Formation of a Widows' Association: Empowering Women in the Local Church in the Kabwe East and West Districts of the Central Zambia Conference

Lubinda Ngenda
Andrews University

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ABSTRACT

FORMATION OF A WIDOWS’ ASSOCIATION: EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE LOCAL CHURCH IN THE KABWE EAST AND WEST DISTRICTS OF THE CENTRAL ZAMBIA CONFERENCE

by

Lubinda Ngenda

Adviser: Skip Bell
Title: FORMATION OF A WIDOWS’ ASSOCIATION: EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE LOCAL CHURCH IN THE KABWE EAST AND WEST DISTRICTS OF THE CENTRAL ZAMBIA CONFERENCE

Name of researcher: Lubinda Ngenda

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Skip Bell, DMin

Date completed: October 2010

Problem

The failure to meet the basic needs of life for the many widowed women in Kabwe East and West Mission District of the Adventist Church has affected the faith of widows in God’s ability to help them meet their physical needs and has eroded their confidence in the ability of the local church to help, as well as the genuineness of purpose the local church has in helping its needy members. The many widowed women in this region of Zambia, represented as 50% by some researchers, make responding to the problem urgent.
Method

Literature on leadership and community efforts to solve the needs of life was surveyed. Investigation of the biblical and Spirit of Prophecy teachings on the feasibility and possible advantages of teaming up in small or larger associations was done. Indirect-participant-observer cases were used to shed light on the nature of the problem and possible solutions. Their suggested solutions were scrutinized for application. The resulting observations were evaluated for strategic implementation in solving the problem.

Results

Women have recovered the will to enthusiastically fight against life problems, the will to win and the will to live in the hope of faith. The widows association was formed and their constitution was approved by the church and registered in the National Register of Societies of Zambia. As a result, their dependence on non-Adventist sources for help has decreased drastically and the witness that the church cares is evident.

Conclusions

The study establishes that by setting aside our differences as well as our feelings of hopelessness and working together for a common cause our differences tend to vanish and our desperation gives way to victory. Two-member teams as well as larger teams provide a basis for explosive evangelism and are effective machineries of need alleviation.
FORMATION OF A WIDOWS' ASSOCIATION: EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE LOCAL CHURCH IN THE KABWE EAST AND WEST DISTRICTS OF THE CENTRAL ZAMBIA CONFERENCE

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

by
Lubinda Ngenda
August 2010
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Lubinda Ngenda

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Advisor,
Skip Bell

Stanley E. Patterson

Walton Williams

Director of DMin Program,
Skip Bell

Dean, SDA Theological Seminary,
Denis Fortin

Date approved: March 31, 2011
DEDICATION

This doctoral dissertation is dedicated to the following people:

To the late Mr. Timothy Ngenda Sooka, my beloved father, who passed away on the 14th of May last year. Having been a teacher, he taught me to love school. Also, to my beloved mother, Mrs. Namakau Ngenda, who spends most of her time praying for my siblings and me.

To my beloved wife and friend, Rose, who for the past 32 years has prayed for me and provided inspiration.

To our children, John, Rita, Mable, Samuel, Mike, David, and Lubinda; may this doctoral dissertation inspire you to have the determination to rule over the circumstances of your lives.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CZC  Central Zambia Conference
GC   General Conference
KJV  King James Version
NKJV New King James Version
SDA  Seventh-day Adventist
UNAIDS the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
ZBUC Zambia Union Conference
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Historical Context

With nearly 700,000 members (as of June 2010) the Zambia Union Conference (ZBUC) of Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) in the Southern Africa Indian-Ocean Division has the largest membership in the Division (Ndatoya, 2008) according to the secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC), until the GC session of 2010. Bediako (2008) noted, as of September 2008, the ZBUC had the largest membership compared to any other Union in the world field. It is estimated that 60% of the membership is female.

The 2000 Zambia Population and Housing Survey released by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) seems to support the ZBUC reports in that it placed the percentage of women to be 5% of the population (GRZ, 2000). However, the ratio of women compared to men in the church is higher than that in the population. Further support for reports that women constitute a larger portion of the membership of the church may be adduced from the fact that the raging HIV and AIDS pandemic is characterized as both a feminine and youth problem. The implication is not just that there are more women or youth, but also that these groups are more vulnerable (Cohen & Reid, 2010). Though the issue of women's vulnerability is caused by many factors, it is significant to the problem at the center of this study.
Despite the difficult situation that most of them find themselves in, most Adventist women (both Dorcas and Women’s Ministries) in the ZBUC are very actively engaged in God’s work. Despite the ongoing bickering in the church as to whether women should or should not preach during church services (which has led to even physical fights in a few places), women across the Union continue to serve the Lord in a variety of ways including conducting crusades, hospital and prison visitation, and ministering to the needy. Some assert a direct relationship between the active involvement of women in the work and the ZBUC’s phenomenal membership growth. Asked what he attributed to be the real secret to the continued membership growth of the Union, President of the Union at the time, Harrington Akombwa (personal communication, 2009) said it was undoubtedly the active involvement of the members in the spread of the membership. A relationship between the high membership growth in the ZBUC and the active involvement of women in ministry is evident, considering that most of the laity who are actively participating in the work are women.

Statement of the Problem

The AIDS epidemic has created a social crisis in Zambia. One effect is that the social system cannot support the needs of the large number of widowed women. Adventist women in the Central Zambia Conference (CZC), the biggest Conference in the ZBUC, are reported to be receiving donations from our Dorcas organizations and from Roman Catholic institutions for material support to meet their physical needs and those of their dependents. If at all true, such a practice indicates inadequate support from our own church and is disempowering to the women themselves. Such a situation tends to erode confidence in the church being genuinely interested in their needs.
Anecdotal reports from the women themselves, fellow church members, and from community residents suggest that this practice has negatively affected the image of the SDA Church. Consequently, the church is regarded to be uncaring and unloving, and its evangelistic initiatives are judged by many community residents to be hypocritical and unrelated to everyday life. Additionally, the retention of members is poor and many new and less mature believers become confused by the church’s seemingly uncaring stance and get attracted to other faith groups that seem to be more caring. This problem needs to be investigated, and a proposal suggested as to how to resolve it.

Statement of the Task

The task of this project, therefore, is to uncover the reasons why SDA women in the CZC go to institutions of other denominations to ask for material help. Unearthing these reasons may give a clue to how best to resolve the problem for all time. The thesis of this study is that addressing the physical needs of church members is a very important way of ministering to their spiritual needs. Conversely, to neglect to minister to members’ physical needs indirectly starves them spiritually and negatively impacts their commitment to God and His work. And women, especially, if ministered to physically, will form a strong cohort that will enhance the evangelistic work of the church. The church therefore, ought to pay more than lip-service to the needs of women.

A literature review will be conducted. The literature review will seek to broaden our understanding of the issues involved in empowerment of women. This will be followed by ethnographic research situations of a participant observer nature carried out to ascertain whether the anecdotal reports of Adventist women asking for material help from Catholics, whom they generally condemn are true. Finally, the study will propose a
strategy to organize Adventist women to form a widows association in the small town of Kabwe. This project is intended to be a pilot project to demonstrate that women themselves supported by leadership can provide a solution to the problems confronting them. And once ministered to, the women themselves can become a prime support for the work. The strategies will be intentional and their results evaluated.

**Justification of the Project**

The main objective of this study is to uncover the reasons why Adventist women in part of the CZC would find it necessary to go to institutions belonging to other denominations to ask for material help. Unearthing these reasons could give a clue to how best to resolve the problem for all time. The thesis of this study is that addressing the physical needs of church members is a very important way of ministering to their spiritual needs. Conversely, to neglect to minister to members’ physical needs is to indirectly starve them spiritually. Yet, women, especially if helped to meet their physical and material needs, could form a strong cohort capable of enhancing the evangelistic work of the church. The church, therefore, ought to pay more than lip-service to the needs of women.

At a time when those involved in mitigating the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic are calling for leadership and human compassion (Anan, 2005) in order to scale down the suffering caused by the HIV/AIDS, the Church in Kabwe cannot afford to ignore the plight of its women. According to Anan (2005), the effect of “shortage of leadership and compassion” in the fight against HIV/AIDS leads to many people getting infected with the virus whose infection could have been prevented, and many more people dying whose lives could have been spared. But with leadership and compassion,
many infections and deaths could be prevented through the implementation of a comprehensive range of evidence-based prevention measures.

Similarly, the SDA Church in CZC, particularly, Kabwe East, should show compassion to the many female members whose dire need for material support has led them to seek material support from other denominations. The reasons for this phenomenon need to be established and a way to solve the problem suggested.

**Description of the Process**

The process the study follows includes a theological reflection based on selected passages in the New Testaments, as well as a literature review. The literature review scans literature pertinent to the subject area to broaden our understanding of the issues affecting the empowerment of women.

The study employed a social research approach that utilized both qualitative and descriptive methods approaches. The qualitative approach utilized three ethnographic research or participant observer situations in order to uncover the feelings and attitudes leading some of the Adventist women in parts of the CZC to ask for material help from other denominations. Also, an additional survey was conducted among women in Kabwe East District to provide both qualitative and quantitative data on the underlying causes of this practice. The results of the survey were analyzed and a strategy proposed as a possible solution.

**Expectations From the Study**

The study is expected to confirm that Adventist women, when faced with serious problems that affect their lives in a literal way, succumb to the temptation to put aside their true identity and seek help from institutions they normally would not identify with
in order to provide for their felt needs. In this way, the study is expected to confirm the
correlation between addressing members’ physical needs and equipping members,
especially women, for ministry.

Thus, the study is expected to awaken the Adventist church leadership to the
Church’s God-given responsibility to show love and care to those who are in need and
suffering want. In other words, the study is expected to be a reminder that one who fails
to provide for the members of his/her household is “worse than an infidel” (1 Tim 5:8);
that “pure religion and undefiled before God” is “to visit the fatherless and widows in
their affliction” (Jas 1:27 KJV; all biblical citation are KJV unless cited differently) and
that it is wrong for the Church to say to its members, “Depart in peace, and be warmed
and filled; notwithstanding ye give him them not those things which are needful to the
body; what profit is it?” (Jas 2:16).

