2023

Understanding Secularized People of Metro Manila: A Case Study Approach for a Contextualized Urban Ministry Strategy

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING SECULARIZED PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA:
A CASE STUDY APPROACH FOR A CONTEXTUALIZED
URBAN MINISTRY STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: UNDERSTANDING SECULARIZED PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA: A CASE STUDY APPROACH FOR A CONTEXTUALIZED URBAN MINISTRY STRATEGY

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Date Completed: August 2023

Problem

Secularization shapes people's thinking, feeling, and behaving in the cities. Yearly, there is a rise in the number of de-religionized or secularized people in cities of the world who engage in pursuits of materialism and show declining interest in religion. Sociologists and missiologists postulate about the spectrum of secularity and the variety of secularism in different context. Since Metro Manila is one of the world's top highly urbanized and densely populated cities, the Seventh-day Adventist Church encounters challenges in reaching its secularized people. It is a new turf for the church. Pastors trained for rural settings may not understand what attracts and retains the secularized

people to the church. Many do not know that the secularized is an emerging people group and that they have some special needs that the traditional Adventist Church does not address. Hence, there is a need for a biblically sound and yet culturally sensitive approach to the secularized people.

Method

This case study looked into the phenomena of evangelizing secularized persons in Metro Manila. It aimed to determine the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños* and what attracted them to God and the church. In addition, the study also answered the questions of what retains in them in church and what make them leave the church—in an attempt to put together a contextualized strategy for the secularized people. Personal interviews and focus group discussions were conducted among 30 participants comprising of non-Adventists who are secularized (12), secularized Adventists (10), and urban ministry practitioners (8). Document analysis and observation (church visit and online worship) followed the interviews. Coded data analysis provided categories for themes that answered the research questions. The interviews, FGI, document analysis, and observation were triangulated to ensure the reliability and credibility of the research findings.

Results

The secularized *Manileños* are found to be at the beginning of the spectrum of the secularization process. They are between the U1-U3 stages in Reiner's Scale on Receptivity to the Gospel. They also identify with twenty-four characteristics of secularized individuals. Several analysis cycles resulted in nine recurring themes that emerged from the data. These themes are four life encounters with Grace, six relational

factors, seven good experiences in the Adventist church, three unique features that are specific to Adventists, three church-related factors impacting retention among secularized individuals, four personal factors influencing their decision-making process when it comes to joining or leaving religious institutions. The study also revealed five barriers hindering efforts to reach out and engage secular audiences, as well as five best qualities of the ministry workers and five approaches for successful ministry toward this group.

Conclusions

Analyzing these findings and insights resulted in twelve proposed strategies that Adventist organizations and conferences can use as examples in developing effective ministry programs targeting secularized people in Metro Manila. These strategies can also be applied to other cities with diverse population segments, including those currently disconnected from organized religion like the secularized people.

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Presented in Partial Fulfillment

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Kleber Gonçalves

To

Abner, J. Nevin, A. Taylor, and Nanay

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

forget the precious times we shared both professional and personally. Oscar Osindo who challenged me during my master's degree program to pursue DMiss and "train my brain." To the administrative assistants and secretaries in the Mission Department of Andrews University who helped me during registration times. To all our professors in the DMiss program, who are brilliant yet humble workers of God. We learned a lot atm your feet. Salute to you all.

To Marilou and Erwin Flores, who hosted me for three years during my classes in Andrews. To Auntie Cora Medina for letting us stay in her house one summer. To Rebecca Arias, Fely Patton, and Reggie Antonio for their hospitality and friendship.

To my American family, the Harwoods—Grandpa and Stan, the last of their generation who love God and missions. Stan and Jean who gave my partial scholarship every year until I finish this program. Noreen, my friend, ever faithful companion and driver in mission trips. Lori and Melinda who are my sisters.

To God be the glory and honor!

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization and secularization present two of the greatest challenges to mission today (Harvey Cox 2013, 65). They shape the thinking, feeling, and behaving of the post-modern people (Paul Hiebert 2008, location 261) in the cities. Urbanization is "a new way of life and the new frontier for missions" to which the institutionalized church has a hard time responding (Kleber Gonçalves 2010, 5). The post-modern societies have "different levels of secularism among people" (Gonçalves 2017, 95; Stephen Beck 2014, location 4633) which necessitates understanding the context of the people in focus and identifying what kind of secular people they are or what type of secularity they have. This research attempts to bridge the gap in knowledge and practice relative to effective and fruitful approaches to reach secularized people in Metro Manila.

Background to the Study

The Seventh-day Adventist Church of the twenty-first century faces numerous challenges and obstacles in fulfilling the gospel commission in the cities (Annual Council 2011, 1). It grapples with the question of how to establish congregations in urban centers. The question is partly because in the cities, you can find people of different ethnicities who left their traditional homelands and joined the different migrant communities. In Metro Manila, these communities include college students from different regions of the

Philippines, Muslim merchants from the south, Chinese and Indian immigrants conducting businesses all over the metro, and young professionals who work in high-rise buildings. There are also manual laborers from the provinces who seek work and fortune and are usually found in slum areas and questionable neighborhoods in the city. Metro Manila provides urban communities that produce a breed of neo-cosmopolitan people, some trying to maintain their traditional beliefs, others embracing secularism. Still, others have adopted a mixture of traditional and secular worldviews. The question that is being asked is, "How secular are the *Manileños* (people who live in Manila)?" This is answered in chapter four. Furthermore, what is unique in the context of the *Manileños* is its deep roots in Catholicism, and because of this, they present different challenges from their contemporaries in other cities of the world. By the same token, the *Manileños* have one thing in common with other city people as far as the mission of the church is concerned: they either become untouched by the gospel or are fast becoming resistant to the gospel due to the secularizing effects of the city.

Looking closely, the global trend shows an increase in the population in the cities. In the 1800s only three percent of the population of the world lived in the cities. In the 1900s, this figure rose to fourteen percent (Gerson Santos 2014, 70). At present, the numbers have changed. Fifty-five percent of the world's population now lives in urban areas according to the report on World Urbanization Prospects (UN DESA 2018). By 2030, experts are projecting that "sixty percent of the world's population will live in an urban area" (Mike Bennett and Tito Betancourt 2013, 231-238).

This situation is repeated in Asia. There is a rapid growth of people living in the cities. In 1995, eight of the top fifteen largest cities in the world are concentrated in Asia

(Roger Greenway and Timothy Monsma, 2000, 7). Bob Garrett (2014, 292) in his discussion of the implications of global urbanization to missions stated that by 2013 "the towns and cities of the developing world will make up eighty-one percent of the urban population." At present, Asia's level of urbanization is nearing fifty percent (UN DESA 2018 Report).

What does this mean for the Adventist Church? Richard McEdward and David Trim (2014, 3-7) observed that there are 500 cities in the world with a population of one million or more where the ratio of Seventh-day Adventists to non-Adventist is 1,826 Seventh-day Adventists for every 1 million people. This underscores the need for Seventh-day Adventists to focus on reaching people in the cities of the world.

Furthermore, the Adventist Church in the twenty-first century is now facing not only the challenge of working in urbanized settings but also dealing with secularism among the post-modern people of the cities. There is a rise in the number of "'de-religionized' people in the Second and the Third World" (LOP 8 1980). As Mark Finley (2014, 11) notes, these de-religionized or secularized people are affected by "materialism, and lack of interest in spirituality." It is "increasingly more difficult to draw sizable crowds" in public evangelism–the methods that used to work are no longer as productive" and "advertising that once drew respectable audiences is less effective" (Finley 1993, 16). This situation related to urban evangelism in North America is fast becoming true in the Philippines today. In just two decades, the population of the Philippines "grew from 60 million in 1990 to 94 million by 2010" (Asian Development Bank 2014). At present, Metro Manila has a population of 14,308,637 swelling to over fifteen million during daytime (Manila, Population Stat). Another source says that "its population is now

estimated at 18,649,422" and "the larger urban area is estimated at 21.3 million" in population (Manila, World Population Review). The result of this increase in urbanization in the Philippines, is "a society that is growingly secular" (Rhoderick Abellanosa 2013, 548; Ines San Martin 2015, para. 7). There is "a shift in the religion-society dynamics" in the modern-day Philippines which shows "emerging forms of religious pluralism" (Manuel Victor Sapitula 2015, 2, 4). This is vividly illustrated by the trend of "decline in church attendance among Filipino adults from 66% in 1991 to 43% in 2013" as described by Mahar Mangahas (cited by Sapitula and Cornelio 2014, 1).

In the Philippines, the Holy Week or Lenten Season used to be a family affair with the church and community. Family members who are scattered all over the Philippines, go back to their home provinces and celebrate the Lenten Season with the family, attending masses and singing in "Kubol." Now, more people are planning their vacations to tourist destinations, spending days on the beach or shopping in the malls instead (Jove Jim Aguas 2019, 239). There is also an emerging trend among Filipino Christians to do "religious innovations" to make their faith relevant in response to the swift societal changes brought on by urbanization and globalization (Sapitula and Cornelio 2014, 3). This is further illustrated in the study of Cornelio (2017, 15) where Catholic youth engage in "reinterpreting religion" that looks at "God as an intimate entity" and their human relationships with others as the projectile of "right living" than just "right believing." It means that these youth no longer identify the church as the source of their identity and that they believe in living the teachings of Christ as a natural outcome of a personal relationship with God, rather than dictated by the church.

Adding to the challenges already mentioned is the lack of readiness of the church

to reach the secularized *Manileños*, Ray Bakke (1999, 229) comments on the challenges faced by "the pastors, normally trained in the barrios" who "come to Metro Manila to pastor a flock that includes all the proliferation" of different people from different islands, said that "the bigger the city, the less they do in evangelism; they program and over-program their members." Most of them are ill-equip to deal with the effects of secularization. This situation creates a deadlock for the ministry to the secularized people.

Statement of the Problem

Reaching secularized people in Metro Manila necessitates the development of a contextualized mission strategy. The secularized people is an emerging people group and they have special some special needs that the traditional Adventist Church does not address. However, many pastors who serve in Metro Manila are usually trained in the barrios and for the barrios. Consequently, they do not have an adequate grasp of what attracts urban secularized people to the Adventist Church. There is a need to research what factors influence secularized people in Metro Manila to join and remain in the Adventist Church as a basis for developing urban ministry strategies to reach other secularized people.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that influence secularized people to join and remain in the SDA Church and to develop urban ministry strategies to reach other secularized persons based on the findings of this research.

Research Questions

This research will specifically answer the following questions:

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1. What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?

2. What are the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños?*

3. What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

4. What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

5. What are the barriers to reaching the secularized *Manileños?*

6. What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?

Justification for the Research

This study aims to bridge the gap between the need of evangelizing and retaining secularized people and the appropriate approaches to evangelize them. As far as I am able to determine, this is the first Seventh-day Adventist study to address the problem of evangelizing secularized people in Metro Manila. This study will specifically be of benefit to Seventh-day Adventist leaders and pastors in Central Luzon Conference as they consider current and future ministry and mission strategies for Metro Manila area. This study will also be able to bring out pertinent information about the urban and secular contexts of Metro Manila and may also serve as a basis for future mission research in other cities in the Philippines and other countries.

Definition of Terms

Before discussing the methodology, it is useful to define specific terminologies and how it is used in this dissertation.

Adventist Church. This is the common name used by people to refer to the Seventh-day Adventist Church which will be used also in this paper.

Adventist Message for the last days. This refers to the three Angels Messages found in Revelation 14:6–12. In this study this is synonymous to the phrase "everlasting gospel."

Attraction. Different ways where a secularized person is drawn towards an Adventist believer or the Adventist Church. It may be Christian qualities like kindness and spirituality, lifestyle, and values. It may even be about doctrines that answers the questions of the seeker. It maybe also on the relationship that Adventists give to others.

Central Luzon Conference (CLC). This is the regional office of the SDA Church for eleven Provinces (Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Cabanatuan, Metro Manila, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Rizal, Tarlac and Zambales, and the towns of Dinapigue, and Palanan, Isabela), located at 20 Governor Pascual Avenue, Potrero, Malabon, Metro Manila.

Creative Approach. Creative refers to the ability to think outside the traditional pattern of ministry and mission. In this study, creative approach refers to an approach or approaches that takes into consideration the unique contexts of the target audience as well as the opportunities and strengths of urban ministry practitioners resulting in the increased conversion of the target audience.

Christian Worldview. Is a biblically informed worldview grounded in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and the knowledge of God. It is thinking, seeing, and doing as someone who has been born into the kingdom of God. The Christian worldview motivates for a godly and faithful living as a testimony of the changing power of God. The believer's response to daily struggles, problems, and catastrophes is shaped by an

understanding of the Sovereignty of God, his justice, and his mercy.

Disciple. A follower of Jesus who has made a commitment to continuously grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Pet 3:18), imitating Christ, living a life of obedience to the commands of God, participating in the work of saving others and making other disciples (Dallas Willard 2006, ix-x).

Discipleship. It is the process of transformation and growth of a believer from babyhood to maturity, growing in his relationship with God and others, practicing spiritual disciplines, growing in grace and knowledge, and participating in the work of discipling others.

Globalization. A process that transforms our present social state to one of globality (Manfred Steger 2003, 32). It is a universalization of culture, creating a worldwide society, where social interactions are happening on a global scale (Neil Ormerod and Shane Clifton 2009, 5).

Gospel or Good News. It refers to the message of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Mission. When the word is capitalized, it refers to the Great Commission. Small letters (i.e., *mission* or *missions*) refers to the activity of the church to carry out the Great Commission. In this study, mission, missions and ministry are used interchangeably.

Pluralism. It is a philosophy that operates on the assumption that all viewpoints and positions have equal considerations and all have equal validity, no matter how they seem to contradict one another. Tolerance is its number one value (Terry Bowland 1999, 126).

Postmodernism. It is an era. It is also a worldview that expresses doubt on the

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modernist assumptions. Its attitude is cynicism towards modernist claims. It believes that absolute truth does not exist, that all truth is relative and personal. It believes in a pluralism of ways or approaches and walks with God. It's acceptance of truth is experiential.

Reach. In this study, refers to presenting the Adventist message that results in a positive response that leads to baptism, and discipleship.

Retention. Remaining or staying in his faith or church or commitment to his faith-community after baptism.

Secularism. It refers to the belief system or philosophy that rejects religion, a worldview that separates God and this life and the spiritual reality. Secularism has a spectrum, the degree varies from one society to another (Hans Weerstra 1997, 5).

Secularized Person. A person who essentially rejects religious faith and worship because he/she essentially believes, and lives life accordingly, as if there is no God, or if there is a God, that He has nothing basic to do with life here as we know it (Weerstra 1997, 5; Z.E. Yazid, Abdul Hamid, Ahmad Fauzi, Henk Folmer, and Justin Beaumont 2014, 394). Many of them "may not deny the existence of God" but are liable to think that "human being has no need of God" and religion. Their attitudes toward the church range from "indifference to antagonism" (Yazid et al. 2014, 394; Michele Buonfiglio 1995, 3).

Secularity. It refers to the degree to which individuals and societies can meaning-fully be characterized as secular or nonreligious. Secularity denotes conditions or circumstances in which religion is marginalized or supplanted by something (Phil Zuckerman, Luke Galen, and Frank Pasquale, 2016, location 433). It also refers to the degree to which political, public, or cultural secularism and public secularity increase

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over time in a population, a particular society, or humanity in general. Secularity also shows the degree to which religion or religiosity declines.

Secularization Process. Secularization is a process of "gradual displacement" of religion and its interpretations of physical reality and what pertains to human life by nonreligious explanations (Buonfiglio 1995, 2).

Secular Worldview. One that makes little or reference to supernatural or religious ideas.

Spirituality. It refers to the quest for a fulfilled and authentic religious life, a quest to experience things with God, a longing to fulfill God's will in one's life. It is contrasted with the academic or detached approach to religion. It is not merely identifying key beliefs and practices, but having experiences with a relational God (David Voas and Abby Day 2014, 4; Alister McGrath 1999, 2).

Unchurched. An unchurched person is someone who has not attended a Christian church service, other than a special event such as wedding or funeral, at any time during the six months he is disconnected from the church (George Barna and David Kinnaman 2014, 10).

Urban Ministry Practitioner. It refers to an Adventist who engages in ministry in the city. This person could be a pastor or a layperson.

Urbanization. It refers to the process of growth of towns and cities through the gradual increase of population brought on by migration from rural to urban environments (Benjamin Tonna 1982, 1:5). It also refers to the process whereby the community adapts to the change from rural to urban settings. There is a "social reorganization of space" which touches on the vibrancy, exchange, and transformation of human life that

characterize urban life (John Short 2012, 25). People live a fast-paced life, they develop

competitiveness, they become more materialistic and tech savvies, and they like to travel.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter surveys the literature regarding secularization and its interaction with
Christianity, particularly Adventism, and how missiologists have dealt with the
challenges of presenting the gospel to secularized people. The chapter is organized into
three major parts based on the research questions. The first part deals with biblical-
theological foundations for reaching secularized people. The second section reviews the
different sociological factors influencing secularized people including urbanization,
globalization, pluralism, secularism, and the secularization process that turns persons into
secularized people. The third part compares various models developed by missiologists in
reaching the secularized people with the gospel and their discipleship. The last part
outlines the theoretical framework of this study.

Biblical-Theological Foundations for Reaching Secularized People

In this part of the chapter, we will discuss the biblical-theological basis for
reaching secularized people. We will discuss the beginning and the heart of mission-the
Missio Dei, where the Triune God is engaged in fulfilling his universal plan of salvation.
We will also discuss the types of grace in operation under the *Missio Dei*, particularly

prevenient grace–how God seeks the lost and lead them to salvation. We will also discuss the Great Commission given by Jesus Christ to the church and its relevance to our understanding of mission for the present. The third biblical foundation that we will discuss is the Three Angels Messages given to the Remnant Church, how its understanding shape our message for the last days and the last generation including the secularized people. On the last section, we will discuss key Old and New Testament references to urban mission and ministry, which outline principles and implications for reaching secularized people.

The Missio Dei

Mission started at the heart of God. Craig Ott, Stephen Strauss, and Timothy Tennent (2010, 58) describe the perfect will and plan of God for the universe. He wants to enlarge the family of heaven with intelligent beings (Francis Nichol 1953, 1:1081). Our first parents, Adam and Eve were created in His image, perfect and holy, the objects of His love and lordship. It was "God's plan that they should populate the earth" (Nichol 1953, 1:1081) but sin spoiled this plan. As a consequence, Adam and Eve were to die because of their disobedience. However, God put into motion His universal plan to save humankind and restore them into God's family. This restoration includes all of His creation affected by sin (Ellen White, *Adventist Home* 1952, 540). Not only this, He plans to restore back His kingdom of righteousness and grace usurped by Satan here on earth (1953, 1:1082). This restoration is universal in scope and nature. It is extended "to people of every nation and of every ethnic or linguistic group" (Rev 7:9), to all ages, to men and women, to rich and poor.

The origin of mission is the heart of God (David Bosch 1991, 392). It is incomprehensible to most of us because we do not understand the love of God for people. This plan includes the sending of his own Son Jesus to die for humankind and gain the victory over sin. It also includes the sending of the Holy Spirit to manifest his power to change hearts and minds, to guide and help the church, and to empower the followers of God. The plan also includes the participation of the church in saving others. This mission originated with God, driven by God, and remains to be owned by God (Angel Manuel Rodriguez, *Salvation Without Knowledge of Christ*, n.d., 1). Bosch (1991, 1719) says, "If there is a missionary in the Old Testament, it is God Himself." Ellen White (*Desire of Ages*, 142) agrees by explaining the reasons why believers should be involved in missions, she says, "God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work … to enter into His joy … we must participate in His labors for their redemption."

However, Vicedom postulates (cited in Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, 75) that the success of missions "does not depend on human efforts and strategies" but "mission is the work that belongs to God." In fact, John McIntosh (2000, 632) asserts that God is "doing everything possible to communicate salvation to the world." These concepts give the church the privilege and confidence that what it does is part of a bigger and cosmic purpose in the progress of salvation history.

The mission of the church "flows directly from the missionary God," therefore, it justifies the claim of biblical truth (Lesslie Newbigin 1989, 83), and it "moves the church to proclaim the gospel in bold humility" (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, 75). Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of

everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Rom 1:16). And believers who came after him, make this their declaration too.

The Grace of God

Grace is what propels "our missionary God." It is the best expression of his character. It is also the driving force in his missionary endeavors. Its Hebrew (*chen*) and Greek (*charis*) words signify his favor, kindness, goodness, benevolence, and loveliness toward humanity. He shows it by being merciful, gracious, compassionate, and by taking pity on us. He also humbles himself to reach his lost creation. Grace is unmerited gift or favor, his love toward the undeserving (Jiří Moskala 2022, 25). It is free, undeserved, all-encompassing toward the sinful man. It is what makes him forgive and deliver us from our sins and our punishment (2022, 26). "That he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:7, NIV). Adventists follows the Arminian interpretation of free grace free from the Calvinistic shade on *monergism,* which means that God determines all things. In fact, George Knight (2013, 5) differentiated *monergism* from *sygernism*, saying that *monergism* is "the belief that God is the sole agent in salvation and that human beings have absolutely no part in cooperating with God in their salvation." Furthermore, Knight (2013, 6) infers that Adventists believe in *synergism* instead, which is the "belief that salvation is a cooperative project and process in which God is the superior partner and the human person being saved is the inferior but nevertheless crucial partner." Woodrow Whidden (2016, 55) postulates that Ellen White agrees on Wesley's interpretation of grace from the context of "free grace and by responding using the human faith." Not on the "instantaneous perfection" aspect, but on "free grace and transforming grace."

There is only one grace of God, but it has many functions and flavors. It shows

God's love literally for everyone (John 3:16; Rom 5:8). In showing this grace, he died for

all (Titus 2:11), and wants to save all (1 Tim 2:3–4). Grace has different types and

functions. Moskala (2022) identifies seven types of grace with their functions: (1)

universal or common grace, (2) prevenient grace, (3) saving grace, (4) transforming

grace, (5) empowering grace, (6) sustaining grace, and (7) triumphant grace. The

attraction and retention of the secularized people is a process that goes through these

different types of grace (See figure 1).

The **universal grace** is shown in the care that God shows for the physical life of

the world and humanity. "That you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes
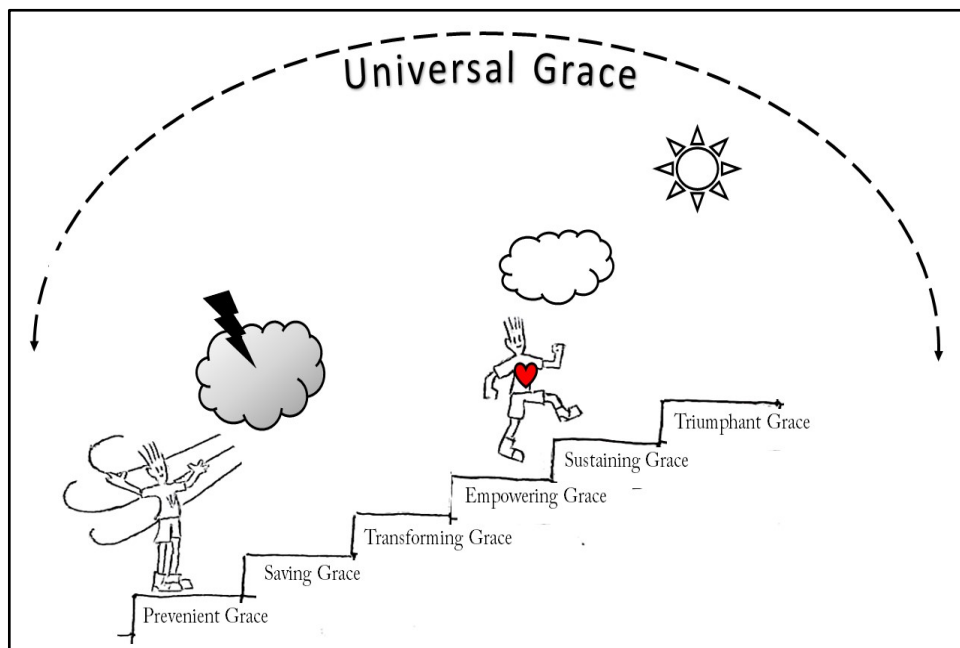
Figure 1. Seven types of God's grace operating in the world. Adapted
from Jiří Moskala's article *God's Blazing Grace* (2022).

his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matt 5:45, NIV). "The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made" (Psalm 145:9, NIV). The second type of grace is the **prevenient grace**. This grace comes before conversion and enables a spiritually dead person to hear, awaken, and response to God. It influences our heart and mind, it strengthens our will to respond to God and to repent when the Word of God is proclaimed. It calls us out of sin to eternal life (1 Pet 2:9-10). Whidden (2016, 54) described this grace as God's initiative in the salvation of humankind. However, there is freedom of will, people can reject and refuse the gift of salvation (Heb 3:12-15). John Reeve (cited in Moskala 2022, 27) postulates that "with the God-empowered choice restored through prevenient grace, the sinner's role in salvation is to allow or reject the gracious gifts of God's saving operations … empowering the saved sinner to will and to act in accordance with God's law in response to God's love." The third type is the **saving grace**. It proceeds from accepting prevenient grace. It leads people to accept God's justifying grace. Jesus knocks at the door or our hearts, calling our attention, wooing us. Then saving grace helps us to open our hearts to let him in (Rev 3:20). It is the Holy Spirit working around and in us to lead us to repentance and accept the salvation offered through Christ. The fourth type of grace is **transforming grace**. It changes the follower of Christ in his "thinking, feeling, goals and ambitions, motivations, desires, imagination, direction, service and lifestyle" (2022, 28). God makes him a new creation (2 Cor 5:14). God empowers the believers to change–"for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." (Phil 2:13). The fifth type of grace is **empowering grace**. This grace equips the believer with spiritual gifts for serving others and performing God's work (1 Cor 12:4-11, 27-31; Eph

4:7-16). The sixth type of grace **is sustaining grace**. This is the type of grace that sustains the believer in a vital relationship with Christ (1 John 2:24, 27). Under this grace a believer grows in knowledge and grace (2 Pet 3:18). It helps the believer to have the strength to endure the stresses and hardships of life, to remain centered on Jesus, and to provide vigor and joy in life. The **transforming**, **empowering**, and **sustaining grace** of God, all three function under the sanctification process. Knight (2013, 11) asserts that "the Holy Spirit convinces individuals of sin and leads them to the Sin Bearer and subsequently provides enabling power to live life conformed to the divine precepts." Lastly, the seventh type of grace is **triumphant grace**. This grace provides miracles and victories over struggles with besetting sins, propensities, addictions, and any remnant of sinful human nature. It prepares us for translation. It brings us all to the final stage of victory through glorification and eternal life (Jude 1:24-25).

The Great Commission

The Great Commission is the marching orders of Jesus Christ. Russell Burrill (1996, 11) calls it the *Magna Carta* of the newly established Christian church. It says,

> All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matt 28:18-20, NIV)

It contains: (1) the authority, (2) the task, (3) the scope, (4) the promise, and (5) the duration. The authority spoken of in this passage is prophesied by Daniel in chapter 7:14, where it says,

> He was given authority, glory, and sovereign power; all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

When Jesus Christ was led into the presence of the Father, he was given authority, glory, and power. This implies that His death on the cross was accepted and He is to lead the church in triumph. The passage also prophesies the future when all the saved from all peoples, nations, and tongues, even the secularized peoples, will worship before Him (Rev 7:9,10). The task given is to make disciples. By going, baptizing, and teaching, we are to make disciples of the secularized people. The scope given is the world. This ensures that all people will be given the gospel. The secularized are scattered all over the world. Even though technology and travel have connected people to a global community, the church needs to look for the secularized people to share the Good News.

The power of God is backing this command. The promise is given by Christ who created the universe (John1:3). His power is limitless. This task has His promise of personal attention or presence. Ellen White (*Acts of the Apostles*, 1911, 3:29) says, "He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success." There is no room for fear and insecurity to accomplish this task. There is even a promise given of his presence which is our full assurance of power and protection. Along with these is the specified duration of the command "until the end of the ages."

Three Angels' Messages

The messages of the three angels in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation is the end-time message given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church to proclaim. This places the church in a very important role of not only making sure that the warning is carried to all peoples of the world (missions and structures for a worldwide scope), but also to

faithfully give the warning (content and methods), and to be prepared for those who are going to heed the warning (discipleship, church leadership).

The three angels' messages were given for a specific prophetic time and combine together as one last warning to the world. The first message is to return to the true worship of the Creator. Looking at mankind's history, man has fallen far from God. Not only is there so many religions that do not worship the Creator, but there are so many fallen religions within Christianity that teach "false doctrines." Christians have also failed to represent Christ in their lives and actions. As a result of their failures, today, there are cross-generations of people who are very secularized and do not have room for God in their lives. The message of the first angel is on point. It points to the justice system of God where there is judgment time. A time for reckoning, a time for accountability for what man has done to himself, to others, and to God's creation (environment). This concept of justice resonates with the secularized people. Pointing people to the worship of the Creator, answers a deep need in the psyche of a human being. He is the "Unknown God" that Paul points to the people of Athens (Acts 17:23) and therefore the One, man unknowingly seeks.

