these gifts the individual grows in grace, bears fruits of the Spirit, and helps the Body to grow as a living organism.

The call to service which God, as an act of love, extends to the believer and is accepted and signified through the rite of baptism knows neither male nor female. Humanity stands equal before God. Whoever is baptized, male or female, has been commissioned by God into His service, and the Church or the Body must recognize the calling and the

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\(^2\)Gal 3:27, 28 (emphasis mine).
manifestations of the gifts.

Earlier in this chapter, I contended that God does not give any special calling into the ordained Ministry. God's calling is basic. His is a call to repentance, forgiveness of sins and into Sonship.
When the believer becomes conscious of his personal calling and through the recognition of his gifts, he or she is determined to put them into active and fruitful use for the service of the entire Church, the Church should recognize the gifts and ordain such a person by setting him or her apart for the work of the Ministry.

When the Church as a Body is guided by the Holy Spirit, she cannot but recognize the leading of the Holy Spirit in its midst. Denying recognition of the ministry of women within the Body of Christ is denying spiritual gifts to women. The Holy Spirit is not divided; neither is the Body of Christ.

God chooses all people for His work. Ellen White writes

In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess worldly wealth, learning, or eloquence. He asks: Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me? God can use every person. . . . His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles.¹

A study of the New Testament concept of ordination reveals, like Ellen White has amply stated above, that qualification for full-time commitment to the Lord's work is not by wealth or learning but by commitment and surrender to the Lord. The Apostles charged the early Christian Church to choose among themselves believers of "good repute,

full of the Spirit and of wisdom."¹ The issue is always moral. Those who are to be "with God" must be prepared to part with sin and lead lives beyond reproach. Paul's counsel on the choice of leaders for God's Church is basically the same. The "bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, nor violent but gentle, nor quarrelsome and no lover of money."² Paul is not setting two standards for the Body of Christ. All members of the Body have been called to minister and so their lives should bear witness to their calling and commission.

To deny ordination to women is to deny the function of the Spirit and of the Church. A true Biblical understanding of ordination is very essential if the Body is to function as a whole. To think that God gives a special gift of grace or power to the ordained candidate at the time of his ordination is to confess a misunderstanding of the Bible's teaching of ordination and the dynamics of the Body of Christ. The Church of God, in this regards, must live above prejudice and see mankind whom God has created in His own image as one who has been endowed with honor and power. The Church's task is magnanimous and to accomplish this task no gift should be denied, rather, the Church should recognize and validate all gifts. In this way the Body will be united—all parts performing an important function, and thus the Church's ministry will be carried out.

¹ Acts 6:3.
² ¹ Tim 3:1-3ff.
CONCLUSION

The New Testament teaching of baptism as we have just seen encompasses the whole vocation of the Christian. His call to baptism is that of discipleship of Jesus Christ.\(^1\) Individually speaking, the believer is called into a life of faith through which he accepts the life of Jesus as his own. In baptism, Jesus binds the believer, who has now become His disciple, to Himself.\(^2\) As a result the believer becomes united, with other believers, to Christ into a unified Body whose head is Christ Himself.

The life of Jesus, which the believer accepts as his own derives its power from Christ's death and resurrection. Through his burial in baptism the believer is united with the risen Lord and as a result, walks in newness of life. This new life is what Paul calls "putting on" of Christ.\(^3\) A new experience in the life of the believer begins. It is a life of incorporation into the Body of Christ. Christ's salvific life becomes the life of the Body and its individual members. Our conclusion may well be stated in the words of Herman Ridderbos:

As Christ in his death died to sin and by his resurrection lives to God (Rom 6:10), so the new life in its moral manifestation

\(^1\)Niebuhr, p. 64.


\(^3\)Gal 3:27 "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
is to bear the stamp of having died and been raised with Christ, that it breaks away from the jurisdiction of the old center (that of sin, the flesh, the old "I") and the centripetal powers ("the lusts") pertaining to it, to find the new meaning of its existence and center in God.¹

The Cross is always at the center of baptism. Through baptism, the believer affirms his acceptance of what the Cross stands for in heilsgeschichte and pledges to be a part in the whole operation of man's reconciliation with God.

By his witness, the believer reveals the righteousness of God which manifested itself in the saving activity of Christ.² God is "just" and the "justifier" who in his righteousness has revealed Himself through Christ as the One who gives a righteous standing to the man who believes in Christ.³ Thus it is when Christ becomes the center of the believer's new life that his "true manhood" is realized in the life and peace in the freedom which Christ gives.⁴

Baptism is closely related to eschatology and has ethical connotations.⁵ It is an expression of repentance, i.e. sorrow for sin and the believer's desire to be free from it by accepting the freedom which Christ gives and its demands. Paul carried the death to sin—


²According to Beasley-Murray, baptism must be understood as meaning the whole redeeming activity to God that forms the heart of the Gospel, Baptism Today and Tomorrow, pp. 74-75. Alec Vidler, a Cambridge theologian in an article "Baptimal Disgrace" (Theology, Vol. 4), 1940, p. 8 states in a bold way that "All the chief Christian doctrines are involved in the theology of baptism."


⁴Ridderbos, Paul, p. 259.

⁵Oepke, "βάπτισμα" TDNT Vol. 1, p. 537.
new life in Christ meaning of baptism— one step further. It is what F. F. Bruce calls "the slave-market analogy". In this analogy, the slave's relation with his master is described as an act of obedience. So long as the slave lives he is bound to obey his master. At the slave's death the master's authority over him ceases and he becomes unresponsive to orders from his master. So Paul says that in the past, the believer was a slave to sin. Sin was his master. It dominated his life and he was forced to do whatever sin commanded without the power to say "No". But now, through baptism the believer has died to sin, and hence has removed himself through the grace of God from the power of sin to the power of the risen Lord. As such he has passed from the service of sin into the service of God. His business now is to do what God desires him to do but not what sin dictates.¹

Thus when baptized the Christian must produce fruits of repentance. The producing of fruits is the believer's obedient response to God's will. In view of the eschaton—whether impending or realized—his whole life ought to be conducted as a citizen of the Kingdom which Christ would inaugurate at His parousia but which has already broken into the present age.