Limitations

The project intends to develop a favorable environment for the empowerment of
women in one church district in Kabwe, 150 km north of Lusaka. While the intervention
is purposeful and can have a broader impact in the years extending beyond this study, the
project itself is not a national or global intervention. Evaluation will be limited to the
widows’ project in Kabwe East. The psychographic survey conducted to unveil the
attitudes and behaviors of women in Kabwe is also limited to only Kabwe East and may
not necessarily be replicated in other areas.

A further limitation of the study lies in the fact that a number of the women chose
not to answer some of the key questions in the psychographic survey instrument. This
limits its statistical value. The above underscores and is related to a further limitation of
the study in relation to the psychographic survey: the sensitivity of the issue of Women Ministries and Dorcas is still so high that it may have been the cause of so many women choosing not answer those they considered sensitive. Finally, the research is qualitative and helpful only for the purposes of this project; it is not intended to be used for interpretation beyond the immediate context of the churches and the intervention.

Definition of Terms

A definition of terms section may or may not be included in a dissertation. While standards vary from one university to another, what makes it almost mandatory to include such a section is the prevalence of terms that appear several times in a study, making it cumbersome to explain the terms again and again (University of Florida, 2010). This study has a number of such terms; and these are briefly explained below in their alphabetical order.

Adventist: This is the shorter form for Seventh-day Adventist (SDA). This shorter form is used interchangeably with the longer one throughout the study.

AIDS: The abbreviated form of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome referring to a syndrome of opportunistic infections and diseases that can develop as immune-suppression deepens along the continuum of HIV infection from primary infection to death.

Conference: This is an administrative level in the SDA church that superintends the work done in a number of districts that are run by several district pastors. This unit is usually financially self-sufficient, as opposed to a field, or mission.
**District:** This refers to a group of churches belonging to one administration unit in the SDA Church for administrative purposes. These churches are almost always under the leadership of one district pastor.

**Division:** Contrary to the literal meaning of the word, division, the term as employed in Adventist parlance refers to an administrative unit that coordinates the work done in a certain area (usually geographical area, but not always) made up of several countries. At the time of writing, there are 13 Division around the world.

**Dorcas:** Based on the philosophy of a woman in the Early Church called by the same name, this is an organization for women who aim to minister to others through deeds of kindness (Acts 9:36).

**Field:** Otherwise referred to as a mission, this like a conference refers to an administrative unit in the SDA Church that supervises work in a group of local Districts. The difference with a conference is that the Field (mission) is not financially self-sufficient.

**General Conference (GC):** This is the world headquarters of the SDA Church located in Silver Springs, Maryland, Washington DC. The GC is comprised of 13 Divisions around the world; hence, Divisions are part of the GC.

**HIV:** The virus that weakens the immune system, ultimately leading to AIDS. HIV is an acronym for human immunodeficiency virus; the virus which causes AIDS. AIDS is a condition in which the natural body's immunity to disease is compromised, leading to the onset of numerous opportunistic ailments (Berkow, Beers, & Fletcher, 1997, p. 92). However, as Berkow, Beers, and Fletcher, rightly point out, though often used interchangeably the two are not the same—though related.
Orphans: In the context of AIDS, it is preferable to say *children orphaned by AIDS* or *orphans and other children made vulnerable by AIDS*. However, it is necessary to point out here that referring to these children as *AIDS orphans* not only stigmatizes them, but also labels them as HIV-positive, which they may not necessarily be. Identifying a human being by his/her medical condition alone also shows a lack of respect for the individual.

*Seventh-day Adventist (SDA):* The name of a Christian denomination whose faith is characterized by two of its most prominent doctrines-belief in the seventh-day Sabbath of the Bible (the Saturday of our time) and the soon return of Jesus Christ to free all true believers from the power of sin and its results. Sometimes the shorter form Adventists is used.

*Session:* The name given to constituency meetings in the SDA Church where policies, plans, and leaders are voted. These meetings may occur every three years, in the case of a local conference and every five years in regard to Unions and the GC.

*Union:* This is the name given to an administrative body in the SDA Church made up of a group of local fields (missions) or conferences. A number of unions constitute a division.

**Methodology**

In keeping with the main objective of this study which was to uncover the reasons why SDA women in part of the CZC would go to institutions belonging to other denominations to ask for material help, the methodology adopted for this study included an examination of five passages in the New Testament with implications for a theology of empowerment of women in the context of the study. Such a theology could be used to
plan intervention strategies to help Adventist women in Kabwe East find an honest and sustainable solution to the problem of poverty and hunger confronting them.

Following that a survey designed around a descriptive and exploratory social research model utilizing qualitative research techniques was carried out. By means of self-structured questionnaires, members of Kabwe East Mission district were interviewed concerning the challenges relating to the work of women in the church. The study, thus, employed a social research approach that utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative approach utilized three ethnographic research or participant observer situations in order to uncover the feelings and attitudes underlying reportedly strange phenomenon among some of the Adventist women in parts of the CZC leading them to ask for material help from other denominations as alleged by anecdotal reports. Also, a psychographic survey was conducted among women in Kabwe East District to provide both qualitative and quantitative data on the underlying causes of this phenomenon.

The results of the survey were analyzed. The data helped develop a strategy to mobilize Adventist women to play an active role in pro-actively working together to provide practical solutions to their day-to-day needs.

Seminars were thereafter conducted for the purpose of educating, empowering, and mobilizing members (especially women) to take charge of the situation and pro-actively work together to find possible solutions to problems affecting them and their families. A widow’s association was also formed in Kabwe East as part of the response. The strategies were to be intentional and their results evaluated. Finally, an evaluation instrument was developed to assess the effectiveness of the project.
Summary

In summary, this chapter has exposed the problem of the plight of Adventist women who are reduced to having to go to institutions of other denominations in order to have their material needs met. This amounts to duplicity on the part of these members. Worse than that, such a practice demoralizes those engaged in it. The problem thus identified, the task, justification, methodology, description of the process of the study, the expectations of, limitations of, and definitions of the study were all defined.
CHAPTER 2

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF EMPOWERING WOMEN

Synopsis

Chapter 1 identified the acute need for widowed women in Kabwe East Mission District to be empowered. The symptom of disempowerment was detected in numerous anecdotal reports that believers in the District still depend on material assistance from other denominations. The chapter called for this problem to be addressed. If left unchecked, the problem has the double effect of not only tarnishing the image of the Church in the eyes of the public, but also of discouraging the women themselves. This chapter, thus, attempts to lay a theological foundation to guide the development of some strategy to help solve the problem.

God's Original Plan for Man

Jesus Christ in His Mount of Olivet discourse, just before He was betrayed and crucified, warned that because iniquity would abound in the last days the love of many believers would wax cold (Matt 24:12). Describing what appears to be the same period of time, the Apostle Paul, writing to the young minister Timothy similarly warned: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come” (2 Tim 3:1).

One of the implications of these two passages is that as history advances, evil will tend to increase and that with the escalation of sin there will be a corresponding
intensification of human suffering. How should the Church of God relate to suffering both outside the church and within? Should believers just turn a blind eye to suffering around them? Was it not the Lord Jesus Himself who said “For ye have the poor with you always, and whersoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not” (Mark 14:7)? In other words, what is expected of believers and the Church in relation to the suffering that is so prevalent in the world today?

It was not part of God’s plan in creation that man should suffer or perish. The Lord ensured man’s security and safety by forewarning him not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil because if man ate from it man would surely die just as it is recorded in Gen 2:17. The perfect harmony that pervaded creation at the beginning (everything God had made was very good; Gen 1:31) was completely disrupted when sin entered in through man’s breaking God’s commandment that forbade man from eating from the tree (3:17-19). The terrible condition of this world resulted from man’s sin in eating from the tree that the Lord forbade him.

Death, suffering, starvation, hatred, wars, crimes, and natural catastrophes are the order of things in this world. Romans 8:22 uses sunodino meaning ‘travailing,’ ‘feeling pain together,’ and sustenazo, ‘groaning together.’ This worsening condition resulting from sin is likened to the labor pains or agony (John 16:21) of a woman about to give birth. The sentence for man’s sin was actually everlasting death but because of God’s love for man the Lord designed an escape plan for man in sending Jesus to be the dying Lamb of God to carry away the sin and resultant death of mankind. It is Jesus that took the suffering of stripes that was for our healing and peace (Isa 53:5). There are no
required works that man must perform in order to merit salvation. The apostle Paul expounds the principle of righteousness by faith through inspiration (Rom 4:1-13).

Thus, we see that in Christ Jesus we do not do good things as labor to earn salvation but as our love for our God and our loving commitment to live in service to mankind. We do not perform the deeds of love and mercy in order for us to be saved but we do what is loving and kind because we are saved.

In fact, the Bible is clear in expressing that the Lord our God has infinite love for us as the Apostle John points out in 1 John 4:7-8: “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” The word \textit{agape} whose declension and conjugation has the respective inflections that are used here and in John 3:16, refers to the quality of love that originates only from the heart of God, because, like the rest of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22), love (or charity) is unconditional and unaffected by any prevailing worldly circumstances. In 1 Cor 13:7-8, \textit{agape} is the tool of leadership that is yet to fail in accomplishing its desired ends since it has never failed in the past.

Therefore, it is clear from the foregoing that suffering was never God’s plan for human beings. Suffering came in because of sin, and since Jesus came to eradicate sin and its results, we can be sure that God is well pleased when we relieve the suffering of any of His children especially widows and orphans (Isa 58:5-12). This is what the Scriptures teach.

True Religion

What is true religion, how can we define it? One of the best answers to this question is provided by James, whom some authorities suppose to have been the first
recognized official of the early Church (Nichol, 1956). The NKJV renders Jas 1:27 thus: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

‘Pure’ as used in Jas 1:27 comes from the Greek word catharos which means ‘clean, clear, uncontaminated, real or actual.’ The Greek word used translated here as ‘religion’ is threskeia, which refers to religion as it expresses itself in acts of worship as related to the outward services of kindness, love, helpfulness, courtesy, and mercy that are indicators of a transformed heart. True leaders will manifest true religion and give an example (hupodeigma, John 13:15) of what they teach and preach by the life they live.