The second angel's message is the fall of Babylon, represented by the Catholic church. It also includes its cohorts of Protestant denominations which teach false doctrines. It calls for teaching pure doctrines from the Bible. It also refers to restoring the breech spoken of in Isaiah 58:12 (KJV), "And they … shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, 'The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.'" The true work of restoration is done by Jesus Christ (French 1933, para. 7 and 9). However, the Seventh-day Adventist

Church shares the work of restoring truths that were 'trodden down' by generations of unfaithfulness and breaking covenant with God (French 1933, para. 3). This is one of the unique roles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Knight (2000, 203) points to two unique sets of truths that the Adventists hold. The first set consists of the central pillar doctrines: the seventh-day Sabbath, the second coming, the ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary, the conditional immortality, the spiritual gifts, and the great controversy. The second set consists of beliefs that Adventists share with other Christians: the Godhead, the divine inspiration of the Bible, the problem of sin, the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the plan of salvation. "It is the role of the end-time people of God to preach this end-time threefold message" (Hans LaRondelle 2000, 872). The Three Angels' Messages are so important to proclaim and so integral in the Adventist Church's mission endeavors for the last days.

Reaching the Secular People

Secularism only started after the Renaissance period. From the historical perspective, the secularization of the world started with the birth of modernism or as others have pointed out, Modernism gave birth to secularism. The Old and New Testaments do not refer to "secular people" or "secularization." People then were identified as either monotheistic or polytheistic. In this sense, we can describe people of the Old and New Testament as religious people. There were only two sides to choose from--the true God or the false gods. However, there are nuances in the Bible of "people living apart from God," and of "a lifestyle that has no god." The National Secular Society's description of "a lifestyle that has relegated God into the private space" (Secularism, n.d.) is also alluded to in the Bible. These nuances of secularism on some

biblical passages will be considered on this part of the paper. In addition, secularism in this study, will be put in the wider context of urban mission since the cities are the milieu of the secularized people.

Cain is the first man mentioned in the Bible who "went out from the presence of the Lord" (Genesis 4:16). Surrounded by the evidences of the consequences of the transgressions of his own parents--Eden being just a stone throw away, the guardian angels with the flaming swords, Cain should be thankful that they were spared from death and were given a promise of a deliverer. Yet he harbored rebellious thoughts in his heart and chose to be disobedient (White 1890, 72). In fact, his act of offering "some of the fruits of the soil" (Genesis 4:3) is a stark contrast to the prescribed offering (a slain lamb) that God asks from a worshipper. H.D.M. Spence-Jones (1909, 83) posits "he virtually proclaimed his disbelief in God's promise and repudiation of God's way of salvation" through this act. Derek Kidner (1967, 80) argues that it springs from his "arrogance of spirit" and blindness to his faults evidenced by God asking him, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?" (Genesis 4:6-7). Michael Rydelnik and Micahel Vanlaningham (2014, 102) describe Cain's response, in chapter four verses 13 and 14, as one of a remorseful recognition of guilt and a yearning for an immediate full punishment. Yet, God showed Cain his matchless grace piled on top of his mercy to an erring child (2014, 102), pointing to a present and future chance for redemption should Cain choose. However, Cain's banishment from his family and starting a city was a "first taste of a self-sufficient society, which the is the essence of what the New Testament calls 'the world'" (Kidner 1967, 82). The rest of the chapter

contrasted those who follow God (from Seth) and those who did not (Lamech), which will be picked up again in chapter six with the label "sons of God."

The other passages from Scriptures that alludes to secularism are found in Psalms 10 and 14. In Psalm 14:1 and 4 (NIV), where it says, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good … In his pride the wicked does not seek Him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God." The immediate context of the first passage is the actions of the wicked against the righteous and his assumptions about God. However, a re-reading of the verses illuminates a declaration of a secular's view on God or the issues on God (John Wesley 2014, location 41668). This is a problem because if there is no God, then there is no sin. If there is no sin, there is no issue of forgiveness or salvation (Alexander MacLaren 2013, location 19495). There is no accountability nor thoughts of judgment. Then the last part of the passage says that the wicked has no room for God in his thoughts. This is a secular man the passage is describing, an atheist even (Allen Ross 2011, 373). Matthew Henry comments on the passage,

> The sinner here described is an atheist, [he believes] there is no Judge or Governor of the world, no Providence ruling over the affairs of men…. He cannot satisfy himself that there is none, but wishes there were none, and pleases himself that it is possible there may be none; he is willing to think there is none.

The second passage that alludes to secularism is from Psalm 10:4, "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." The person who is described here is someone who knows there is a God, but has decided that there is no room for God is his life. The passage can easily apply to the type of a secularized person who has decided to have nothing to do with religion, whether it is the institution or the rituals that come with it. He also belongs to the spectrum of the

secularized. The third passage is from Psalm 10:11 (KJV), "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it." He believes that either there is no God or God does not care what he does (MacLaren 2013, location 33422). This passage is describing a secularized person who may have a Christian background but is nominal or non-practicing.

Different sources describe a spectrum of the secular man. Kleber Gonçalves (2013, 123) explains that a secular person is someone who has "no real religious experience as the central focus of their lives, neither have their lives been influenced by the Christian faith." While Jon Paulien (1993) says,

> A secular person is certainly not an atheist, someone who has consciously rejected religion in the ultimate sense. He or she may believe in God, yet not continually conscious of God's involvement in the practical matters of everyday life…. He or she simply a person for whom religion has become irrelevant at the practical level of everyday experience. (47)

Both persons described above are types of secularized individuals. They either come from non—Christian background or they come from Christian background. The number from each group depends on the length of time that particular society has been on the secularization trend or process.

The Bible outlines a historicity of the separation of the sacred and the secular. People of the Old Testament understood the concept of separating things that are "sacred" and things that are "common" (Lev 10:10). The sacred belongs to God, and the "common" is for the use of man. The sacred and secular spheres used to be under God's sovereignty. The common and the divine are not in opposition to each other as some think. In daily life, the church used to rule over its own affairs and the state used to execute order and justice. Even Paul encourages the believers to respect people of

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authority or in governance (Rom 13:1-7). However, secularism continues to develop to a point where there is no room for God in man's daily affairs. Secularism is establishing itself as "the new god of the age." The secular man has pronounced death to the God of the Old and New Testament. Rick Wade (2017) describes secular society as removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. The voice of the church is being silenced in society. In some societies, God is not in the picture except in private space. It is a society where people decreasingly view the world with a religious perspective and with less or no reference to God (Wade 2017). R.C. Sproul (2008, para. 4) says, "the secularized culture operates as if he [God] does not exist. There is nothing transcendent to which the secular is accountable."

Mission to the City

One of the functions of the cities is as a center for religious worship, whether it is for the worship of the Creator God or for idolatrous worship. Historians like Eliade (cited in Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz 2001, 84), David Lim (1989, 4:22), and John Short (2012, 25) attributed the cities of the ancient world to being centers of religious influence. The cities were designed like shrines, and their walls were supposed to protect and divide the spirit world from the temple and its protectorate.

As the population grew and crime and social evils developed, people began to establish more cities to protect themselves. One city may have several tiers of villages surrounding it (Num 21:25, 26). The city's primary purpose is for "security and defense from enemies" (Conn and Ortiz 2001, 83; Lim 1989, 4:21). As time passed, these kinds of cities became larger and more industrial as they grew. In the process of expanding territories, the role of the cities also shifted. Later it became ruled by a monarchy. Further

on, cities naturally progress into empires. Through the succession of the world empires like Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, "this new role was solidified" according to Lapidus (cited in Conn and Ortiz 2001, 117).

Cities in the Old Testament

In the ancient world, the word "city" has been mentioned in tablets and papyrus as "*uru*" for the Sumerian, "*alu*" or "*happiras*" in Hittite, "*ir*" in Hebrew, and "*polis*" in Greek (Harvie Conn and Manuel Ortiz 2001, 83). It is estimated that the term "city" appeared 1,600 times excluding the use of proper names for the cities (Lim 1989, 4:20).

We find in the scriptures that it was God's purpose to establish a city that is ruled in righteousness. This is the city that Abraham was looking into the future in Hebrews 11:10. The proliferation of wicked cities required the establishment of godly cities which will become the source of spiritual light for the surrounding nations. There were forty-eight cities with schools for instructions, aside from the cities of refuge (Josh 21:1-42; 1 Chr 6-7). The six cities of refuge were distributed among the twelve tribes—where two tribes can easily access one. In addition, there were four Levitical cities in close proximity to each tribe making instructions three times more available. It shows that God wants his people to be well-instructed in righteousness.

Can all cities be bad? Some missiologists like Stephen Strauss (2012, location 1793), sought a balance in the "theology of the city." Strauss posits:

> Because human beings are concentrated in the city, their sin and depravity is also concentrated in the city. Filled with rebellious sinners seeking to be independent from God, cities can exhibit their greatest acts of pride and rebellion. Moreover, their sin and depravity infect the complex social systems of the city, resulting in systemic evil that goes beyond individual personal sin. (Location 1742)

However, Strauss (2012, location 1746) argued that to blame the city as evil would be missing the point since the Scripture is very clear that "sin roots in the hearts" of man. "If cities are evil, it's only because they are home for depraved human beings and social system." City dwellers are not only sinners but they are also people who bear the image of God who needs help to return to a loving relationship with their Creator. There are also followers of God who live in cities like Lot and others, so there must be a balance in how we look at cities.

Cities in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the word "polis" occur around 160 times. Luke mentions it in thirty-nine verses. Matthew mentions it twenty-six times, and the book of Revelation mentions it twenty-seven times. Around ninety cities were mentioned in the New Testament.

Paul is the foremost example of a missionary to the city. He himself came from the city of Tarsus. He worked in more than twenty-three cities during his three missionary journeys. Paul's ministry and mission strategy was to establish churches in cities, especially in major or central cities. Some of the cities that were prominent in the New Testament are Joppa, Antioch, Jerusalem, Pisidian Antioch, Corinth, Athens, and Ephesus. They included surrounding regions such as Galatia, Macedonia, and Asia (Gary Fujino and John Cheong 2012, location 872). This has been noted by many scholars as instrumental to the quick spread of the gospel in the pagan Roman world since cities often serve as hubs or centers of innovation and influence. Shirley Jackson (cited in David Claerbaut 2005, 1:7) postulates that "Christianity triumphed because it reached the

cities, included a diversity of people, and met the spiritual and material needs of the poor and marginal of the Greco-Roman society."

Jesus' ministry to the cities

There is an on-going debate among scholars whether Jesus really chose to do His ministry in the towns and cities or he chose the countryside. There is enough evidence that He did both. He also strategically went to the main cities on occasions where there are festivities and there will be many people. Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. He ministered in cities as well as in rural villages. He often visited and preached in Capernaum where he also did many of his miracles as well as Decapolis. People from the cities became his followers. Looking at the ministry of Jesus when he was on earth, he went ministering to people who lived in the cities and provinces. Jesus also sent out his disciples two by two to the cities. The disciples went and targeted Jewish cities at the beginning. This was in response to the specific instruction of Jesus not to go to any other cities but to "the lost sheep of Israel."

The city of God

In the book of Revelation, we find two cities described as representations of forces of good and forces of evil. The city of Babylon is depicted as a representation of fallen churches while the New Jerusalem represented God's victory over evil. Babylon will be destroyed just before Jesus' second coming. The New Jerusalem will be brought down to earth and will be where God's people will dwell for eternity. Thus, the city, which was first established against God's rule, is no more. The city built by God, New Jerusalem remains.

Sociological Factors Influencing Secularized People

What is the interconnection of the growth of the cities (urbanization), postmodernism worldview, the creation of global society (globalization), pluralism, secularism, the secular people, and the secularization process? How are these inter-related? These questions will be answered in this section.

Urbanization

Urbanization is a product of modernity. This is "a new way of life" and "the new frontier for missions" (Kleber Gonçalves 2005, 166; 2010, 5). Benjamin Tonna (1982, 1:5) describes the process of urbanization as "the phenomenon by which millions of men and women move *en masse* from rural to metropolitan areas … which transforms their lifestyle." However, it does not only affect geographical distribution of urban dwellers but also the "social reorganization of space" which touches on the vibrancy, exchange, and transformation of human life that characterize urban life (John Short 2012, 25). The cities become the "laboratories for new social developments, and accelerants of social, economic, and political change" (2012, 26).

Gonçalves (2010, 269) and Short (2012, 27-30) cited six factors responsible for rapid urban explosion: (1) unmatched population growth rate, (2) rural-urban migratory patterns around the globe, (3) scale and pace change across the world in the growth of cities and development of urban places, (4) marked metropolitanization of cities as centers of global economic activities (5) globalization of less developed countries, and (6) the information revolution. These six factors affect the lives of secularized people. They live a fast-paced life, always in a hurry to get somewhere, or get a job done. They develop competitiveness. They become more materialistic, needing to buy more gadgets,

accessories, the latest styles in fashion, changing cars, going out or eating out, and travelling locally and internationally. Less time is spent with families, children are left with helpers or media is used to baby-sit them. Housing becomes congested, having small space with many people. Hanging-out in malls and café's become popular. Busyness is the by-word of secularized people. These images are apt descriptions of the context of Metro Manila and other cities of the world.

Postmodern Worldview

In order to understand postmodernism, we have to look at its worldview assumptions. The postmodern worldview according to Bruce Bauer (2013, 89) and Ott, Strauss, and Tennent (2010, 75, 300) is pluralistic and discards the concept of "any absolute moral truth with universal application" or validity. Instead, Gilley (cited in Bauer 2013, 89) postulates that it accepts truth that is "developed and accepted within a certain community." So one particular truth maybe accepted in one community and not in another community. The postmodern's take on world religions and Christianity is that there is no point of comparison and they are utterly disproportionate so as they must be treated as such. For the postmoderns, there should be no stepping over boundaries, no convincing to changed sides, and no preaching. There is no room for Christian witness. Many postmoderns or secularized people have adopted these worldview and attitude and have inoculated themselves from attempts by Christians to witness to them. On the other hand, postmoderns highly values spirituality. They also value pluralism, experience, relativity, altruism, community, creativity, environmentalism, globality, holism, and authenticity (Bauer 2013, 88).

Terry Bowland (1999, 124-133) discusses seven signs of postmodernity.

Postmodern attitude embraces (1) *relativism*. This refers to a loss of any sense of absolute

standards. Bowland (1999, 124-125) posits that majority of postmodern people believe

that they are the one and only one who determine what is moral and immoral in their

lives. They base their decisions on their own experiences and wishes. They also believe in

(2) *experientialism*. This is determined by three things: consumerism, spectatorism, and

self-absorption. Consumerism is a hunger to accumulate things, to satisfy the need for

comfort, ultimately to experience the euphoria of well-being. Spectatorism is an

absorption to experience life at all levels. The media, internet, and technology affords the

millennials the illusion of living the life of the people on the screen (Bowland 1999, 125).

Self-absorption has become a way of life for most postmodern people. Self-image, self-

actualization, self-concept, and self-help became the language of the individuals. They

also believe in (3) *pluralism.* This philosophy operates on the assumption that all

viewpoints and positions have equal considerations and all have equal validity, no matter

how they seem to contradict one another. Tolerance is its number one value (1999, 126).

The next belief of the post moderns is (4) *deconstructionism*. For deconstructionists,

reality is what we create in our minds through language. The words we use take on

different meanings depending on who is the speaker and listener. Corresponding to this is

"the belief that every interpretation is just as valid as the next, there are no absolutes, only

personal experience. There is not one reality, no one meaning of the world, no

transcendent center to reality as a whole, but only individual interpretation of it" (1999,

127). They believe in (5) *nihilistic fatalism.* This is a philosophy with the assumptions

that "everything is absolutely meaningless. Fatalism is the philosophy that that future is

set and there is nothing we can do about it." Hence, "nihilistic fatalism is the ultimate

pessimistic view of the future" (Bowland 1999, 128). On the positive side, they believe in

(6) *fraternalism* (search for Community) (1999, 129). This is a psycho-emotional need to

find "a community where an individual can find identity and significance." Instead of the

"isolated enlightened individual," the postmodern man seeks for "a community-based

model." Then the last and also important trait or belief of postmoderns is (7) *spirituality*.

It is a seeking for an experience with a higher power. Postmodern people are increasingly

open to discussion of spirituality, but it is a spirituality with pluralism and tolerance as its

framework. Bowland (1999, 131) postulates that "each individual determines how own

view of truth and then enters into a community which promotes such a view."

Graham Johnston (2001, 26) posits that postmoderns are known for the following

characteristics: They are reacting to modernity and all its tenets. They reject objective

truth. They are skeptical and suspicious of authority. They are like missing persons in

search of a self-identity. They have blurred morality and are into whatever is expedient.

They continue to search for the transcendent. They are living in a media world unlike any

other. They will engage in with the knowing smirk. They are on a quest for community.

They live in the present.

Globalization

Other than urbanization, one of the phenomenon that brings about secularization

is globalization. It is important that we understand what it is and what its role in the

proliferation of secularity on people.

The simplest definition for globalization is given by Ormerod and Clifton (2009, 5) in

relation to universalization of culture: "globalization is a description of social-interactions

occurring on a global scale." Manfred Steger (2003, 13) infers that as a process

globalization is in a flux and will continue to evolve in its meaning. He underscores that

globalization should instead be treated as a set of social processes that transforms our

present social state into one of globality (2003, 7, 32). Globalization theory describes the

nature of this worldwide society. In this sense, globalization is a label used to encapsulate

the complex and globally ranging set of experiences, relationships, structures,

technologies, institutions and cultural symbols that are seminal for life in a compressed

world. Globalization extends to all aspects of life—personal, structural, economic,

technical and political, cultural and religious spheres of life. Terry Muck and Frances

Adeney (2009, 369) point out to the cross-cultural exchange through travel, internet, chat

rooms, blogs, personal web pages. Whereas in the past governments can make their

countries restricted from others, computers and internets have open the gates for contacts

in the outside world. Cities and urban places in different countries developed their own

version of what modernity is in their own culture. That is why there is no one face of

secularism. It continues to evolve.

Globalization of Religion

How did globalization affect religion? Since globalization is social interaction

happening in global scale, it brings the world into a global culture where the pattern of

thinking is based on science, where democratic pluralism is advanced, where capitalism

or materialism is its milieu. In a global world, the flow of ideas is multidirectional

(Ormerod and Clifton 2009, 5; Muck and Adeney 2009, 369). The flow of religious

beliefs is advanced through immigration of people, and the world religions find their new

adherents in new lands in the West and Christianity finds its way to the East (Short 2012,

25-26). In the twenty-first century "religion also becomes globalized" (Muck and Adeney

2009, 17). A common religious form is emerging out of their traditional forms, shedding their distinctive forms and morphing into a shape, which is recognizable in all religions Religions now look more alike than unalike or divergent. Muck and Adeney (2009, 17) theorize that "as politics and economics become homogenized, the role religion plays in those cultures also homogenized."

<div align="center">Pluralism</div>

Another factor that influences secularization is *pluralism*. Pluralism is "the existence of different types of people, who have different beliefs and opinions within the same society" (Pluralism 2017). This society is described as where "multiple truth claims and religious convictions co-exist" (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, 75). When absolute truth is discarded, pluralism will naturally result. Bowland (1999, 126) infers that pluralism is a belief that "all viewpoints and positions not only be given equal consideration, but that they also all have equal validity." Not only that, Angel Rodriguez (2013, 430) postulates that it teaches that "all religions are equally valid and that there are many saviors and Jesus is simply one of them."

Proponents of the "mutuality model" of pluralism explain that where "the world's religions provide independent access to salvation," where "conflicting truth claims are reconciled" by repositioning them "from the level of objective, normative truth to subjective experience" (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, 299). They further explained that for adherents of religious pluralism "Christianity is just one of the many religions and has no unique claim as the final or authoritative truth…. It is not the most advanced religion and not the fulfillment of other religions."

However, unlike biblical apologists, pluralists do not subscribe to the practice of supporting their views with biblical support because for them that would be conceding that Christianity or the Bible is above all other world religions. The pluralists stand strongly on human experience as the universal standard criteria for truth.

There are four difficult positions that pluralists have according to Ott, Strauss, and Tennent (2010, 303): (1) They claim that beliefs and practices that makes each religion uniquely different from each others are but "human projection and perceptions of their own humanity." (2) The God of the pluralists cannot be known and unknowable. (3) Truth is based on the subjectivity of human experience, therefore the final judge what is truth is the one who experience it. (4) There are many paths toward God, this is a classic discription of pluralism.

Today's society is composed of many different cultures and religions all competing openly with each other for the allegiance of the people. Thus, tolerance is the byword in pluralism. The present day secular man is highly affected by the relativistic pluralism. Jimmy Long (1997, 71) observes that it promotes "to each his own" and "everyone has a right to his own opinion." Long (1997, 69) further state that "instead of human reason that leads to truth, postmodern posits multiple truths that lead only to preferences…. What is true is what one believes to be true." Berger (cited in Green 2010, 302) further says, "the end result is that 'Truth' becomes 'truths,' conflicting truth claims begin to cancel one another out, and 'the plausibility of traditional religious definitions of reality is put in question in the minds of the ordinary people."

Since Pluralism affects all other areas of life–politics, public education, the financial world, and the military, many missiologists and evangelists are losing the battle

to defend and propagate Christianity. Roger Greenway and Timothy Monsma (2000, 1:39) describe this danger, "respect and tolerance remove the need to engage in mission work and to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to followers of other faiths." Thus, Barna (2017, para. 12) argues that "more education is connected with lower levels of religiosity" because the students are exposed to explaining most things in life through science or philosophies that leaves God out. After decades of exposure to pluralistic views in education, workplace, politics, etc., the structures of society which is based on religious tenets provided less and less support for a religious interpretation of life and as a result, more and more people have less religious convictions and have unstable and relative understanding of truth.

<div align="center">Secularism, Secularization Process, and Secularized People</div>

There is a great need to understand secularism if we are to understand how to reach secularized people. Secularists compose more than fifteen percent of the world's population. Secularized people are found in every country in the world and in every global city. In many places the number of secularized people "have been on the rise in recent years" (Zuckerman et al. 2016, 6). Sociologists accept secularism and secularization as part of progress and modernization (Nilufer Gole 2010, 246).

The first concepts we need to understand are secularism, secularization, and secularized people--how they are related. These three terminologies are "used very differently in various academic disciplines, sociopolitical, and cultural contexts" (Casanova 2009, location 1049).

Secularism

Secularism is described by Talal Asad (2003, 349) not only as a worldview that gives precedence to material things over the spiritual but also a "[post] modern culture of alienation and unrestrained pleasure." It is where religious passion is suppressed and reason determines what is truth. It is also where religion is viewed with suspicion and there is intolerance and misconception. Secularism refers to "a whole range of modern secular worldviews and ideologies" (Jose Casanova 2009, location 1051; Asad 2003, 349), and are reflected in "projects of modernity and cultural programs." In other words, progress and modernization automatically brings in secularization. The more technologically advanced a society becomes, the less religious it will be (E. Spencer, M. Weber, K. Marx, and S. Freud, 2003, 1).

Varieties of secularism

There are different kinds of secularity as indicated in the works of Micahel Warner, Jonathan Vanantwerpen, and Craig Calhoun (Varieties of Secularism) and Bubandt and Vaan Beek (Varieties of Secularism in Asia). Harvey Cox (2013, xxxiii) also points out that "there is not a single secularism," "within its realm, there are denominations, sects, and schismatics, traditionalists and radicals" which gave rise to numerous and often rancorous "intrasecular disputes."

Charles Taylor (2011, location 736-1281) in his discussion of the development of Western secularization describes the branching off of secularization from the simple distinction of the "sacred" and the "secular" into two main path during the Reformation era. One path is the attempts of the reformers to bring back the "religion" into the lives of the people even though there is a separation between the "church" and "state." This is the

type of secularism that the revivalists and evangelicals stand on. The other path is to leave God out completely from everything—science, politics, institutions, and the lives of people. These two paths produced and continue to produce hybrids of secularism.

Characteristics of secularism

There are four characteristics of secularism as a philosophy (Anthony Campolo 1983, 17), they are:

1. Contingency or Belief in Natural Evolution. Secularists do not accept the biblical doctrine of creation. Instead, they believe in the premise of contingency, which assumes the pre-existence of basic elements in the universe where everything in the universe developed from and where homo sapiens emerged through the process of evolution and natural selection (Campolo 1983, 43). The implication of the belief in contingency is that: (1) all came to exist by chance and (2) everything can be explained naturally or scientifically. "The concept of contingency makes God irrelevant to the creation of the heavens and the earth" (44).

2. Autonomy of man. Contingency logically leads to the belief that since the human person is the result of chance, he or she is free to determine his or her destiny (no deity governing his or her life). He or she creates the meaning of life-not some deity governing the universe. He molds his own future and the goals he sets for himself are the ones he follows (Campolo 1983, 44).

3. Relativity. It holds the belief that there is "no moral absolutes" (1983, 44). Morality or "the absolutes about right and wrong" is relative and depends on the historical, social, and cultural context.

4. Temporality. This is the belief that life is all about the here and now. There is no "afterlife," no "future world in which sacrificial virtue will be rewarded," or "in which the injustices of life in this world will be rectified" (1983, 45). Death is the end of everything. To the secular person, the afterlife is only wishful thinking. Secular people have an attitude of living at the moment and getting the most experience in the present. For a secular person, ultimately, whatever he or she chooses to do is okay as long as he or she does not hurt anyone.

In terms of characteristics of a secular society (Zuckerman et al. 2016, location 1772-1788), it is described by six characteristics: (1) separation of church and state; (2) secular self-identification of majority of people; (3) weak theism or belief in God (majority of people are atheists or agnostics); (4) low levels of religious beliefs (minority of people hold religious or spiritual beliefs); (5) Low rates of religious participation (only a minority of people attend religious worship services on a regular basis or are active in religious congregations); and (6) Low rates of religious ritual observance (only a minority of people engage in religious rites and rituals).

The Secularization Process

Secularization is the process in which individuals, institutions, and societies become secular (Cassanova 2009, 1050). Secularization can be seen in the absence of religion at the different levels of society. It is the process in which religion loses social and cultural significance. The secularization process is in a Linear Chronology. It has evolved from its premodernism, to modernism, then postmodernism stages (Aleksandar Santrac 2013, 239). A few centuries ago, God is present in "social practices and at all levels of society" and in "any kind of public activity you will encounter God" (Charles

Taylor 2007, 1). Now, the separation of religion and state is felt more strongly in places where secularization has become part of the culture. Due to secularization, there is a rise of the number of "'de-religionized' people in the Second and the Third World" (LOP 8 1980). Holyoake (2016, location 110-113) posits that "secularism is a series of principles intended for the guidance of those who find theology indefinite, or inadequate, or deem it unreliable." It replaces religion when secular people do not get adequate answers to life issues.

Ariela Keysar (2014, 11) described the secularizing effect on Christianity of post-modernity, pluralism, and secular worldview in a diagram. (See figure 2).

What creates secularization? There are different factors contributing to secularization. One of these factors is *privatization*. Privatization simply means "it is increasingly considered inappropriate to discuss religion in public. Religion is confined
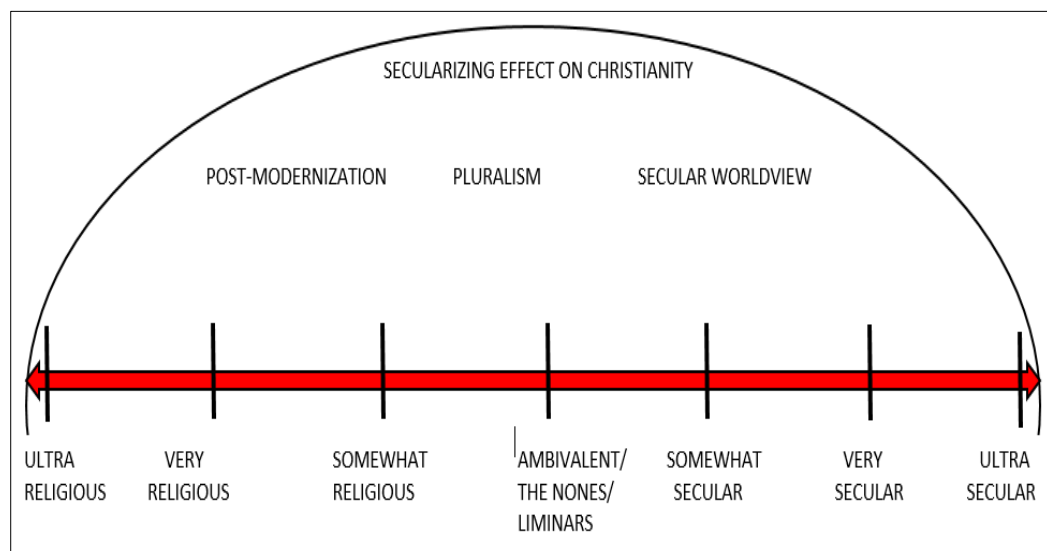
Figure 2. Secularizing effect on Christianity. Adapted from "Attitudes toward Human Evolution and the Belonging, Behavior, and Belief Scale. ARIS 200." (Keysar 2014, 11).

more and more to people's private spaces, treated as a "private matter" (Taylor 2007, 1).