Baptism is the believer's pledge of acceptance of the covenant relationship with God. It is the way the believer affirms God to be his God and he himself as God's child. This is a relationship of

utmost faith and dependence. Faith is the beginning and end of the Christian experience.\(^1\) Hans Hut remarks that baptism is a lifelong struggle with sin.\(^2\) To this note Paul also affirms that death to sin is not something which happens once but the experience of surrender to Christ and death to sin is daily.\(^3\) Baptism, therefore, places the Christian in the center of redemptive history with the assurance that if he remains faithful to the teachings of Christ and His example, Christ's victory over evil will be his victory and would share in its glory here and now.\(^4\)

Acceptance of Jesus Christ into the believer's life is authenticated by the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the believer. At baptism, the Holy Spirit takes full control of the believer's life. Gifts of the Spirit are endowed individually and collectively upon the Church to be used to edify and build up the Body of Christ. The Church as a whole is empowered to recognize these gifts within its Body. Scripture teaches that as a result or proof of the gift and its use, the elders of the local congregation are to set apart, through the laying on of hands, those individuals who have proven gifts received through their baptism.\(^5\)

\(^1\) See Dodd, *Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, p. 14.


\(^3\) 1 Cor 15:31.


\(^5\) The New Testament support for this finds its *locus classicus* in the call to apostleship of Paul. These four steps are very significant. (1) Called by God—Gal 1:15-24. This is Paul's reference to the Damascus road experience when God called him "through his
Thus, the believer's baptism is his ordination to the gospel ministry. As his response to this call, he is consecrated and set aside from the world. As the believer lives the life of Christ, he would, then, bear witness in word and deed to the world. In a way, the believer is called out of the world into Christ so that he will be sent back into the world to witness for Christ, his new Master.

Within this framework of "called out of the world to be sent back into the world," every believer stands equal before God. For Paul says that there are no divisions—no male, no female, no Jews and no Gentiles. The gifts given to the members of the Body are all important to the building up of the Body. The variety of these gifts are functional. They are given to cover all aspects of the Church's ministry. To refuse to recognize gifts among members is rejection of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within the Body of Christ. Consequently, rejection or belittling certain gifts like prophesying, pastoring, or teaching by women, is accepting an unbiblical teaching of grace" by revealing Christ to him "in order that I might preach him among the gentiles." Paul even contends that the Church as an organization had no part in this calling which became a reality in his baptism. 

(2) Singled out by the church--Acts 13:1-3. It was the Church at Antioch--Paul's home Church--where he and others had given proof of their gifts, that set them apart through the urging of the Holy Spirit.

(3) Recognized by the church at large--Gal 2:7-10. Beyond Paul's local congregation, the church at large recognized that Paul "had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised." They recognized the grace God had given to Paul. It is significant to note that the Apostles in Jerusalem did not set him apart--for the local congregation at Antioch had already done so--instead they extended their right hand of fellowship to him. In today's Adventist language, they gave him a formal welcome into the ordained ministry.

(4) Confirmed by apostolic signs--2 Cor 12:12. Paul's was not an inferior ministry for he had "the signs of a true apostle" and these signs were evident in his ministry.

partiality of the Gift-giver. Men and women are both ordained through baptism into the ministry of reconciling humankind with God.

The mission of the Church in and to the world depends en toto upon the whole membership of the Body of Christ. The tension is very prevalent when recognition is given to the fact that each Christian is in the world and yet is not of the world. And in a similar way, the Church is in the world but not of the world. Both exist in the world for the benefit of the world. Thus, the evangelism of the Church must be individualized in that members of the Body of Christ must actively identify themselves in the task and bend every God-given gift to the completion of that task.¹

Given this theology, the whole λαὸς, the people of God have been called into ministry. Aided by the Holy Spirit, the Church, through baptism, has been ordained to a life of consecration, fellowship and witness. The recipients of the messianic salvation, the Church, as the people of God's Kingdom, the true Israel, must witness to the world what they have seen and heard with the view of awakening and reconciling a lost world to Christ.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE STRENGTHENING
OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST MINISTRY
IN WEST AFRICA
CHAPTER I

A PROPOSAL FOR THE ORDINATION OF LOCAL ELDERS INTO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY IN WEST AFRICA AS AUXILIARY MINISTERS

Introduction

My primary task in this section is to establish the need in West Africa for an order of ordained local church pastors whose duty will be to equip the church members for ministry—a call confirmed upon them through baptism. This proposal is an outgrowth of the first section—the theological paper—which dealt with baptism as ordination into the gospel ministry. That study revealed that baptism signifies the believer's response to God's call for self-surrender and for ministering with and on behalf of Christ for "the ministry of reconciliation."\(^1\) The Church, consisting of individual believers, must fulfill its corporate mission of being Christ's witnesses to all mankind. For Christ indeed gives specific gifts to each individual member of the Body. These gifts are given by God's grace and are meant to be put to their fullest use for the building up of the Church and also for God's

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\(^1\) The Church's role in this world takes its character from Jesus Christ and it exists as a servant to the world. "The Church is to be the living, witnessing community testifying to the reconciliation that Jesus Christ achieved between God and man, and further to the meaning of this reconciliation within all human relationships. Wherever Christians are unwilling to be reconciled in the spirit of Christ, they deny their Lord" Robert S. Paul, p. 136.
glory. Baptism as a "call" is, therefore, for the exercise of such ministry as the Spirit of God imparts.

Paul emphasizes that each member of the Church has been given gifts by God's grace. Such gifts as apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring and teaching have been given to members of the Church "according to the measure of Christ's gift" "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up of the body of Christ."¹ The recipients of "the ministry of reconciliation" are the members of the Church, the Body of Christ, which consists of individuals who have accepted the Lordship of Christ Jesus and have been incorporated into Him through baptism.

The willingness of the Holy Spirit to use each individual member of the Church depends largely upon the extent of the member's surrender. Ellen White states "There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God."² The determining factor for the reception and use of spiritual gifts, is moral. It ceases to be a question of how educated a member is or is not, how rich or poor, whether male or female, Jew or gentile, missionary or national. Rather, it is a question of commitment—to what extent the believer allows the Holy Spirit to take possession of his life and to use him for performing His will on earth.