True religion is exemplified in 1 Kgs 4:1-7 when a widow came to Elisha for financial empowerment. Her late husband had left a big debt for which the creditor wanted bondage of her two sons as his payment. She told Elisha that all she had was a pot of oil. Elisha counseled her to borrow as many pots as possible from the neighborhood and fill them all with the oil from her pot. The oil was to be sold to clear the debt and to sustain the family. Leadership must learn from this experience to have faith in God: (a) God uses what the Lord has already provided the needy with; (b) the needy require being coworkers with God in alleviating their own problems and those of others; and (c) God’s providence is abundant and sustained. Consequently, therefore, leaders must “not just give the needy a fish but teach the needy how to make nets and how to catch fish” (Ancient Chinese proverb).

Although it is clearly a continuation of the true religion motif started in chapter 1, we will treat Jas 2:13-16 as a separate passage, under the sub-heading “What Does It Profit?” The passage reads as follows:

What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be [ye] warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what [doth it] profit?

The Apostle James was writing to counsel the church of his day, in the first century A.D., that meaningful and genuine religion is not just something in the imaginations of the mind or something that ends up only in speech. According to James, true religion manifests itself in works of kindness and love. The Lord created man in the image of God (imago Dei) to have a character like that of God (John 1:12). It follows then, that there is no true worship of a loving God when the worshiper is doing things which God hates and then neglects to do those things which the Lord desires that man should do (4:23-24).

Kindness is the chief attribute of God. At a time when the human race had estranged itself from the Lord by disobeying clear instructions, the Lord in his mercy and kindness devised a heavily sacrificial plan, the only way of saving man from perishing, as it is written in John 3:16: “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten [monogenes, ‘the only, the chief, born, the only one of his kind’] son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have ever lasting life.”

The first verse cited above is stating that we live in the presence of or before our Divine Father who is seeing everything we are doing, and we know that God will bring everything to review in the Day of Judgment (Eccl 4:13-14). As we live then in the
presence of the great God, we need to offer to God a sacrifice of acceptable religion or else if not acceptable to the Lord our religion becomes useless since it does not attain to its purpose. For us not to be saved, but to end up like those who do not care about worshiping God, is pitiful since when our works will be tested (dokimazo, ‘to try, to assay, to prove’) by fire we too will be burnt up together with our worthless works (1 Cor 3:13-15).

James uses the clause “to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction.” To visit the orphans and widows in their afflictions means that Christians must be there to comfort and provide the needed help to the bereaved family, particularly, when they lose the bread winner in the family who leaves behind as in most cases the widow and her fatherless children. When destitute women lose their husbands, especially with the AIDS pandemic, it is not becoming for Christians to take a condemnatory stance and feel that it is not their duty to assist the family materially. It is improper to let the survivors suffer, even when the late father rejected Christian counsel and our effects before he became infected. The children should not be punished for the wrongs or shortcomings of their parents (Ezek 18:2-4).

All resources of the family normally get exhausted in effort to cure and provide the needed nursing care for the ill over a very long period of time, during which time he has been unable to function as the family’s bread winner. Most families by the time the husband or father dies become so destitute that they do not even have the needed resources to afford a burial for their deceased loved one without getting into debt. Though we have an elaborate extended family system which should have easily withstood the devastating effect of the pandemic, the truth is that wherever you turn to
seek help you find only more need. Relatives who would like to help are unable to since they are sick themselves, planning a funeral, or nursing someone in the hospital or at home. At the time when the body of their deceased loved one is still in the home since they do not have the necessary resources for his burial, what kind of piety could lead a Christian to go and say to the mourning widow, “Condolences my sister, take care, and bury your late husband well. I do not have anything to help you with, may the Good Lord take care of all your needs. Have faith in God, it is the Lord who helps all the needy. Bye!”

The above example is one of not visiting (episkeptomai, ‘look over, look after, inspect’ an equivalent to the Hebrew word pagad, Jas 1:27) the needy in their affliction. Though it is a very common and natural occurrence, it is a fitting example of what James is admonishing the members of his audience not to do. True piety, according to James requires provision of the necessary day-to-day physical needs of life and not just paying lip service. A family in need should be given financial assistance to whatever extent possible in connection with the funeral to cover the purchase of the coffin, to pay for the burial site, and to transport the mourners to and from the graveyard for burial. Food needs to be bought for them during the period of mourning, and they still need to survive after the period of mourning. The high prevalence of such cases brings a state of crisis in the church, in the community, and in the nation, and this then is the time when the true Christian will stand up to be counted.

But what does the story of the women who ministered to Jesus tell us about empowering women for ministry? We turn to this next.
The Women Who Ministered to Jesus

Another passage that is significant to a theology of empowerment of women for ministry is Luke 8:1-3. It reads:

And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve [were] with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance. (NKJV)

The Messiah came for the redemption of the human race, to salvage man from sin, death, and from the whole train of woes that sin carries with it. He grew up humbly in Nazareth until he was baptized in the Jordan by John at the age of 30. At the age of 30, He began His ministry by serving needs, healing, teaching, and preaching. The Son of God was loving, compassionate, tender, and caring. The presence that radiated deep unfeigned love could only magnetize everybody to it. As the Lord went about preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, His 12 disciples were His closest associates. Next to the disciples was a ring of women. These women followed Jesus. All their pursuits in life became refuse (skubalon, 'dung,' 'rubbish,' Phil 3:8) as they now viewed life in the Spirit of Jesus. They could see nothing else in life meaningful enough for them to pursue other than their loving Creator, who could so sympathize with them even though they were but creatures. He left the glory of heaven for their sake. The life of Jesus lends sense and meaning to our lives. He was the only one worth living for and, therefore, the only one worth dying for. Jesus is the only witness who could tell us God's purpose in creating the world, and He spoke with authority because He was there in the beginning with God (John1:1-3, 14). Jesus taught new things, you would not know what you would miss if you kept away when He spoke.
How did these women come to follow Jesus? The Bible records that Jesus had healed these women. From some of them, He had cast out evil spirits. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna are mentioned among many other women. These women followed Jesus because they were so very thankful to Jesus for what He had done for them, so much that they gave their lives to minister to Him.

Because Jesus had ministered to their physical, mental, and spiritual needs, they were now enabled, or empowered to minister to Jesus and His disciples with all their hearts, strength, and even with all their material resources. In offering of their means to minister to the Lord’s needs, they were not only ministering to meet the Lord’s needs but they were doubly ministering to others. Here is a case where giving turned out to be an investment (Eccl 11:1). Kindness reciprocates blessings and benefits (Mark 4:24). Jesus ministered to bless them and, therefore, they now ministered to reciprocate blessings and service to Him. Indeed we should not perform acts of kindness with the motive of what we can get back in return, but only because the love of God constrains us. Truly we are to desire most to give to those who cannot give back in return. However, it is one of the fundamental principles or laws of nature that like begets like. That is to say, if you give love, you get love back; as John the Apostle said: “We love Him, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

And after the women had their physical needs met, the women became a very dedicated and strong force in ministry—even becoming a support to the Master Himself. Here is an uncelebrated secret to the empowerment of women for Christian ministry. Let the church pay due attention to the physical needs of the sisters, who in many countries
constitute more than half of the membership, and we will witness such devotion to the Lord’s work surpassing our wildest imaginations!

1 Timothy 5:8: Denying the Faith

Yet another Scripture that speaks to the principle of alleviating human needs is 1 Tim 5:8. This startling declaration is found in the book of first Timothy: “But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

According to the Apostle Paul, if a man be irresponsible and fail to take care of the needs of his family, so that his family starve and live in the destitution of nakedness or lack of clothing and shelter for no apparent reason other than that man has denied the faith and has become worse than an unbeliever who provides for his family. Even the unbeliever who fails to provide for his family is better than him, because the unbeliever is not taking the name of God in vain and is not causing as much reproach on the name of God as the unproductive Christian is doing. The professing believer is denying God by failing to take care of those over whom God gave him/her the stewardship of bringing up and taking care of in this world. The leader then will exemplify good stewardship and show the way forward by laboring (kopiao) to be productive and self-supporting in order for that leader to be able to support (artilambanomai, ‘to prop up, to strengthen’) the needy, seeing it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:34-35).

It follows then that if a professing church fails to care for its widows and orphans, it is similarly worse than any apostate church and any secular organization that takes care of the needy in its membership. It is even worse than any such organization which is failing because it is causing great reproach on the cause of God, whose name it bears.
James 1:27: “True Religion”

Perhaps it would help as we endeavor to know what is expected of believers in relation to suffering today to consider what those involved in the fight against the HIV and AIDS scourge are saying. Retired former UN Secretary, in his preface to the 2005 the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Report poignantly lamented that because of a shortage of leadership and human compassion the fight against the pandemic was not as successful as it could have been (Anan, 2005, p. 6). Should less be expected of Christians? Obviously not. On the contrary, more should be expected of those who believe in God. That is what the Scriptures seem to indicate.

The Parable of the Last Judgment

The parable of the last judgment is recorded in Matt 25:31-46. In this parable, Jesus taught that at the judgment, those who will be pronounced righteous (symbolized by the sheep) will be those who would have shown kindness to others. Similarly, those who will be condemned (represented by the goats) will be those who declined to show kindness to fellow human beings. More significantly, however, Jesus says by either showing or neglecting to show kindness to fellow human beings, we are showing or neglecting to show kindness to Christ.

Thus, MacDonald (1990) is correct in concluding that by the parable of the last judgment, Jesus' points out that He regards whatever is done for anyone of His creation as done to Him, and neglect of any of His followers constitutes neglect of Himself (p. 1299). In other words, in the parable of the last judgment, Jesus completely identifies Himself with His creation.
This point is a very significant one for the purpose of our study, considering that some of the people who were shown kindness and with whom Jesus completely identifies Himself were “the sick” (v. 39, 43). We, therefore, note that the parable of the last judgment reminds us that Jesus is concerned by the suffering of His people. For this reason, He identifies himself with them completely. Therefore, Jesus expects all who follow Him to care for the sick as they would if He was there in person to care for the sick with them or as they would care if it was Jesus who was sick. The last passage is the parable of the Good Samaritan, to which we turn next.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Luke, the physician gospel writer, is the only one who narrates the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). According to the context of the passage, Jesus told the parable to answer a question put to Him by a teacher of the law who came to ask Jesus what he needed to do in order to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the law. Not contented with the answer, and perhaps to show himself righteous, the young lawyer countered saying he had kept the law from his childhood. At that point, Jesus reminded him of his duty to love his neighbor as himself. It may have been out of a desire to silence Jesus that the Pharisee asked Jesus: “Who is my neighbor?” (10:29). It was to answer this second question that Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan (vv. 30-37).