Another factor is called "*existential insecurity*." The neo-modernization theory explains that "the greater that insecurity, the more likely that people will be religious. But where economic, political and social conditions have improved … religion loses its impact" (ARDA, par. 5). Thus, people who experience risks or threats to themselves and their families or faced risks in their community tend to be religious than those who grew up in safer and comfortable environment (Spencer et al. 2003, 2).

Secularized people

Secularized people generally refers to persons who are disenchanted with religion or who believe that religion should have no place in public life (Yazid, Z. E.; Abdul Hamid; Ahmad Fauzi; Henk Folmer; and Justin Beaumont 2014, 394). Secularism has people questioning the existence of God, the role of faith, the authority and relevance of churches, and the individualistic basis of moral standards. They are a people "who have no real religious experience as the central focus of their lives nor have been influenced by the Christian faith" (Goncalvez 2013, 123). However, Paulien (1993) posits that secularized people can also be

> certainly not an atheist, someone who has consciously rejected religion in the ultimate sense. He or she may believe in God, yet not continually conscious of God's involvement in … everyday life…. He or she simply a person for whom religion has become irrelevant at the practical level of everyday experience. (47)

At this point, we will place these three concepts side-by-side and summarize: secularism is the philosophy or ideology that results in secularized individuals, institutions or societies through a process called secularization. We can then use the diagram used by Keysar (2014, 11) and Thom Rainer (2003, location 860) to determine the secularity of the people in Metro Manila.

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Characteristics of secularized people

Secularized people are a diverse group of people. Secularism has people questioning the existence of God, the role of faith, the authority and relevance of churches, and the individualistic basis of moral standards. Below are five things that most secular people have in common with each other:

Secularized people are essentially ignorant of basic Christianity. Many of them have never read the Bible. Consequently, they are misinformed about what biblical Christianity believes. What they are exposed to is the "distorted, diluted form of Christianity" and once people are exposed to the wrong kind of Christianity, they become "immunized" from the real thing (George Hunter 1992, 44-54).

Secularized people are seeking life before death. This is the consequence of the belief in temporality of life. Hunter (1992, 44-54) postulates that secularized people are "aware of their mortality, but most of them fear extinction more than they fear hell or seek heaven." Secularized people generally do not ask about the afterlife. They struggle to find purpose and meaning in life, as well as to have significance, and to make a difference while they live.

Secularized people are conscious of doubt more than guilt. This is occasioned by the fact that for secularism there is no meaning to life. One does not have any moral compass. Thus, Donald Soper (cited by Hunter 1992, 44-54) posits that "doubt has taken the place of guilt as the common factor in the constitution of the preacher's crowd."

Secularized people have a negative image of the church. Secular people are not a-religious or immoral (1992, 43) but "they doubt the intelligence, relevance, and credibility of the Church and its advocates" (44-54). Furthermore, Campolo (1983, 17)

describes the secularized people as raised in ethos "where believing in spiritual realities" which cannot be explained by "logic and empirical verification" are not accepted.

   Secularized people have multiple alienations. In a secular society, individualism and privacy are the norms. Secular people often find it difficult "to belong." Their existence can be described in terms of multiple alienation (Hunter 1992, 44-54): alienation from nature, alienation from neighbors, alienation from the politico-economic systems, and alienation from their vocations. This multiple-alienation makes people characteristically lonely.

Secularism and the Unchurched

   The unchurched people are a big part of the population of the secularized people. The continuous increase in the number of the unchurched is an ongoing phenomenon (Thom Rainer 2003, location 1848). However, there is no data yet available on how many number of unchurched Filipinos there are. Studies that focus on people without church affiliation are extremely rare in the Philippines. There are however studies that show "emerging forms of religious pluralism" in the Philippines (Manuel Victor Sapitula 2015, 4) and a decline in church attendance as reported by Mahar Mangahas (cited by Sapitula and Cornelio 2014).

  Who are the churchless or unchurched? An unchurched person is someone who has not attended a Christian church service, other than a special event such as wedding or funeral, at any time during six months, he is disconnected from a church (George Barna and David Kinnaman 2014, 10). Four categories of the "churchless" were identified by Barna and Kinnaman. My assumption is that the participants in this study belong to the three groups they have identified: *actively churched, minimally churched, and the de-*

churched. The *actively churched* group usually attends church once a month or more often. The m*inimally churched* group attends several times a year, whose appearances in church buildings are infrequent and often unpredictable (Christmas, Easter, etc.). Then the third group is the d*e-churched*, who have been churched in the past but are currently on hiatus. They have a history of cyclical church attendance patterns. This group is also the fastest growing segment, one-third of the population in studies conducted in America. Barna and Kinnaman (2014, 15, 127) used a metric of fifteen questions to measure secularity. If the respondent identified with sixty percent or more (9 or more out of fifteen), then he is a secular person. If a person identifies with twelve or more factors (eighty percent or more) then he belongs to the highly secular group. I adapted and revised this metric to identify the participants in this study. (See the appendix for the metrics used).

Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes' Younger Unchurched People

Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes (2009, 10-14) made a study of the younger unchurched (ages 20 to 29). They have identified four general types among them: (1) Always unchurched (never been involved); (2) De-churched (having attended as a child; (3) Friendly unchurched (not particularly angry at the church); and (4) The hostile unchurched.

Among the four unchurched peoples identified by Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes the d*e-churched* and *the friendly unchurched* are describing the participants in my study. The *de-churched* attended church weekly as a child but had negative experience in the church. They no longer attend but their upbringing influenced their understanding about God, Christianity, and church toward more traditional views. They have a strong agreement

about God's existence and uniqueness but still leave open the possibility that supreme beings of other world religions may be similar to the biblical God. They were taught and accepted the bodily resurrection of Jesus as a fact, and they are convinced that believing in Jesus makes a positive difference in one's life. Their receptivity to Bible studies or conversation about Christianity is above average. They have very strong feelings against hypocrites in the church. They also have personal lifestyle issues that make them wonder if they would be accepted at church. They wonder occasionally about their eternal destiny much more than the rest of the unchurched. They are sure about the person's spirit continuing on after death, and they are more comfortable with the notion of heaven and hell. They personally know many Christians and are open to spiritual discussion with them. They find that some Christians do get to their nerves. Their friendships are not limited to those who are spiritual, and church attendance does not convince them that a person is more spiritual than themselves. They indicate that weekly attendance is not required for a person to have a good relationship with God and an understanding of Christianity. The *friendly unchurched* and *the hostile unchurched* are on opposite ends of the receptivity scale. The *friendly unchurched* is not angry with the church. The *friendly unchurched*'s affinity toward the church of his childhood is born out of his agreement that Christianity is relevant today and that the church is helpful to society. He strongly believes that it is not necessary to attend church in order to relate well with God, and he does not require instructions regarding Christianity from the church. The *friendly unchurched* are interested in knowing more about God. He is much more religious than his peers, and he may even identify with the denomination of his childhood. He still remembers being taught about heaven, and he wonders about his eternal destination

occasionally. He believes strongly that heaven and hell both exist, and he lives his life with that in mind. He is much more open to a small group study where he could learn about the Bible and Jesus. Familiar music at church has some appeal for the *friendly unchurched*. He may respond to an appropriate invitation to church, especially from a friend. These findings reveal some big implications for the Adventist Church, especially on what interests and what the de-churched and the friendly unchurched respond to.

Rainer's Unchurched People and Receptivity

Thom Rainer (2003) made a qualitative research study on the unchurched. His team used the interview method using a guide questionnaire to 300+ unchurched persons. As a result of his study, he designed the Rainer Scale which identifies the type of unchurched's receptivity to the gospel in the scale. I made the assumption that U1-U3 best describe the participants in my study. The characteristics are described below:
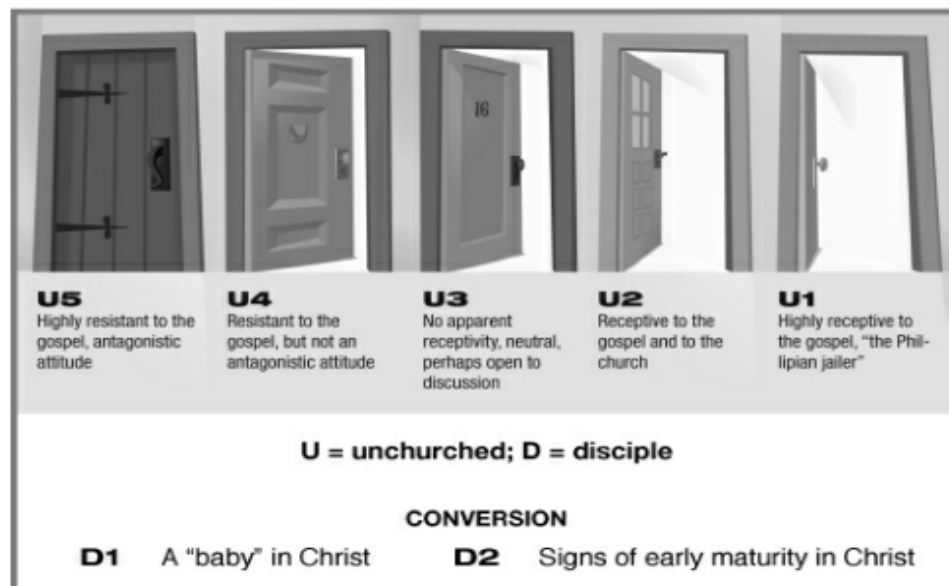
Figure 3. The Rainer Scale of Receptivity to the Gospel by Thom Rainer. *The Unchurched Next Door*, (2003, location 860).

The U1s are highly receptive to the gospel. They are the group that over-whelmingly say that "busyness" was the number one reason they did not attend church. They pray regularly and believe both in heaven and hell (Rainer 2003, location 2642). Almost half of them have a grace-based understanding of salvation. They are not anti-church. They do recognize that they are seekers (2003, location 2520). The U1s are waiting to hear the gospel and waiting for someone to give them hope (2003, location 1114). The U1s have more church backgrounds than the four groups (2003, location 2526). They have experiences with Christians who were good to them and they express that they are willing to attend the church if Christians who know them will invite them. The reasons they have given why they do not presently attend church were being too busy, laziness, and because of the hypocrites in the church. The U1s are very prayerful persons (Rainer 2003, location 2620). They believe the Bible is the Word of God and helpful in everyday living (2003, location 2677). They believe in Jesus Christ as the Savior but they get confused with salvation by works. The gospel is not very clear to the U1s. Some of the concepts are right but they mix it with salvation by works (Rainer 2003, location 2694).

The U2s are more known as "the seekers," either seeking something or are fully aware that they are seeking God himself (Rainer 2003, location 1043). They view the Bible as authoritative, almost similar to that of an evangelical (2003, location 1048, 2248). Their belief in heaven and hell are often biblical. They may be visiting churches once again, pray regularly, and believed in the supernatural, but have not found Christ yet. They are also very keen on accepting invitation to attend church. They are close to becoming a Christian and they have many questions (2003, location 1071). Most U2s

sound like Christians in what they say they believe, they are in fact like "cognitive Christians," but they do not have a personal and relational knowledge of God (Rainer 2003, location 2197). Most U2s are receptive to the gospel and will become Christians within a year with consistent and loving witness (2003, location 3608).

The U3 group is the most difficult to describe because of their tendency to be "neutral" or non-committal to anything. Religion seems to be a non-issue for them. They act as neither interested nor offended when someone talks to them about matters of faith. They went to church as children but they did not have good experiences in the church. They pray to God at least once a month when one is sick or there are some life events issues (Rainer 2003, location 1930). They have a Christian family (2003, location 1947). They go to church to attend events but not in regular worships (2003, location 1021). They may say they know God or have some understanding of God (pantheistic) but they do not need the church (2003, location 1930, 1950). They do not attend church because of busyness, they have a friendly view of Christians, and they have no negative views of ministers (2003, location 1955). They will "somewhat likely" attend church. They are U3s because even though they have positive views and attitude towards Christians and the church, they still resist attempts to share the gospel to them (2003, location 1961). Busyness was the top factor for not attending. Many of the U3s are very positive in endorsing church attendance and yet they themselves do not attend (2003, location 2034). The U3s have a confused understanding of salvation that is-Jesus plus good works (2003, location 2026, 2029). Most of the time the U3s do not know who they pray to but they pray to a higher power anyway (2003, location 2046). The U3s also have unique perspectives on heaven and hell but not the biblical kind. They envision heaven as a good

place to go, where dirt and bad things never happen. They think of hell as a place where really bad people go, a place of punishment.

Missiological Responses to Secularized People

Discipleship Models

In this section of the paper, we will discuss the missiological practices, theories, and innovation contributed by discipleship, contextualization, receptivity, people-group thinking, urban evangelism, and ministry to the unchurched–to reaching the secularized people.

What attracts secularized people to the Gospel? What kinds of discipleship programs work for the secularized so that they are nurtured and are growing in their faith and Christian lifestyle? When you look at the Great Commission, the heart of the command is on "making disciples." It is to gather believers "into [faith-]communities whose members are committed to one another and to God" (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, 98). Discipleship speaks to the secularized because they are longing for a community of their own, a community that is authentic and caring to its members. Discipleship speaks of not only membership to the church but a transformation and reformation at a deeper level, one that "breaks with the past," changing loyalty from Satan to Christ, and "putting off of the old and putting on the new." It is building a community that grows in faith and maturity, serving one another and the people outside the church, and working for the salvation of others (Ott, Strauss, and Tennent 2010, h158). In studies made about retention (David Trim 2015; Galina Stele 2019), those who backslide are those who have either have not been discipled and nurtured in the faith or

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have not experienced true heart conversion, if not only a superficial conversion.

Discipleship and worldview change are essential components to retention of believers to

Christ and to the church. The Nurture and Retention Committee (2020) described the

Adventist understanding of what a disciple as:

> A disciple is one who experiences continual transformation toward the fullness of
> Christ in a biblically faithful way, in a culturally appropriate way, at the worldview
> level, in personal spirituality, in emotional wholeness, in personal lifestyle, in family
> relationships…and as a disciple-making disciple. Christ's method includes all of
> these factors in a pre-baptism, baptism, and post-baptism process wrapped into a
> package called discipleship. (120)

Bill Hull's Discipleship

Christians are supposed to be disciples. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (cited in Bill Hull

2006, 15) saying, "Christianity without discipleship is Christianity without Christ."

Without Christ, the church loses its power and authority. When discipleship is not present

among the believers of Christ, they eventually die. Hull discussed about four essential

ingredients to be a good disciple. First, a disciple should have a vision. Just like the

apostle Paul, his dream is to be like Christ (1 Cor 9:24-27; Gal 4:19; Col 1:28). Second, a

disciple is accountable. He needs to submit to fellow disciples to keep his commitment,

honesty, and integrity to God. Third, as a disciple, he needs structure. This structure

simply refers to the action plans so that the Holy Spirit has the room to mold him into His

likeness. Lastly, as a disciple he needs to experience loving relationships in his

community. If he experiences being loved, it is easier to share that love to others.

Hull (2006, 130) listed "six-fold definition of being conformed to Christ's image."

These areas of conformity to Christ's image are necessary for a deep-level change in a

secularized person. They are:

1. Transformed Mind: Believe What Jesus Believed.

2. Transformed Character: Live the Way Jesus Lived

3. Transformed Relationships: Love as Jesus Loved

4. Transformed Habits: Train as Jesus Trained

5. Transformed Service: Minister as Jesus Ministered

6. Transformed Influence: Lead the Way Jesus Led"

The focal point of discipleship is imitating Christ (Hull 2006, 114). Two principles are here considered. First is to imitate Christ and second is to imitate the disciples of Christ. Practicing spiritual disciplines develops the habit of surrendering one's life to God. A deeper relationship with God is then developed and the disciple becomes more ready to engage in service. Self-denial or self-sacrifice are two important values that a secularized person needs. The secular worldview is one of self-indulgence, self-gratification, and autonomy. It is an opposite worldview from Christianity where Jesus Christ is the master and a person's will and life are submitted to him.

Hull discussed three methods of personal training. The first is coaching (Hull 2006, 212-214). This involves developing skills and equipping the disciples to do missions. Some of the functions of a coach are to impart skills, impart confidence, and motivate people in order to bring out the best. He also models the importance of learning the basics of a skill, point people to other resources, observe people in action, evaluate people's experience, and give them feedback. The second personal approach is mentoring. Coaching focuses on skills and equipping while mentoring is more on the spiritual aspect of life. Mentoring (Hull 2006, 216-221) means you help the person to make sense of his life and to lead him to live under the authority of God. Spiritual

direction is the last approach. Bruce Demarest (cited in Hull 2006, 221) defines the spiritual direction as "the structured ministry in which a gifted and experienced Christian (spiritual director) helps another believer grow in relationship with and obedience to Christ."

Small Group

According to Hull (2006, 229-247), small groups play a vital role in training disciples. The key is choosing the right potential core group leaders (242). They must have willing hearts, time, interest and gifts to lead. The first step is to impart and orient them with the vision for the group (240). The structure of the small group needs to fit the interests and needs of the group. The group needs to have a well-defined mission statement, structure, an agreed level of intimacy, insist on outreach, and an agreement to multiply. The leader is ready to deal with problems. The principle there is to deal with the issue immediately before it becomes worse. The leader can help the members to grow.

Steve Smith and Stan Park's Take on T4T and DMM

Steve Smith and Stan Parks (2015a, 36) are experts on church planting movements that center on discipleship. They have written on principles they have come across while they raised churches and multiply believers across cultures (Nepal to the United States). Under the Training for Trainers model (T4T), the process goes through: (1) mobilizing and training all believers to evangelize the lost; (2) discipling the new believers; (3) starting groups or churches; (4) developing leaders; and 5) training these new disciples to do the same with their circle of influence. Under this model, discipleship is defined as both obeying the Word of God and teaching others. The other model is called Disciple-Making Movements (DMM) developed by David Watson. Under this

model, the disciples engage in the first phase: (1) finding "households of peace," (2) starting an inductive Bible study group in these households, (3) teaching the Bible from Creation to Christ. While the group are discovering truths and coming to Christ, they are encouraged to (4) share the Bible stories with family members and friends, and (5) start a new discovery group with them. At the end of this initial process, new believers are baptized and enter the second phase of the discipleship process, which covers the following steps: (6) Studying the Bible for several months focusing on topics, which will make them ready for church organization and leadership.

Smith and Parks (2015b, 32) describe how T4T is used in small group meetings. They stress the three-thirds (3/3) process to develop and train trainers, meetings are divided into three parts: (1) look back, (2) look up and (3) look ahead. They use seven elements (Pastoral Care, Worship, Bible Study and Accountability, Vision-Casting, Practice, and Setting Goals with Prayer). DMM meetings use questions to generate what the Holy Spirit is teaching to the group, which they are to obey and pass on. These methods of Bible studies which are similar to Inductive Bible Study found to be effective in small group meetings for secularized people.

George Barna's Five Models of Effective Discipleship

George Barna (2001, 133) in his studies of churches, found five approaches that are effective in disciple-making: the competencies model, the missional model, the neighborhood model, and the worldview model. All of them emphasize on enabling people to think and act like Christians. They all focus on character development, thinking and decision-making, and building affirming relationships. The differences are on how each model accomplishes those common objectives.

Barna (2001, 158-160) proposed a new model taking the best from these five models. The Discipling process starts with the use of personal evaluation tools (from the Competencies Model) and church outcome assessment (from the Missional Model). The cumulative discipleship experience is incorporated to the use of those tools. After participating in a self-evaluation and goal-setting effort, the disciple will take an intensive interactive course on the fundamentals of the faith (Worldview Model). After completing the course, he will sign a short-term covenant with the church regarding his Personal Development Plan for that term (one year). In this covenant, the disciple covenants to engage in several activities. First, she will join a small group that meets in someone's home during the week, perhaps every other week (159). These meetings would be primarily for prayer, fellowship, accountability, and community service. Each small group would belong to a mid-sized congregation within the larger congregation. These mid-sized groups would meet every Sunday morning to build expanded relational network and participate in the interactive teaching related to the week's sermon topic. Second, the disciple will regularly participate in the church's worship services and in community service options offered by the church. These options would facilitate people's spiritual development as well as the ministry impact of the whole church. Third, the disciple will work with a mature mentor who will work with him on a regular basis, helping him to remain focused on personal developmental objectives. Fourth, at the end of each year, he will compare his progress on his predetermined spiritual goals for the year. He will then develop his personal plan for the coming year based on this evaluation (160). For the process to work best, all sermons are planned to relate on key worldview components. The idea is to expose the disciple to the building blocks of a Christian

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worldview within two-three years. The same goals and process are applied to the children and teenaged members of the church. The underlying idea is to build a lifestyle of discipleship in a person. This process is extended to families. The family members do not just have the spiritual development track experiences in the church but also in home life experiences. Discipleship now becomes not just the responsibility of the church leaders but the parents as well. Parents are the first teachers, mentors, and leaders for the spiritual maturity of their children. Such a model implemented as the foundation of a church's ministry, could work well regardless of the size of your church or its doctrinal leanings.

Robert Logan's Making Disciples

Robert Logan (2019) is a known practitioner and leader in church planting. He listed eight areas of growth for a disciple to mature. This process of growth will help retain the disciple in his newfound faith. These areas of growth are:

Experiencing God. This means that the disciple is intentionally and consistently engaging with God for a deeper understanding of God and his or her relationship with Him (Logan 2019, 199).

Spiritual Responsiveness. This means that the disciple is listening to the Holy Spirit and His leadings and acts on his or her understanding of what the Holy Spirit tells (Logan 2019, 200). *Sacrificial Service*. This means that the disciple does good works whether it is costly, inconvenient, or challenging (2019, 200).

Generous Living. This means that the disciple is a faithful steward of what God has given him or her to advance the kingdom of God (Logan 2019, 200). *Disciple-making.* This means that the disciple involves in discipling others in obedience to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ (Logan 2019, 200).

Personal transformation. This means that the disciple changes and matures in attitudes and behaviors because of his or her relationship with God and others (Logan 2019, 200).

Authentic relationships. This means that the disciple engages with others in ways that reflect God's ways of dealing with humankind (Logan 2019, 200).

Community Transformation. This means the disciple involves himself with his community to effect positive changes (Logan 2019, 200).

Logan (2019, 202) believes that Christian growth and discipleship are on a continuum. A person may move from a hostile position to a more receptive one as time passes by. One of the things that help in achieving this movement is the small group. Logan posits that discipleship is relational at its core (204). The disciples are described as "relationally connected to one another and willing to live in obedience to God" (204). They also spontaneously learn from each other, ask questions of things they do not understand, and they learn to listen to each other. This is the same engagement in the small group.

Logan suggested four reproducible disciple-making processes that can be adapted for secularized people. It should always include inward and outward growth. It should be simple enough to be reproducible but flexible enough that people do not feel forced into a mold (Logan 2019, 205-206):

Focused discipleship conversations. The discipling relationship is intentional and developmental, and focused on inward and outward growth: (a) helping people celebrate where they are at, (b) listening to God where He wants them to grow, (c) thinking about how to disciple and serve others.

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Guide for Discipling. This process is focused on the eight areas of growth. This is used in a peer to peer or in small groups focused discipleship conversations. People can study the Bible together, pray, and share their experiences.

Life Transformation Groups. In this process the group meet weekly to challenge each other to study the Bible and for accountability in life choices. The format is: prayer, Bible readings between sessions, and asking accountability questions. The questions are: (1) describe your interaction with God this week, (2) how did you share Jesus with others, (3) what temptations did you face this week and how did you respond, (4) what did the Holy Spirit teach you through bible reading this week, (5) what next steps does God want you to take personally, with others.

Discovery Bible Study. This study has three basic parts. The first is connection, thanksgiving, and prayer. The second is reading and engagement with the Bible. The third is committing to live in obedience in response to what he heard and learned.

Faith Development Theories

James Engel's Stages of Conversion

James F. Engel made the Engel Scale to describe how a person journeys to conversion. His model recognizes the role of general revelation in people's growth in knowledge and relationship with God. He suggests that everyone who becomes a committed believer goes through fourteen stages: awareness of God, hearing the gospel, understanding the gospel, considering the gospel, becoming positive to the gospel, seeing personal problems if the gospel is received, decision to act, repentance and faith, initial discipleship, church membership, growth, reproduction, and full commitment. In the modified Engel Scale, Calver and Lear listed sixteen "steps to Christ": no awareness of

God, some awareness of God, contact with Christians, interest in Jesus, investigating Jesus, grasping the truth about Jesus, understanding implications of the truth about Jesus, acceptance of Christian truth, acceptance of implications of becoming a Christian, decision to surrender to Jesus, gaining confidence in their decision, experiencing change in their life, learning the basics of their faith, learning Christian disciplines, sharing faith with others, and on-going growth.

The Engel scale is a helpful tool in assessing the journey of the secularized person to conversion. Each step or stage brings them nearer to the stage of matured disciples which help them to be people who are discipling others. (See Engel Scale of "Steps to Christ" in the appendix).

Jim Putman's Spiritual Growth Stages

Jim Putnam identifies five stages defined by attitude through which people go through: unbelief (the person is categorized as spiritually dead), ignorance (becoming a spiritual infant), self-centeredness (being a spiritual child), other-centeredness/God-centeredness (being a spiritual young adult), and intentionality/ reproducibility (becoming a spiritual parent). Putnam's discipleship model focuses on five discipleship shifts: from reaching to making disciples, from informing to equipping disciples, from program to purpose of discipleship, from activity to relationship, and from accumulating disciples to deploying disciples. (See Putnam's Five Stages of Spiritual Growth in the appendix).

<p align="center">Worldview Change for the Secularized People</p>

Paul Hiebert's Glocal Worldview

There is an issue on the inability of postmodernity's worldview and philosophy to answer the growing human needs around the world. In the discussion of the

secularization process, Huston Smith (cited in Hiebert 2008, 241) posits on the emerging paradigm of the "post-postmodern" era which is called "the glocal worldview." This process of development is ongoing. This status is being observed and studied in the first world countries. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, my assumption is that the Philippines is still at the initial phase of secularization and therefore not yet facing the post-postmodern challenges.

The global carrier of modernity is the English language and through interaction with other cultures it produces the re-creation of new modernities in different cultures. Each culture responds differently with globalization. It may protest, adapt, invent, accommodate, assimilate, or make alliances. "Specific responses will be constrained not determined" (Hiebert 2008, 248). Some local cultures will be open to join the flow of modernity. However, other cultures adapt elements of modernity, yet seek to preserve their own sociocultural identity. Their core identity is traditional. This latter type produces many different hybrids (2008, 249).

How does it affect the individual? What becomes of the secularized man? The "increasing flow and mixing of peoples, technologies, ideas, and cultures are eroding the notion of worldview as coherent wholes" (Hiebert 2008, 253). The result is "social and cultural fragmentation" in these cultures or communities. Now, the secularized person must construct himself away from fixed and concrete structures like family and society, culture, and religion. This creates a very confused state. While the secular world is offering its own worldview, Christians must also offer a better alternative which is the Christian Worldview.

David Dockery's Christian Worldview

A Christian worldview provides the framework for the believer's identity and purpose in life. He is a sinner pardoned by God and restored in the fellowship of God's family (Rom 3:22-26). The Christian worldview motivates for a godly and faithful living as a testimony of the changing power of God. He is involved in helping others to be restored in a loving relationship with God, too (John 3:16). Believers live in hope and assurance of God's care and faithfulness amidst life's struggles, problems, and catastrophes (Matt 6:32-35). It gives him confidence and hope for the future that sin and this old world are temporary, and that God will deal with sin ultimately and will re-create a new world for humankind to live in (Rev 21).

The Christian worldview provides the framework for ethical thinking. All human beings are made in the image of God and are created moral beings. Through God's provision of salvation and regeneration, humankind can continue to show true goodness, love, holiness, grace and truth (John 1:14-18).

Developing a Christian worldview is an "ever-advancing process" in which Biblical principles shape more and more the believers' participation in culture. This dynamic and continuous process shapes how believers assess culture and how they place themselves in culture. "Thus, a Christian worldview offers a new way of thinking, seeing, and doing, based on a new way of being."