In the same manner, the ordained Ministry is Christ's gift to the Church. The Church as a Body ought to recognize the presence of

¹Eph 4:7, 11, 12.  
²White, Desire of Ages, pp. 250-251.
the Holy Spirit through the gifts given to its members. As Robert Paul notes,

The Church has the responsibility beyond all the conflicting and distracting motivations that may be present to discern and recognize this authentic note in a Minister's call, and to say that this man is Christ's gift to his Church is to say no more (and no less) than that he has come to this congregation through the call of Christ.¹

T. W. Manson claims that according to some Free Church Christians, "a minister is a layman who has lost his amateur status."² In a sense he as professional is a trained layman. He assumes a leadership position in accordance to the gift which the Holy Spirit has given him. His new role springs from the ministry of the Church. His priesthood is not different in kind from that which belongs corporately to all Christians. The ordained priesthood is an instrument and organ of the corporate priesthood of the Church conferred in baptism. This Christian priesthood in turn springs from the priesthood of Christ. This means that the whole Church, not just its ordained ministry, bears responsibility for the Church's life and ministry to the world. The laity then ought to be associated with the clergy in all matters of faith, discipline and morals. Both the ordained and the unordained laity bear the burden of the fulfillment of the Church's mission to mankind. In fulfilling this mission, the ordained minister's responsibility, first and foremost, is to be "a teacher of teachers."³ This

¹Paul, p. 119.
ought to be the function of the ordained minister in equipping his church for ministry.

Unfortunately, this role is lacking in West Africa on the congregational level. The ordained ministry is so limited in number that many local churches are without resident shepherds. For the Seventh-day Adventist Churches in West Africa to be nurtured and equipped for ministry, I propose that members who through baptism and reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit have manifested clear evidence of their call into the gospel ministry by serving their Church in a faithful manner according to the measure of God's grace given them, ought to be ordained as local pastors of their congregations. If this is done, the individual churches will signify their recognition of the gifts of the Holy Spirit among its members, who will in return be nurtured and thus the whole Church as the Body of Christ will be built up.

My aim now is to present statistical support to give credence for the need of an order of pastors who will work with the professional pastors, as auxiliaries, in nurturing the local congregations for the work of soul winning. With authentic information supplied by the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, I have broken down the membership growth—from 1969 to 1979—into ratios as it pertains to the ordained and licensed ministry. At the moment, the growth rate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Africa is quite high. In the Northern Europe-West Africa Division, West Africa claims 72% of the entire Division membership and yet the ministerial growth rate in West Africa is proportionately the least.

The final chapter will deal with how to train these newly ordained local pastors for effective ministry to their local congregations.
and how the professional ministers will help them as resource persons. These training periods ought to be pre and post-ordination in nature. It is hoped that this program would contribute to the spiritual growth of the Adventist Church in West Africa.

An Analysis of the Numerical Growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in West Africa with Particular Emphasis on Ghana

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced tremendous growth in West Africa. Organized as the African West Coast Union Mission under the General Conference Mission Division in 1943 with a baptized membership of 7,183, the growth since then has been significant. In 1951, the West African Union was once again organized under the Northern Europe Division. A re-organization took place in 1961, and in 1971 the Division became known officially as the Northern Europe-West Africa Division. By 1972, adherents numbered 51,397 baptized members and 134,300 Sabbath School members. From 1969-1972


2 Under the 1933 re-organization, the work in West Africa fell within two unions as we have it at present. There was the Gold Coast Union Mission with a territory covering the Gold Coast, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Togoland and the Upper Volta Colonies of West Africa; the other union, the Nigerian Union Mission covered Nigeria, French Colony of the Niger, and the islands in the Gulf of Guinea. Both of these unions were under the Northern European Division until the outbreak of World War II when in 1943 they came directly under the General Conference Missions Division until the 1951 re-organization.

3 This figure and the following ones are furnished by the General Conference Office of Statistics and Archives for the years indicated.

4 It is the practice of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to accept new adherents as Sabbath School members. Having acquired enough knowledge and faith in Christ, they are baptized as full members
the average annual membership increase through baptism was 5,262—an annual percentage rate of 18.8%. Within this same 5 year period, Sabbath School membership increased at an annual percentage rate of 30.3%—an average of 7,850 per annum.

The strength of the ordained and licensed ministry has also had some growth since 1943. With an initial working force of 63 and a ratio of one minister to 114 baptized members and one minister to 343 Sabbath School members, the West African Union has made some significant strides. By 1972, the Union had a working force of 146 ordained and 74 licensed ministers—a total working force of 220.

In the face of rapid growth of the Church in West Africa, percentage of increase of the ordained ministers over the period under consideration, 1969-1972, was 14.9% and that of the total ministry was 6.2%. In 1969, the ratio of the baptized membership to the ordained ministry was 354:1. By 1972, the ratio had risen to 378, an increase of 7.3%. The ratio of the baptized membership to the total ministerial force in 1969 was 217:1. By 1972, that had also risen to 250, an increase of 15.2%.

The Sabbath School membership presents a similar picture. In 1969, the ratio of Sabbath School members to the ordained ministry was

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1 This figure represents both the ordained and licensed ministers.

2 Total ministry is a reference to the ordained and licensed ministers combined. Hereafter to be referred to as such.
By 1972, the ratio had gone up to 919, an increase of 13.3%. The ratio of the Sabbath School membership to the total ministerial force had grown from 497:1 in 1969 to 610:1 in 1972, an annual increase of 22.7%.

These figures show that as the overall membership grows, the ratio of ministers to Church or Sabbath School membership widens. When the West African Union Mission was divided into two Union Missions at the end of 1972, the trend remained the same. Below are the ratios for the West African Union Mission from 1973-1977.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members to ordained minister</th>
<th>Members to total ministry</th>
<th>S. S. members to ordained minister</th>
<th>S. S. members to total ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>450:1</td>
<td>282:1</td>
<td>926:1</td>
<td>581:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>478:1</td>
<td>305:1</td>
<td>998:1</td>
<td>637:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>533:1</td>
<td>302:1</td>
<td>1016:1</td>
<td>576:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>517:1</td>
<td>306:1</td>
<td>908:1</td>
<td>538:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>474:1</td>
<td>258:1</td>
<td>1091:1</td>
<td>594:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The re-organized Union has grown with the baptized membership of 26,100 in 1973 to 35,950 in 1978 an annual average growth of 2,824 and an increase rate of 37.7%. Over the same period the Sabbath School membership rose from 54,650 in 1973 to 84,910 in 1978, an annual average growth of 5,043 and an increase rate of 55.3%. Baptisms alone averaged 2,604 per annum.