In the parable, Jesus described a man traveling from Jericho to Jerusalem attacked by thieves who wounded him, stripped him of his raiment, and departed leaving him half dead (v. 30). Later, a priest passed by, but he ignored him, passing on the other side. So did a Levite who passed that way also. After these two had passed by, hurrying off to the Temple to worship the Lord (vv. 31-32), a Samaritan also passed that way. According to
the parable, though the Samaritans were not on good terms with the Jews, (and without considering his own safety), this despised Samaritan not only aided the unfortunate victim, but also committed himself to pay whatever bills would accumulate in the course of his treatment. Thus, the Samaritan’s attitude stood in stark contrast to that of his fellow Jews—a priest and a Levite.

When Jesus asked the young Pharisee which one of the three people who met that unfortunate man behaved like a neighbor, the teacher of the law without any hesitation replied “The one who showed him mercy.” To that Jesus responded: “Go and do likewise” (v. 37).

As MacDonald (2005) has accurately noted, the point of this story of the Good Samaritan is that “if a Samaritan could prove himself a true neighbor to a Jew by showing mercy to him, then all men are neighbors” (p. 1411). Similarly, Ellen White (1948) concludes that the answer to the question who is my neighbor is “everyone”:

Our neighbor does not mean merely a church member of the faith to which we belong; it goes beyond. The parable has no reference to race, color or class distinction. Our neighbor is every person who needs our help. Our neighbor is every soul who is wounded and bruised by the adversary. Our neighbor is everyone who is the property of God. (p. 503)

Therefore, this parable clearly shows that Christ’s compassion goes beyond any ties, whether religious or filial, to encompass every human being. Hence, the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches that our neighbor is everyone in need of help, irrespective of religion, race, color, or class. In other words, neighborliness is determined more by need than location or relationship. While all are neighbors, the one in need stands in more need of a neighbor to show them kindness than one who is in no immediate need. And the wise man maintains “A brother in need is a brother indeed.”
**Jesus’ Attitude Towards Suffering**

During His three and a half years of ministry, Jesus healed many people suffering from different diseases and taught many lessons regarding suffering. These encounters and lessons are instructive for Christians on how to relate to those suffering around them in their time. According to one Bible commentator, Jesus spent more time healing the sick than preaching or teaching:

> The Lord Jesus is our example. He came to the world as a servant of mankind. He went from city to city, from village to village, teaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing the sick. Christ spent more time in healing than in teaching. (White, 1908)

Therefore, in order to know how to relate to people who are suffering today from HIV/AIDS or some other illness, hunger, or poverty Christians should study the life and teachings of Jesus.

Of Jesus, the great example for Christians, Ellen White (1940) wrote:

> From the homes, the shops, the market places, the inhabitants of the city pressed toward the humble dwelling that sheltered Jesus. The sick were brought upon couches, they came leaning upon staffs, or, supported by friends, they tottered feebly into the savior's presence. . . . All day He toiled, teaching, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, feeding the multitude; and at the evening or in the early morning, He went away to the sanctuary of the mountains for communion with His Father.

**Summary**

This chapter lays the theological foundation for the Church to consider the empowerment of women in the work of ministry by ensuring that their day-to-day needs are met. The present has shown that the aloofness that is seen in the majority of the local churches today is actually contrary to Jesus’ teaching and example. But what are the underlying factors to the marginalization of women? Why are women ever so eager to work for the Lord? What makes women so vulnerable, both in the church and in society?
What can the church do to assist women and meet their needs? These and many other similar important questions are crucial to a study such as this one. Chapter 3 will examine the subject of woman empowerment in search of answers in line with these questions in a bid to understand the challenges involved in empowering women for ministry in the context cast by this study.
CHAPTER 3

MEETING PHYSICAL NEEDS TO EMPOWER WOMEN
FOR MINISTRY: A LITERATURE SURVEY

Synopsis

Chapter 2 of this study attempted to lay a theological foundation for the empowerment of women in the work of ministry by ensuring that their day-to-day needs are met. Failure to meet women's needs makes them vulnerable to so many ills. This chapter pursues this topic by means of a literature review of material relevant to this topic.

It is hoped that such a review will help identify the underlying factors in the marginalization of women. It is also hoped that the literature review will explain why women are ever so eager to work for the Lord; what makes women so vulnerable, both in the Church and in society; what the church can do to assist women themselves meet their own needs as well as explain why it is important to help a woman in society.

Chapter 3 will, therefore, examine the subject of woman empowerment in search of answers to these questions in a bid to understand the challenges involved in empowering women for ministry in the context cast by this study.

The Meaning of Empowerment

Although some space was allocated for the definition of important terminology and phrases in Chapter 1, it will be necessary to define the meaning of empowerment as
used in this study here. The preference to defining the word here is that such a definition will be readily appreciated in context as it will be referred to a lot in this chapter.

The definitions of empower or empowerment vary in scope and intent. Definitions of empower on the World Wide Web include the following: “The act of conferring legality or sanction or formal warrant” (Houghton Mifflin, 2010); Wikipedia states: “increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities” (Empowerment, n.d.); or Wiktionary states:

The granting of political, social or economic power to an individual or group. . . . The process of supporting another person or persons to discover and claim personal power. . . . The state of being empowered (either generally, or specifically). . . . Government programs encouraging advancement of blacks. (Empowerment, n.d.)

According to these definitions, empowerment enables the individual or group that has been empowered not only to discover power but to claim it as well. Additionally, empowerment embraces not only political, social, and economic, but also spiritual aspects. We may summarize from the above definitions that anything that disadvantages any individual or group economically, politically, socially, or spiritually is in a real sense disempowering such. Equally, we could say that no empowerment is complete that does not embrace all these aspects of human existence. More significantly, it would seem that any situation that affects any individual in one or more of these aspects of human existence proportionally affects the other areas.

Therefore, applied to our study, we are right to conclude that the fact that the women who are reported to be going outside their church to have their physical needs met, while remaining outwardly committed to their denomination are by the very act itself declaring their disempowerment. In other words, the SDA Church’s neglect of the
women’s material needs is disempowering and makes the women vulnerable, hence their involvement in the unseeming behavior of going out to beg.

However, as used in this study, empowerment does not embrace such aspects, such as economic, social, and political rights, as it does in today’s popular usage—as important as that is. Neither does empowerment in this study include the connotation of allowing women to be ordained like their male counterparts; other studies argue for this (Simankane, 2010). Instead, in this study, empowerment refers to recognizing, as was brought out in Chapter 2, that God is interested in the physical well-being of His children. For that reason, God expects the church to not only minister to the spiritual but the physical nature of man. Hence, empowerment in this study means helping to meet church members’ temporal needs with compassion, love, and care to the end that the members feel affirmed and empowered.

The women cited in Chapter 2 who followed Jesus received holistic empowerment. Perfect leadership is found in Christ only. According to Ellen White (1948, p. 143): “The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’ ” It is because of His great love and strong will to save mankind that Jesus was the servant-leader who paved the way to enable others to be servant-leaders.

The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. (White: 1947, p. 57)

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the
subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.

Ellen White adds further that the Lord permits suffering for the character building of both the sufferer who is undergoing the process of being purified, shaped, and squared and the prosperous neighbor who has the opportunity to exercise kindness and benevolence as a faithful steward that is exercising leadership in the faith based hope through the empowerment of the vulnerable. Ellen White (1952) said:

The Savior's words have a message of comfort to those also who are suffering affliction or bereavement. Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. God "doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." When He permits trials and afflictions, it is "for our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness." If received in faith, the trial that seems so bitter and hard to bear will prove a blessing. The cruel blow that blights the joys of earth will be the means turning our eyes to Heaven. How many there are who would never have known Jesus had not sorrow led them to seek comfort in Him!

The trials of life are God's workmen, to remove the impurities and roughness from our character. Their hewing, squaring, and chiseling, their burnishing and polishing, is a painful process; it is hard to be pressed down to the grinding wheel. But the stone is brought forth prepared to fill its place in the heavenly temple. Upon no useless material does the Master bestow such careful, thorough work. Only His precious stones are polished after the similitude of a palace. (p. 20)

Elsewhere Ellen White (1898) has said that:

The Lord will work for all who put their trust in Him. Precious victories will be gained by the faithful. Precious lessons will be learned. Precious experiences will be realized. (p. 11)

Ellen White (1952) has also said:

While the world needs sympathy, while it needs the prayers and assistance of God's people, while it needs to see Christ in the lives of His followers, the people of God are equally in need of opportunities that draw out their sympathies, give efficiency to their prayers, and develop in them a character like that of the divine pattern.

It is to provide these opportunities that God has placed among us the poor, the unfortunate, the sick, and the suffering. They are Christ's legacy to His church, and they are to be cared for as He would care for them. In this way God takes away the dross and purifies the gold, giving us that culture of heart and character which we need.

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The Lord could carry forward His work without our cooperation. He is not dependent on us for our money, our time, or our labor. But the church is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock, and He longs to see it without spot or blemish or any such thing. He yearns after it with unspeakable love. This is why He has given us opportunities to work for Him, and He accepts our labors as tokens of our love and loyalty. (pp.17-18)

A very serious principle of leadership that is pointed out in this literature review comes from the pen of Ellen White. This is the incarnation motif. It derives from the fact that to redeem, teach, and lead man, God incarnated into humanity through Christ. If we would reach intimately to the hearts, we want to minister to, and we would need to identify with them completely. Differences, boundaries, and other artificial limitations to intimacy like race, color, sex, education, poverty, culture, political affiliations, and age must not be allowed to be discriminates that can block need alleviation. Intervention, as demonstrated by Jesus in saving the human race is best done on level or equal ground. Jesus empowered us by identifying with us through His incarnation. If we identify with the needy to the point where we have all things in common with them, then we will manage to implement the example of empowerment Jesus left us. That His disciples grasped this lesson is seen in the Early Church during the days after the Pentecost Acts 2: 44-45 when they possessed all things in common. Ellen White (1952) has said:

Christ stood at the head of humanity in the garb of humanity. So full of sympathy and love was His attitude that the poorest was not afraid to come to Him. He was kind to all, easily approached by the most lowly. He went from house to house, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the distressed. . . He was willing to humble Himself, to deny Himself. He did not seek to distinguish Himself. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to be a comfort and a consolation to others, to gladden the sad and heavy-laden one with whom He daily came in contact.