David Dockery (n.d., para. 1) posits that A Christian worldview is a coherent way of seeing life. It is looking at the world separate from deism, naturalism, materialism, Darwinism, humanism, Marxism, existentialism, polytheism, pantheism, mysticism, or deconstructionist postmodernism. Its theistic perspective postulates stand and direction when faced with new age spirituality or the secular and pluralistic approaches to truth and

morality. Living here and now, and the future, are "informed by a Christian worldview grounded in the redemptive work of Christ and the grandeur of God" (n.d., para. 35). A Christian worldview offers meaning and purpose in all aspects of life as opposed to the meaningless and purposeless nihilistic perspectives.

Transforming worldview

Conversion is the starting point of the transformation process. It is not just joining a community of faith. It is "a change in allegiance" from the world or from some other forms of gods "to Jesus Christ as the Lord and center of one's life" (David Bosch 1991, 488). It involves accepting the responsibility of "serving God in this life and promoting God's reign in all its forms." It involves personal cleansing from sin, "forgiveness, reconciliation, and renewal" in order to partake of the mighty works of God in one's life and in the life of others (1991, 448).

Transformation is both a point and process (Hiebert 2008, 310). It is a life of discipleship and obedience in all areas of our being and our lifetime. This spiritual transformation is the work of God in the sinner's life which necessitates the cooperation and positive response of the sinner. Since it is the work of God, there are areas where our human understanding of the "what and how" is limited. However, there are areas where human works or actions are integral part of the transformation process.

Cognitive Transformation. The cognitive dimension of our worldview relates to the knowledge which guides us to perceive the reality of self and surroundings. The cognitive dimension is where we gather information and store them for reference. The cognitive transformation that is needed for secularized people is to have a conversion experience to Jesus Christ, not to just acknowledge the good man Jesus, but to accept the

Son of God who became flesh, died, and resurrected to save people from their sins. Many of the secular look at Jesus as an example of a very moral man but they do not accept Him as divine, that He is the Lamb of God, and that He is the coming King. A secularized Adventist must be able to say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able … (2 Tim 1:12 KJV), I know Him, I can trust Him."

Affective Transformation. The affirmative dimension relates to our feelings, emotions, and behavior. We react to a situation or stimuli based on our feelings. Feelings are involved in the "initial impulse for conversion" (Hiebert 2008, 312). It is what first responds to the gospel. Feelings are parts of the whole spiritual transformation process (2008, 313). We cannot convert feelings, it is caught, not taught. However, the emotions must be engage together with the mind so that a deep-level change will be achieved.

Evaluative Transformation. "At the heart of moral transformation is decision making" (313). It goes through the process of thoughts, responding to it negatively or positively, then comes evaluation, making a decision, and then acting on it. Hiebert (2008, 313) described three types of decisions. First is the type based on rational thinking alone, with no moral or emotional input. The second type is brought on by high emotions with no moral or cognitive input. The third type of decision is focused on moral issues. People are faced with many decisions on a daily basis. However, if we are looking for critical decision making for the gospel by the secular, we need to understand that "enduring transformations are results of many decisions to adopt and develop a new worldview" (313). People who initially reject a new way often "re-evaluate their decision and maybe open to conversion" (313). People think long and hard before making a long-term decision. Follow up becomes critical not only in nurturing the faith of a disciple, but

to the whole transformation process. For the secular, many years of faithful witness will result to life changing decisions for Christ.

Hiebert (2008, 315) posits that conversion must encompass the three levels of culture: behavior and rituals, beliefs, and worldview. The worldview needs to be transformed to make sure that the new-found faith is not "subverted and become captive to the local culture." The result of this is a syncretistic Christianity. For humans, "learning is by making sense or giving coherence to our experiences" (Hiebert 2008, 315).

There are two ways how worldviews are transformed. The first way is through normal change or growth. It happens in the level where conscious beliefs and practices overtime penetrate the worldview level and bring about the change in that level. The second way is through "paradigm or worldview shifts." It means that there is a tension between the surface culture and the worldview and there is "a radical reorganization in the internal configuration of the worldview itself" that is happening. These "paradigm shifts reshape the surface culture." Conversion means radical paradigm shifts. "Conversion replaces an old set of beliefs and practices with new ones," turning from the old way and walking on new one. At the worldview level, it changes the fundamental ways in which we configure our view of reality. Most worldview transformations are an ongoing process in all individuals and societies. Hiebert (2008, 319) says, "we must see worldview transformation as a point, conversion, and as a process, ongoing deep discipling." (See figure 4).

Hiebert (2008, 319-332) posits that there are at least four steps to transform a person's worldview:

THREE LEVELS OF CONVERSION FOR SECULARIZED PEOPLE

Surface Culture

CONVERSION:

✓ Attend small group regularly
✓ Pray and read the Bible
✓ Stop using alcohol, vape, cigarette, and social drinks
✓ Stop eating pork and seafood, and follow health laws
✓ Be baptized and attend church
✓ Memorize fundamental beliefs and verses

BEHAVIOR, RITUALS

✓ Repent and confess sins
✓ Become a disciple of Jesus
✓ Know the Bible

BELIEFS AND BELIEF SYSTEMS

✓ Transform the worldview into a biblical worldview

WORLDVIEW

Figure 4. Three levels of conversion for secularized people. Adapted from Paul Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change,* (2008, 316).

1. Surface of the worldview. Consciously examine the deep, unexamined assumptions we have (319).

2. Step outside of the culture and look at it from the outside, and to have outsiders tell us what they perceive as our worldview (321).

3. Creating living rituals. Living rituals speak of the transcendent–the deepest beliefs, feelings, and values. They point to mystery, root myths and metaphors, and fundamental allegiances, and express our deepest emotions and moral order (322). "With no clear living ritual, religious conversion becomes simply another ordinary decision, like the many decisions we make every day. There is nothing to mark its life-transforming nature" (323). We need to rediscover the importance of appropriate rituals to help structure and express our worldviews. We need to overcome our fear of rituals. The

answer to dead traditions and idolatrous rituals is not to do away with rituals. It is to

constantly consciously examine and re-create our rituals to keep them vibrant and to

transform us through participation in them. Without living rituals, we have no appropriate

ways to affirm our deepest beliefs, feelings, and morals, which lead to new lives in a new

community and in the world (324).

4.   Personal and Group Conversion. Hiebert (2008) emphasizes,

Decisions are personal, but most of them have broader social consequences.
Conversion often involves a break with our old community and entry into a new
covenant community. We are not individuals before God. We are "individuals-in-
community" before God. We need to examine the nature of transformation in the
cultural, social, and psychological systems, and the ways in which these three systems
interact. (325)

There is also the challenge of facing "conversion shock." It is when a new

believer needs the support of other believers. It is a critical period of a new believer

where when he is unable to overcome, he will return to his old beliefs and leave his new-

found faith. Hiebert posits,

after experiencing the euphoria and joy of conversion, it wears off. He begins the
difficult process of learning to think and live as a new Christian. He must learn a new
language, behave in new ways, and form new relationships … He must be
enculturated into a new culture and socialized into a new community. During this
period, the new convert often faces periods of doubt and depression. He questions his
decision, and some return to their old beliefs. This is a critical period where he needs
the support of his new faith-community. (331)

Focus on Receptivity

In missions, receptivity is everything. Donald McGavran strategizes "winning the

winnable while they are winnable" (cited in J. Dudley Woodberry 1998, 29). This implies

that not all people are open to the Gospel at the same time. The work of the Gospel

communicator is to be ready to grab this opportunity when people become receptive. It

also implies that "people do not remain open or receptive" to the Gospel forever. Gary

Fujino, Timothy Sisk, and Tereso Casino (2014, 364) posit that people become more

resistant from overstimulation "from so many competing truth claims" and can become

"more aggressive in shutting out unwanted influences."

Donald McGavran (McGavran, 1990, 180) described receptivity as

changeable. He says, "The receptivity or responsiveness of individuals waxes and

wanes. No person is equally ready at all times to follow the way…. Peoples and

societies also vary in responsiveness. Whole segments of society resist the Gospel

for long periods … then ripen to the Good News."

To take advantage of the receptivity of the secular people, Gary McIntosh (2011,

109) suggested seven ways how to reach them with the Gospel. The evangelist must take

secular culture seriously. He must communicate the authentic message so that it lodges in

popular consciousness. He must employ secular language in place of religious jargon. He

needs to respect the sanctity and freedom of human personality (i.e., not coerce or

manipulate commitments). He needs to particularize the Gospel to individual needs. He

must offer reconciliation of relationships, and he must see evangelism as the penultimate

process toward the ultimate end of making disciples.

Heterogeneity has somewhat factors in the receptivity of people in the cities.

People develop *heterogeneity* overtime as they continue to live and breathe the life in the

cities. The influence of heterogeneity is such that it breaks down the hold of tradition,

values, and culture that the person grew up with. So, an Indian may still look like Indian

in his skin color yet some of his beliefs have already changed and adapted to his urban

environment.

In describing the phenomena of "urban heterogeneity" the Fujino. Sisk, and Casino (2014, 338) say:

the increasing heterogeneity … tends to break down the cohesion of the social unit and erode any consensus around a moral code. Family and village values no longer control behavior; gossip … no longer has the power to curb deviance from the norms. High density ensures that these people frequently rub shoulders with each other and adopt patterns of behavior that allow them to cope with 'a world of strangers.'

Ray Bakke (1999, 228) is correct in his theory that "cities are not neutral, they package people in certain ways." This how secularization and urbanization affect people who live in cities.

Ministry to the Secularized People

Secularized people compose more than 15% of the world's population. This is a group of people that can be found in every country in the world and in every global city. In fact, when we think about mission to the city, we are largely going to deal with secularized people. The Adventist Church has its own challenges. If it will continue to describe its message as the "present truth," meaning a message for the last days before the Second Coming of Jesus, then it should be "relevant to people living in this historical context" (Reinder Bruinsma 2012, par. 16), "it must be relevant to the people's innermost longings and urgent needs" (Gottfried Oosterwal cited in Bruinsma 2012, par. 16). Its message must be able to speak to the multi-cultural members of its body as well as the diverse cultures of the people it seeks to reach.

To understand the secularized people, Jimmy Long (1997, 206) proposes six steps in the secularized people's conversion process. It usually starts with their *discontentment in life*. The postmodern's outlook in life is pessimistic. Their lack of contentment can lead them to seeking new meaning in life. The next is their *confusion over meaning*. Since

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there are no absolutes in the post-modern era, meaninglessness is prevalent. Some have

given up on searching for meaning but others are still seeking and are dissatisfied with

the answers they found. Then there are those much-needed *contact with Christians*. This

is one of the most crucial stages. The postmoderns do not have a very good image of

Christians, either by experience or by lack of contact. They mistrust Christians for their

genuineness and their overzealousness in their evangelism. Then *conversion to*

"Community" happens. People from the postmodern world view life from a community

or tribal perspective. For them, becoming a Christian means leaving one community for

another. So, at the onset they would involve themselves in the life of the church to find

out if this is what they are looking for. They are looking for belongingness and

relationship with the members of the community of faith. Sometimes conversion may

come after belongingness. After they feel they belong comes *Commitment to Christ*.

Commitment to Christ may form over a period of time or at a specific time. More and

more people are making their commitment to Christ over a period of time, and it needs to

take deliberate steps to lead them to Christ. Then they need to understand the Great

Controversy and God's eternal plan of salvation. They need to understand God's

narrative of creation and redemption.

Summary

God has a universal concern for every person in every nation on earth. Missions is

about extending God's offer of salvation to every nation, tribe, language, all people. It

includes the secularized people of the world. The challenges we face in reaching

secularized people is enormous and it is an unchartered course for the Seventh-day

Adventist Church. It calls for a re-thinking on how we approach our mission to the secularized.

In this chapter we have discussed the biblical-theological foundations for reaching the secularized people. Missions starts with the *Missio Dei*. God has a perfect will and a universal plan for the salvation of humankind. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have roles that they fulfill in realizing this plan. This mission originated with God, is driven by God, and owned by God. In fact, God is a sending missionary. He sent his own Son to die for all. Moreover, the Holy Spirit is sent to empower the church to win people for God's kingdom. God's Grace, God's Spirit, and God's people are integral parts of the mission of God. We also discussed the types and functions of the grace of God. God truly seeks humankind to restore him or her to full status of what humankind lost in Eden through these types of grace. Salvation is made attainable and available to all.

Missions is both universal and local. Jesus Christ has promised success to all believers who will obey the command to bring the Gospel to all the world. His presence is promised and the attending powers of the Holy Spirit. The task given to the remnant church to proclaim the three angels' messages is one of urgency. It calls all people to return to the worship of the true God, the One who created the heavens and earth. These messages are to encompass the world until the end of time. The remnant church is called to restore the truths that have been cast aside and trampled upon by traditions of humankind and false doctrines taught in the fallen churches. The three angels' messages include pointing to the narrative of God's unchanging love manifested in the plan of redemption and the great controversy. It also points to the need to engage in ministry in the cities to win secularized peoples. The cities are the arena where the church can find

those who are seeking for God and are trying to find meaning and hope in this life. The secularized people of the cities need the saving truth of God and the experience of salvation.

We have also discussed in this chapter the sociological factors affecting the secularized people. These are the factors that made the secularized different from other people-urbanization, globalization, pluralism, and secularism. The first factor is Urbanization. It brings a very comfortable life because of modern amenities like infrastructure, good housing, malls, business centers, good schools. But it also changes a person to live a fast-paced life, always in a hurry to go somewhere or to get a job done. Busyness is the byword of secularized people. He becomes competitive at work. He becomes materialistic, always needing to buy more gadgets and accessories, fashion, changing cars, eating out. And he becomes a world traveller. He spends less time with the family. Children are left with helpers or media is used to baby-sit them. Since people flock to the cities, housing becomes congested. Hanging-out in malls and cafés become popular. Urbanization makes a secularized person lose the traditional values for family orientedness, loyalty to one partner, hospitality, consideration, respect for older people, and other things.

The second factor we discussed is Globalization. It is marked by a rapid change in population and development in urban places. It brings about a global community where people become interconnected through technology, communication, and travel. It creates polycenters of globalism in cities, which provide a global experience of other cities in the world. New structures of social relationships are developed in this worldwide society. Globalization extends to all aspects of life-the personal, structural, economic, technical

and political, cultural and religious spheres of life. Travel, internet, chat rooms, blogs, personal web pages connect people with people of other cultures. Cities and urban places in different countries develop their own version of what modernity is in their own culture, creating different strands of secularism.

The third factor affecting the secularized people is religious pluralism. It is the belief that all religions are equally valid and that there are many saviors and Jesus is simply one of them. It is a belief that the differences in religions is "not about the choice between truth and falsehood but of different perceptions of the one truth," to insist that a set of beliefs is true and the others false is rejected (Lesslie Newbigin 1989, location 356-357). It repositions the claims of Christianity of absolute and final truths to being a subjective experience. It positions human experience as the universal standard criteria for truth. It claims that beliefs and practices that make each religion uniquely different from each other are but "human projection and perceptions of their own humanity." It claims that God cannot be known and is unknowable. Truth is based on what one experiences. And that there are many paths toward God. Respect and tolerance are high values of pluralism. The danger of this philosophy is that it removes the need for engaging in missions to other people of other faiths. It promotes for people to be left alone. It also invalidates the commands of God to go and preach the gospel and make disciples.

Secularism is in a continuum. There are varieties of secularism. As a society is impacted by urbanization, globalization, pluralism, and modernization, particularly postmodernity and post postmodernity, it produces culture collision which results to strands of secularity for different societies. Two external factors that help the growth of secularization is privatization and existential insecurity. When faith and religion is

relegated to the private sphere of life, it dies. Faith needs to be shared. When people are secured, at peace, and prospering, they have less interest with the religious. Hardships, calamities, trials, problems–they help people turn to God or the higher powers. Secularized people believes in natural evolution, personal autonomy over his destiny, relativism of truths and morality, and the temporal nature of man and this life. As a group of people, they share the same characteristics of ignorance to basic Christianity and they usually have a negative image of the church and its leaders. Though they know that life is temporal they seek to know about the after life. Secularized people have multiple alienations–from nature, neighbors, political and economic, and vocation. These multiple alienations make them a very lonely people. The secularized people are usually young, urbanite, more educated, rich, mobile, are in industrial or information type of work. They are the most affected by the vehicles of secularism (education, science, materialism, etc.). The secularized people have also been described and we discussed what made them different from other groups of people. As people go through the secularization process, they are changed and many lost their interest in religious matters or simply decided to live a life without God. Secularized people are also in a spectrum–from the actively churched to the purely unchurched (Barna and Kinnaman), from the friendly unchurched to the hostile unchurched (Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes 2009), and from the highly receptive to the gospel to the highly resistant to the gospel (Rainer 2003).

We also established that we need to return to discipleship as our platform for winning and retaining converts to the church. We have discussed several models we can utilize to disciple the secularized. These models have been tried and found working for city evangelism, church planting, and reaching the secularized people. We have also

discussed transformation and worldview change. This is an important element in shaping our approach and making our strategies to reach the secularized. Our aim will not be the surface change but the deep level worldview change, one that would result in making disciples who will be true followers of Jesus. We also discussed about aspects of receptivity of people to the gospel. And how we must explore and take advantage of these receptive moments in their lives.

Lastly, we discussed about how to minister to the secularized. We need to study not only their characteristics but also their needs. A vibrant spirituality is needed. We should minister to their felt-needs. Authentic relationships must be developed. We need to make use of the care groups to nurture and disciple them. Finally, our message must be Christ-centered and coming from a heart that genuinely cares about people.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology used in this research study. It includes the research design, sample, and sampling techniques. This section also describes the data collection procedures and the data analysis. It also tackles the trustworthiness and ethical issues encountered in the study. In the field research findings section, the data interpretation is discussed. This section cross-examines the intersection or meeting points between the research questions, theoretical sensitivity, and the reality of the data (Fukofuka 2021, 220).

Research Design of the Study

This research is a qualitative case study. Qualitative research is used when there is a problem that needs to be explored deeper (John Creswell and Cheryl Poth 2018a, 125). Furthermore, a case study is an approach used in research, "in which one or a few instances of a phenomenon are studied in depth" (Joaichim Blatter 2008, 68). John Easter and Allan Johnson (2018, location 3256), describe this type of research as focused on "a phenomenon not yet understood," where there is little or no studies made that involves "worldviews, lifestyles, spirituality, cultural patterns and configurations, social perceptions and attitudes, and the dynamics of interpersonal interactions in various social settings." J. Thomas (cited in Steven Taylor, Robert Bogdan, and Marjorie L. DeVault

2016, 26) posits that it is the right tool to examine the world from "different points of view" because there is no intrinsic "hierarchy of credibility" in qualitative research. Qualitative case study allowed me to explore or describe a phenomenon in context, which is the secularized people of Metro Manila and their response to the Adventist message. It also allowed me to study individuals or organizations through "interventions, relationships, communities or programs" and then allowed me "to construct and deconstruct" this phenomenon (Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack 2008, 544).

Foundations of Qualitative Approach

Qualitative methods of research have been around since ancient times. Historians, travelers, and philosophers have been utilizing "descriptive observation, interviewing, and other qualitative methods" from the time of the Greek scholar Herodotus in the 5th century B.C. to Marco Polo in the 13th century (Taylor et al. 2016, 4). Travelers wrote accounts of ways of life of the people they encounter (Frederick Erickson 2018, 88). Aristotle and Galen (cited in Erickson 2018, 88) used descriptive reports to record knowledge of nature. As a field of inquiry, qualitative research has advanced continuously over time (Sharon Ravitch and Nicole Carl 2016, 41). By the 20th century, participant observation (otherwise known as field research) became popular through anthropology. From 1910 to 1940, social science students became "familiar with participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and personal documents" (Taylor et al. 2016, 5) which are the approaches used in this study.

Qualitative Research in Practice

Diverse disciplines and sub-disciplines have now accepted the use of qualitative

methods of inquiry (Sharon Lockyer 2008, 706). They include geography, political science, psychology, health care and nursing, mental health, counseling and psychotherapy, education, music education, public health, business, theology, disability studies, human development, social work, and special education (Taylor et al. 2016, 7). For these disciplines, qualitative research is useful "to identify, analyze, and understand patterned behaviors and social processes" (Lockyer 2008, 706).

Creswell and Poth (2018a, 85, 125-127) suggest seven reasons why a researcher should use qualitative research methodologies: First, qualitative research is used when the researcher needs to understand "the context in which participants in a study address a problem" (2018a, 85). Second, it is used when a researcher wants to come up with "a follow-up explanation of mechanisms about quantitative findings" (2018a, 126). Third, it is used when a researcher wants to develop "a theory to address gaps in understandings" where little is known (Bill Gilham 2000, 126, 11). Fourth, it is used when there is a need for a complex, detailed understanding of the issue to be studied (Creswell and Poth 2018a, 126; Gilham 2000, 11). Fifth, it is used when quantitative methods do not fit the problem or the complexities are beyond the scope of more controlled approaches (2018a, 127; 2000, 11). Sixth, it is used when the researcher wants to use "a literary, flexible style of reporting" (2018a, 127). And seventh, when there exists a desire to empower individuals or people group (125).

Worldview Assumptions of Qualitative Research (QLR)

Qualitative study is dedicated to understanding social phenomena from the viewpoint of the people and how they experience the world (Taylor et al. 2016, 3). However, Erickson (2018, 90) posits that QLR is a social inquiry that focuses on

"understanding … rather than proof or prediction." Patricia Leavy (2017, 13, 129) suggests that the qualitative worldview infers that people are continuously constructing and reconstructing meanings from their daily experiences (social construction of reality). As a philosophical belief system, it emphasizes people's personal experiences "grounded in social-historical contexts" (2017, 13). Therefore, QLR as a research tool will be here for a long time so long as there are social-historical events or issues to be understood.

There are different approaches used in QLR, one of them is interpretivism (Taylor et al. 2016, 4). Under interpretivism there are three perspectives: phenomenological, symbolic interactionist, and ethnomethodological. The interpretivists seek understanding through the use of qualitative methods like participant observation, mapping, in-depth interviewing, and other techniques that produce descriptive data. Since the purpose of my research is understanding the secularized people phenomenon and their response to the Adventist Message, the use of the interpretivists' approach helped me personally understand "the motives and beliefs behind the secularized people's actions" (Taylor et al. 2016, 4). I followed the interprevists' approach in research using in-depth interview, observation, mapping, focus group interview, and document analysis.

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research or inquiry (QLR) has several distinct characteristics: First, QLR focuses on meaning and understanding people from their frame of reference (Taylor et al. 2016, 6, 7; Sharon Merriam and Elizabeth Tisdell 2016, 15). Second, it is inductive rather than deductive (Taylor et al. 2016, 8; Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 17). It means that the data analysis is built from particulars to general themes which is the opposite for deductive (Creswell 2014, 4). Third, it is holistic (2016, 9). It means that the researcher

must look at people and their settings as a whole and not reduce them to variables. Fourth, qualitative research is naturalistic, it adopts strategies that allow to study things in their natural settings (Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln 2018, 43; Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 18). Creswell and Poth (2018, 35, 414), describe the naturalistic approach the collection of data is done in the natural setting or environment of the people and places under study. It means that the researcher spends a lot of time in the field of study; spending a lot of time with the participants; allowing them to express their thoughts, feelings, and meanings about the subject under study; then the researcher writes the case study with the aim to be understandable to its readers. Robert Yin (2016, 334) adds that the naturalistic approach includes the observational study of the verbal and nonverbal behavior in conversations, including the speaker's mannerisms, pauses, intonation, and emphasis while in the natural setting. Fifth, it is inclusive. It accepts all perspectives as worthy of study and rejects the "hierarchy of credibility" that assumes that particular perspectives are more valid than others (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 9). Sixth, it has meaningfulness and validity as opposed to having reliability and replicability (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 10; Peter Miller 2008, 909). Seventh, qualitative research is emergent and flexible. It follows guidelines, but not rules (Taylor et al. 2016, 11); it is responsive to changing conditions (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 18). Eighth, it is richly descriptive using thick descriptions (2016, 17; Johnny Saldaña 2011, 4). Creswell and Poth (2018a, 145, 323) described "thick description" as the written record of cultural interpretation which includes verbatim quotes referring to social structures, relationships, social structure, or functions which may include context, emotion, and webs of social relationships. It uses words and pictures to describe themes, categories, typologies,

concepts, tentative hypotheses, and theories (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 17). Ninth, the

researcher is the primary research instrument who can immediately respond and adapt

(2016, 16). The central activities of QLR include interviewing, observing, and analyzing

(2016, 2). Furthermore, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) emphasize that

> the researcher can expand his or her understanding through nonverbal as well as
> verbal communication, process information (data) immediately, clarify and
> summarize material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and
> explore unusual or unanticipated responses. (16)

Sharan Merriam and Elizabeth Tisdell (2016, 15), postulate that QLR uses

different methods for describing, decoding, translating, and interpreting the meanings of a

phenomenon. It is descriptive and inferential (Bill Gilham 2000, 10). This type of

research values profundity of meaning and people's personal experiences and what kinds

of meanings they ascribe to their experience, and how they understand their world

(Patricia Leavy 2017, 124; Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 15). It involves gathering the data

in the participant's context where themes are pooled during the data analysis, then the

report is written in a way that respects the meaning that the person attached to it and in

presenting the complexity of a situation (John Creswell 2014, 4). The qualitative

methodology focuses from general to specific and depends on designs "generating

meaning and producing rich, descriptive data" such as "people's own written or spoken

words and observable behavior" (Leavy 2017, 124; Taylor et al. 2016, 7). Further,

Saldaña (2011, 3-4) adds that in qualitative research data are gathered through interviews,

document analysis, visual materials, artifacts, photographs, video records, and other

sources that give a whole picture of the phenomenon. When used in exploratory or

descriptive research, qualitative research gives a "robust understanding of a topic,"

unpacking the meanings people ascribe to activities, situations, circumstances, and people (Leavy 2017, 124).

Case Study

Case study has its beginnings in the 60s and 70s where variations of experimental designs and statistical methods were being explored in research methodologies (Merriam 2009, 39). At that time, the world of research is acknowledging that there is a need for a branch of research for studying historical or in-depth study of a phenomenon. By the 1980s Merriam, Stake, Yin, and others are writing about case study as a research methodology (39).

Robert Yin (2008, 18) describes the case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." On the other hand, Wilcott (cited by Merriam 2009, 40) does not treat it as a strategy or method but "an end-product of field-oriented research." The case study is one of the twelve more known variants or types of QLR (Yin 2016, 8). The case study is a type of QLR approach in research that is focused on developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases (2016, 65). It is a study of an event, a program, an activity, or more than one individual. It uses multiple sources to ensure the issue is explored through a variety of lenses, such as interviews, observations, documents, and artifacts (Baxter and Jack 2008, 544). It analyzes data through the description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes.

John Gerring (2007, 19) observes that a "case study" implies observing a "spatially delimited phenomenon" at a "single point in time" or over some "period of

time" that an inference attempts to explain through "a single or multiple observations." The case study is not restricted to "contemporary phenomenon or real-life contexts" where boundaries and context are not clear (Arch Woodside 2010, 2).

What makes case study different from other qualitative research methods is that it has a *bounded system* (Merriam 2009, 40). What it means is that it is treated as a single entity, a unit which there are boundaries. The researcher determines the boundaries of what he is going to study (Gillham 2000, 1). This fact is also reiterated by Arch Woodside (2010, 2) by proposing that the value of "case study lies in the supreme importance placed by the researcher" on obtaining the data through description, analysis, prediction, and/or control" of the case. Another unique characteristic of a case study argues Merriam (2009, 41), is its focus on the "unit of analysis not the topic of investigation." It means that there should be a limit to the number of people involved who could be interviewed or a finite time for observations. If there is no boundedness, then the phenomenon does not meet the criteria as a case study (Merriam 2009, 41).

<div align="center">Kinds of Case Studies</div>

There are two primary ways to categorize case study research design. They can be categorized based on disciplinary background or orientation, such as ethnographic, historical, psychological, sociological, and missiological etc. (Dawson Hancock and Bob Algozzine 2006, 32-33). My study is a missiological case study with close affinity with sociological case study. In missiological case study, Rance (cited in Safary Wa-Mbaleka, Pavel Zubkob, Peter Cincala, and David Penno 2021, 6) posits that the researcher "continually moves between the different disciplines represented in the study; theory and practice, theology, history, culture, and the practice of ministry, and the description,

affective expression, analysis, discernment, and action." It is "designed to address a specific concern or offer solutions to a problem" according to Newman (cited by Wa-Mbaleka et al. 2021, 7). It might explore certain phenomenon and explore possible reasons in order for it to be understood. Swinton and Mowatt (cited in Wa-Mbaleka et al. 2021, 6) describe it like a sociological case study, but its purpose is to understand social phenomena in their natural and religious context, which results adding to the universal understanding of God and human experiences.