The present South Ghana Conference is a child of the Gold

Nigeria became a separate Union and the rest of the Union retained its previous name, the West African Union Mission.
Coast Mission which was established in 1894 as the Gold Coast Field when E. L. Sanford and K. G. Rudolph arrived at Apam, Gold Coast on February 22, 1894. This team of missionaries sent by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists became the first resident Adventist missionaries to Africa--arriving in Africa about four and one half months before the first party of Adventist missionaries to Solusi in Southern Rhodesia arrived there on July 4, 1894.

In 1933, it was organized with the headquarters at Bekwai in the Ashanti Region. In January, 1969, North Ghana became a separate

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2 On August 12, 1891, the Foreign Missions Board voted to send Elder L. C. Chadwick to the Gold Coast. Ordained to the gospel ministry in the Battle Creek Tabernacle on September 19, 1891, he left Battle Creek on October 8, 1891 traveling through Mexico, the West Indies, Brazil, Argentina and then to West Africa (see Review and Herald, published by the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, Vol. 68, No. 40, October 13, 1891, p. 640). Landing at Apam, Elder Chadwick spent "some months" in the Gold Coast where he visited other places like Accra. While in West Africa, he visited Dakar in Senegal, Sierra Leone and Liberia before going back to the United States to report to the General Conference of SDA. L. C. Chadwick, "The West Africa Mission Field," General Conference Daily Bulletin, Vol. 5, No. 2, January 29, 30, 1893, p. 27. Since Chadwick was sent to survey the possibilities of establishing our work in West Africa, Sanford and Rudolph should be regarded as the first Adventist missionaries to Black Africa.

3 The question of where the Adventist work was first started in Africa is under dispute. The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia lists Solusi in Southern Rhodesia as the place where Adventist missionaries first arrived on African soil on July 4, 1894. Yet, recent research conducted by Elder George E. Bryson, a missionary to West Africa, showed that the first missionaries sent to Africa landed in Apam in the Gold Coast on February 22, 1894. (See George Elmer Bryson, The Beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana (Gold Coast) 1888-1905, p. 20. Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, Spring Quarter, 1975, an unpublished term paper). In a companion work, The Beginning of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana (Gold Coast): A Continuation 1905-1917, I called attention to the impression the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia had inadvertently created (see p. 60).
mission from the Ghana Mission so that the work would gain ground in the north also. By the end of 1969, the Ghana Mission had had a steady growth of baptized and Sabbath School membership, had demonstrated its ability to be self-supporting and in January, 1970, it became the first black Seventh-day Adventist Conference in Africa. Since then membership growth has been significant. At the end of 1976 the Ghana Conference was re-divided. The Ghana Conference was re-organized as the Central Ghana Conference with its headquarters remaining in Kumasi and the South Ghana Mission established with Accra as the headquarters.¹

My task, from this juncture, is to give the trend of growth of the Central Ghana Conference as a basis for my proposal for an auxiliary ministry. An attempt will be made to analyze growth in both membership and ministerial working force and the ratio existing between them.

The years under consideration are 1969 to 1976. During this period, the baptized membership rose from 13,000 in 1969 to 26,000 by the end of 1976, a 100% increase in baptized membership. The annual rate of baptismal increase was 20.9%. During the same period Sabbath School membership increased by 78%. The rate of growth of the ministry, during this period, could not be compared to the phenomenal growth of membership. The rate of growth of the ordained ministry was 29.6% and that of the licensed ministers was 25%, a growth rate of 27.9% for the total ministerial force.

The figures appearing below are the ratios of members to ministers in the Ghana Conference from 1969 to 1976.

¹I am not analyzing the numerical growth of the South Ghana Mission because it has been in existence for just two years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members to ordained minister</th>
<th>Members to ordained total ministry</th>
<th>S.S. members to ordained minister</th>
<th>S.S. members to total ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>525:1</td>
<td>330:1</td>
<td>1196:1</td>
<td>751:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>645:1</td>
<td>369:1</td>
<td>1462:1</td>
<td>835:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>704:1</td>
<td>422:1</td>
<td>1495:1</td>
<td>897:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>565:1</td>
<td>365:1</td>
<td>1115:1</td>
<td>721:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>636:1</td>
<td>411:1</td>
<td>1318:1</td>
<td>852:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>714:1</td>
<td>457:1</td>
<td>1553:1</td>
<td>994:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>777:1</td>
<td>460:1</td>
<td>1684:1</td>
<td>998:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>742:1</td>
<td>472:1</td>
<td>1642:1</td>
<td>1045:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 1969 and 1976 the ratio increased as follows:

- Members to ordained ministers: 41.3%
- Members to total ministry: 43.0%
- S.S. members to ordained ministers: 37.2%
- S.S. members to total ministry: 39.1%

These figures indicate the trend of numerical growth of the Ghana Conference from 1969 to 1976. The growth of the Conference's ministerial force is far below that of its membership.

In January, 1977, the Central Ghana Conference came into being as a result of a re-organization which saw the creation of the South Ghana Mission. That left the Central Ghana Conference with a membership of 21,250 at the end of that year. The ratio of membership to its ministers stood as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members to ordained minister</th>
<th>Members to ordained total ministry</th>
<th>S.S. members to ordained minister</th>
<th>S.S. members to total ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1062:1</td>
<td>505:1</td>
<td>2062:1</td>
<td>982:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1262:1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From these figures, it appears that there exists a need for
more ministers to perform the work of specialized ministry in West Africa. The trend in Ghana is just a sample of what is happening elsewhere in the West African Union. A quick glance at the West African scene reveals the following ratios of baptized membership to ordained ministers:

- **North Ghana 400:1** There are two ordained ministers and both are serving as Mission administrators.
- **South Ghana 840:1**
- **Togo-Benin 111:1** There is one ordained minister who is the Mission President. Membership, 111.
- **Sierra Leone 714:1**
- **Liberia 269:1**
- **Ivory Coast 216:1**
- **Upper Volta 15:1** (A new mission with one ordained minister—the President—and fifteen members).

The disparity in the ratio of membership to the total ministerial force is often attributed to lack of funds. As a result, the conference and missions in West Africa are not able to employ as many ministers as needed. This leaves the churches without shepherds and hence no sense of financial direction. A plan for an auxiliary ministry, self-supporting as it will be, will encourage giving and at the same time the ministry of the auxiliary ministers will not cost the conference or mission much. Of course, the travels of such auxiliary pastors would be paid and I would suggest that they are put on the regular denominational sustentation policy at the time of their retirement.