Christ stands before us as a pattern, the great Medical Missionary--an example for all who should come after. His love, pure and holy, blessed all who came within the sphere of its influence. His character was absolutely perfect, free from the slightest stain of sin. He came as an expression of the perfect love of God, not to crush, not to judge and condemn, but to heal every weak, defective character, to save men and women from Satan's power. He is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the human
race. He gives to all the invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

What, then, is the example that we are to set to the world? We are to do the same work that the great Medical Missionary undertook in our behalf. We are to follow the path of self-sacrifice trodden by Christ. (pp. 53-54)

The Vulnerability of Women

Much is written today about vulnerable groups. What are the factors that make an individual or group of people vulnerable? What does it mean to be vulnerable? What can be done to help vulnerable people and groups? How does vulnerability affect one's spirituality? What is the relationship between vulnerability and the empowerment of women for ministry in the local church? These questions are important, and this section of the chapter attempts to answer them with a view to show how the factors that make women a more vulnerable group are affecting their lives and spiritually.

Definition of Vulnerability

According to Collins Plain Dictionary, to say that someone is vulnerable means that the person is "easily influenced or led astray, because they are lacking in wisdom or experience." Put in another way, a vulnerable person is one who is "able to be hurt or wounded or injured" (Vulnerability, n.d.).

But what makes an individual or group to be vulnerable? Collins Plain Dictionary again explains:

Throughout our life we are exposed to all kinds of situations and incidents. Some of these increase ones vulnerability. This means that one may find it emotionally difficult to handle a variety of situations in life. Our coping skills have either been diminished and/or have not been given the chance to develop. (Vulnerability, n.d.)
Thus, we see from the foregoing that all are prone to vulnerability since all are subject to experience situations in life that are bound to challenge our coping skills and for which we did not prepare.

Yourdictionary.com defines vulnerability in a way that adds another dimension to it—a dimension that might help us understand why women are usually very vulnerable. After defining it as “affected by a specified influence, temptation, etc.: vulnerable to political pressure,” the dictionary defines vulnerable adjectively as something “that can be wounded or physically injured,” something “open to criticism or attack,” for example, a vulnerable reputation; or someone who gets “easily hurt, as by adverse criticism; or “sensitive” (Vulnerability, n.d.).

From the psychological point of view factors that affect or lead to vulnerability have to do with ones position on Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. A triangle with the base at the bottom and apex at the top is usually drawn to depict the hierarchy of needs. The most basic needs are put at the base and self-actualization at the apex. The most basic or biological needs clamor for primary or immediate attention. It is after they are satisfied that one can move up the ladder to work in satisfaction of the next level. Vulnerability is when one is struggling on the basic level, when the biological needs are not met.

Why Women Are More Vulnerable

One explanation for the vulnerability of women is the suggestion that women are by nature more sensitive than men. And by sensitive we mean more easily touched, in the positive sense. It is this sensitivity that makes women more caring. Some suggest that women are oriented more towards the right brain than men, the centre for emotions
(Mfune, 1991). For this reason, it is more characteristic of a female to say, "I feel this is the right time for us to ..." and more characteristic of a male to say "I think this is what we need to." Of course it should not be construed from the above that only women feel, or that heightened feeling is expressed in replacement of thinking. The point is that of basic orientation, much like being left-handed and being right-handed.

From the foregoing, it should be clear that what makes women more vulnerable is their sensitivity to life. It is to that sensitivity that the Lord through the prophet Jeremiah must have been referring: "Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you" (Isa 49:15, NKJV). And throughout Scripture we find the love, compassion, and sensitivity of a mother used metaphorically to refer to the God's love for His children.

From the pen of Ellen White we glean additional factors that result in leaving women in more vulnerable situations. As noted in Chapter 2 of this dissertation the HIV/AIDS pandemic that widows millions of women causes them to spend all the available resources on their terminally ill husbands and if anything is left it is swept away by his selfish relatives immediately his burial is done. This results in leaving the widows and orphans in utter destitution. From Ellen White, we quote:

Many a widowed mother with her fatherless children is bravely striving to bear her double burden, often toiling far beyond her strength in order to keep her little ones with her and to provide for their needs. Little time has she for their training and instruction, little opportunity to surround them with influences that would brighten their lives. She needs encouragement, sympathy, and tangible help.

God calls upon us to supply to these children, so far as we can, the want of a father's care. Instead of standing aloof, complaining of their faults, and of the trouble they may cause, help them in every way possible. Seek to aid the careworn mother. Lighten her burdens. (1948, p. 203)

Widowhood makes a woman vulnerable. Her destitution in raising up her children single handedly and providing for their needs often leaves her no time to instruct and
train the children. She has little time to influence them for the better through her presence so they tend to become delinquent juveniles that give their mother a very hard time and who hardly appreciate her efforts. The state of these children makes them very vulnerable to the bad influence of their peers and when the mother dies many such children take to the streets as street kids that have no home.

Therefore, much as the vulnerability of women is a social liability; it is also a virtue, one that sets them apart as specially gifted to do a work for God that no other could perform better—the work referred to by Ellen White (1905) as “Christian Help Work.”

But what is Christian Help Work, and what has that to do with empowering women to do missionary work?

Christian Help Work

Refereed to variously as Welfare Ministry and Christian Help Work Ministry, the idea was existent in the early days of the SDA Church. It would definitely not be amiss; it seems to us that what was evidenced in the 19th century was simply a continuation of the ministry of those noble women mentioned in the chapter on theological foundations who followed Jesus wherever He went during His earthly sojourn ministering to His temporal needs. Could it be that when Jesus answered saying, “Who are my mother and brothers?” at the time He was confronted with the demand for His attention from His physical family members that He meant to refer to His disciples and the women who followed Him as His family, His mother and father (which by extension includes you and me if like them we leave all in order to follow Jesus)?
All who work for God should have the Martha and the Mary attributes blended—a willingness to minister and a sincere love of the truth. Self and selfishness must be put out of sight (White, 1952, p. 150). Christian help work is a blend of the spiritual effort to save souls and humble service in ministering to the actual needs of others whether they be material, physical, mental or social. Such a beautiful and critically needed kind of service is not limited in time and space. Ellen White (1952) puts it this way:

According to the fourth commandment the Sabbath was dedicated to rest and religious worship. All secular employment was to be suspended, but works of mercy and benevolence were in accordance with the purpose of the Lord. They were not to be limited to time or place. To relieve the afflicted, to comfort the sorrowing, is a labor of love that does honor to God’s holy he whole of the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah is to be regarded as a message for this time, to be given over and over again. (p. 29)

The Lord actually is not pleased by acts and postures of fasting and praying when these are done by people who do not practice faith, love, justice, and mercy. What God delights in is alleviating the needs of the down trodden, in providing for the sustenance of the widow and the orphan. Such acts are not only doable on the Sabbath but Sabbath keeping is meaningless when such works are not done on the Sabbath day and throughout the week whenever opportunity arises:

The work of the gospel is to be carried by means of our liberality as well as by our labors. When you meet suffering souls who need help, give it to them. When you find those who are hungry, feed them. In doing this you will be working in lines of Christ’s ministry. The Master’s holy work was a benevolent work. Let our people everywhere be encouraged to have a part in it. (White, 1952, p.29)

To implement the Lord’s call to service requires leadership and a well-planned formation. The reason why true conversion is needed and that genuine *agape* love must be the motivating factor because nonverbal communication being spontaneous and not easily faked will portray our inner selves (Cormier, 2009). We need to find genuine pleasure and satisfaction in alleviating the needs of the suffering. Selfishness, pretense,
pride, and other ulterior motives will be read out on us by others and will confuse the recipients of the benefits. Once this shared vision of Christ's leadership is stirred up by *agape*, the participants will plan effectively in building up small groups to turn the community upside down with the gospel.

Working in small groups is a divinely given way of working effectively which apart from being seen in the Garden of Eden in the creation of Adam and Eve, a pair (couple), it is also seen in the ministry of Jesus and of His apostles who set out or went out in pairs or two-by-two. We quote Ellen White (1952):

> The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members but for unbelievers. (p.107)

Stressing the importance of the organizational structure to strategic and operational effectiveness, Millimore and Lewis (2007) support that the organization's structural design is key to its effectiveness and sustainability. The school of 'strategic choice' suggests that managers exercise choice in determining the structural design of the organization (Child, 1977). Other schools of thought that relate organizational structural design to strategic effectiveness, and are derived from the work of Child, include (Millimore & Lewis, 2007, p. 171):

1. The classical universal theory, which states that a universal set of principles should be used to design the structure of any organization.

2. The structural contingency theory, which states that the effective organizational strategy and structure will be contingent on the circumstances confronting the organization.
3. The internal consistence approach to organizational structural design states that the structural design should be made to achieve consistency between the various facets within the organization to achieve strategy, operational effectiveness, and fit the external environment.

There are several models in structural designing apart from the cellular model. As the church forms up to work within itself and in the community it needs to frame up a working administrative structure that will be effective. Other such structural models portrayed by Millimore and Lewis (2007, p. 188) include the area based design, product based design, and administrative department based design, network form design, and the project center base design.

We are conjecturing in this dissertation a construct which though we are proposing to have been Jesus' model in administrative structural designing we do not have the scope to thoroughly propound it here. It seems to be the simplest combination of all the above models. Closest to Jesus we have the twelve disciples among whom Peter, James, and John seemed to enjoy greater intimacy. As the Lord related to the three, if each of the three related to three other disciples of Jesus, then we have nine others to join the three making the total of 12. In this structure each of the nine relates to three other disciples and here we see a ring with the possibility of some women now being included. This adds 27 to the 12 disciples forming a group of 39. When each of the 27 relates to three other disciples we now have 51 joining the 27 to make a community of 78 disciples. These figures seem to be close to the 3, 12, 40, and 70 we read of in the scriptures. For the structural diagram check Appendix B.
With such a concentric cellular structural frame we then would work the community in the small groups of twos and threes, going from door to door. Ellen White (1952) said:

“How can the great work of the third angel's message be accomplished? It must be largely accomplished by persevering, individual effort, by visiting the people in their homes.” (p. 97).