<div align="center">Types of Case Studies</div>

Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack (2008, 547-549) describe seven types of case study. Other writers call this classification "based on function or purpose" (Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 31; Thomas 2011, 93-9). They are:

1. Explanatory Case Study designs seek to establish cause-and-effect relationships. Hancock and Algozzine (2006, 33) state that "its primary purpose is to determine how events occur and which ones may influence particular outcomes." The researcher gets the chance to connect one bit to another and "offer explanations based on the interrelationships between these bits" (Thomas 2011, 101). This type of case study is used when seeking an answer to a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions which are too complex for survey or experimental strategies (Baxter and Jack 2008, 547).

2. Exploratory Case Study defines the research question(s) of a succeeding study to establish the viability of the research methods as a prelude to additional research efforts that "involve fieldwork and information collection prior to the definition of a research question" (Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 33; Thomas 2011, 104). This type of

case study is described by Robert Yin (cited in Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack 2008, 548) as a study used to explore situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear or single set of outcomes.

3. Descriptive Case Study. Its descriptive designs attempt to present a complete description of a phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Baxter and Jack 2008, 548; Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 33).

4. Multiple-Case Studies enable the researcher to study differences within and between cases, to replicate findings across cases. Comparisons are drawn to predict similar results or contrasting results based on a theory as described by Robert Yin (cited in Baxter and Jack 2008, 548).

5. Intrinsic Case Study is used when the intent is to better understand the case, when the case is of interest to the researcher according to Robert Stake (cited by Baxter and Jack 2008, 548; Gary Thomas 2011, 98). The focus is on learning more about a particular individual, group, event, or organization and less about examining/creating general theories or generalizing research findings to broader populations (Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 34).

6. Instrumental Case Study. The purpose of the study is not the issue itself but the theoretical underpinnings. The case study is the tool to understand those theories (2006, 35; Thomas 2011, 98). It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. Robert Stake (cited by Baxter and Jack, 2008, 549) posits that it is an instrumental case study when the case is of secondary interest, playing a supportive role, aiding our understanding of something else.

7. Collective Case Study "addresses an issue while simultaneously adding to the

literature base that helps us better conceptualize a theory. This design usually involves

several instrumental cases selected to allow an enhanced ability to theorize about some

larger collection of cases" (Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 35). Robert Yin (cited by

Baxter and Jack 2008, 549) postulates that it is similar in nature and description to

multiple case studies.

Advantages of Case Study

Joachim Blatter (2008, 68-69) lists four advantages of case study from other

methods of research. First, case studies have been the primary "source of theoretical

innovation" in research (Blatter 2008, 68). The case study is "often appropriate for both

theory building and theory testing," especially when it is enhanced by "both qualitative

and quantitative methods, in the same study" (Woodside 2010, 11). Second, the case

study has an excellent descriptive-interpretive characteristic and is ideal for describing

specific mechanisms and pathways, which eventually helps in studying causes and

effects. Third, case studies are better at providing in-depth analysis with conceptual

richness and theoretical consistency (Blatter 2008, 69). Providing in-depth analysis is

very important because "the principal objective of case study" is "deep understanding of

the actors, interactions, sentiments, and behaviors occurring for a specific process

through time" (Woodside 2010, 6). Fourth, case studies are better at constructing internal

validity (Blatter 2008, 69). The fifth reason added is that case study is crucial in

achieving a deep understanding of the thinking/doing processes being studied (Woodside

2010, 2-3).

Characteristics of Case Study Research

Qualitative case study research is easier to describe than to define. First, case study

research is carried on "in the case's natural context" (Swanborn 2010, 13, 15). Second, the case study focuses on interrelationships within an organization, event, phenomenon, or person (Albert Mills, Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe 2010, xxxii). It is interested in learning "the subjective significance of persons and events, the linkages and underlying paths among concept variables identified in a case" (Woodside 2010, 6). Third, it is carried out within the boundaries of the case or cases (Swanborn 2010, 13; Tony Elger 2010, 55). Fourth, in case study "researchers focus on process-tracing (Swanborn 2010, 13). Fifth, case study research allows for flexibility in its research design (2010, 13, 15). Sixth, it uses "several data sources, the main ones being available documents, interviews with informants and (participatory) observation" (2010, 13). Seventh, it embraces subjectivity-what lies beyond the objective evidence and underlying reasons of what is going on. This is key to understanding "what needs to be done to change things" (Gillham 2000, 7).

Gary Thomas (2011, 93-95) suggests three other ways of classifying case studies: based on the subject, based on approach, and based on the process. Based on the subject, the case study could have a subject that is a *key*, an *outlier*, or *local knowledge*. Based on the approach, it could be a case study: to *test a theory*, to *build a theory*, or to *draw a descriptive* picture that is *interpretive*, or that is *experimental*. Based on the number of cases, it could be a *single* or a *multiple case study*. In terms of process, it could be *retrospective*, *snapshot*, *diachronic*, *nested*, *parallel*, or *sequential*.

Applying the above discussion in my research, my subject (secularized people in Metro Manila) is an *outlier case* in that evangelism for other groups of people in the Philippines is easy, but secularized people are different from the norm. The justification

for choosing this subject is its unusually low conversion rate. In terms of research purpose, this case study is *exploratory* of evangelizing secularized persons, "that I do not know very much about," and *explanatory* "since I want to explain to myself and others" about how to effectively reach secularized persons in Metro Manila, and *intrinsic* since I am interested in this phenomenon in its own right (Gary Thomas 2011, 94). I will use the approach of *drawing a picture* (i.e., describe and interpret the experience of secularized persons in Metro Manila) and *build a theory* about how to reach them with the Gospel. It is a single case study that processes mechanisms that are *retrospective*. In terms of disciplinary orientation, this case study is *missiological* because even though it uses methods from sociology and ethnography, it is first and foremost missiological in orientation.

Research Setting

I conducted my study in Metro Manila, one of the twenty largest cities in the world (2010; CEO World Magazine 2020). Metro Manila is a conglomeration of sixteen cities and it is reported to be the most densely populated city in the world (Chris Weller 2016, 1). It has all the characteristics of a megacity already on its track to becoming secularized--urbanization, globalization, pluralism, and secularization are part of the facets of this megacity. At present, "Metro Manila has a population of twelve million" swelling to fifteen million during daytime. The result of this increase in urbanization in the Philippines, is "a society that is growingly secular" (Rhoderick Abellanosa 2013, 548; Ines San Martin 2015, para. 7). Wendell Cox (2021) describes Greater Manila (this is Metro Manila plus Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Bulacan, Pampanga, Batangas) with business centers that are likely to rival those that are in big cities of the world and "has a number

of high-rise, high-density edge cities … with hyper-dense employment densities." He also attests that nothing rivals the extent of Manila's dense edge city development in the twenty-nine megacities he has visited all over the world.

For the church, Metro Manila has been the focus of several global initiatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for Urban Mission. There is an ongoing urban church planting initiative by the Central Luzon Conference that provides empirical data on the challenges and results of Seventh-day Adventist ministry and mission in Metro Manila. At the time that the interviews were done, there were sixty-eight pastors who were assigned and working in Metro Manila. Ten are specifically assigned to urban ministry initiatives by the Central Luzon Conference (Interview of Reylourd Reyes, July 20, 2020).

Research Participants

The sample for this research includes twelve (12) selected secularized non-Adventist participants (SNSDAs), ten (10) secularized Seventh-day Adventists (SSDAs), and eight (8) Seventh-day Adventist urban ministry practitioners in Metro Manila (UMPs). The age group of the secularized people is from eighteen to thirty-five years old young adults for the SNSDA and the SSDA. This is the boundary of this research (Johnson 2018a, location 2695). In addition, two secularized Adventist participants (SSDA) who are aged above forty, were also interviewed. Though these two were beyond the age limit, I have concluded after listening to the recordings several times, that the data are rich to help understand the secular so I added them to the SSDA group of participants bringing the number to ten persons instead of eight.

Gatekeepers (Adventists friends, elders in the church, or pastors). Most of the

gatekeepers are conference urban workers (UMPs) who were referred by the conference's Associate Director for the Ministerial Department (Central Luzon Conference).

These are the categories for the participants of my research:

Group I. Secularized Non-SDA (SNSDA). I used the following criteria in the selection of the secularized non-Adventist participants: He or she (a) lived or currently lives in Metro Manila for at least three to five years; (b) possesses at least one or more characteristics of a secularized person; (c) is willing to participate in the study. Twelve secularized non-Adventist participants (SNSDA) were interviewed. They were referrals from my gatekeepers in Metro Manila. Six of them were interviewed face to face and another six were interviewed by phone or chat due to the pandemic.

Group II. Secularized Adventist (SSDA). The following criteria were used for the selection of the secularized Adventist participants: (a) he or she lived or currently lives in Metro Manila for at least three to five years; (b) he or she must be a baptized Adventist and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for less than 3 years; (c) he or she must be willing to participate in the study. Ten secularized Adventist participants' interview were utilized in this research. Five of them were interviewed face to face and five were interviewed by phone or chat due to the pandemic.

FGI I and II. Urban Ministry Practitioners (UMP). I used the following criteria in the selection of the Adventist urban ministry practitioners: he or she (a) has served in Metro Manila for at least two to three years as an urban ministry practitioner; (b) he or she must have led to Christ at least four secularized persons;

(c) he or she must be willing to participate in the study. There were six Adventist urban ministry practitioner participants in FGI and two practitioners were individually interviewed for a deeper understanding of the secularized people of Metro Manila. The latter practitioners were doing ministry to the secular for sixteen and twenty-five years respectively. The UMPs were divided into two groups (ages 20-40 years old and 4-65 years old).

Data Collection

Data Collection Methods

Instrumentation

I developed an interview protocol for in-depth interviews with secular people (non-Adventists and Adventists) and for Adventist UMPs. I worked closely with my methodologists to ensure that I had this approved by my research committee. The interview protocol describes the interview procedure and includes a script of what the researcher will say before and after the interview. The guide questions were also listed. It has also a reminder for the researcher to get the informed consent paper as well as get the information the researcher wants to collect (Stacy Jacob and Paige Furgerson 2012, 2). The interview questions were developed based on the research questions.

Validation and pilot testing

Under the guidance of my methodologist, I pilot-tested the interview questions by using two approaches–internal testing and field testing. I simulated the interview with my research assistant, with her acting as the interviewee. In the field testing, I engaged the help of a gatekeeper in a nearby university to get an interviewee who fits the criteria. I

simulated the interview with him. The focus is on the "intelligibility of the interview

questions" and to test whether the questions will elicit relevant and rich data to answer

the research questions (Pavel Zubkov and Israel Kafeero 2021, 144). I took note of what

needs to be adjusted in the interview guide like how some questions are phrased

understandably than others and made the adjustment before the actual gathering of data.

In-depth interview (IDI)

The most common type of interview in which the researcher interacts with one

participant at a time (Leavy 2017, 139). IDI is ideal for interviewing both the secularized

non-Adventist and the secularized Adventist persons as they were able to express their

answers in detail. I spent time with them in exploring the meanings of their responses.

Twenty-two participants were interviewed. I followed the semi-structured type of IDI

which uses an interview guide (Johnson 2018b, location 3011). A semi-structured

interview allowed me to follow the interview guide and have enough room to "develop

new topics, restructure or reorder questions" depending on the flow of the interview

(Zubkov and Kafeero 2021, 161). I followed the procedure suggested by Gill, Paul, Kate

Stewart, Elizabeth Treasure, and Barbara Chadwick (2008) for IDI:

    a. Interviewing the right person. Before the actual interview, after the

        pleasantries were done, I asked the interviewees to answer a short

        demographic questionnaire to ensure that the participant fits the profile of

        secularized people that I am looking for. Then I asked them to read the

        prepared list of characteristics of secularized people (adapted from Barna and

        Kinnaman 2014) and identify which characteristics describe them most from

        the twelve listed traits. The step helped verified that I have the right subject to

interview and get the participants checked if the gatekeepers endorsed secular people for my interview.

b. Inform the interviewees ahead of time. The interviewees were given orientation on the phone on the purpose of the interview and what the interview will cover. However, I found that it is important to let them go through a more detailed orientation before we start with the interview proper. This includes giving them orientation on the purpose of the study and the type of questions they will be asked. I also assured them of the confidentiality of the interview and asked for them to sign the informed consent forms before I proceeded to the actual interview.

c. Build rapport with the interviewees. I introduced myself to the participants, gave a little personal information, and gave my educational background.

d. Observe proper questioning techniques. I used the semi-structured type of interview which did not use "yes or no" approaches. The questions are focused on the "what, when, where, and how." I employed probes and follow-up questions which deepened the responses of the participants. Listening was utilized throughout the interviews.

Focus group interview (FGI)

A popular qualitative data collection method in which a group of people with knowledge of the topic is interviewed (Merriam & Tisdell 2016, 113). This is ideal for urban ministry practitioners as it gives these participants a chance to interact with each other and to provide data that is socially constructed through the interaction of the group (2016, 114). Participants enrich different responses which may not be possible in one-on-

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one interviews. This generates a richer perspective on the subject discussed. The

discussion is moderated well to avoid "spotlight huggers" or dominance of certain

individuals (Yin 2016). Eight UMPs were interviewed. The participants were divided into

two groups: younger urban ministry workers (20–40 years old) and older urban ministry

workers (41-65 years old). The interviews were done through the "synchronous method"

using two zoom meetings on July 22, 2020. With the permission of the participants, the

interviews were recorded through zoom application (Zubkov and Kafeero 2021, 167).

The FGI approach benefits this study by having the UMPs share common

experiences with secularized people in the course of their urban ministry work with

colleagues who may have experienced the same or different challenges. By allowing the

participants to share ideas which contribute to the conversation, a deeper and richer

understanding of the concept. Some of the information provided in the FGI were used for

observation and document analysis.

Observation

This research includes collected data through observation. I visited four locations

to observe the programs going on and to ascertain the importance of what is going on in

the place where the UMPs conduct their ministries. Observation is utilized in this

research since "the nature of the research question to be answered is focused on

answering a how or what-type question (Deborah Cohen and Benjamin Crabtee 2006a,

section 3). I followed the observation guide based on Spradley's work (grand tour

observation strategy, 78, revised by Rosario 2018). The observation includes nine

elements: space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal, and feelings. The COVID-

19 restrictions made it impossible for me to continue my physical observation of places

of worship for the secularized. I observed four churches.

Online Worship Evaluation

To support the observation done in the four churches, I adapted the evaluation guide made by Chuck Lawless (n.d.) and evaluated three online worships each from four churches in Metro Manila Project Grow Church 1 and Church 4; and two each from Church 2 and Church 3. There are eight areas of online worship that were evaluated, they are: (a) Response to God—Do I want to know God more as a result of attending the service? How am I responding to his holiness and presence? (b) Music—Would I know the gospel by the lyrics of the songs? Is the music focused on God or the worshipper? (c) Jesus and the Gospel—Do I know more of Jesus than when I first came? Is my love for Him sweeter and bigger because of what I have heard and learned? (d) Word of God—Is the Bible central to the worship activities or parts? Are the worshippers "feeding from the Word?" (e) Application—Is there a decision made for transformation? What areas of life need to be changed? (f) Excellence in Worship—Is there respect and reverence for God and the things of God? Is there an underlying drive to give God the best in all parts? (g) Would I like to come back because God's presence is real in this church? (h) Will the program attract and retain a secularized?

Document Analysis

This method refers to "a systematic procedure for reviewing, examining, or evaluating documents–both printed and electronic . . . material" (Glenn Bowen 2009, 27; Bowen; Yan Zhang and Barbara M. Wildemuth n.d., 1). Document analysis eliminates the "researcher effect" on the participants' interview or on the situation. I analyzed

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documents that include workers' reports, proposals, website materials, and the likes. The

basis for the document analysis are my research questions: RQ1: What are the biblical,

theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro

Manila? RQ2: What are the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños*? RQ3: What

factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church? RQ4:

What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist

Church? The results are discussed in detail in chapter four. RQ5: What are the barriers

(internal and external) to reaching the secularized *Manileños? RQ6: What urban ministry*

*strategies wi*ll be effective in Metro Manila*?*

Bibliographic Research

In many works of literature, documentary research is described similarly to

documentary analysis (Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln 1981, 228; Craig Kridel n.d., par.

1 and 2). I am using the phrase "bibliographic research" instead of "documentary

research" so as not to confuse the two. In this study, bibliographic research refers to

literature-based reading and thinking, getting a thorough knowledge of the literature

relevant to the research problem (Bibliographic Research, par. 1 and 2). In order to

answer research question number one, as well as to support the findings of this research, I

researched books and articles from the library of Andrews University and of AIIAS, as

well as from online or internet sources.

Data Collection Procedures

I followed the following procedure for data collection:

1. Dissertation Proposal Approval. I submitted the proposal and defended it in

front of the dissertation committee of the Department of Missions (Andrews University, Michigan, USA). The next step is to polish this and submit to the IRB for approval which I did when I was done with all my courses by the end of 2019.

2. I contacted the Central Luzon Conference to get permission. I sent a letter to the President's Council on January 31, 2020, asking permission to conduct my research in Metro Manila Adventist Churches which involved the UMPs, some church elders, and members. I received their approval the following week.

3. I submitted the proposal to the International Research Board (IRB) for approval. Included in the IRB papers is the interview protocol. The interview protocol includes the interview questions, the procedure for the interview, the information the researcher wants to gather, and prompts for collecting the informed consent. The interview questions were generated from the research questions. The IRB sent me their approval on March 2, 2020, with the "exempted" category.

Data Processing and Analysis

Guided by the research design, the interviews, focus group interviews, and observation notes the different interviews collected were transcribed and analyzed. The interviews were done in Filipino and English. I hired a research assistant to help me with the interviews and transcriptions. I listened to all the recordings, divided the collected data between me and my research assistant for transcription. I read the initial transcriptions and checked all the translated interviews after they were finished. This is where the services of my research assistant ended. I then sent the copy of the interviews to the participants for checking. From this next phase on, I worked on the data analysis alone. The trends and themes were then analyzed and summarized through coding.

Coding is the process of "taking the transcribed text data and make sense of them" in two cycles (Saldana cited in Christian Ekoto, Safary Wa-Mbaleka, and Ranjith Gladstone 2021, 191). These two phases of "coding and developing and reflecting on interpretation of the data to make sense of the whole thing" are called by Knight (quoted by Easter and Johnson 2018, location 3272) as "interactive phases for data analysis." I followed the six-phase approach to thematic analysis as discussed by Ekoto et al. (2021, 210-211): familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the data.

I developed the first codebook by coding the first two data. The codes were then grouped into categories and themes. The themes were extracted through patterns in the data related to the research questions. I revised the codebook several times as I continued to understand the codes, themes, and patterns that the data are showing until the end. The reliability of the findings is verified by using triangulation (Easter and Johnson 2018, location 3262).

<div align="center">Trustworthiness</div>

Instead of looking for validity, qualitative research is concerned with trustworthiness. Trustworthiness refers to the processes, approaches, or ways that researchers use to assess the validity, quality, or rigor of qualitative research (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 188). A qualitative study is trustworthy if its claims, implications, and conclusions are shown to be justifiable (Anthony Yue 2010, 962). There are four criteria that enhance trustworthiness (Andrew Shenton 2004, 63-64):

<div align="center">Credibility</div>

Credibility refers to the believability and appropriateness of a research account in

terms of the agreement between the researcher and the participants (Michelle McGinn 2010, 242; Shenton 2004, 63). To enhance credibility in this study, I used the following strategies: a) triangulation; b) member checking; and c) adopting established qualitative methods.

a. Triangulation. *Triangulation* means using multiple methods and sources of data to describe the phenomenon. It aims to reduce bias and thus improve *convergent validity* (Julie Cox and John Hassard 2010, 944; Dawson Hancock and Bob Algozzine 2006, 66; Woodside 2010, 16). It means using two or more different measurement procedures and research methods to answer the same research question. I employed data triangulation by using different strategies (interview, FGI, documents analysis, and observation) and collecting data from my participants (secularized non-Adventist from different parts of Metro Manila, secularized Adventist converts from different Metro Manila Adventist Churches, and urban ministry practitioners who are working in Central Luzon Conference's urban ministry projects in different parts of Metro Manila) to explore what attracts and retain the secularized people of Metro Manila to the Adventist message or church. The triangulation helped me establish the meeting points or intersections that the data produced.

b. Member Checking. *Member check* refers to the procedure in which researchers present the preliminary results to their participants so they can get last-minute corrections and feedback (Swanborn 2010, 18; Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 66). I showed the interview transcriptions (written in English) to the participant(s) to ensure that what I have transcribed reflects their meaning. I

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also verified if my perception of what they meant by certain statements is accurate. Due to the pandemic I checked with some of the participants by calling them. The member checks did not show any gaps in the accuracy of the transcriptions and therefore provided me a reliable data for a trustworthy interpretation.

c. Adopting well-established qualitative research methods. To ensure credibility, I followed the four methods recommended by McGinn (2010, 243):

    i. *Data saturation* refers to the practice of continuously interviewing people only until the researcher is "learning nothing new" (Saldaña 2011, 34). The number of participants is planned but I also made room for participants to be added. In the beginning, I planned to finish the interviews in two weeks and worked hard in getting the appointments two weeks before the start of my interviews in March. However, this was made impossible by the city lockdowns due to the pandemic. I could not collect data daily, the schedules kept changing as everyone had to deal with the quarantines and lockdown in Metro Manila. Half of the scheduled interviews were put off because people thought that the pandemic will only last shortly. In the succeeding months we tried to finish the interviews. I stopped adding participants when the ideas, words, themes that are coming out from the data have become repetitive.

    ii. *Researcher reflexivity*. It refers to "the systematic assessment" of the researcher's "identity, positionality, and subjectivities" (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 47). Reflexivity may be described as the "researcher's engagement of

continuous examination and explanation of how they have influenced a

research project" (Maura Dowling 2010, 747).

iii. *Thick description and the use of verbatim statements* are strategies that

enhance credibility in the writing of the research report. The use of "detailed

descriptions of the data themselves as well as the context" enables the

readers or audiences to "make comparisons to other contexts based on as

much information as possible" (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 191). It is

specifically appropriate for case study research reports as "thick description

… brings the case to life for readers" (McGinn 2010, 243). This is shown in

the data analysis section.

iv. *Use of recording devices*. I used recording devices with the permission of

participants to capture the verbatim statements and to have an accurate

recording of the interviews. During the pandemic lockdown I transitioned

my data collection to using chat or phone interviews and used the recording

application in the phone directly. For the focus group interviews I used the

zoom recording application.

Dependability

Dependability addresses qualitative research issues, the same as reliability does in

quantitative research. It refers to the consistency and stability of the data and entails that

the researcher has a reasoned argument for how the data is collected (Ravitch and Carl

2016, 191). To address dependability in this study, the following methods were

employed: triangulation, robust research design, and appropriate data collection methods,

as well as detailed articulation of the rationale for these choices (Cox and Hassard 2010,

944; Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 66; Woodside 2010, 16; Swanborn 2010, 18; McGinn 2010, 243).

1.   To ensure the trustworthiness of this research, I made sure that the data is dependable by following the procedures on how to conduct a case study. I made sure that I followed the protocols and procedures outlined in my proposal which were approved by the IRB. I also did the same procedure when I adapted online interviews (Zubkov and Kafeero 2021, 167) when COVID-19 struck.

2.   I recorded the procedure for my data collection which includes the schedules of my interviews, FGIs, and observation. The time and places of the data collections are also indicated.

3.   I collaborated with my methodologist in conducting an audit trail of my data collection procedures. An audit trail simply means an accounting or detailed description of the data gathering process and the evaluation of how effective the process was (Lincoln and Guba, and Shenton cited in Arceli Rosario, Petr Cincala, David Penno and Rene Drumm 2021, 152).

<div align="center">Transferability</div>

1.   Transferability is the qualitative equivalent of the quantitative concept of external validity or generalizability. It refers to how this study can be applied or transferred to a broader context without removing its context-specific richness (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 190; Susan Morrow 2005, 252; Shenton 2004, 63). Therefore, in order to allow the transferability of the findings of this study, I used thick descriptions as described by Ravitch and Carl (2016, 191) and McGinn (2010, 243). I included detailed criteria of the characteristics of the participants: secularized non-Adventists (SNSDA),

secularized Adventists (SSDA), urban ministry practitioners (UMP). I also gave a detailed description of the three groups of participants that provided the data for this study.

2. I detailed the procedures of the data gathering in terms of the individual interviews, focus group interviews, document analysis, and observation.

3. I described the data-gathering sessions, their duration, and observations.

4. I outlined the timeline from each participant as found in chapter 4 of this study.

Confirmability

The confirmability of a study is based on one thing: the findings reflecting the reality of the participants and not of the researcher (Rosario et al. 2021, 152). It means that the research findings or data can be confirmed by other researchers (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 191; Shenton 2004, 63). In order to demonstrate confirmability in this study, I implemented five main strategies, namely: triangulation, researcher reflexivity processes, methodological description, external audit or review by my committee, and audit trail by my methodologist (Cox and Hassard 2010, 944; Ravitch and Carl 2016, 47; Dowling 2010, 747).

To achieve confirmability in this research, and to address the possible ways my own assumptions, biases, and prejudices may affect my interpretation of data, I kept a journal of thoughts and feelings on my methodological decision making throughout this study (Ravitch and Carl 2016, 191).

Positionality and Reflexivity Statement

It is generally assumed that since the researcher is the primary instrument in

qualitative research, the researcher's race, gender, class, position, or religion will have an effect on the participants and therefore on the findings of the research (Merriam & Tisdell 2016, 62). It is therefore important to state the researcher's identity and positionality so that the reader will know where the researcher is coming from and how such subjectivities can influence the research project (Sharon Ravitch and Nicole Carl 2016, 47; Dowling 2010, 747).

I am a Filipino who grew up in the province but moved to Caloocan City (one of the cities of Metro Manila) when I was thirteen years old. Having lived and studied in Metro Manila for more than five years gives me a familiarity with this city and the characteristics of secularized people there. I come from a family focused on the education of its children. Religion was not a part of our home since my parents were disowned by my Adventist grandparents. Our parents raised us with a high moral code, but God was a topic that we did not touch in the family. We also did not pray except when someone in the family was about to travel for the city. My years of stay in Metro Manila was profoundly marked by emptiness, though materially I was well provided. I studied in an exclusive Catholic school for my middle school and took my first year of nursing in a big university (Manila Central University). My own personal journey from no religious affiliation to Adventism gives me a sense of affinity for many Filipinos who after leaving their province became secularized in the city.

Before my data gathering, I thought that my being a lady pastor may affect the way participants will respond to me. My assumption was based on the fact that Filipinos respect pastors but continue to have mixed attitude towards women. On the other hand, my being in the academe helped dispense what possible barriers my being a lady pastor

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may present. During the interviews, being female proved to be an advantage since I did not pose as a threat to the participants whom I just met for the first time.

The approach to winning and discipling the secularized is a sensitive topic among Filipino Adventists. Many are predisposed to throw the idea of the need for a contextualized ministry for the secularized people. Many do not understand that the secularized is an emerging people group and that they have some special needs that the traditional or orthodox Adventist Church do not address. There is an on-going debate that any approach of doing church divergent from the traditional Adventist way is not Adventist. Contextualization or contextual sensitivity has not yet rooted in the consciousness of the local members. I am aware that I still hold some deep-seated values as a traditional Adventist. However, I have been doing a ministry for the unreached people groups for twenty-five years before becoming a professor, so I am familiar with doing contextualization to bring the gospel to the unreached. In doing this study, I resolved to keep an open mind and let the secular people tell their story or experiences through the data I gathered. I also acknowledge that this research has its limitations due to its human origin. There are only dimensions of truth that this research has uncover which are subject to the participants' perception of reality. My methodology and the process of research which includes data collection, data analysis, and interpretation have also some limitations due to human nature. However, while not all experiences tell the same story, this qualitative case study research provided me a way to understand how secular people think, feel, and need in relation to God and life.

Ethical Considerations

Steinar Kvale (2007, 23) postulates that Interview research is inundated with

moral and ethical issues because it probes on the private lives of people and puts these pieces of information in public. Ethical principles dictate that the contribution of the research to the promotion of human welfare should outweigh the negative, by increasing the knowledge of human behavior and understanding of self and others (2007, 24). Kvale (2007, 24) suggests ethical considerations should be practiced in the seven research stages. These seven areas are addressed in my research. I will discuss them below.

1. Thematizing. The purpose of the interview should include not only the scientific value of the findings but also the improvement of the human situation under study.

2. Designing. The ethical issues of design should include obtaining the participants' informed consent to participate in the study, securing the confidentiality, and considering the possible consequences to the participants.

3. Interview Situation. There should be considerations to the possible effect of the interview interaction to the participants such as stress or changes in self-understanding.

4. Transcription. The confidentiality of the participants should always be protected and the accuracy of the transcriptions to the oral statements are handled well.

5. Analysis. Prominent issues in analysis involve how astutely the interviews can be analyzed and whether the participants should have a say in how their statements are interpreted.