The time has come for the Church in West Africa to take note of this trend and to strengthen the ordained ministry. When this is done, the saints would be equipped "for the work of ministry, for building
up the Body of Christ," until the Church in Ghana, West Africa shall "attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." 

_Strengthening of the Ministry in West Africa_

In the previous section, an attempt was made to provide an analysis of the growth pattern of the Seventh-day Adventist work in West Africa with particular emphasis on Ghana. This analysis showed that the numerical growth of the Church has been far ahead of the numerical growth of the ordained and licensed ministry. The wide disparity of the ratio between membership and ministerial strength presumably creates a problem with respect to the nurture of the members of the household of faith.

Church growth cannot be measured numerically alone. Nurturing the congregation enlivens faith among members. Needless to say that instilling faith in the church membership as a whole, the congregation will be more ready to fulfill its task of witnessing and be able to stand when the Lord appears the second time.

Reference was made earlier to the importance of recognizing the ministry of all the laity of God. The idea that God has given gifts to each member within the body should spur every member on to employ his God-given gift in ministry. Truly, God calls His Church to a life of service. The believer's baptism is a response to this call. Paul addresses himself specifically to this issue, for he sees baptism--a

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1 Eph 4:12, 13.
response to God's calling—as a crucial step in each person's life.
The decision to accept baptism is yielding oneself "to obedience which
leads to righteousness."\(^1\) This thought is similar to what Bultmann
calls the "dualism of decision"\(^2\), a decision to be in Christ, live in
Christ, work with and for Christ. Within the Body of Christ this de-
cision affirms the Body's connection with Christ as its living Head.

As such, baptism stands at the heart of the gospel message.
Because Christ died to make humanity free from sin, our death through
baptism is to fulfill the same salvific task. The calling of the
Christian into the Body of Christ through baptism is his calling into
ministry. Competence or qualification for ordination must not be
based upon years of academic discipline per se, but rather upon spir-
itual competence.\(^3\)

The ordained ministry is today regarded as a profession; years
of formal education and preparation are considered vital to effective
discharge of ministerial duties. These years of formal training are

\(^1\) Rom 6:16-18. Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to
any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey,
either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to
righteousness. But thanks to God, that you who were once slaves of
sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to
which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have be-

\(^2\) Dualism of decision for Bultmann is man's choice to exist
either from himself or from God. The concepts of light-darkness, truth-
falsehood, life-death, freedom-bondage are spheres of existence which
calls for choice. Accepting the light from Christ is accepting Him and
His plan for the human life. This leads to eternal life. Thus mankind
knows the truth and becomes free "Each man is, or once was, confronted
with deciding for or against God; and he is confronted anew with this
decision by the revelation of God in Jesus." Bultmann, Theology of the

\(^3\) Acts 6:3. Pick out from among you . . . men of good report,
full of the Spirit and of wisdom.
necessary where the minister is central to the life of a congregation. Besides, technicalities in the work of the ministry call for a well-trained and qualified ministerial practitioner. Another problem associated with the minister is how to allocate time to the large variety of functions he must perform so that his personal ministry to his congregation is not affected. This problem affects the very heart of his ministry. The essence of his specialized ministry is the preparation of the laity, "for their task of evangelism and to equip them for service and continuous church growth." E. G. White writes in support of this specialized ministry: "Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the church in gospel work. They are to teach the people how to seek and save the lost."

Because of the rapid numerical growth of the Church in West Africa, the Church should "give careful study to ways of implementing

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1 Interesting studies have been made in this respect. In Samuel Blizzard's monumental study, "The Minister's Dilemma," the minister performs the functions of preacher, pastor, priest, teacher, organizer and administrator. In this study, the clergymen surveyed expressed concern for duties which they consider unimportant to an effective ministry but yet take most of their time. S. Blizzard, "The Minister's Dilemma," The Christian Century Vol. 73, No. 17 (April 23, 1957). See also Donald P. Smith, Clergy in the Cross Fire (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), pp. 46-47. A similar study made by Professor Gottfried Oosterwal, published in his book, Patterns of SDA Church Growth in North America (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1976) sees that instead of having a pastor who is able to spend his time in pastoral nurture and care, visitation, preparation of sermons, training the church for effective ministry, the typical pastor "is so busy with all the other affairs of the church that he often has no other choice but to neglect or to de-emphasize the work which he would like to do, what he felt he was called to do and what the members wanted him to do most" p. 67.

2 Oosterwal, Patterns of SDA Church Growth, p. 68.

3 Ibid., p. 69.

4 White, Desire of Ages, p. 825.
the Biblical views of ministry."¹

Because the size of the ministerial force is inadequate to cope with the rapid increase of membership, the Church in West Africa should consider the idea of formally ordaining into the gospel ministry, as a second order of ministers, competent and Spirit-filled elders of local congregations who have given proof of their spiritual gifts. Such persons should be allowed to carry on full ministerial duties on the local church or district levels. The call for consideration of this proposal is crucial. Already in West Africa the responsibility of soul-winning has been assumed by the laity. As Oosterwal rightly notes, "it has become obvious that the laity is the single most important factor of SDA church growth."²

The pastor in West Africa as it now stands is more of an administrator than an equipper of the saints for ministry. He maintains an office in which he is both the district pastor and his own secretary. In present practice in West Africa, he receives all the funds from his district churches and companies, deposits them in the bank or carries them personally to the Conference or Mission Office. He is responsible for preparing financial reports, weekly and monthly. He serves as the local manager of schools—in which capacity he is the "paymaster" for the teachers within the Adventist educational system. Many of the more specific pastoral and evangelistic aspects of the minister's normal work are, therefore, neglected.

The purpose of ordaining local elders as gospel ministers is

¹Oosterwal, Patterns of SDA Church Growth, p. 69.
²Ibid., p. 70.
to widen the scope of their functions to include baptizing, performing
the marriage ceremony and other necessary pastoral duties as needed.
Such additional responsibility and recognition would give them a better
standing within their congregations. More often than not, the present
ministers are unable to make the rounds of the twelve to fifteen
churches under their jurisdiction even to baptize new converts because
of administrative responsibilities and transport difficulties. Nor
are they able to devote all the attention required of their members,
because of the large number of congregations served.¹

Thus ordained, this new order of pastors could pursue their
personal vocations and yet serve the Church in the fullest capacity—²
a "tent-making" ministry, so to speak. This concept is supported by
the New Testament; where the existence of full-time paid as well as
self-supporting ministries are mentioned. The disciples, when called
to be fishers of men, did not at the very onset give up fishing com-
pletely.³ Later on they devoted their full attention to the ministry
and were supported by the Church. Paul, on the other hand, was a

¹Between 1957 and 1965, my father, Pastor D. N. Agboka, pas-
tored 36 churches and companies which were often far removed from each
other.