She (1952) also said:

One of the most effective ways in which light can be communicated is by private, personal effort. In the home circle, at your neighbor's fireside, at the bedside of the sick, in a quiet way you may read the Scriptures and speak a word for Jesus and the truth. Thus you may sow precious seed that will spring up and bring forth fruit. (p. 97)

As said before, the Lord Himself and His apostles set a powerfully successful performance with small groups in door to door ministry and again we quote Ellen White (1911):

The Savior went from house to house, healing the sick, comforting the mourners, soothing the afflicted, speaking peace to the disconsolate. He took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoke words of hope and comfort to the weary mothers. With unfailing tenderness and gentleness He met every form of human woe and affliction. Not for Himself but for others did He labor. He was the servant of all. It was His meat and drink to bring hope and strength to all. (p. 364)

Again, Ellen White (1952) has said:

On one occasion Paul said: “Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house.”

These words explain the secret of Paul's power and success. He kept back nothing that was profitable for the people. He preached Christ publicly, in the market places and the synagogues. He taught from house to house, availing himself of the familiar intercourse of the home circle. He visited the sick and sorrowing, comforting the afflicted, and lifting up the oppressed. And in all that he said and did he preached a crucified and risen Savior...

Paul sometimes worked night and day; not only for his own support, but that he might assist his fellow laborers. He shared his earnings with Luke, and he helped
Timothy. He even suffered hunger at times, that he might relieve the necessities of others. His was an unselfish life. (White, 1952, pp.62-63)

The more closely the New Testament plan is followed in missionary labor, the more successful will be the efforts put forth. We should work as did our divine Teacher, sowing the seeds of truth with care, anxiety, and self-denial. We must have the mind of Christ if we would not become weary in well-doing. His was a life of continual sacrifice for others' good. We must follow His example. (White, 1952, p.65)

Go to your neighbors one by one, and come close to them till their hearts are warmed by your unselfish interest and love. Sympathize with them, pray for them, watch for opportunities to do them good, and as you can, gather a few together and open the Word of God to their darkened minds. (White, 1952, p. 87)

Those who engage in house-to-house labor will find opportunities for ministry in many lines. They should pray for the sick and should do all in their power to relieve them from suffering. They should work among the lowly, the poor, and the oppressed. We should pray for and with the helpless ones who have not strength of will to control the appetites that passion has degraded. Earnest, persevering effort must be made for the salvation of those in whose hearts an interest is awakened. Many can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ.

Missionary nurses are best qualified for this work, but others should be connected with them. These, although not specially educated and trained in nursing, can learn from their fellow workers the best manner of labor.

Talk, Pharisaism, and self-praise are abundant; but these will never win souls to Christ. Pure, sanctified love, such love as was expressed in Christ's lifework, is as a sacred perfume. Like Mary's broken box of ointment, it fills the whole house with fragrance. Eloquence, knowledge of truth, rare talents, mingled with love, are all precious endowments. But ability alone, the choicest talents alone, cannot take the place of love. (White, 1952, p.81)

Summary

Women typically possess a caring nature heightened by their parental role as mothers and wives. The nature of caring develops vulnerability in women that both strengthens their contribution and deepens their response to personal suffering. The culture does not empower them in business and social transactions. They need particular empowerment when they become widows. Helping others, especially members of the one's own church, is mandated by faith and society. This divine mandate requires our
individual and collective involvement in door to door execution of Christ's mission of salvation and alleviation of human suffering.
CHAPTER 4

AN INVESTIGATION INTO WOMEN’S DISEMPOWERMENT IN THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

Synopsis

In the previous chapter a survey of literature on the empowerment of women was conducted. In Chapter 1 the practice of Adventist widowed women seeking aid from other denominations was stated. The researcher hypothesizes it means that these widows are certain the church will not do anything to meet their material needs. The practice is discouraging and therefore, disempowering spiritually, making them very vulnerable.

Factors contributing to the disempowerment of women were unearthed. These included the following: the vulnerability of widowed women, failure to meet the basic elements in the hierarchy of needs due to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, and lack of leadership in intervention.

The purpose of this chapter is to seek to establish the factors causing widowed women to pursue that practice. As mentioned above it must be conceded that this practice is a further expression of that vulnerability which makes women never to be able to shrug off the burden of caring for their families.

The survey was done in two parts. The first is a narration of two participant observer situations giving detailed insights into the experiences of the widows; thereafter,
a detailed description of a psychographic survey that was carried out amongst nearly a thousand women in the same district.

**Participant Observation**

According to Moulton (2006), participant observation is a social research method used in empirical studies that are usually qualitative in nature which aim to provide an in-depth description of a group of people or community. Such descriptions are embedded in the life-worlds of actors being studied and produce insider perspectives of the actors and their practices. (p. 148)

This particular methodology is chosen here because it appropriately affords us the kind of insider perspective needed to understand the factors that could make women who to all purposes are committed to their church seek aid from another church.

In addition to the participant observer situations described above, a psychographic survey was conducted of which the description and analysis follow after.

**Case 1: Mother Seeking Help From a Catholic Priest**

She was moving with her two boys and her small girl as the researcher met them carrying some maize meal, relish, and other assorted foods.

“Good morning, Pastor. Did you come to chair our nominating committee?”

“Yes, I thought I should have seen you there. How are you doing with my little friends?”

“Well to tell you, Pastor, I have a very burning desire to serve the Lord and never to miss any meeting where my services are required. My problem is that of looking after and providing for these children since my late husband’s relatives carried all our properties away at the end of his funeral. The Catholic priest at this institute does offer
help to those whom he knows to be widows so he sent for me to come and get this food just at the time I had prepared to come for the committee. I just had to go there since this is just a gift that is chanced. Pastor, these children you see are a big problem when there is no food at home!”

“Thank you for accepting the gifts. Remember to see the hand of the Lord behind every person through whom he moves to provide for you. Cheer up; I have to rush to my next meeting. See you when we meet next time.”

Case 2: Pentecostal Convert Seeking Help From a Catholic Priest

It was at the camp meeting last August when one sister stood to ask, “Pastor, we need to help each other spiritually here. A certain young man started studying Voice of Prophecy materials and eventually stopped going to his former Pentecostal fellowship as he got baptized into the SDA Church. We were shocked when we caught him receiving handouts from the Catholic priest at this nearby institution. What I want to know, Pastor is would you classify such a brother as truly converted? How can someone who is truly converted depend on donations from a system that is condemned by God in prophetic scriptures?”

There was an ensuing agitation as it seemed everyone wanted to speak. Some were offended because they felt that the question was directed at them and they therefore wanted to speak to clear themselves. Others wanted to condemn the practice of receiving aid from other denominations.

One elderly lady stood and said, “But what are you doing about it my sister? What are we as a church doing to alleviate the predicament of the widow and the orphan? You can dare to know that someone gets handouts from the Papal system and instead of
finding a way to help them financially so that they stop depending on catholic handouts you keep quiet and watch then at a distance waiting for the next chance to disgrace them publicly. . . . As far as I am concerned this situation casts a reproach upon us all as a church, we are not caring enough to come up with a system to take care of the needy in our midst. We then try to comfort ourselves by finding fault with others. Why are we providing leadership that is opposed to that of the Son of God who addressed people’s actual needs before bidding them to follow Him?"

Widows’ Meeting

A Wednesday was programmed for family life emphasis in the mission. We divided in groups. The researcher went with a group of widows. They were about 120 in number and were coming from both Kabwe West and Kabwe East Mission Districts. The widows were divided into small groups of 10 people each. They were tasked to brainstorm, describing the problems they face and to propose possible solutions to them. The list of prevailing problems included: (a) lack of food; (b) lack of shelter; (c) lack of financial resources to educate dependants; (d) lack of security; (e) lack of respect from other members of the church; (f) suspicious attitude from fellow women; (g) hosting too many orphans; (h) dissident and delinquent behavior of male grown up dependants; (i) lack of attention, help, and support in sicknesses and emergencies; (j) property grabbing by relatives after burial; (k) unemployment; (l) lack of capital for business projects; and (m) debts.

But, when it came to solutions the widows offered only four solutions for their situation. The few mentioned answers included: (a) donations from church members, (b)
donations from well-wishers, (c) peace works, and (d) loans to start small businesses with.

Promoting Working in Groups

The next meeting was in the afternoon on a Sabbath. The researcher addressed the group of widows—largely the same group from the Wednesday meeting—on the importance of working together for their own betterment. They accepted to be organized into an association. They needed to realize that although their problems were heavier, other people from whom they were hoping for help had other problems also. Instead of spending time sorrowing and morning, they needed to get up and work or perish. Coming together they would become a power and have societal rights and the credibility for large grants and loans.

The facilitator, who was the researcher, went on to explain the duties, qualifications, and what was expected of the leader or chairperson of the society. Names were proposed from both the eastern and western districts. After carefully scrutinizing each one’s eligibility, the delegates were asked to vote for the society leader and assistant. The agreement was that if the leader came from the west district, then the assistant would come from the east, and vice versa for all positions or departments. We proceeded to choose the leader and assistant, the secretary and assistant, and finally the treasurer and assistant. The rest of the organizational slots were to be filled at another meeting agreed to that Sabbath.

Subsequently, we met on September 6, 2009, and voted in the remaining officers and we chose a constitution committee, which we tasked to report on October 4, 2009.
Psychographic Survey

A psychographic survey is a quantitative study that provides data about a given sample of population regarding what they think or know about the desired subject. Psychographics remain one of the least understood concepts in marketing research (Heath, 1996, pp.18, 38-43). As Pence (n.d.) has noted, it seems that every scholar has his or her own definition of exactly what constitutes psychographics. Some define it simply as values or lifestyles while others have more elaborate definitions. The clearest and most comprehensive definition the researcher found was in the book Consumer Profiles: An Introduction to Psychographics, by Gunter and Furnham (1992). Their definition claims that psychographics seeks to describe the human characteristics of consumers that may have bearing on their response to products, packaging, advertising and public relations efforts. These variables may span the spectrum starting from self-concept and lifestyle to attitudes, interests and opinions; this may go on to include perceptions of product attributes.

Psychographics are used to determine lifestyle characteristics and traits. For that reason, psychographics and lifestyle are often used interchangeably; except that psychographics is actually the way that lifestyle is made operationally useful. Hence, psychographics allow for a more complete picture of an individual, making it easier to understand how to market products to them. Psychographics initially emphasized consumer’s activities, interests, and opinions.