6. Verification. The researcher is responsible to report knowledge that is as secured and verified as possible. It involves the issue of how critically a participant may be questioned.

7.   Reporting. The issue of confidentiality is touched when reporting personal interviews to the public, as well as the question of what the consequences are for the participants and the group they belong to when the report is published.

In this study, I followed ethical research work standards as prescribed by the International Research Board (IRB) which reflected on my professional ability and prevention of bias. This research guaranteed that the human participants are protected from harm by making sure the participants understand that: (a) their participation is purely voluntary, (b) that they can stop their participation at any time, and (c) that they do not have to answer any question that they are uncomfortable with.

Approval of committees. The approval from IRB, research committee, and Central Luzon Conference were sought prior to data collection. It entailed going through processes of communication in obtaining permission from these different entities.

Informed Consent. Consent forms were made available and explained to interview participants (Jacob and Furgerson 2012, 2). The content of the consent form included the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, their right to ask questions or to refuse to answer a question, confidentiality, and the benefits of participation (Leavy 2017, 184). (See appendix on the "informed consent form"). The informed consent forms were signed before the actual interviews of the twelve secularized non-Adventists, ten secularized Adventists, and eight urban practitioners who participated in the study.

Confidentiality. The confidentiality of the gathered information was always maintained. The identification of respondents or interviewees are not available to anyone other than myself. It was only at the initial stage, when we were doing the interviews, that

my assistant saw the information of the participants. I used codes to hide the identity of the participants. When the codes were assigned to the participants, this remained their identification until the end. Any identifiable information related to any participant were removed from the final report (Leavy 2017, 142; Hancock and Algozzine 2006, 41).

Relevance of Data. I only asked questions that are relevant to this research, the questions are based on the research questions. Only relevant information was reported in the final report.

Management & Reporting of Data. The recording and transcription of interviews are kept in my computer under the file Data gathering and a copy of the audio and video recordings are in my google account. They are password protected. Pseudonyms, letters, and numbers were used in encoding and reporting the interviews. I sent the transcriptions to the participants for feedback and checking of accuracy (Shenton 2004, 68).

Safety of Researcher and Participants. I made sure that no one is harmed or put in discomfort during this research (Saldaña 2011, 25). The interviews were conducted at the time and place agreed upon by the participants.

UNDERSTANDING SECURALIZED PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA
A BASIS FOR A CONTEXTUALIZED URBAN MINISTRY STRATEGY

RQ2: What are the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños*?
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized person to join the SDA church?
RQ4: What factors influence a secularized SDA to remain in the SDA Church?
RQ5: What are the barriers to reaching the secularized *Manileños*?
RQ6: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?

Interview to secularized SDA & non-SDA

Member Check

Focus group interview and individual interview (Urban Ministry Practitioners

Coding, triangulation, Analysis and interpretation of data

Observation of Ministry Practice

Documentary Research
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?

Document Analysis

Contextualized Urban Ministry Strategies for Secularized People

Figure 5. Research design for finding an effective contextualized Urban Ministry Strategy for secularize people.

Summary

This chapter presented the different methodological considerations for my research. This study follows the case study design in qualitative research. The participants were twelve secularized non-Adventists and ten secularized Adventists who are living in different cities of Metro Manila. Eight urban ministry practitioners (UMPs) participated in the focus group interview (FGI). Triangulation of the interviews, FGI, document analysis, and observation were employed to ensure the reliability and credibility of the research findings on what attracts and retains the secularized people of Metro Manila to the Adventist message or church. The triangulation helped me establish the meeting points or intersections that the data produced.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of my inquiry on the phenomenon of reaching the secularized people of Metro Manila with the Gospel. Through the data analysis, I am answering the questions: (RQ2) "What are the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños*?"; (RQ3) "What factors influence secularized people to join the Adventist Church?"; and (RQ4) "What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" Furthermore, the theme "personal and church factors why secularized converts leave the Adventist Church" is also discussed in this chapter. Research questions five and six are discussed in chapter five.

My data analysis and findings generated nine themes. Six of these themes are discussed in this chapter and the other two themes in chapter 5. These six themes are: (1) the characteristics of secularized people of Metro Manila; (2) life encounters of secularized people; (3) factors that attract secularized people to the Adventist church; and (4) factors that retain secularized people to the Adventist Church.

For triangulation, three steps were taken. First, I made observation of several churches following the observation guide by Spradley (1980, 78) which was modified by Rosario (2018). Second, I also included the assessment of the online worship of four churches. Third, I discussed the analysis of the documents I gathered from the local conference and its pastors. The findings on the triangulation are in the appendix.

Operational Data Collection

The participants for this research were divided into four groups. The participants included twelve (12) selected secularized non-Adventist persons (SNSDAs), ten (10) secularized Seventh-day Adventists (SSDAs), and eight (8) Seventh-day Adventist urban ministry practitioners in Metro Manila (UMPs). The age group of the secularized people is from eighteen to thirty-five years old. The UMPs are divided into two groups ages 20-40 years old and 41-65 years old respectively. Two participants from the SSDAs are aged forty-two and forty-nine. One of my gatekeepers misunderstood the age limit and endorsed these two participants. However, after listening several times to the recording of their interviews, I concluded that the data are rich and valuable to the understanding of the secularized people of Metro Manila and so I included them. The other reason is that these two participants checked more of the characteristics of secularized persons than the others in the group.

As indicated in table 1, the participants come from different parts of Metro Manila. My initial target was to get participants from each of the sixteen cities of Metro Manila, but the pandemic made it difficult. Nevertheless, I made sure that the distribution of participants is spread across the megacity. Their location, where they work and where they live, ensure they live and breathe the Metro Manila life (see table 1).

Data Collection

I started my physical data collection from March 4, 2020 to April 16, 2020 for the in-depth interviews with the secularized NSDAs and SSDAs. The *Focus Group Interviews* were put on hold because of the pandemic until July 2021. As COVID-19 hit in March 2020, data collection became more challenging. By the second week of March,

Table 1. Participants distribution in Metro Manila
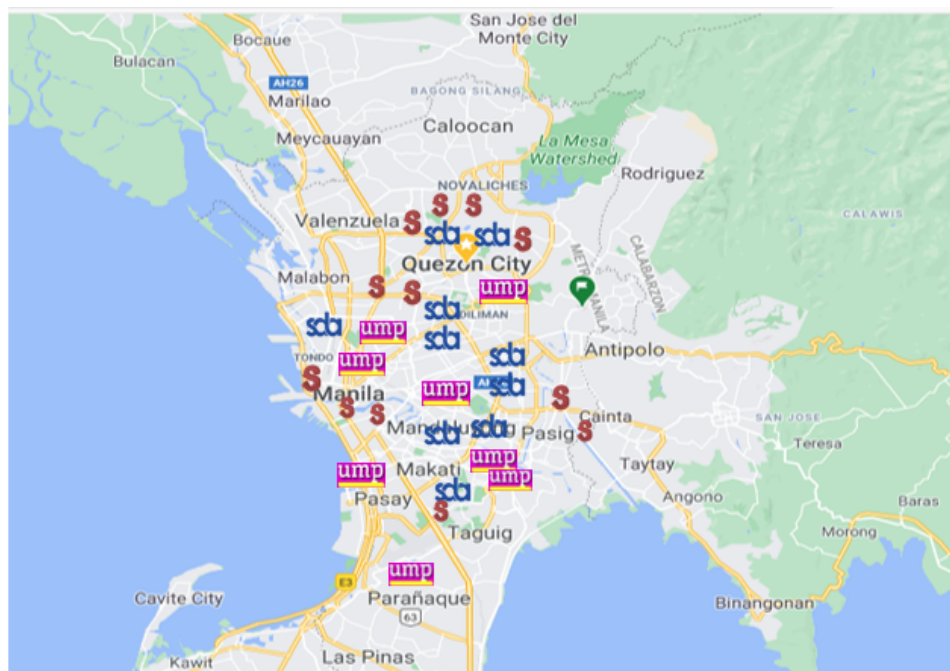
S = secularized non-Adventist participant (SNSDA)
SDA = secularized Adventist participant (SSDA)
UMP- Urban Ministry Practitioner (UMP)

places started to lockdown, I was forced to conduct the rest of my interviews by phone,

through Facebook chat, or zoom meetings. I searched for possible participants through

Adventist friends, elders in the church, and pastors. Urban ministry practitioners (UMPs)

from (Central Luzon Conference) were referred to me by the conference's Associate

Director of the Ministerial Department. Those who were actively helping me at my initial

contacts became my gatekeepers. I contacted the UMPs individually and explained the

purpose of my research. I asked them if they were willing to be my gatekeepers. I sent

them the electronic copies of my permission from the conference, the summary of the

description of my research, and the characteristics of secular people that I am looking for.

The list of characteristics was adapted from the works of George Barna and David

Kinnaman (2014, 127) on secular churchless people. (See the appendix for the interview protocol information). I prepared a small packet of information and a script for initial contact with the gatekeepers and participants. I also repeated to the gatekeepers these pieces of information on the phone. The gatekeepers introduced the participants face to face, by phone, and through Facebook chat or zoom meetings. I asked them to only refer participants who fit the description of a secular person. This proved to be challenging as many of the conference urban workers were confused about how to identify the secularized people of Metro Manila. This lack of understanding made some of the urban practitioners decline participation in the research.

In determining the characteristics of the participants, I set the number of years living in Metro Manila to a minimum of three to five years to ensure that the person has already imbibed the secularizing effects of living in a megacity. This is coupled with one or more characteristics of a secularized person based on the study of Barna and Kinnaman (2014, 127). Before recording the interview, I verified if the participant has the secularized people's characteristics by asking him or her to look at the list and identify the number of the characteristic that describes himself or herself. (See the appendix on the interview protocol information. See tables 2, 3, and 4 below for the list of participants and their descriptions.)

Table 2. Participants' profile of Urban Ministry Practitioners in Metro Manila

UMP #	CONTACT	ADDRESS	AGE	OCCUPATION	PERSONAL VALUES
1	FB	Pasay	49	Pastoring U-Belt Church	Between Moderate and Progressive
2	FB	Caloocan City	50	Pastoring Shekinah Fellowship, Cubao	Moderate
3	FB	Pasay	42	Pastoring in Pasay	Moderate
4	FB/09774313231	Makati	33	Pastoring in Makati	Progressive
5	FB	Mandaluyong, Quezon City	33	Pastoring in Mandaluyong	Between Moderate and Progressive
6	FB/09156006332	Western Bicutan, Taguig City	32	Church Planting in Paranaque	Evangelical
7	09175105467	Bonifacio Global City, Taguig	35	Associate Ministerial Director/ Adventist Mission	Between Moderate and Progressive
8	FB	QC	56	Businessman/Elder in U-Belt church	Between Moderate and Progressive

Table 3. Participants' profile: secularized non-SDA

CODE	ADDRESS	AGE	OCCUPATION	PERSONAL VALUES	SECULAR CHARACTERISTIC	DATE OF INTER VIEW	TYPE OF UN-CHURCHED
SNSDA 01	QC, living in MM for 10 years	27	San Miguel Corp. Head Operations Assistant	Traditional, Progressive	#4 Indifferent to religion #6 Has never made a commitment to Jesus #7 Does not understand the deity of Jesus #8 Highly materialistic	March 4, 2020	U1, Highly Receptive
SNSDA 02	QC, 6 years Living in MM	25	BA graduate, Lending Corp.	Progressive, Modern	#9 Disagrees that the Bible is accurate	March 4, 2020	U3,Neutral/No ncommit-tal
SNSDA 03	Marikina, MM Since birth up to present	25	Site Engineer	Progressive	#11 has not read the Bible in the last year	March 10, 2020	U2, Receptive
SNSDA 04	Tondo, Manila Since birth up to present	21	College Student	Modern	#2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 Identifies self as agnostic, indifferent to religion, does not understand the deity of Jesus, believes that Jesus is just a highly moral man, disagrees that the Bible is accurate, has not attended a Christian church in the last year, has not read the Bible, has not attended religious gathering	March 10, 2020	U5, Antagonis-tic, Resistant
SNSDA 05	Crame, 5 years in MM		BA graduate, Lending Corp.	Modern	#11,12 Has not read the Bible, has not attended religious gathering in 3 years	March 4, 2020	U2, Receptive

Table 3 -- Continued.

SNSDA 06	Project 4, Living in MM since High School	21	BA graduate, Bank	Traditional	#8 Highly materialistic vs religiously oriented	March 4, 2020	U2, Receptive
SNSDA 07	Pasig, MM Since birth up to present	31	Housewife	Progressive, Christian	#5, 11 Has not prayed to God for a long time (before) Has not read the Bible for a long time	April 9, 2020	U1, Highly Receptive
SNSDA 08	Sampaloc, Manila since birth up to present	26	Student	Traditional	#6, 11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, has not read the Bible in the last year.	April 13, 2020	U3, Neutral/Non committal
SNSDA 09	Makati, 21 years in MM	28	BPO-Call Center	Traditional, Modern	#6, 10, 11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, has not attended a Christian church for years, has not read the Bible	April 13, 2020	U3, Neutral/Non committal
SNSDA 10	Quezon City, Since birth up to present	29	HR And Admin Officer	Traditional, Modern	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time	April 14, 2020	U2, Receptive
SNSDA 11	Quezon City Since birth up to present	25	Artist	Traditional	#6,9,11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, disagrees that the Bible is accurate in the principles it teaches, has not read the Bible	April 8, 2020	U3, Neutral/Non commital
SNSDA 12	Pasig, 9 years in MM	29	Seamstress	Traditional, Modern	#11 Has not read the bible in the last year	April 13, 2020	U2, Receptive

Table 4. Participants' profile: secularized SDA

CODE	ADDRESS	AGE	OCCUPATION	SECULAR CHARACTERISTIC	DATE OF INTERVIEW	PERSONAL VALUES
SSDA13	Makati, living in MM for more than 5 years	32	Working in a Japanese Corporation, Makati	#5, 10, 11 has not prayed to God for a long time, has not read the Bible Highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented	March 7, 2020	Modern, Progressive
SSDA14	Eastwood, QC	35	BDO Customer Service Rep.	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time #5 has not prayed for a long time	March 30, 2020	Modern, Progressive
SSDA15	Mandaluyong, living in MM for 17 years	31	Online Selling	#5, 10 Has not prayed to God for a long time, has not attended a Christian church for a long time	April 9, 2020	Modern, Christian, Provincial
SSDA16	Cubao, QC living in MM for 7 years	27	Secretary & Cook	#10, 11 Has not attended a Christian church for a year before becoming an SDA, has not read the Bible for a year before becoming acquainted with SDA's	March 25, 2020	Christian
SSDA17	Quezon City Living in MM for 12 years	33	Housewife	#5, 11 has not prayed to God for a long time, has not read the Bible	April 10, 2020	Traditional, Christian
SSDA18	Sta. Mesa, Manila Living in MM since birth	22	Architectural Designer	#8,10,11 Before becoming an Adventist: Highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not attended a Christian church for years, not read the Bible for years	March 14, 2020	Modern, Progressive, Christian
SSDA19	Quezon City Born and raised in MM	31	Construction Worker	#8, 11 highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not read the Bible for a long time	April 16, 2020	Christian
SSDA20	Mandaluyong Born and raised in MM	29	Product Operations Manager	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time	April 16, 2020	Modern, Progressive, Christian

Table 4 -- Continued.
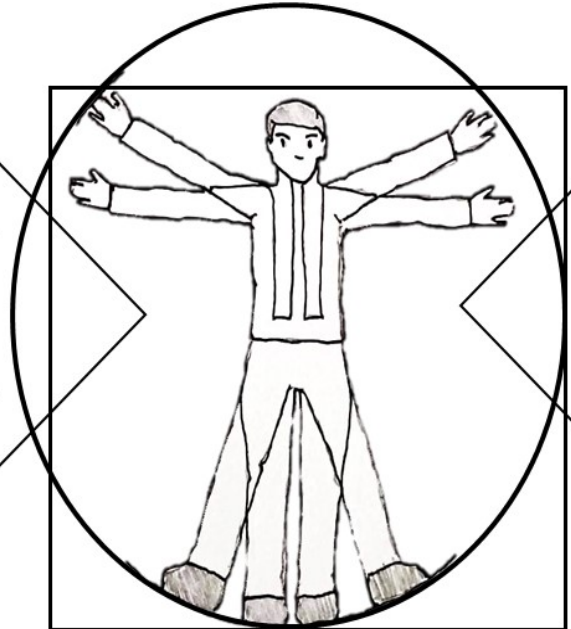
SSDA 21	QC, Living in MM for more than 20 years	49	Bank Consultant	#6,8,11,12 highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not read the Bible for a long time, has not made a commitment to Jesus, has not attended the church except for weddings and special occasions	March 4, 2020	Traditional, Christian
SSDA 22	CRAME, Living in Manila for more than 10 years	38	Army Officer	#10-12, not attended a Christian Church, not read the Bible, not attended religious gathering	March 4, 2020	Modern

The Secularized *Manileños*

In chapter I, I described that my study is focused on the secularized *Manileños*. My assumption is that the people of Metro Manila are fast becoming secularized and this has affected their response to the Gospel. My other assumption is that the secularization effects are slower in Metro Manila compared to America and the rest of the western world. Furthermore, Metro Manila is just at the beginning of the spectrum of secularization. However, the secularity of these *Manileños* is unique compared to other secular people of the world because of their deep roots and identification with Catholicism. In the interviews, the participants were asked about God, the church, religion, the Bible, prayer, and their experiences related to these topics. (See the appendix on the "Interview Guide and Protocol.") The data brought out twenty-four traits of secularized *Manileños* that validated the assumption that the people of Metro Manila are secularized. These traits made them similar in many aspects to other secular people in other cities of the world and yet some of the characteristics also made them unique because of their Catholic background. They also have a different level of secularity (see table 5).

The question then that will be asked is, "If the *Manileños* are secularized, how secular are they?" Using the **Spectrum of Receptivity to the Gospel** by Rainer (2003) I found out that the secularized *Manileños* are between the U1 to U3 spectrum. (See the appendix of the participants' *Faith Stages* based on Rainer's Survey of Receptivity to the Gospel. See also Figure 6 on the spectrum of Secularized *Manileños* Receptivity to the Gospel). Most of them do not equate attending church as the basis of their religiosity.

Table 5. Secularized *Manileños' characteristics*

1) USUALLY FROM CATHOLIC BACKGROUND

2) BELEIVES THAT GOD EXISTS

3) DOES NOT HAVE THE BIBLE, DOES NOT READ THE BIBLE

4) PRAYS SPONTANEOUS BUT IRREGULAR PRAYERS

5) NOMINAL CHRISTIAN/DOES NOT ATTEND CHURCH REGULARLY

6) HOLDS CERTAIN BELIEFS IN GOD

7) HAS BELIEFS IN JESUS

8) HAS DOUBTS ABOUT GOD, BIBLE, PRAYER

9) DOES NOT LIKE TO BE JUDGED

10) LEADS A BUSY LIFE, MATERIALISM

11) LIKES LIVING IN THE MOMENT/ SEEKS MEANING IN LIFE

12) DISENCHANTED WITH RELIGION

13) RELATIVISM

14) TOLERANCE/RESPECT OTHER RELIGION

15) PEACE AND HARMONY WITH PEOPLE

16) SEPARATION OF STATE AND RELIGION

17) RELIGION IN PRIVATE SPACE

18) CONCERNS ABOUT THE JUDGMENT

19) AUTONOMY

20) NATURALISM/PANTHEISM

21) AVOIDS ISSUES OF LIFE AND DEATH

22) LOOKING FOR CERTAINTY IN LIFE

23) CO-HABITATION

24) ISSUES OF EQUALITY, PRO-LGBT PLUS

However, unlike the unchurched in Rainer's study who have negative experiences with the church (60% plus), the participants in this study have very little negative experiences with Christians and or none at all with Adventists.

Life Encounters

The question may be asked, do secularized people perceive life differently than others due to these twenty-four characteristics? Generally, we perceive things differently from another person, however, our reality is shaped by or influenced by our experiences in life. This version of reality determines the responses of the secularized people to God and religion. So, the answer to the question is yes. In chapter 2, I have discussed the seven types of God's grace and their functions. Moskala (2022) posits that God applies his grace in stages through the work of the Holy Spirit to draw a person from unbelief to conversion until full restoration is achieved in the glorification phase (see figure 1).
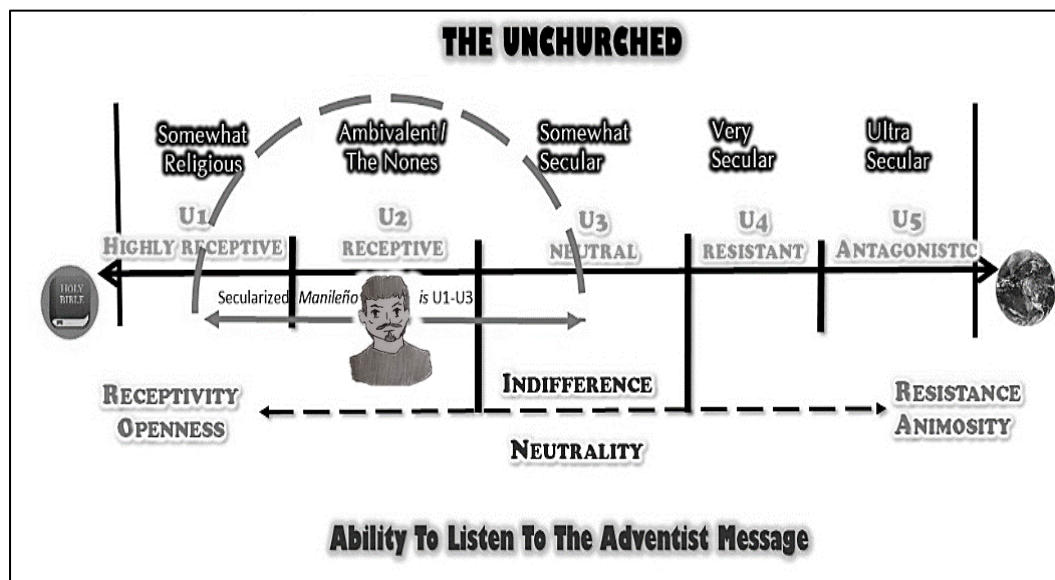
Figure 6. Secularized *Manileños'* receptivity to the Gospel. Adapted from Thom Rainer's *Scale of Receptivity to the Gospel* (2003).

In the study made by Rosario et al. (2018, 294) they mentioned that there are **attracting factors and deciding factors** (relationships and experiences) that people encounter, which leads them to decide to accept Jesus. This is the **saving grace** in operation. However, in this study I found out from the interviews that before the actual encounters with the Adventist Church, the secularized people have been going through a pre-cycle stage of **attracting and deciding factors**. This is **prevenient grace** in operation before the person enters the **saving grace phase**. These experiences determine their openness to Christian witness or to an active seeking for God and truth. I am labeling this as **life encounters**, wherein God works through life experiences and circumstances of people to lead them to salvation. Just like the story in Matthew 18:12-14, the shepherd upon discovery that a sheep is lost from his herd, searches everywhere until the sheep is found. This depicts God in active duty focused on finding the lost. The data in this study substantiate the **prevenient grace of God** in operation through these **life encounters**, even before the secularized person steps inside the church. In this study, the **life encounters** of the secularized *Manileños* are: (1) encounters with God; (2) encounters with Christians; (3) encounters with tragedies; and (4) encounters with persons of influence. These four categories of **life encounters**, whether one out of four, or any combination of the four, either draw the secularized nearer to God or builds a wall between God and the secularized person (see figure 7).

<div align="center">Encounters with Tragedies</div>

When the secularized people talked about their problems and tragedies in life, they described: (1) broken relationships, (2) death of a loved one, (3) abandonment by a parent, and (4) loss of a job. They admitted that they questioned God when these things

happened. These are all circumstances that make a person doubt God or increase faith in

Him.

> There are times that I neglect myself, and I also neglect God. I really could not handle it. That's why I tend to always neglect God (SSDA 16, Pos. 63)

> So, it was like, I also lost my faith, actually. (SSDA 18, Pos. 95)

> he was actually telling us his bitterness of life and God. He was not praying anymore … He wasn't attending church. and he was even telling me, "If God is really present, why am I being like this? Why is he allowing me to live like this?" (FGI 1, UMP 01, Pos. 5)

<div align="center">Encounters with Persons of Influence</div>

As we go through life, we have persons in our lives who are our role models or

someone we look up to for advice or guidance. These persons influence us for good,

although sometimes there are persons who do the opposite. This category answers the

inquiry if there are persons in the secular people's lives who influenced them toward God

and religion. On the "encounters with persons of influence" category, the top codes that

came out are: (1) SDA immediate family
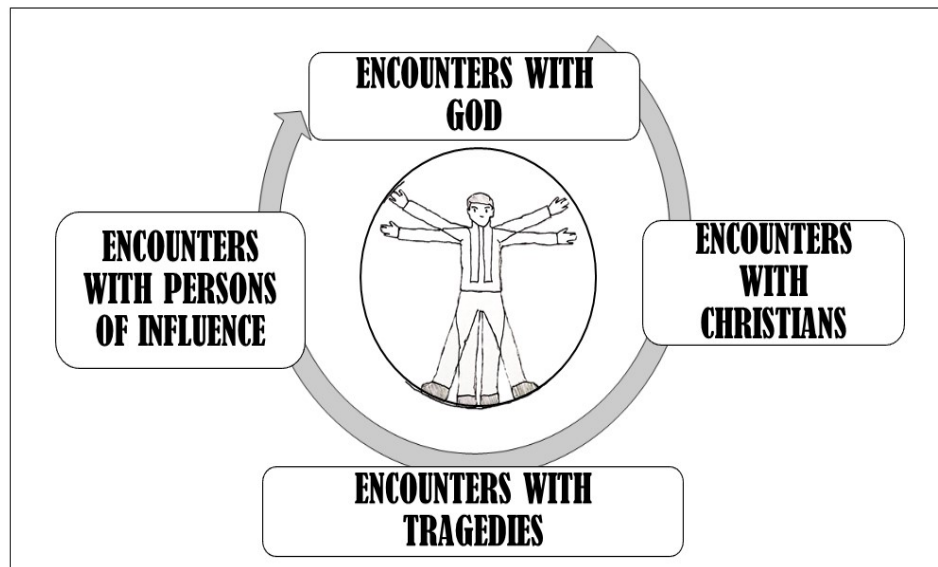
Figure 7. Life Encounters that influence secularized people to join the Adventist Church.

members, (2) Christian/SDA relatives, and (3) Christian/ SDA friends. From the data I collected six SNSDA and eleven SSDA said they have persons in their lives who influenced them toward God or religion. These eleven SSDA said that an Adventist friend or a family member invited them to Adventist Church or events. The six SNSDA participants said that they also have "persons of influence" in their lives who showed positive witness for their faith which influenced the participants to be open, friendly, and not prejudiced to Christianity. Four out of twelve SNSDA have Adventists in their lives who influence them towards God and religion. One of the SNSDA is married to an Adventist. Three SNSDA are attending Adventist Bible studies. Among the ten SSDA, four of them have Adventist friends who invited them to church, Bible studies, or to activities of Adventists. Two of the SSDA have Adventist girlfriends and three are married to Adventists. One of the SSDA is a daughter of a former Adventist. From the data, it showed that the influence of Adventists on their non-Adventist family members, friends, and boyfriends/girlfriends is very significant to how they respond to the gospel. Adventists must keep in mind that their influence do matter to witnessing. The survey done by the group of Paul Richardson (2013, 2, 4) on church dropouts showed that twenty-eight percent (28%) of the total Adventist conversion from 2011 to 2012 are from people who were introduced to the Adventist Church by an Adventist friend, relative, neighbor or co-worker. This study is conducted across Africa, South America, Europe, and North America so it covers a wide area. Corley (2018) and Richardson (2013) posit in their studies that religious conversion is the result of a complex mix of factors, and it cannot be attributed to just one element (the factors they found are the message, ministry, and outreach of the church). This has been supported by the study made by Rosario et al.

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(2018) on conversion, retention, and reclamation.

Encounters with Christians

Another big factor that influences secularized people to be open to Christian witness is having good "encounters with Christians." The relational aspect like friendship with the secularized is one of the top factors drawn out. This factor pops up regularly in the answers of the secularized participants in this study as well as in the focus group interview of the urban practitioners as an attraction to the Adventist Church. The participants in this study mentioned having positive encounters with Christians in: (1) attending a Christian church; (2) joining a Bible Study; (3) befriending Christians; and (4) being healed through prayer. The secularized are also impressed with the authenticity of their lives which made the secularized want to investigate further. Undoubtedly, they are all positive influences that help them to be open to the gospel and to conversion.