²Other Christian churches follow this practice whereby the or-
dained person earns his living in other ways than by the offerings of
the congregation or a stipend from ecclesiastical headquarters. There
are also members whose calling is that of pastor-teacher but who could
not be formally trained for such because of economic and family rea-
sons. Such opportunity brings their gifts to the surface where they
become a blessing to their local congregations. Nathan M. Pusey and
Charles L. Taylor, Ministry for Tomorrow: Report of the Special Com-
mittee on Theological Education (New York: The Seabury Press, 1967),
pp. 104-113.

³Compare Luke 5:1-11; Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20 with John 21:
1-19.
self-supporting gospel minister. Reckoned by many as the greatest of the apostles, he labored by the toil of his hands.

Formal ordination of this nature in addition to the ordination to ministry implied by baptism should open up opportunities for the Church to witness. This would be one way of stimulating the laity for Church growth. The Church cannot rely solely upon organized and planned programs for witnessing, but should set the context for the spontaneous witness of members who are conscious that whatever their vocation, they also have the call to ministry. Thus, the farmer continues in his vocation but at the same time enters a higher vocation of ministry for his Church and Lord. The businessman, teacher, housewife, etc., will all witness to their congregations and communities realizing that they have been so called. The entire Body of Christ will bear personal witness to the Lord in everyday life and social contacts. It is an evangelistic outreach that grows spontaneously arising out of Christian conviction and the special gifts the Lord has entrusted to them.

The implementation of such a call undoubtedly will entail a recognition of the gifts God has placed in these local congregations. Their participation in the selection of elders to serve their congregations supports the view that ministry derives its power from the Body of Christ on the local level. These elders should be trained to assume their new responsibility. In the next chapter our attention

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1 Acts 20:33-35. This form of ministry is designated as "tent-making ministry" where "the pastor continued to earn all or part of his living from his secular vocation unless the congregation grew to such proportions as to demand his services on a full-time basis." Kenneth B. Mulholland, Adventures in Training the Ministry (Nutley, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1976), p. 8.
will be focused on how to implement and train these local ordained ministers to fulfill effectively their new role of ministry.
CHAPTER II

A PROGRAM OF TRAINING FOR ORDAINED LOCAL PASTORS
IN WEST AFRICA AS LEADERS OF WORSHIP

It has been proposed that local elders, whose spiritual gifts have been proven, be formally ordained as pastors of their local congregations in West Africa. This proposal ought to be taken seriously for two reasons: firstly, in the face of the rapid numerical growth of the churches and companies in West Africa, the ratio of church members to the ordained ministry is widening from year to year, and secondly, most of our churches in West Africa are without resident pastors. It is always a privilege to have the district pastor worship with a given congregation once or twice in a year. The continual absence of a pastor creates problems with respect to nurture. The problems are two-fold: the lack of adequately prepared leaders of worship; and consequently, the absence of an equipping of the saints for ministry.

These are problems that need to be investigated. The Gospel Commission requires more than simply winning converts. Like new babes, these converts are to be nurtured together with the rest of the Church for spiritual maturity. Even though it is of utmost importance that new sheep enter into the fold, the words of the Lord to Peter must be remembered: "When you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."¹

This challenge was further explained after the resurrection in a three-fold manner, "feed my lambs . . . tend my sheep . . . feed my sheep."\(^1\) Ellen White writes:

In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the minister should not seek so much at first to convert unbelievers as to train the church members for acceptable cooperation. Let him labor for them, endeavoring to arouse them to seek for a deeper experience for themselves and to work for others.\(^2\)

This call often goes unheeded when the success of the minister is based upon how many souls he has won or baptized during the calendar year. In this chapter my task is to outline steps to a program of training for the ordained local elders with a view to solving these problems.

**Basic Outline**

1. Need for qualified resource persons
2. Involving the trained ministry
3. Organizing training institutes

**Need for Qualified Resource Persons**

In order to make this training program an ongoing thing all efforts must be made to get well-qualified ministers to serve as resource persons. The Ministerial Association could serve an important function here. In a specific sense, the office of the Ministerial Association should be made what it ought to be. At present, in West Africa, the Mission or Conference presidents act concurrently as you returned to me" and the King James Version "when thou art converted."

\(^{1}\text{John 21:15-17.}\)

Ministerial Association Secretaries. On the Union level, the Union Evangelists also serve the office of Ministerial Association Secretary. In a place like West Africa where increase of membership is reaching phenomenal proportions, and where there are not enough trained pastors to nurture these flocks, the services of full-time Ministerial Secretaries on Union and Conference/Mission levels is critical. The Ministerial Association Secretary "must avoid involvement in conference administration. His is solely a spiritual, preaching and training service, and he must not over-reach nor assume duties that rightfully belong to the president." This is not to say that administration is not a spiritual gift. Rather, the Ministerial Association Secretary, as "the minister's pastor" should place himself in a position where ministers can be open and free to discuss their problems and areas of weakness in ministry that need to be strengthened. Obviously a pastor will not be so open when he knows that his Ministerial Secretary is at the same time his president in whose hands lies his "fate" in the ministry.

Such a Ministerial Secretary should not only motivate the trained pastors for effective ministry but would also teach, train, help and guide these local elders who have been ordained as pastors of their local congregations. His duty would be to make available to all ministers every new idea or every tested method that will help them to be more successful. By seeking to deepen the spiritual life of the

1 In the SDA Year Book 1979, the Ghana Conference president is listed as holding the following offices: Ministerial, Religious Liberty, and Publishing.

2 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Ministerial Association Department Manual for Ministerial Association Secretaries, n.d.
ministers, the Ministerial Association Secretary helps also to deepen the spiritual life of the whole church.

To achieve this objective, the Ministerial Association Secretary should be responsible for the in-service program of continuing training and development of the ministers, and provide for opportunities of sharing and the exchange of ideas and materials with the pastor in his total ministry. He should aid in the planning for and holding of institutes, workshops, seminars, field schools of evangelism, and such other ministerial meetings that will prepare the ministers for effective ministry.