Research Design and Methodology

A survey was used to seek attitudes and feedback from members of the districts. Members of Kabwe East Mission District were interviewed concerning the challenges relating to the work of women in the church. The surveys were distributed among Adventist women in Kabwe East District in an effort to obtain both information on the
underlying causes of the reported practice among some of the Adventist widows in this part of the CZC where some of them seek material help from other denominations as alleged by anecdotal reports.

The survey was designed to be in two parts, the objective part consisting of questions 1 to 20 and the subjective part consisting of the questions 21 to 27. The survey was distributed to determined age groups and shared evenly between the sexes. Differing levels of academic attainment were not considered. Out of the 1,125 surveys printed and distributed, only 968 were received back. The administration of the survey was intended to provide feedback to the researcher, not to provide verifiable scientific analysis. Because the questions and returns are not scientifically designed, the researcher does not feel it is appropriate to publish the survey. However, the researcher can relate the tone of the responses as influential to the opinions formed by the researcher.

Analysis of the Objective Section

The objective part (numbered 1 to 20) explores the attitudes of church members regarding the empowerment of women for church leadership. The group of respondents seems to hold a position opposed to formal positions of church leadership for women. Many members feel that women’s ministries are forced on the church. The following figures were gleaned from the survey:

1. Eighty-five percent of the members who responded indicated that the Department of Women’s Ministries was forced on the church at the local congregation level.

2. Eighty-eight percent indicated the Women’s Ministry Department was being introduced in order to replace the Dorcas society.
3. Seventy-five percent indicated that this department is also being established in order to introduce into the church the ordination of women, although God has appointed ordination for men only.

4. Ninety percent are against the ordination of women to deaconship.

5. Ninety-seven percent are against women ordination to the gospel ministry as pastors in the administrative use of the Word.

6. Ninety-nine percent are against women being ordained as elders of the church.

7. Eighty-four percent felt that the Bible explicitly forbids the ordination of women.

Analysis of the Subjective Section

The subjective part was meant to detect information that lead to the possible solutions to the problem. Respondents were asked to give a one sentence answer.

In their answers most respondents focused on what they interpreted as biblical injunctions against women serving in formal positions of church leadership. The respondents cited verses such as Gen 3:16-18; Exod 28:1; Num 3:1-3; Acts 9:36; 1 Cor 14:13-36; and 1 Tim 2: 14-42.

A question of great importance related to attitudes regarding the Department of Women Ministries. Of those who indicated antagonism to the ministry, 177 were sure it was a project designed to promote women to preach. Ninety feared that it was a system brought in to abolish the Dorcas society and thus replace it. Three hundred and fifteen of the responses lamented that this department is confusing, wrong, divisive, and forced on the resisting local churches.
Regarding ordination of women as deacons, the responses were similar. According to the feedback, there is significant resistance to the idea of ordaining women to be deacons. Some even indicated they would leave the church and worship from their homes.

The survey asked what could be done to make women’s ministries department acceptable to you? Twenty-one of the responses showed hope that if education or teaching was done, the department would be understood and accepted. A greater number simply said nothing could be done. Seventeen responses opted that the department be named after Dorcas.

Summary

In summary, this chapter narrated two participant-observer situations which afforded a unique advantage to the researcher in discovering the perspectives needed to understand the factors that affect the subjects of the research, Adventist widows. Encounters with three Adventist members were narrated and analyzed for clues that could best help explain the practice of seeking aid from other denominations.

The researcher believes the needs of Adventist widows are recognized by the membership and that the widows themselves are able to organize to find solutions. However, the membership of the church is suspicious of organizations that exist for women and are led by women. Empowering women to find solutions to their problems, specifically the problem of Adventist widows, is thus a dilemma.
CHAPTER 5

STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR MINISTRY

Synopsis

Chapter 4 described the context for the anecdotal reports that came to the attention of the researcher regarding Adventist members going to other denominational institutions to have their physical needs met. If true, this practice could have an effect on the church's reputation as a caring community interested in every aspect of its members' well-being. Also, such a practice could demoralize the members involved in it. Finally, it has the potential of leading them to consider joining the churches that seem to be more caring. For these and many other reasons it is necessary to understand the issue.

The first type of investigation was conducted using the research method called participant observer survey. As was mentioned in Chapter 4, participant observation has the unique advantage of affording the researcher the kind of insider perspective needed to understand the factors that were affecting the subjects of the research. Encounters with three Adventist members were narrated and analyzed for clues that could help best explain the phenomenon brought to light in this territory. Also, evidences of disempowerment among the members, especially the women, were looked for.

The other type of research method that was used was the use of a questionnaire. These were distributed to nearly 900 church members in Kabwe, Zambia. These were
also scrutinized in order to discover how the feedback relates to the main concern of this study: how to empower women.

Prior to the surveys described in Chapter 4, Chapter 3 reviewed some of the literature relative to the issue of empowering women for ministry. The literature review, among other things, revealed that in as much as empowerment means “increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities,” church members are therefore disempowered when the churches they go to only pay attention to their spiritual needs, to the neglect of their temporary needs.

The review also brought out a related issue to empowerment or the lack of it, namely, vulnerability. The connection was made between vulnerability and empowerment: those who are not empowered end up being vulnerable. In other words, there is a correlation between disempowerment and vulnerability. Further, the review suggested women’s innate sensitivity, or motherhood instinct, as the real cause of their vulnerability. This motherly instinct explains why it is often largely women who feel the most disempowered and therefore, become the most vulnerable.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to lay a strategy to empower women in the local church. Based on the foregoing, such a strategy should empower women, thus reducing their vulnerability. Even better, beyond just reducing women’s vulnerability (women being the ultimate care-givers both at home and in society), the strategy will empower them to do exploits in God’s work. Women, once they are empowered by helping them satisfy their day-to-day needs, will also form a strong cohort that will support the work today.
Strategy to Empower Women for Ministry

In an article entitled "The Vulnerability of Women: Is This a Useful Construct for Policy and Programming?" Cohen and Reid (2010) articulate a principle which they consider very cardinal to the issue of empowering women, whether it be in spiritual matters or in ordinary life.

Analyses which begins from the realities of women’s daily lives creates a textured and intricate understanding of what needs to be changed. However, strategic development—the attempt to answer the question of "How?"—which encompasses only women will often just create safe havens or intermissions in a continuing context of disempowerment, discrimination, and humiliation. For the quality of women’s lives is determined not only by their own actions but by the attitudes and behavior of husbands, children, mothers-in-law, employers, public servants, and also by the economic, cultural, and political values of their countries. (p. 378)

The reason for this is most women are economically, socially, and emotionally dependent on their husbands in such a way as to make them unable to negotiate safety. For that reason, Cohen and Reid (2010) state:

However, strategies of women individually or collectively attempting to protect themselves and their children, even if effective, can only be short-term stratagems. A decision to forego sexual expression or relationships which have a sexual dimension may not be sustainable over the longer term, or the personal price of sustaining it may not be acceptable. It also means that these women must forego the creation, nurturing, and raising of children. This is a form of emotional deprivation that few women would wish to endure for a lifetime. Women-centered strategies show that women can empower themselves in certain ways but there are limits to what they alone can achieve. (p. 380)

Therefore, in both the shorter term and more particularly in the longer term, any strategy will have to include men as well, or better still, the entire church. The implication of the above is that the men and women of the community will have to start discussing women’s value and men’s behavior and come to some decision about how the impasse might be broken. Consensus will have to build throughout the community, and decision-making will need to be collective.
Women-focused strategies need to be complemented through strategies that bring together and transform the lives of all those who yearn for and dream of a better way of living now. Certain changes can be brought about by women together. Other changes will require that men work together to develop a language that names some of the tragedies and distortions of their own growing up in a sexist society, a society where they are both oppressed and oppressing. Others will require not only broader-based alliances but also inclusive collectives of men and women, rich and poor, young and old, healthy and unwell, the articulate and the inarticulate.

God is Able Adventist Widows’ Association

The strategy proposed in this paper, the establishment of a Widows Association in the town of Kabwe in Central Zambia, is based on the same principle. As will become evident from the constitution adopted by the two Districts that agreed to work together, the strategy is the work of the SDA community in this town. The strength of the strategy is first that it was made in response to a felt need, and, second, that it is the collective responsibility of the church in the district. Additionally, the program should benefit from the strong organizational set of the district which provides for regular follow up and review through the district leadership that meets every month, every quarter, and biennially for reviews.

The researcher went to one of the districts in CZC as a camp meeting speaker. The district consisted of 24 organized churches and over 12 companies. It had a church membership of about 6000. The Thursday afternoon of that week was dedicated to family life so the researcher went with the group of widows, about 150 in number. The meeting proceeded in a very similar manner to the formation of the God is Able widows
association. After brainstorming and listing the problems and solutions, it was resolved that a widows and orphans society for that district be formed. The names for the administrators and executive committee members were proposed and voted into position unanimously by all the camp meeting members present from the 24 churches and their companies.

The vibrant leadership contacted the Zambia Union ADRA (Adventist Disaster Relief Agency) which gave them about six bales of clothing to dress the needy among them with, and the rest to sell in order to raise up the capital needed for the operation of their income generating projects designed for sustained income generation.

The paradox the district pastor found themselves in reminded me of Russell’s dilemma of the Spanish Barber written at the beginning of the 20th century in the celebrated book on mathematical logic entitled, *Principia Mathematica* co-authored by B. Russell and A. N. Whitehead (1963). The pastor would not go to collect the bales of clothes for the fear that since the widows’ association was not alluded to in the church manual, he would be found guilty if queried by the conference president. Conversely, he was under pressure from the widows: he had to collect the bales because it was Zambia Union that was offering them free of charge. The offer died a natural death as the clothes were not collected after a long time during which he evaded the widows.

This incident highlights the importance of formalizing a serving structure. It shows also the disadvantage in leadership of a worker who will not take any risk, a leader who will not break any new ground. When a leader is more interested in the approval of his superiors than in alleviating the needs of others, the leader lacks the essential Christian grace.
Conclusion

The reports that some women among us seek free sustenance from Roman Catholic institutions are true. The widows association has been formed; its constitution has been approved by the church and the association has been registered with the Zambia National Registrar of Societies.