Encounters with God

From the four areas of experiences that influence secularized people mentioned above, "encounters with God" is a unique area of human experience because it transcends religious branding and focuses on personal encounters between God and the secularized. These encounters with God are often referred in literature as the area of **spirituality**. There are many ways of defining spirituality. It is harder to explain it in precise words but there are ways to capture its essence. For example, McGrath (1999, 2) described spirituality as a quest for a fulfilled and authentic Christian existence; it is living out the fundamental ideals of Christianity; and it is simply enjoying a loving father and child relationship with God. Voas and Day (2014, 4) described it as a quest to experience things with God and a longing to fulfill God's will in one's life. It is contrasted from an

academic or detached approach to religion, to an emphasis on having experiences with a relational God. Jon Dybdahl (2008, 11) describes it as an intense human hunger for God, not only to know about Him but a quest to encounter God–to touch, experience, and feel the divine. Bauer (2013, 88) posits that secular/postmodern people highly value spirituality. In this study, the secularized *Manileños*' spirituality is expressed through their (1) searching for God, (2) feeling close to God, (3) sensing the presence of God, (4) experiencing a miracle, (5) feeling sorry and wanting to go back to God, (6) feeling grateful, and (7) following God's will. These expressions all interplay to increase spirituality and evoke positive responses to God.

For those of us who came from Christian background, it is hard to grasp the concept of not having God around at any stage of our lives. Nonetheless, God is not an acknowledged person or presence in the lives of many of the secularized people. As described in the beginning of this chapter, a secularized *Manileño* believes that God exists, he has some knowledge about God, though may not be in a relationship with Him. Now, using the Engel's scale (Engel and Norton 1975, 45), the secularized people can be placed between -10 to -7 in the simplified Engel's scale. (See the appendix for the Engel's Scale). The Engel Scale is a model for "spiritual decision processes" which is useful for the secularized people because it explains the stages before the secularized person is introduced to Christianity moving on to discipleship growth.

What is interesting to note here is that at these phases, the secularized *Manileños* perception of God, experiences with God, and feelings toward God, interplay to increase spirituality and evoke responses of trust in God. In fact, the participants described feelings of "longing for God," "closeness to God," and "feelings of desire to search for

God." These are all indications of the Holy Spirit works on the secularized during these stages and then the Holy Spirit connects him to a Christian at stage -7. This is not to say that the Holy Spirit stops working as soon as there is a Christian witnessing, far from it, but at this stage there is now a collaboration between God and His agents from the church, see table XIV, XV, XVI for the spiritual responses of the secularized participants in the appendix.

Some of the participants described their encounters with God starting from when they do not know so much about the Bible to the time when they became Adventists. For SSDA 22, he recognizes that God used his relationship with an Adventist woman so that he will seek the truth for himself. Now, he says that

it was a love story as humans at the beginning, but now … my love story is Jesus Christ. (SSDA 22, Pos. 4)

During the background check for SSDA 21, UMP 02 described that prior to her conversion her husband died so she was asking questions about life and death. She was seeking for direction. God was working unseen in her life.

This lady was baptized last year. This one is unreachable, in a high position in business, she was so busy … we've been inviting this lady for about three years. One day she said, "Can I have intense Bible study with you?" After I gave her Bible study, she said, "I want to be baptized." This is a very secular woman … she does not go to church regularly, only to attend a wedding, funeral … but we did not stop pursuing her. (FGI 1, UMP 02, Pos. 9)

During the interview, UMP 08 shared stories of secularized and influential people whom he led to the Lord. He shared the story of Mrs. N who was a wealthy client of his. As their relationship improved as client and service provider, he was able to give her Bible studies. Later when they came to the subject of the Sabbath, she was convinced but would not make any decision about it, he told her to pray to God to give her a dream. She

did pray about it and God gave her a dream about the Sabbath. UMP 08 said that he has seen the intervention of God in the lives of the secularized over and over in the course of many years.

What Attracts the Secularized People to Join the Adventist Church?

In answering the research question, "What attracts the secularized to join the Adventist Church?" There are twenty codes that were identified. (See table XVII in the appendix). Some of these codes also came out in the *Focus Group Interviews* of the pastors and I labeled them as "good practices" and "contributing factors from the UMPs." I then condensed these twenty codes into thirteen factors and divide them into three areas: *relational factors* (1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16), *experiences in the Adventist Church* (4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20), and *unique Adventist features* (2, 10, 13, 18). (See figure 8 and 9).

In the study of nine-hundred twenty-five participants (Center for Creative Ministry 2013, 6), when asked "what attracted them to join the Adventist Church" the
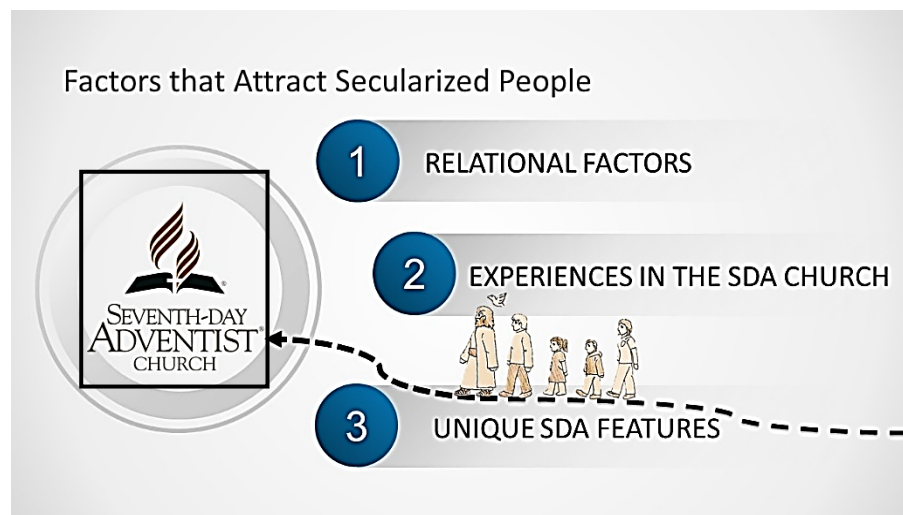
Figure 8. Factors that attract secularized people to the Adventist Church.

four factors they found in their study are: 72% of the participants said that its doctrines; then 56% of them said that friendship is one of the factors; then 52% of them said that it's the charisma of the preacher; and 37% said that it is "my needs." These findings are similar to the findings in this study. I labelled doctrines as ***unique Adventist features*** in this study. I labelled friendship and charisma of preacher as ***relational factors.*** Some of their findings on "my needs" are similar to what I labelled as ***experiences in the Adventist Church***.

<div align="center">Relational Factors</div>

The relational factors show how important they are in attracting the secularized to the Adventist Church. Jesus says, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13: 35, ESV). Jesus repeated this command in chapter fifteen to show its importance, "This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. Another verse says, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John15:12-13, NLT). Jesus' death on the cross is the true measure of love and he wants us to show this to one another. Further, there is no better way to show the love of God to each other than in our relationships inside and outside the church. Skip Bell (2018, 147) called this "**relationality theology**." He posits that this is the primary tenet of urban mission and ministry, in that Jesus carries out His mission in intimate relationships. His strategy in His disciple-making is to live with a group of people, share their meals, walk and talk together with them. He showed his close relationship with them by calling the disciples his "friends" (John 15:12-17).

Relationship/Friendships

In the **relational factors** under friendship with Adventists, the participants
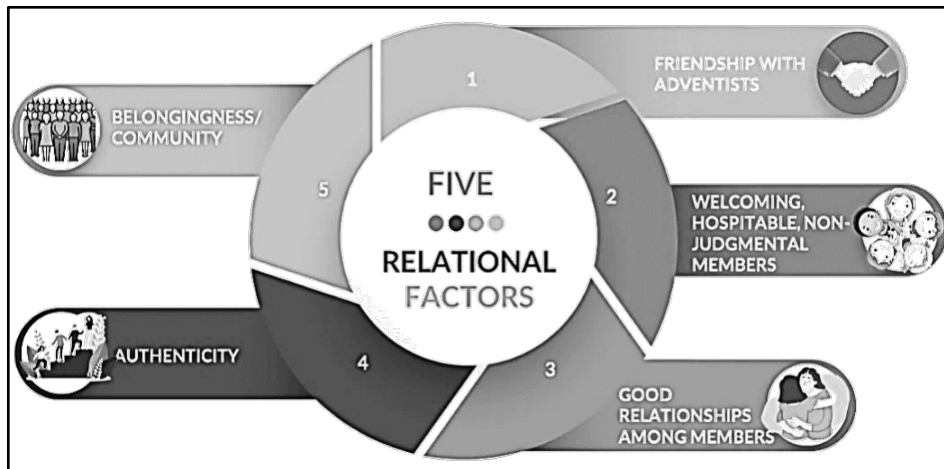
Figure 9. Five relational factors that attract secularized people.

described the following codes as what attracts them in terms of relationships: welcoming church, hospitable and non-judgmental people; good relationships of church members; the church is like a family; authenticity; and the sense of community. These substantiate the claim that people are attracted to a church whose members show genuine love to people shown in acts of friendship and genuine relationships. In the study made by Anderson Corley (2018, 132) his findings indicated that being friendly and building relationships in the community have the most frequency in answer to the question what ministry practices attract new church members.

Members are welcoming, hospitable, non-judgmental

Each of the participants had unique experiences on this area. Participant SNSDA 02 uses the words "embrace, harmony, and acceptance" to describe his relationship with the Adventists. For participant SSDA 13, this category was a big factor in pursuing her awakened interest in God. Her Adventist friend introduced her to her group in Café Life, and then to Grow Group later. This is where she found acceptance and welcome without reservation. For participant SSDA 14, his homosexuality did not become an issue to

welcome him in Café Life. He felt that he was not judged and it led him to be more open to study the Bible and accept Jesus Christ. For participant SSDA 16, there were two things that impressed her deeply with the Adventist Church she attended: one, the hospitality of the Adventist members; and two, the praying environment in the church. Participants SSDA 19 and 20 speaks of the friendliness of the members in the church. Although it has been a while since participant SSDA 19 has been to this church, it is what he remembers the most and he says, he feels "comfortable" with them. For SSDA 21, what impressed her was the "friendliness of the pastor and the welcoming atmosphere, the inviting attitude from the people." For participant SSDA 22, he was unsure how the church would receive him because he was a "walk-in" seeker, and no one knew him. Working in government intelligence for many years made him wary of people. He only brought his children to the church when he proved that the Adventist Church is welcoming and open to his family. For the urban ministry practitioners (UMPs 01, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08) they emphasized on the importance of having a "friendly, welcoming, and hospitable church," and on having people who are "open, accepting, non-judgmental, and authentic" in their relationships with people. (See appendix on "members are welcoming, hospitable, and non-judgmental" under Theme 4, category 3). This welcoming, non-judgmental attitude was best expressed by SSDA 20 when asked what she liked in the church she is attending:

> when I started attending Grow Community…there are more visitors than members … I get to know people from different denominations and even atheists or agnostics … that attend the service … it's the only church that I attended that's very open to anyone … it's one of the things that I like about it, it's very warm … it's without judgment. You can share … everything and anything … knowing that the people around you won't judge you. (SSDA 20, Pos. 68-69)

Authenticity

Another code that came out from the data in what attracts the secularized under

relational factors is **authenticity**. The Barna research group (2021) found out that the

non-Christian Generation Z thinks that the most appealing type of evangelism occurs

"when Christians live out their faith not when they explain it." This generation dislikes it

when you quote Scriptures to them, when you ask to pray for them during the

conversation, and when you ask them the reasons behind their beliefs or lifestyle choices.

Participants SNSDA 09, and SSDA 22 used the words "sincerity" and "practicing what

the Bible says" to describe the way the church members should relate with non-believers

and in practicing what they preach. This is what "authenticity" looks like for them. The

following quotes from the participants show how important is "authenticity" to the

secularized people, it also shows that friendliness and welcoming atmosphere in the

church are interrelated.

> I've already observed. I mean I already know the ways of different religions and [how it is] inside their churches. I guess if I would return, [it's] … because I saw the sincerity, I saw that I really should be surrounded by these people ... I would be happier to go there voluntarily … in the church. (SNSDA 09, Pos. 88)

> But what I love most about our church [Adventist] is they embrace authenticity. You can come as you are, [with] your uniqueness, you're truly appreciated. (SSDA 14, Pos. 179)

> [We are] a church that stands so rigid in terms of … decorum. They [church members] should be more accepting of how [the secularized people] look. And then let's be more authentic in the way we do and interact in our worship service … I think a secular person can be more invited into our church. (FGI 1, UMP 01, Pos. 51)

> Well, the relationship, the people should be authentic, and then safe. When we say safe, they're open, to any perspective, any mindset, like that … a friendly church, it should be welcoming. Because they [secularized people] won't go there, they won't attend … where they are not welcome. (UMP 07, Pos. 99-102)

> authenticity of each one … It's also very important. A secularized person will really

remain in the church if he experiences authenticity. Because the millennials and postmodernists or secularized, they really don't like, phonies. They detest that. (UMP 08, Pos. 124)

Belongingness or Community

Another aspect of "relationship" is that it fosters the sense of "belongingness or community" in secularized people. Belongingness or community is a big thing for secularized people. Where broken relationships and alienation (Hunter 1992, 44-54) are widespread in this world, secularized people are looking for authentic relationships, they are looking for people to connect. Jimmy Long (1997, 206) postulates that postmodern people view life from a community or tribal perspective. For them, becoming a Christian means leaving a community for another. Secularized people like to share their journey with a group of people they can call their community or tribe. Bell (2018, 149) is right to propose that the goal of every Christian community is to "establish people in a spiritual community where intellectual, physical, and spiritual growth occurs" (Col 1:28-29). The participants I interviewed from the conference's urban projects seem to be getting that sense of community or belongingness in the Adventist groups or faith-communities they attend.

Experiences in the Adventist Church Factors

The second grouping in figure 10 is **experiences in the Adventist Church factors**. This is directly related to the **relational factors**. It shows that when the secularized *Manileños* experienced the following: (1) experiencing care group life; (2) attending the Adventist Church; (3) involving and participating in community programs; (4) having a pastor who is kind, open, and leads by example (transformational leadership); (5) participating in prayer ministry; and (6) getting exposed in the spirituality

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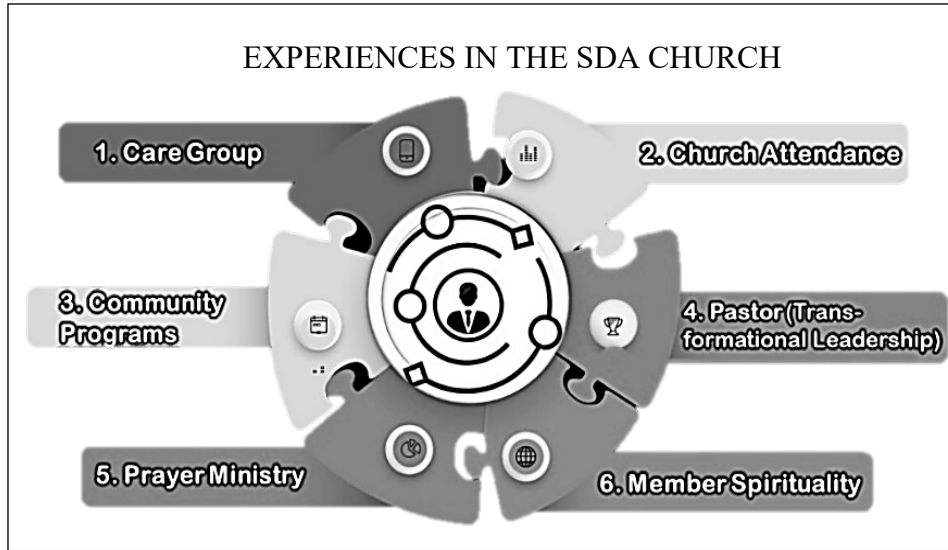
Figure 10. Experiences that attract secularized people to the Adventist Church.

of members–all of these, attract them to the Adventist Church.

Care Groups

The importance of small groups in securing the growth of a congregation is reiterated by Mike Mullen (Fact 2008, 8) in their study. He says "spiritually vital and relevant worship and fellowship activities draw new participants in the door, but small group relationships keep them coming back."

In the interviews, UMP 02, 03, 04, 06 all said that they are utilizing the "care groups" to invite secularized and non-secularized into the Adventist Church. They said that the "Adventist members were the best persons to bring in new interests" and be the support system for their non-Adventist friends and family members. Participants SSDA 13, 14, 16, 20, 21, described how they enjoy their "care groups" not only in terms of activities but also in the relationships that they developed even before they became Adventists. They shared that their "care groups" have an influence on their decisions to

attend the Adventist Church and to be baptized. UMP 02 described his most difficult

experience with a secularized person which span four years. He attributed the significant

contribution of the care groups in winning this secular friend to Christ. For him, the care

group is the support system for the secularized in his church. Below are quotes from two

SSDAs of their experiences with care groups before they became Adventists:

> that GROW group began so many changes in me … I started to enjoy my community instead of going to work. So even if my work would get affected, I still went to church. (SSDA 13, Pos. 5).

> there was this evangelistic meeting … I attended the whole week … my friends and I talked about … what's stopping me from being baptized … I think that was the first time they asked me about being (baptized). (SSDA 13, Pos. 7).

> when I met with the fellow attendees we immediately hit it off, [we] started our own Café Life group … in Marikina … I became a regular attendee of Grow gatherings in 2016 and 2017 … Then I started attending the Adventist Church … I wasn't eating pork for a year already … Just as an attendee. Not yet active. Much has happened since then. (SSDA 14, Pos. 3, 37).

Church Attendance

Attending the church is a big step for the secularized and it helps them to start on their

discipleship journey while connected to a support system in the church. Almost all the

SSDA participants in this study, except one, attended the Adventist Church due to the

invitation of friends and family members. They then joined the "care groups" and joined

"Bible studies" given in the "care groups." Some of them attend individual Bible studies.

In the study made by Rosario et al. (2018, 294) they mentioned the **attracting and**

deciding factors that lead people to decide to accept Jesus. These relationships and

experiences happened inside the church. I found that the same process of **attracting and**

deciding also happen before they become members of the church and when they are

already members, although on the latter experience the decision is on whether to remain

Attracting and Deciding Factors in Phases

(Life Encounters)
No Church Influence Yet

Attracting and Deciding Factors With Church Exposure

Decision to Remain in the SDA Church and Grow as a Disciple
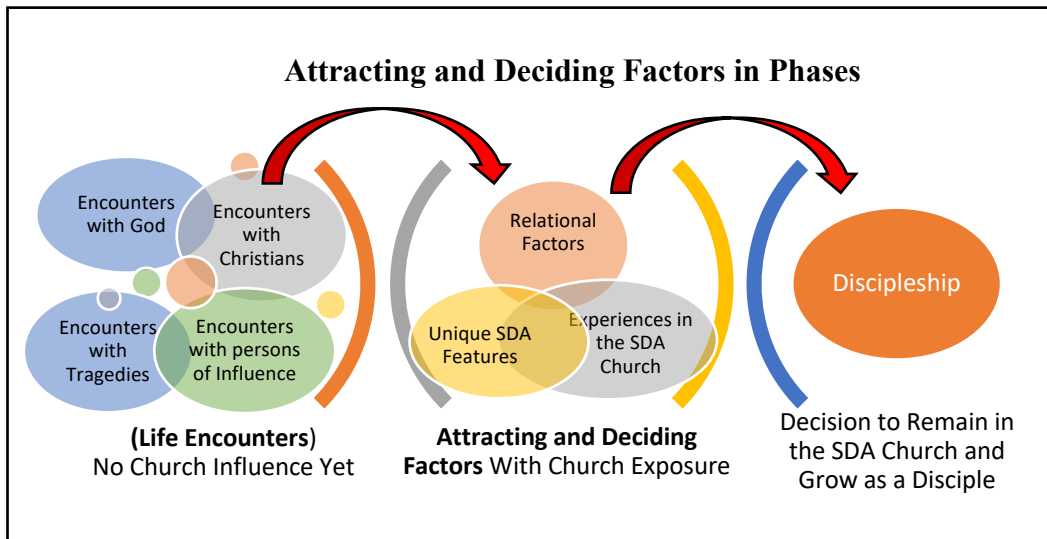
Figure 11. Cycles of attraction and decision during pre-conversion and conversion phases of a secularized person.

in their new-found faith or not. When asked what experiences in the Adventist Church they treasure, participant SSDA 16 mentioned three things:

> The **friendship** and the family [**community**]. Our **worship in the church**, the worship service. (SSDA 16, Pos.187)

In the study of "younger unchurched" made by Ed Stetzer, Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes (2009), they have identified four general types of unchurched. The *de-churched* group is the largest sub-group of the respondents (62%) which has a sub-set identified as the "friendly unchurched." The characteristics of these two groups describe the participants in my study. Stetzer, Stanley, and Hayes (2009, 10-14) made mentioned of the following: They no longer attend church but their upbringing influenced their understanding of God, Christianity, and church toward more traditional views. They agree about God's existence and uniqueness but still are open to the possibility that supreme beings of other world religions may be similar to the Biblical God (pluralism).

They believe that believing in Jesus makes a positive difference in one's life. They are

receptive to Bible studies or conversations about Christianity. (These descriptions aptly

fit SNSDA 01 and 02). Their lifestyle choices make them wonder if they would be

accepted in church. They personally know many Christians and are open to spiritual

discussion with them. So why is the "friendly unchurched" not attending? Well, he is

convinced that it is not necessary to attend church in order to relate well with God. He

also does not need instructions from the church regarding Christianity. They believe that

church attendance does not make a person more spiritual than themselves. These

descriptions of the unchurched fit the secularized Filipinos studied by Sapitula and

Cornelio (2014), and Cornelio (2017) respectively mentioned in chapter 1. Stetzer,

Stanley, and Hayes (2009) continue describing the unchurched by saying that the friendly

unchurched may respond to an appropriate invitation to church, especially from a friend.

However, the focus needs to be more than the invitations. It is just the start. They need to

be able to attend the church and then get introduced to the care groups because they are

much more open to a small group study where they could learn about the Bible and Jesus

than if they study individually with the pastor.

Community Programs

What is the importance of having a good outreach or community program? It is

based on the purpose of why the church exists. As the Adventist Church sees itself as a

church born in prophecy, it does not only embrace the teachings of Jesus to be the light of

the world but to be the salt also. Jesus showed the disciples that the ministry of

compassion, healing, and justice, is part of the plan of redemption as well as teaching

and preaching. Rick Warren (cited in Kinnaman and Lyons 2007, 244) describes God's purpose for the church:

> While the church's methods must constantly change in a changing world, the church's mandate will never change: we are called to know and love God (worship), love each other (fellowship), grow in Christlikeness (discipleship), serve God by serving others (ministry), and share the good news (evangelism).

Community programs are God-given strategies to the church to help humankind and to bring people closer to God. Ellen G. White (Testimonies Volume 9, 1909, 128) says, "The Lord has presented before me the work that is to be done in our cities. The believers in these cities are to work for God in the neighborhood of their homes." Community programs is a big component of the outreach ministry of any Christian church. Corley (2018, 11) in his study on attraction and retention defined outreach ministry as "actions that involve taking the gospel out to the communities." Corley posits that outreach ministries or community programs while they are created to reflect, improve, and enhance the quality of life in the communities, they do attract and retain church members (2018, 11).

In this paper, I used community programs interchangeably with outreach programs. One of the factors that attract the secularized people is the community programs of the church. Many of them are excited to be part of the activities and serve people struggling in life. These kinds of experiences give them a change of outlook, they learn to appreciate more what they have, and they also gain happiness in helping others.

> I joined [their] outreach activities. But looking at those people who are struggling with their lives, for their food. God showed me that I have so many things to be thankful for instead of detesting the life I had at that time … God was changing my heart. (SSDA 13, Pos. 5)

> My faith is also nurtured by … doing and practicing what I believe in … I remain active in our advocacies in the church. (SSDA 14, Pos. 191)

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After Grow Sessions [in the afternoon], we go out to spend time with the community … I enjoy it now … looking back, it's funny the way I thought of it [Sabbath observance] as restrictions … now it's more of obedience. (SSDA 20, Pos. 27)

they also like is the church that has … a community involvement … They [would like to] see that your church has advocacy and social involvement in the community. [I believe] that church should be able to help the community. (FGI 2, UMP 05, Pos. 66)

In this study, the community programs that the participants joined varied. Participant SSDA 13 joined the "get-away trip" of a Grow Group and became a member afterwards. She said that she enjoyed so much their community activities. It has helped her to develop socially and be active in social advocacies. This is one of the factors why she joined the activities of the Grow Group which later led her to accept Jesus through baptism. For participant SSDA 14, he was an active member first of Café Life and Grow Group before becoming an Adventist. He said that he enjoyed the different activities and platforms of their groups. He was an enthusiast in promoting the Café Life platform. He supports the plans of the group to reach out to their neighbors and workmates. For participants SSDA 18, she wants to serve God through her talents. With the limitations that the pandemic has put on everyone she wants to use the social media platform and use "conversion stories or memes of videos" to reach out to her generation. For participant SSDA 20, she became a member of the Grow community in BGC where the church is reaching out to secularized young professionals. She described their Sabbath activities which include going out to the community in the afternoon. This is one of the activities she loves. UMP 05 attested that one of the factors that attracts the secularized is the community involvement or social advocacies. UMP 06 also emphasized the importance of involving the secularized in ministry instead of just sitting down in the pews. (See appendix on "community programs" under Them 4, Category 13).

Participants UMP 01, 02, 03, 07, 08 all indicated the need for getting the group

members to be involved not only in serving the church but also utilizing their talents to

reach out to the communities and to other secularized. The UMPs use the strengths of

people in the groups they handle. UMPs 03, 07, and 08 described more deeply the

discipleship activities of the groups they are handling and how the spiritual giftedness of

the members are crucial to the growth of the groups. This category is also connected to

Theme 4 "What attracts the secularized to join the Adventist Church," Category 12

"community programs," and Category 20 "prayer ministry" where SSDA 13, 14, 17, 18,

and 20 described of their involvement in these ministries of the church.

Pastoral Leadership (Transformational Leadership)

The pastor or the lay-leader in the ministry for the secularized people play an

important role. Usually the urban ministry initiatives in these studies are church planting

endeavors and the pastor's leadership and example to his core group and growing

congregation are vital to the DNA of the church plant. Allan Roxburgh and Fred

Romanuk (2006, 14) propose the "Missional Model" as best fitted for a context in which

people have an ever, greater variety of religious options (secular). This "emerging

leadership paradigm" is used when they want to innovate in the congregation. This

rightly describes the work among the secularized people. The congregation functions like

cross-cultural missionaries rather than behaving like they are there to be entertained and

served. Roxburgh and Romanuk describe the atmosphere in the group as one of "rapid

discontinuous change" where the leaders develop skills and competencies leading the

congregation and having denominational systems in a context that is missional rather than

pastoral. (This will be discussed further on in "the best practices"). Here are some of the

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descriptions given by the secularized as what impressed them with the pastor and his

leadership:

> And then the first [time] I went there, the way he spoke to me, I mean Pastor … even if I was not committing to it, I went to the study. (SNSDA 01, Pos. 68).

> With Pastor _____'s group, I can embrace them. And, also, they can embrace me ... harmony, acceptance. Those are the words that I'm looking for. (SNSDA 02, Pos. 120).

> What helped draw me into the study group was how friendly the pastor was. The biggest part was the welcoming atmosphere, because I felt out of place. So it's definitely the friendliness, the inviting attitude. (SSDA 21, Pos. 50).

> They say … the authenticity of the life of the pastor. 'Ahhh, this pastor is really real, this guy is really real, this family is really real.' FGI 1, UMP 02, Pos. 23.

> the time that we spend with them, whatever they see in our life … that's what we are. Nothing's fake, no, we don't have underlying motives … we're not hiding anything. (FGI 1, UMP 02, Pos. 25).

Participant SNSDA 01 is a self-proclaimed doubter and just coming out from his

"atheistic phase," but he was impressed with the **friendliness and kindness** of the

Adventist pastor that he was not able to say no to his invitation to attend the Bible study.

He was also very **impressed with** what he learned in the **Bible study**. It was the same

experience for SNSDA 02. Which only shows that the **pastor plays the role of a friend,**

Bible teacher, and evangelist. This comment about the friendliness and kindness of the

pastor was repeated several times by other participants. There are several comments that

were made by UMPs about "the part that their families play*"* in ministering to the

secularized. They mentioned how they opened their homes and hosted many of the group

activities of the secularized. They also mentioned how their wives and children were

roped in to not only be good hosts which include feeding and sometimes housing people,

but to also lead in Bible studies and provide music. For UMP 03, he observed that the

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secularized not only look for belongingness and true doctrine, but also in how the **pastor lives his life through his relationships with other people**. (See appendix on "Pastoral leadership" under Theme 4, Category 16). Participant SSDA 14 mentioned of how proud he is that **their group communicates in English** which, emphasizes on the English usage of the millennials or young professionals where we find most of the secularized) and that the sermons are well prepared and well-thought of compared to the traditional Adventist Churches. This speaks of the need for the pastor to be a **good communicator** and **preacher** when ministering to the secularized people.