In a place like West Africa where much of the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is being carried out by the unordained laity, it seems essential that there be a Ministerial Association Secretary who is not only knowledgeable, but who can devote his full energies and capabilities to prepare others for ministry. His inspiration will aid the full-time "trained" ministry in conducting successful evangelistic campaigns and at the same time help the elders who have been ordained as local pastors to nurture these new converts.

The services of a competent Ministerial Association Secretary would build a bridge between the ordained ministry and the ministry of the Church. He will help the Church realize that soul-winning is not complete without nurture. Whenever evangelism is misdefined the Church's role in leading persons to a mature walk with Christ is thwarted. "Evangelism must be seen in terms of making disciples and not just getting decisions."¹ The ordination into the full gospel

¹John Fowler, "Caring for New Converts," The Ministry Vol. 52, No. 4, April 1979, p. 5.
ministry of qualified elders would not only help our present elders
to grow spiritually, but would help convert our churches into evan-
gelistic centers. Thus, the whole Church must promote the phase of
evangelistic activity which seeks out the lost, prepares them for bap-
tism and provides the fellowship and training necessary in establish-
ing new converts in the faith and helping them witness for their new-
found faith.

The Ministerial Association Secretary in conjunction with the
trained district pastor would help the newly ordained local pastor to
follow Ellen White's injunction that "when souls are converted, set
them to work at once."¹ She indicates in the plainest language that
the vow a person takes at baptism is a pledge to work actively for the
salvation of others. "By their baptismal vows they are pledged to make
earnest, self-denying effort to promote, in the hardest parts of the
field, the work of soul saving."²

It is suggested then, that the office of the Ministerial Asso-
ciation could be an invaluable aid to the ministry. The Ministerial
Secretary could be an asset to the newly ordained minister of the lo-
cal congregation who, more than anyone else, benefits from his expe-
rience to become an effective local pastor to a congregation where for
years there has been no pastor.

Involving the Trained Ministry

The trained professional ministers, working hand in hand with
the Ministerial Association Secretary, could also help foster training

¹White, Evangelism, p. 35.
²Ibid., pp. 354-355.
and leadership. By their personal examples they should guide these newly ordained ministers to produce fruits to their maximum capacities. This means that they are to oversee the entire activities of the Church and help the Church to move out of its own environment.

The district pastor can then help the local congregations to make an inventory of the special gifts with which the Lord has endowed the Church. No program for soul-winning or soul-conservation can operate with maximum success unless the believers know and recognize their spiritual gifts. The diversities in these gifts should be acknowledged. Charles Teel, Jr. has rightly noted that "the ministry of our Lord knew no such monotonous sameness. The ministry of Jesus was diverse in that it was shared by an inclusive and diverse community of faith."¹

The trained minister, as the district pastor, is thus placed in a position where he can be close to every local congregation to help them develop their spiritual gifts. From time to time, he will organize training workshops or institutes to strengthen those whose gifts have been manifested and help others to discover their individual gifts. In this diversity of gifts we find the Church's strength and the effectiveness in its mission.² It is when the whole Church pools its resources

¹ Charles Teel, Jr., "The Diverse Ministry of Jesus," City Parish Reader (ed. and compiled by Charles Teel, Jr.) Published by the La Sierra College SDA and the Riverside City Parish Churches, Riverside, California, March 1974, p. 83.

² Oosterwal, Patterns of SDA Church Growth, p. 72. It is precisely this work of the minister, namely assisting the laity in discovering its special gifts, that Professor Oosterwal emphasizes. Contending that our trained ministry have not been given much insight in this area, he calls for a seminary training that will prepare the minister for this specific role. For those already in the field, Oosterwal suggests holding of workshops to give our trained ministry "the insights and tools necessary to guide and equip the laity for their continuous growth and ministry" p. 73.
for evangelism that God multiplies the Church's strengths.

The trained pastor, as a specialist, cannot do without a dedicated team of lay ministers. Leighton Ford writes:

A church which bottlenecks its outreach by depending on its specialists—pastors and evangelists—to do its witnessing, is, living in violation of both the intention of its Head and the consistent pattern of the early Christians. The true pattern is that the minister helps the layman to evangelize.¹

The trained pastor, working in collaboration with his conference, union and even his division Ministerial Association Secretaries would in a significant manner equip these newly ordained local pastors for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Organizing Training Institutes

The training of this new order of ministers ought to be given prime consideration. The need of helping them to acquire the basic tools for the responsibility that they are now shouldering must be met. In parts of the world, like Latin America, this need has been met through training by extension. Training by extension is the method whereby education for ministerial efficiency reaches the student in his own environment rather than pulling him out into a special controlled environment. F. Ross Kinsler raises the question:

Is there anything more paternalizing than taking a student to a residence seminary where every aspect of his life is taken care of every moment of the day. Compare the extension set-up which is so completely deschooled that the professors go to the students, sit down with them in their situation, and discuss their problems as they study theology and carry on the ministry in their churches, and struggle with the needs of their families and communities

Another educationist, Dr. José Arreguin, former dean of the Baptist Theological Education by Extension Seminary in Mexico concedes that extension

reminds us that the task of proclaiming the good news and of evangelization belongs not only to the ministry, but to each member of the body of Christ. To prepare them for this work on its various levels is the task of the church through the teaching function of the Seminary. Also, it reminds us that the Church has her true work in the world and not inside of herself, as up to now we have been doing.2

In a training program of this nature, it would be necessary to involve the Adventist Seminary of West Africa to make available its teachers to assist the Ministerial Association in conducting summer extension programs. It becomes easier this way to have men already in the field who are engaged in ministry, to be trained for the work God has called them to perform. Traditional training for ministry often poses a problem to many. The admission requirements are beyond the reach of the average individual; there is the problem of fees and also the inability to leave family and support them as one becomes a full-time student. The chart below shows that methods of education vary from one extreme to the other. From the "extraction" extreme where the traditional training for ministry (in-resident Seminary) is close to the "extension" extreme (Seminary training by extension) one has to determine which system would best suit the needs of the given situation.