If we band together to plan and work together in large groups and in small groups to help ourselves and others, instead of focusing on and talking about our differences, our differences dwindle into insignificance and finally vanish into oblivion. Our deformities of character are reshaped by the Spirit of God’s work and our sinful habits and thoughts are crowded out by business. The life Jesus lived for us and the lessons He taught us require that we work to alleviate the destitution and suffering of others, otherwise our religion is futile. The formation of the widows’ association is the best way for widows and orphans to help themselves and provide us with a clutch with which to help them while knowing that our assistance will be responsibly managed.

Recommendations

In view of the above project and the great need that widows and orphans have and the need the church has in taking care of its needy flock, we make the following recommendations:

1. Each local church should choose a leader, a secretary, and a treasurer together with some committee members (at least 3) to associate and work out a situational adapted program to address the needs of widows and orphans.
2. That the Adventist Widows and Orphans Society be under the department of women’s ministries. In conferences where women’s ministries are rejected, here a specific leader may be assigned this task.

3. That an evaluation instrument and a report form be designed for the Adventist Widows and Orphans Society to include the following features: (a) local church society name, (b) number of members, (c) group projects undertaken, (d) number of the participants in group projects, (e) income from the projects, (f) expenses of the projects, (g) profits of the projects, (h) new projects planned, and (i) project proposals—especially needed human resources and financial capital.

4. That the church at all levels budgets for the widows and orphans.

5. That at least one offering on the annual calendar of offerings be specifically designated for the widows and orphans. The helplessness of the local church in this respect is very acute.

6. That the stewardship department reorient its approach from emphasizing only faithful tithe returning and benevolent offering giving to include faithful and effective use of time and talents in entrepreneurial undertakings as well as skills development and application in generating decent incomes and offering substantially to the cause of God and that of the needy.

7. That the GC considered renaming the Women’s Ministries Department as Adventist Women’s Department.

8. That the church, recognizing that HIV/AIDS results in widows and orphans in large numbers, take up the recommendations in Akombwa’s (2010) doctoral dissertation:
A Strategy to Mobilize Seventh-day Adventist Church Members in Lusaka in Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis.
APPENDIX A

CONSTITUTION

THIS CONSTITUTION IS FOR "GOD IS ABLE" WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS ASSOCIATION FOR KABWE EAST AND WEST SDA CHURCHES

1.0 NAME

The name of this association shall be called –
God is Able Widows and Widowers Association

2.0 ADDRESS

C/O THE SDA KABWE EAST MISSION DISTRICT
P O BOX 81243
KABWE.

3.0 VISION

The vision of this association is to be self-reliant, care, alleviate suffering and poverty among its members.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

To improve the livelihood of members and reduce poverty levels.

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To provide opportunities for its members to interact, develop and share individual skills and talents for betterment of all members and their communities.

To undertake various projects that will benefit members.

To help the under privileged members and those in the community eg the disabled, the orphans and the aged.

To provide appropriate assistance in education and health issues particularly HIV/AIDS related cases.

To source funds and necessary materials and services from members, churches, Government, NGOs and international donors.

To encourage members to run individual and group projects successfully.

To provide employment to members /church members and non church members.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this association shall be open to Kabwe Urban District widows and widowers in the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Membership be by application and shall be approved by the executive committee.

Members getting married shall have a right to resign or remain as a member

Each member shall be required to pay a non refundable membership fee as approved by annual general meeting.

A widow/widower is a person who has lost their spouse.

The AGM shall have power to accept or reject a member.

5.1. MEMBERS RIGHTS

All rights are for the fully paid up members eg

The right to vote on any policy matter.

The right to participate in the election of office bearers

The right to participate in general meetings and any meeting called.

MEMBERS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OR OBLIGATIONS INCLUDES

To elect the executive members

To observe and protect the by-laws that governs it.

To participate in all the activities of the association.

To contribute the capital

To participate in the associations activities eg meetings
To learn all that they can about the affairs of the association with open mind and gender sensitive.

5.3. **MEMBERSHIP WITHDRAWAL**

By writing, one[1] month notice to the executive secretary
Failure to attend three [3] consecutive meetings without any excuse.
By being expelled from the association for indiscipline but shall have the right to appeal, to the annual general meeting.
By death of a member

5.4. **DISCIPLINE**

All association members shall be strictly required to adhere to the association rules and regulations. Failure to which action shall be taken as provided for in the constitution and the by-laws.

5.5. **MEETINGS**

There shall be three [3] meetings, namely-

Annual General meeting
Special General meeting
Executive meeting

[a] **Annual General meeting**- As its name, shall be held once in every year. This shall be the supreme authority of the members as joint owners of the society, and property of the society. It shall be called annually with a notice of one month through District announcements or personal letters. Annual general meeting shall elect new office bearers and receive financial reports and other relevant report brought before it. The Annual General Meeting will chaired by the District Pastor.

[b] **There shall be a mid-term Annual General meeting** to review progress to be chaired by the association chairperson.

[c] **Special General meetings/Executive**- These shall be called for a special agenda, but shall be requested by two third members to resolve any issue called by its members. All members shall attend. Also the executive meetings shall be called once every month, or as the executive shall decide. Only executive members shall attend except by invitation.
Executive Committee - Membership to the Executive Committee shall be by the election at Annual General meeting and approval of District council. It shall consist of ten [10] committee members plus one trustee for a period of one year. The committee shall consist of -
Chairperson
Vice Chairperson
Secretary
Vice Secretary
Treasurer
Vice Treasurer plus four
[4] committee members and
one trustee.
Ex-official consists of District Pastor, District secretary and District treasurer.

5.6. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

[A] Chairperson

Shall chair all the meetings apart from Annual General Meeting
Shall be signatory to the associations account
Shall have a right to cast a vote
Shall attend to all issues brought before him or her
Shall ensure that all general meetings resolutions are carried into effect

[B] Vice-Chairperson

In the absence of the chairperson, shall carry out duties and powers of the chairperson or as assigned him or her.

[C] Secretary

Shall be the custodian of all minutes taken during meetings and shall read them when necessary
Shall call all meetings
Shall be responsible of all the associations correspondences
Shall prepare annual reports for the association and present such to the general meetings
Shall prepare quarterly reports and present them at the district council
Shall be the signatory to the account
[D] Vice-Secretary

Shall perform duties of the secretary or delegation
Shall assist in preparation of the reports for the association

[E] Treasurer

Shall be responsible for preparation and upkeep of all financial documents and reports
Shall present financial reports to AGM and other meetings
Shall receive all monies and cheques on behalf of the association
Shall present quarterly financial report to the district council
The District treasurer shall be chief signatory to the account of the association
Shall insure the assets of the association
There shall be only two people to sign a cheque

[F] Vice-treasurer

Shall perform duties in the absence and at the delegation of the treasurer
Shall assist in the preparation of reports or as assigned

5.7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

There shall be Executive committee meetings called by the secretary. The office of a member of the committee shall become vacant if-
The holder of the office dies or resigns or expelled from the committee
When such a vacant occurs, the Executive Committee shall recommend a member to complete the term of office to the Special General Meeting

5.8. OTHER COMMITTEES

There shall be other committees namely-
Health committee
Orphans committee
Project committee
Disciplinary committee
Evangelism committee
The chairpersons of these committees shall be from the executive committee, and shall operate as assigned by the executive committee. Each committee shall comprise of five[5] members namely- chairperson, Vice chairperson, Secretary and two [2] committee members.
5.9. **VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE**

A vote of no confidence shall be passed on any or some or whole executive committee whose performance / conduct is found or proved to be detrimental to the progress of the association at any time during its term of office. Provided that such vote shall be passed by two third of the members present at a meeting or petition from its members at a duly called Special General Meeting of each year ending.

6.0. **BANKING**

The association shall maintain one bank account or more in any commercial banks, for transparent purposes of the association and shall be audited and reported annually by appointed external auditors of the association. The expenses of and incidental to the audit shall be paid for from funds of the association. The financial year of this Association shall be 30th September of every year ending.

6.1. **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The constitution may be amended in part or by adding new provisions or may wholly be replaced by a new constitution by a vote of not less than two third of membership of the association present at annual general meeting.

6.2. **DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The association may be dissolved by resolution of the members taken at a General meeting convened for the purpose and passed by a majority of not less than two thirds of the members present, and voting at such meeting. The resolution shall be recommended to the district council.

6.3. **APPLICATION OF ASSETS**

Upon dissolution of the association, the property of the association not consisting of money shall be sold and the proceeds there of together with that part of assets of money shall be applied in satisfaction of debts and liabilities of the association. The outstanding balance thereof shall be disposed as determined by the meeting or shall be shared by members.

Br. W. Nalipapa  Sr. E.Samayuwa  
**CHAIRPERSON**  **SECRETARY**
APPENDIX- B

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Department Basted Structure

Chief Executive

Research Development  Operations  Sales

Finance  Marketing  Human Resource

Project Based Structure

Chief Executive

Product Based Division  Product Based Division  Product Based Division  Product Based Division
Area Based Structure

Chief Executive

Area Based Division
Area Based Division
Area Based Division
Area Based Division

Centrally Based Structure

Project Team

Project Team
Corporate Center
Project Team

Project Team
Centrally Based Structure of Jesus Disciples
REFERENCE LIST


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White, E. G. (1908, May 1). Medical missionary work among the colored people of the South. *Gospel Herald*.


Name: Lubinda Ngenda
Date of Birth: August 8, 1951
Place of Birth: Kalabo, Zambia
Married: June 25, 1978 to Rose Kabwe Ngenda

Education:
1957- 1964 - Liumba Hill Mission School
1965 - 1966- Rusangu Secondary School
1973- 1975- School of Engineering, University of Zambia
1984 - 2087- Bachelor of Arts in Religion, Andrews University, Solusi.
2007 - Present - Working on a D.Min. in Leadership with Andrews University at Helderberg College, Cape Town, South Africa.

Ordination:
January 4, 1994- Ordained to the S.D.A. Gospel Ministry

Experience:
2009 – Date – District Pastor. Kabwe East Mission District
2001 – 2004 - Conference Departmental Director for Ministerial, Stewardship; Church Development, and Education.
1995 – 1998 Departmental Director, for Stewardship, Church Development, Adventist Youth; Ministerial, and Education, Zambia Union
1994 – 1995 – Mission Station Director for North-Western Province, Zambia Union
1990 – 1993 – Departmental Director for Stewardship, Church Development, Youth and Education, West Zambia Field
1979 – 1984 – Literature Evangelist in Lusaka, South Zambia Field