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Theological education by extension would have a more reach-out advantage over the traditional seminary education which tries "to force all candidates into the mold of full-time, urban-oriented, professional scholar-pastor" setting. Rather the extension method of education "takes into account the varied forms of ministry inherent in such historic patterns of training as apprenticeship, in-service training, and tent-making ministry."\(^3\)

This program of theological education should be comprehensive in nature. It should meet the needs of different levels of leadership on the local levels. There will be both literate and illiterate individuals among this new breed of ministers and courses of instruction should be planned to meet the needs of each individual whose progress would be at their own rate. Thus the extension system opens the door for some theological education for laymen who could not possibly study in a day time residence program.

Training by "extraction" or "extension" would not work in all given situations. The "extraction" extreme is more likely to fit the accepting psychology of children and young persons than to the nearly

\(^1\)Ralph D. Winter, "What is Extension Education," The Extension Seminary and the Programmed Textbook, published by The Latin American Association of Theological Schools, Northern Region, 1967, p. 5.

\(^2\)Milholland, p. 207.

\(^3\)Ibid.
autonomous personality of the adult. Yet through the extension training for ministry, earnest effort is made to reach out to the natural leaders in the local congregation.

Training Schedules.

A regular time of meetings should be established. If meetings are held at definitely prescribed and rather frequent intervals, there is more certainty of giving continuous attention to the task that faces the Church.

1. The Ministerial Association, in conjunction with the Adventist Seminary of West Africa, would organize annual Lay Ministerial Intensive Workshops during periods that will be convenient for the new pastors. The mid-season—between July and late August—would be suggestive. This intensive workshop is very essential in the training program of local church pastors. It could also be arranged for this workshop to precede an evangelistic field school to be organized jointly by the Adventist Seminary of West Africa and the local field. Participants for the workshop will include members who are teachers, civil servants, public officers, literature evangelists, farmers, doctors and nurses, private business persons, etc. Top level personnel should be made available to handle the workshop. I will suggest that the duration of the workshop be ten to fourteen days with seven to eight hours of instruction daily. The evenings should be set aside for field work.

2. The conference/mission Ministerial Association Secretary would also plan quarterly workshops on the district level as a follow-up to the annual workshop. This mini-workshop would be held on scheduled weekends. Participants would arrive Thursday night. There should
be all Friday, Sabbath afternoon, and Sunday morning meetings. Friday and Saturday evenings should be set aside for field work.

3. It will also be necessary to plan on-the-spot weekly in-service training for the local pastors. This in-service training would be conducted by the district pastor for the local churches he visits. Such training should be scheduled for Sabbath afternoon and possibly all day Sunday. Saturday night should be reserved for field work.

Courses of Instruction

Plans are to be made to cover a large territory of instructional material during the year. The list presented below is just suggestive but these courses are essential in training effective local pastors for ministry in West Africa.

1. Sermon preparation
2. Correct art of Bible reading
3. How to give Bible studies
4. Baptism and the Lord’s supper
5. Principles of worship
6. Principles of church leadership
7. The pastor as leader of worship
8. Rudiments of church administration
9. Church finance
10. Church policy and practice
11. Evangelism--public and personal
12. Christian beliefs
13. Life and writings of Paul
14. The church and society
15. The Christian and his society
16. Christian music
17. Spiritual gifts
18. Christian stewardship
19. Christian and his body
20. Principles of healing
21. History of the Christian Church in Africa
22. History of the early church
23. African Independent Church movements
24. Church growth in West Africa
25. Pastoral visitation
26. Principles of Christian Education

Every effort must be made to involve knowledgeable laymen who will handle aspects of instruction that fall within their area of competence and training. Thus the whole church is involved in what will be called self-training for self-conservation.

In some cases, it would be necessary to conduct two identical classes for those who can read and write and those who cannot. Since these workshops are not being organized for credit, every effort ought to be made to instruct the illiterates within the groups. Plans should be made to organize literacy classes on specified evenings during the week to help members who desire to learn the art of reading and writing.

It is my belief that as a result of such a consistent program of training, our churches would have inspired leaders who would more competently lead in the affairs of their local congregations: (1) These local pastors would be leaders of worship in their local congregations and would strive to raise the spiritual level of worship; (2) such men would in turn equip the rest of the congregation for the work of ministry; (3) in congregations where more leaders are available, the district pastor could assign the rest to help out in other churches or companies; (4) our lay members would sense a new opportunity for growth in ministry and (5) the whole Body of Christ would be strengthened in its soul-preservation and soul-winning programs.
SUMMARY

This research project has dealt with Christian Baptism as ordination into the gospel ministry. It has thrown light on the relationship between baptism and the Cross. The significance of the Cross, i.e. its power of salvation, is the underlying factor for baptism. Everyone who accepts baptism is by his act showing faith in the death and resurrection of his Lord. Christ's own baptism was an expression of faith in His own death.

The death of Christ has made salvation free for all. The baptism of the Christian incorporates him into the Body of Christ, the Church, which has been charged with a specific mission to win the world for Christ. To be baptized in the name of Christ is an acceptance of all what Christ means to this sinful universe—His redemptive sacrifice for mankind. Through Christ's resurrection, the believer comes out of his watery grave to live a renewed life with Christ.

Christ fills the believer with the Holy Spirit and he is identified with the mission of Christ. His total life must be in the service of God. The Christian's life must glorify God both in word and deed. The gifts which Christians receive, therefore, are to be used in the building up of the Body of Christ.

Through baptism, God calls men and women into His service. He desires all who are thus called to put their gifts into use and also to multiply their talents in the service of God. This is the only calling
the Christian receives. The Body of Christ is to recognize these God-given gifts among its members and to set aside through the laying on of hands those whose gifts are so pronounced for the full-time or special service to the Church.

The Holy Spirit does not show any favoritism in respect to who receives spiritual gifts. Both men and women are given the same opportunities to minister to the Body of Christ. Thus, all members of the Body are called into the gospel ministry by virtue of their baptism. Baptism confers upon them an ordination to a task which the Lord requires them to perform.

It is primarily because of this God-given responsibility that falls upon the Church as a whole that I am advocating the setting aside of local elders in West Africa for a full or special responsibility as pastors of their local congregations to equip the rest of the Church for ministry. This is even more necessary in the face of growing church membership in West Africa where the pastoral ministry is unable to care for the entire membership in an adequate manner. I believe that when this proposition is given its due consideration the work in West Africa, by the Grace of God, would flourish in unprecedented proportions and millions in West Africa and the rest of the world would be won in readiness for Christ's second coming.
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