Prayer Ministry

As it was, Jesus' habit was to rise early in the morning and spend some time in prayer. In this particular passage in Luke 11:1-13, the disciples found him praying aloud and they were moved by the power of his prayer. When he finished, they asked him to teach them to pray. Jesus repeated the prayer he taught on the Mount of Blessings which we now call "Our Father." He added illustrations how privileged we are to be able to ask God the Father who likes to give blessings to his children. He also taught the science of prayer as ABC—asking , believing, and claiming of God's promises. Ellen White mentions of our personal need for prayer for growth and service in the following quotations:

> The soul that turns to God for its help, its support, its power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God, we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rule in our hearts. (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 85.)

> The greatest blessing that God can give to man is the spirit of earnest prayer. All heaven is open before the man of prayer … The ambassadors of Christ will have power with the people after they have, with earnest supplication, come before God.

(The Review and Herald, October 20, 1896.)

The members of our churches need to be converted, to become more spiritual-minded. A chain of earnest, praying believers should encircle the world. (Reflecting Christ, 121).

Corley (2018, 54) cited prayer and living in God's grace as the foundation for church growth. In his study, he reiterated that **growing churches make prayer a top priority** in their agenda. They have scheduled times of prayers during the week for church members with various requests as well as corporate prayers (137).

In this study, participants SSDA 16, 17, and 20 are newly baptized members of three different Adventist Churches in Metro Manila. Their churches are very diverse in terms of the approaches in worship and church culture. Church 1 is more traditional. Church 3 is modern and catering to professionals and influential people. The last is Church 5 in BGC which is a Grow Group community. All of the SSDA participants are involved in prayer ministry in their care groups. Based on their interviews, they make prayer a part of their daily life and they minister to others through prayers.

Aside from food, their concerns to pray, to pray for the person. Like myself for example, they will pray for me … the church there is very devoted. (SSDA 16, Pos. 59)

If I'm moved to pray, I pray, right then and there … I can't give an exact number of times that I pray in a day right now. Because there are times that wherever I am if I feel like I'm moved to pray, then I pray. (SSDA 20, Pos. 45)

Member Spirituality

The sixth factor in what attracts the secularized to the Adventist Church under the category **"experiences in the church"** is the **member's spirituality**. While there are indicators of what *spirituality is* and *does*, it is much more on the *being* than in the *doing*. However, one cannot do without the other, they complete each other. In the case of

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member's spirituality, it is a unique factor because often it is mentioned as an individual characteristic than a groups; but in this study it has been identified as and described by some of the participants as an individual characteristic as well as an **existing condition of groups of church members**. Moreover, for the secularized people, the Adventist members' spirituality attracts them to the church.

> I see it in him … he's very peaceful … he'd rather be the one who's wrong, he takes the blame … so that there would be no fight … Because his relationship with the Lord is so good. He became like my model … I wish I could be like this person. I want … something like that. (SNSDA 07, Pos. 109).

> I found the inner peace here with the Adventists that I could not find in other religions. (SNSDA 07, Pos. 153).

> Number two that I've observed is the spirituality … What they say is … what we're doing is not fake … what we study in the Bible we're not playing with their time; we're not playing with their minds. What we study is the true Word of God. There [you find in the care group], the spirituality within the group. (FGI 1, UMP 02, Pos. 20-21).

> Yeah, yes, very authentic. That's their comment … particularly in the spirituality and learning process. (FGI 1, UMP 02, Pos. 23).

<div align="center">Unique Adventist Features</div>

The third category of the factors that attract the secularized people to the Adventist Church is the "**unique Adventist features**" which the participants identified as: (1) distinctive SDA Bible studies; (2) Urban Ministry Program; and (3) health and holistic programs. These three categories contribute to the uniqueness that the secularized people experience when they involve in the Adventist Church.

SDA Bible Studies

The secularized *Manileños* are found within the U1-U3 spectrum of the unchurched where most of them have a Catholic background. Most of the participants

who were interviewed accept the Bible as the Word of God but they do not have a personal copy of the Bible or if they do have the Bible they have not read it. So, in their experiences in the Adventist Church, studying the Bible frequently in the care groups is a new experience. There are many types of Bible studies that were mentioned by the participants that they went through like the Grow Bible Study series put out by the Central Luzon Conference for its Urban Ministry initiatives. There is also the Amazing Facts Bible Study, and the 28 Fundamental Beliefs (adapted and revised by the pastors). Their understanding of the Bible and the Adventist doctrines were also enhanced by their participation in some Bible or Prophecy seminars. Generally, information about distinctive Adventist doctrines lists four areas (BBC 2014, par. 3), but there are actually nine distinctive doctrines considered by Adventists that made them different from mainstream evangelical denominations. These are the Second Coming, the Sabbath, the heavenly sanctuary, the investigative or pre-Advent judgment, the law of God, the state of the dead, the Great Controversy, the three angels' messages of Revelation, and the gift of prophecy. J. Robert Spangler (1981, 24) mentions the reason why Bible students find the Adventist doctrines unique, he says:

> It is not just one particular doctrine or concept of belief that is involved in the uniqueness of this movement. It is an entire pattern of thinking and believing based on God's Word…When all the doctrines of this church are considered as a whole, one can see that God has led us into the most comprehensive, all-inclusive, perfect system of doctrines on earth. It's a golden chain of truth, at the center of which stands Jesus Christ and Him crucified. When properly understood and practiced, this message brings meaning to life and a sense of direction, commitment, destiny. It is not a piece of truth here and there, but an entire system that in its fullness is incomparable.

Three SNSDA (01, 05, 07) and six SSDA (13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21) described the uniqueness they find in Adventist Bible studies. They commented on its Bible-

centeredness and focus on God. Three UMPs (02, 04, 06, 08) shared their different experiences in giving Bible studies to the secularized. UMP 08 does not consider it hard to share the distinctive doctrines of the church. He banks on the Adventist's "unique doctrine, eschatological message, and holistic approach" to sustain the interest of the secularized people. For UMP 02, he pairs his Bible studies with other approaches meant to establish a stronger relationship with the secularized people and fit his social interests like community work and health. (See appendix on "Adventist Bible study" under Theme 4, category 2).

SNSDAs who are attending Adventist Bible studies described their experiences as:

> They're very informative … and then … it's focused also on God. (SNSDA 05, Pos. 81)

The secularized Adventists who went through Bible studies in their care groups and faith-communities added informative descriptions as to the importance of the unique doctrines of the Adventist Church to their conversion:

> They talked about Nebuchadnezzar … I never thought that there would be a **truer truth** … about what is happening now [prophecy] is also based on the Bible … they invited me to attend the Amazing Facts Revelation seminar … [later] I resigned from my work so I could attend the crusade. (SSDA 16, Pos. 4)

> I was so curious about … the Adventists … the 28 Fundamental Beliefs … why are there beliefs like these? Because with the Born Again we did not have that. We just have "saved by grace". I researched … Perhaps there must be something wrong here. I've read so many about Adventists being a cult … That they make Ellen G. White their God. The pastor and the elder in _____, they were able to explain it to me very well. So, I said, okay, I'll continue with the Bible study. (SSDA 18, Pos. 6-7)

> It started when I was with a small group at Quezon City, a bible-study group. From there, I became interested in … the lessons about God. This continued over the last four years … Every time we met, I learned from the lessons that there were many practices that I did that were not in accordance with the Bible. Then, there was this

[15 days] Bible seminar … from there I learned more … my life changed from there. (SSDA 21, Pos. 4)

I believe these are the … three factors that influence them to join the Seventh Day Adventist. In my experience, the unique doctrines, eschatological message and holistic approach. (UMP 08, Pos. 18)

You know … that's part of being secularized. Their god doesn't factor in their lives yet … seven members are so diligent in listening to my once-a-week Bible studies. Yeah, because of the uniqueness of the Seventh Day Adventist doctrine, especially the Sabbath. Actually, they were amazed by that. Also, our end-time message, so seven of them got baptized. (UMP 08, Pos. 36)

Urban Ministry Programs

Under the directives of the Southern-Asia Pacific Division, the Central Luzon Conference launched an initiative in 2012 to start several types of Urban Ministry programs to address the demographics of urban dwellers in Metro Manila that the Adventist Church has not yet penetrated. This initiative includes the elite groups, slum areas, and young professionals. Born from these experimentations iare the Café Life, Grow and Growth Groups that focuses on the young professionals; the U-Belt Ministry that includes a Center of Influence for the university students; a ministry for "the men in uniform"; and two or three ministries for the elite people. Café Life's intent is to embrace people from all walks of life and from all religious or non-religious affiliation and lead people to a relationship with God. It focuses on engaging secularized young professionals and to develop faith-communities (through care groups) which will help them as individuals in all aspects of life including spirituality. Then they transition them to become members of the Grow Group, which gives deeper Bible studies. Growth Group gives them the training for leadership in leading out other Café Life groups or Grow Groups.

Participants SSDA 13, 14, and 20 are connected with these different ministries.

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The ministry for the elite that involves participants SSDA 16, 21, and 22 are located in the business district and malls in Cubao, EDSA, and Shangri-La Plaza, which serves the professionals and businessmen in the area. Participants SSDA 13, 14, and 20 described the approaches used by Café Life and Grow group: "storying," sharing testimonies, giving in-depth Bible study in "care groups," the communication is in English, and the church involves in community work. These are all highly appreciated by participants SSDA 13, 14, and 20. Participant SSDA 13 discussed about the non-traditional approach of the Café Life and Grow Group as attractive to secularized young professionals, she said that she does not mind going to traditional Adventist Churches now but if she was approached before as a non-Adventist by traditional Adventists she would not have accepted. Participant SSDA 20 was very enthusiastic about the Grow church she attends, they always have more non-Adventist visitors than Adventists in their church because people are very welcoming, engaging, and connecting with the visitors. For UMP 07, sharing the stories of the Bible and sharing his personal story makes it more relatable to the secularized people. UMP 06 talked about the programs as enjoyed by the secularized people. Participant SSDA 14 described the program as "not long, not preachy, structured and easy to follow, the speakers are good, the messages are about hope, forgiveness, compassion, our identity as God's children, and surrendering to Christ." (See appendix on "urban ministry programs" under Theme 4, Category 10).

The description above of what the urban program initiatives look like give us a glimpse of what works in attracting the secularized people to Adventist programs and gatherings. UMP 08 gave an apt description of what a secularized person will be looking for in a church. When asked what kind of church he thinks a secularized person will like

to attend, he says:

It must have the components of being inclusive, rich in content, authentic, relevant, seeker-sensitive, gospel or everlasting gospel-focused, and discipleship-driven." (UMP 08, Pos. 36)

Health and Holistic Programs

Another component of what attracts the secularized people to the Adventist Church is its "health message and holistic programs." The Adventist Church look at the work of restoration and salvation as one. Ellen-May and Gaspar Colon (2016, 11-12) emphasized how Jesus showed the importance of these two in the work of redemption, they posit that Jesus' goal was "wholistic restoration of humankind" – physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually – through his miracles, his teaching, and his preaching. There is a synergy between the spiritual, mental, social, and physical aspects of a human being. Each one affects the other. The medical missionary work that Adventists consider to be the "right arm of the Gospel" is also considered to be a "comprehensive health ministry" (citing White 1898, par. 4). Ellen White described the ministry of Jesus while on earth as responding to the human need at a given situation. He went about doing good for all - healing, teaching, and preaching. The purpose of "doing good" in health and other community programs is not for the sake of doing good but to make an effect of restoration in what sin has destroyed.

For SSDA 16, she appreciates the health message of the Adventist Church because she has some illness that she was battling with while having Bible studies with the Adventist missionaries. She underscored the care that these Adventists showed her. For participant SSDA 21, she is able to share to workmates her knowledge about health and unhealthy foods. For UMP 01 he uses health service as an avenue to minister to

secularized sick people. It has produced a lot of interests in spiritual things because they were able to spend a lot of time (three to six months) with these sick people at home. They were able to minister to their needs physically, emotionally, and spiritually. (See appendix on "health and holistic approach" under Theme 4, Category 18). UMP 01 described the experience of long-term patients their church chose to minister to:

> In my church, we like to shift paradigms … for example medical mission … [I said] if it is really our character to love these people, it [health program] must be sustainable ... Aside from giving the … medical attention, I think what really impressed them is the fellowship, the caring individuals … In a secular place like this that is getting drier, more individualistic, lonely, I think it's all about the capacity to love and to reach out to others that really matters for the secular people. (FGI 1, UMP 01, Pos. 33)

What Factors Influence the Secularized Adventist to Remain in the Adventist Church?

In answer to the question: "What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" There is no other way to put it than to say that discipleship is the key. Mike Breen and Steve Cockram (2011, 20) posit that discipleship builds the church, it is the effect of discipleship not the cause. There is church because there are disciples. In effect, the only way a secularized person will be retained in the church is if he becomes a disciple, if he enters the discipleship process. A wonderful description of the process is here described by George Barna (2001, 14), he says, "it is about sinners receiving grace, committing to change, and living in concert with the wisdom imparted by their faith sources–the Scriptures, the lives of fellow sojourners, and the leading of the Holy Spirit."

In this process, the disciple develops five marks (Barna 2001, 27, 28): (1)

experiencing transformation through the new birth and the Christian faith now defines his philosophy of life; (2) changing his lifestyle revealed in Christ-oriented values, goals, perspectives, activities, and relationships; and, (3) maturing into a changed worldview, attributed to a deeper comprehension of what it means to be a Christian. It means that his understanding of truth is entirely a God-driven reality; (4) Anything else is evaluated through the scriptures; and (5) now, the disciple's lifelong quest is pursuing the truths of God.

In this study, the data generated twenty-four significant codes as **faith-sources** or **builders**. These codes describe discipleship as activities or as a process. I separated these codes into "personal factors" and "church factors" groups. "Personal factors" are factors that the secularized Adventists choose to do for himself (12 codes) in order to grow in his faith and practice. "Church factors" are factors that the church or church members provide or contribute to the retention of the secularized (7 codes), whether they are done through church environment or through programs, which help the secularized Adventist convert to grow in his faith and get established in the Adventist faith. See table XVIII and XIX in the appendix on the participants' response to personal factors for retention.

<div align="center">Personal Factors that Help Retain Secularized People</div>

The personal factors are further condensed into four: (1) **engaging in spiritual disciplines** (attending church, doing personal Bible study, maintaining a prayerful life); (2) **living an obedient life** (following the commandments of God, applying Biblical truths in daily life, following God's leadings and guidance); (3) **sharing the gospel** (testifying of God's works in life, participating in evangelism programs of the church, personal witnessing, and excitement with the gospel); and (4) **remaining committed to**

Jesus (enduring hardships and overcoming temptations).

Engaging in Spiritual Disciplines

What is the difference between **spiritual disciplines** and **spiritual formation**? What is their relationship? In defining **spiritual disciplines,** Gilbert Cangy (2014, 139) identified it as "activities or practices that enable the believer to increasingly reflect the character of Jesus." Dallas Willard (2006, 53) posits that while spiritual disciplines are the activities or practices, **spiritual formation** is "the process of shaping the inmost being (heart, will, and spirit) and until it takes on the quality or character of Jesus." Adopting and practicing as many **spiritual disciplines** as possible at the onset of a secularized person's spiritual journey is crucial for his growth and retention in the Adventist faith. Examples of these activities mentioned are: prayer, Bible study, meditation, solitude and silence, fasting, frugality, study and worship, service and submission, etc. (Willard 2006, 28, 114). In this study these spiritual disciplines have been identified by the participants as: **attending church**, doing **personal Bible study**, maintaining a **prayerful life**, **reading Spirit of Prophecy or Adventist books**, **watching and listening to religious programs**.

Attending the Adventist Church

Attending the Adventist Church is an important factor in ensuring that the newly baptized secularized person will continue

being an Adventist. This factor has been identified as an "attracting factor" previously, but it also came out from the interviews as a "retaining factor." It has been discussed beforehand that by attending the Adventist Church the secularized convert gets exposed to activities, programs, and care groups. In the retention process, when the secularized

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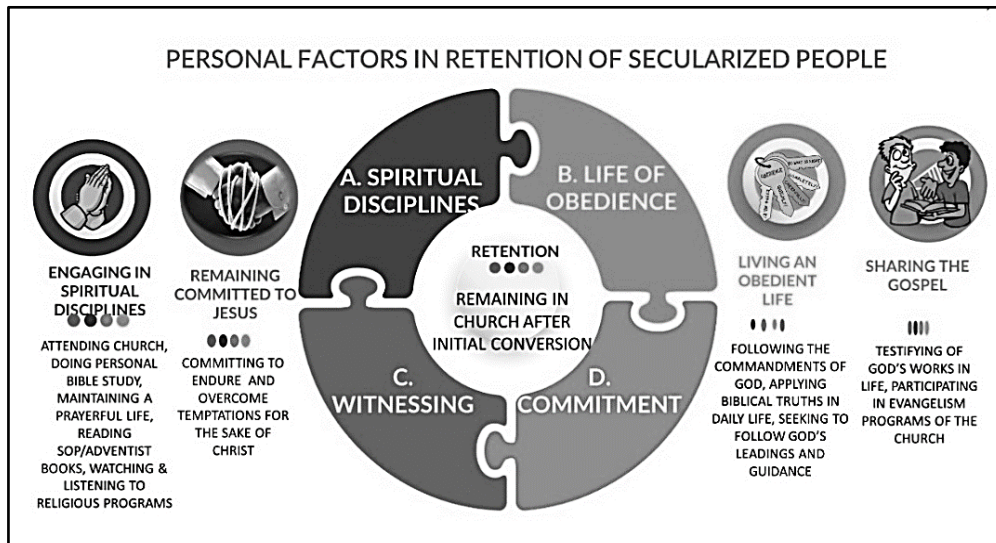
Figure 12. Personal factors in the of retention of secularized Adventists.

attends the church he is recruited to the care group or may have been recruited even before his baptism, and through the care group the secularized Adventist convert engages in many activities which gets him nurtured and established in the faith. In the care group they will study the Bible–by studying the doctrines, participating in Growth Bible studies, and by discussing the Sabbath School lessons, he will not only be able to review but ask questions, or even dialogue with fellow believers. He will have people around him, called by Barna (2001, 14) as *fellow sojourners*, to whom he can be **accountable for mutual growth**. Participants SNSDA 07 and SSDA 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 found "attending the Adventist Church" to be a part of what strengthen them and help them to continue with their faith. (See the appendix on "Attending the Adventist Church" under the "factors that retain secularized people").

Personal Bible Study

The study of the Bible can be both **informational** and **formational**. In the study

made by Cangy (2014, 140) he identified that the Adventist Church uses **informational Bible study** applied in Sabbath school, evangelistic events, preparation for baptism, and nurture of young people and leaders. On the one hand, he identified the purpose of informational Bible study as increasing knowledge, gaining rational understanding, and bringing intellectual conviction, but, not necessarily transformation of lives. Robert Mulholland (cited in Cangy 2014, 141-142) mentioned several differences between the two. On the other hand, the **formational Bible study** is concerned with quality time reading the Scriptures rather than quantity. It is concerned with engaging the Scriptures for depth of meaning. **Formational reading** allows the Scriptures to change the reader. It requires a humble, receptive, and loving approach not a critical and analytical one. The former gives the foundation, like giving the meaning of the text in its original context, but the latter creates the opportunity to experience an encounter with God. Hence, it is important to balance the two approaches to get the best results for personal Bible study.

Looking closely at the experiences of the participants, majority of the SSDA described how they have grown in faith through their personal study of the Bible. For participant SSDA 13, her respect and understanding of the Bible has grown. In her description of her life before conversion, she was a typical secularized person who does not pray much, does not attend church, and does not read the Bible. Now she described her experience in reading or studying the Bible as "everything is there, all answers to your questions" and "it never goes out of trend" in speaking of the timelessness of its message. Participants SSDA 14, 16, 18 and 21 mentioned using phone apps to remind them of their daily Bible reading as well as using apps to plan their Bible readings for the whole year. For participant SSDA 15, she memorizes verses and she meditates on what

she is reading during her personal Bible study time. For Participant SSDA 17, she has made Bible reading a part of the family worship every day and especially on Sabbath. She described that the Bible "enlightens her mind" especially in facing daily problems. Personal Bible study is part of how she nurtures her faith. For participant SSDA 20, personal Bible study is her way of "learning about God" and "God's way of talking to me." She studies the Bible regularly. For participant SSDA 21, she studies her Bible daily at least for an hour. She uses her phone to remind her that it is time to read her Bible at least a chapter a day. She finds the early morning as the best for a quiet time to read the Bible.

Maintaining a Prayerful Life

Another factor why the secularized remain in the Adventist Church is by "**maintaining a prayerful life**." For participant SSDA 13, her attitude towards prayer before conversion is to treat God as a "bending machine." She asks for things, when God does not give what she asks for she feels that God does not love her or God favors others than her. Since she has gotten to know God better, she treats prayer as her way of communicating to her heavenly Father. For participant SSDA 15, her prayer life has grown a lot from simply praying when she wakes up and before going to sleep. She is now involved in praying for others in her church. She and her husband have also experienced miraculous things during typhoon Yolanda and because of that she has a stronger belief in prayer. Participant SSDA 16 has also grown in her prayer life. She used to be shy in praying publicly. She now prays spontaneously four to six times a day. Participant SSDA 17 did not pray much. When she became an Adventist she became prayerful and even joined the prayer chain ministry of their Women's Department in

church. For participant SSDA 20, she said that she had to unlearn memorized prayers and now prays to God as if having a personal conversation with Him. She also prays for other people, letting the impression guide her to pray on the spot. She attributes her growing prayer life to one of the reasons for her growing faith.

> Because He listens to my prayer. God listens to my prayers … He extends my life. And my health is being restored. (SSDA 16, Pos. 157)

> the relationship I have with God has gotten stronger. Almost intimate, if you will. I pray to Him every day, once in the morning and once before going to bed. Sometimes, I would pray to Him before doing something, always ask for His blessing to guide me to do right and avoid wrong … there were big changes in my life. (SSDA 21, Pos. 8)
> whenever I have a problem, I can feel as though I can just pray and He will answer. In my home whenever we have problems, we [now] always pray. My children, before they did not know how to do this thing. (SSDA 22, Pos. 59)

Listens/Watch Religious Programs

The data brought out "listening and or watching religious programs" as a factor that supplements, nurtures, and nourishes the faith of a secularized Adventist. Participant SSDA 13 listens to "Spotify program" (a digital music, podcast, and video service that gives access to millions of songs and other content from creators all over the world). The program "Why They Did That" podcast is popular among the Grow Group members. For participant SSDA 15, she listens every morning and night on audio Scriptures. She said that this practice helps her faith. She also mentioned "Ubidos" and "Pag-aralan Natin" as regular programs she listens to and watches. Participant SSDA 16 listens and watches broadcast from the "Amazing Facts" and "Doug Batchelor." Participant SSDA 17 relies on her chat group in church for religious videos and sermons because she does not have internet service at home so she relies on her cellphone data for these. Her church posts sermons for the church members to watch. Participant SSDA 18 is following several

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programs like "Bible Flock Box" by Greg Sereda (a full-time YouTuber who makes Christian videos); "Hope Through Prophecy" by Dustin Pestlin in YouTube; "Amazing Facts" by Doug Batchelor; and "Pag-Aralan Natin" broadcast by Hope Channel. She also likes also watch debates between different religions. For participant SSDA 20, she watches in YouTube the "Table Talk" produced by *Light Bearers*, Jeffrey Rosario, James Rafferty, David Asscherick and Ty Gibson. This program format is casual talk regarding biblical "topics and other religious podcast." A podcast is an episodic series of spoken word in digital audio files that can be downloaded to a personal device for easy listening. Podcasts are cheap to produce and disseminate than radio and television programs.

Reading and Studying SOP/Adventist Books

The Spirit of Prophecy books are a treasure to the Adventist Church. It provides "guidance, instruction, correction to the church, and it teaches that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested" (What Adventist Believe About the Prophetic Gift). Participants SSDA 13, 14, 22 are all reading Spirit of Prophecy books (e-book or hard-print). Participant SSDA 13 said that for her, it touches people's lives that she wants to read more. She has read "Steps to Christ" and now she is reading "Messages to Young People." Participant SSDA 14 follows the devotional plan that their coach gives them. He is reading the devotional book "Sons and daughters of God." He has also read the book "The Great Hope" (condensed version of the Great Controversy). Participant SSDA 22 present relationship with an Adventist lady made him search through the Spirit of Prophecy books on the topic of adultery, divorce, and re-marriage. In the process he gained more insights on the Bible.

Living an Obedient Life

The second personal factor why secularized remain in the Adventist Church after their conversion is "living an obedient life." This includes **following the commandments of God**, **applying biblical truths in daily life**, and **seeking to follow God's leading and guidance**. This may also include the **development of their piety**, **changes in their outlook in life**, **involvement in the church and community**, and **changes in their relationship with other people**. One of the challenges of growing in faith is **applying biblical truths in daily life**. It means that there is daily surrendering to God of self so that the human nature will be subject to the Lordship of Jesus and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. It means taking daily dose of Christian disciplines (reading the Bible, prayer, meditation, church attendance, fasting, becoming like Jesus in Character, showing graces, etc.) which reflect in character change. For participant SSDA 13, she described submitting her will to God and seeking to understand God's will for her life. "I live my day with God." For participant SSDA 14, he described himself as gentler, kinder, less judgmental, compassionate, hopeful, and having uplifted spirit. These changes are the by-product of that Christian disciplines that the participant practices daily. For participant SSDA 15, she described that she is changing in many ways because of her love for going to church, listening to sermons, and studying the Bible. For participant SSDA 17, she said she used to engage in worldly activities like playing cards and partying. There was no self-restraint. She also has an anger-management issue. But now she can control herself from saying things that will hurt others. These are big changes for her. For participant SSDA 18, she described the many changes in her since she became an Adventist. She said that she stopped cursing, she

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keeps the Sabbath devotedly, she trusts God more with her problems, and she wants to please God. Her workmates noticed these changes in her. The way she dressed was also so different. When she looked back to her past and to what she is now, she said that she "cried so much to the Lord. I was so thankful." For participant SSDA 19, the change was on his maturing faith. He used to work also on the Sabbath but has now regularly made a stand that he will not, and to be in church on the Sabbath instead. Participant SSDA 20 has been attending Adventist Churches due to the influence of her Adventist boyfriend whom she married later. She is now a happy Adventist who is growing in her faith and understanding. She said that before she did not understand why the Sabbath has to be kept twenty-four hours, but now she enjoys the Sabbath. For participant SSDA 21, the positive changes are on the happiness she found in her faith. She has developed a growing relationship with God. She has also made God a part of her decisions. She is trying her best to bring her whole family to Christ. She has also changed in the way she dresses and talks to people. For participant SSDA 22, his changes are huge on the area of temper, pride, reliance on guns. He said that he has now learned to trust God and being active in church helped him in his process of transformation.

Involvement in the Church and Community

It has been discussed in the "factors that attract the secularized" that they are very much interested in helping other people, church advocacies on helping the communities or marginalized people of our society. These types of programs or activities draw them in. This same factor helps retain them to the Adventist Church. In fact, there is now an added dimension which is service to the church and then service to the community. Participant SSDA 18 has a yearning to give back to God in any form of service she can

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give, be it in singing, broadcasting, social media ministry. She also feels that helping in the church ministries will help in reaching more people for Jesus and get them ready for His Second Coming. Participant SSDA 20 is active in the Grow church. She loves attending all the church programs and also doing the community outreach. Participant SSDA 22 is also a very active church member of Church 05. Because of what he is learning from church and the happiness he feels in being an Adventist, he is now dreaming of going back to Mindanao and opening a business that will support him in doing ministry to the mountain people. He wants to put up a church on his property. UMP 1 believes that there is room for the participation of the secularized Adventists in the church ministries even though they may still be young in the faith, especially in bringing their secularized friends to the church. UMP 2 involves the secularized Adventists even before their baptism in the ministries of the care groups. He continues to involve them in the health ministry of the church. UMP 6 testifies that it is important for the secularized converts to be involved in the ministry. One of his converts wanted to share with others what she was learning in Bible studies. An opportunity opened to start another care group and he asked her to lead this group and he served as her mentor.

Sharing the Gospel

The third personal factor for the retention of secularized Adventist is in sharing the Gospel. As the proverbs admonishes: "The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered (Prov 11:25). Ellen White described witnessing as the exercise that is needed by the body in order to grow in Jesus' grace and knowledge. It drives the believer to "feel the need for a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things," and will make the believer "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (*Steps*

to Christ, 1892, 80). Ellen White further says:

> No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart … we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, we shall have something to tell … There will be an earnest longing that those around us may "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (79)

For participant SSDA 14, he gave an extensive description of how they are trained and encouraged in the Grow Group to intentionally seek out and create friendships with people. He also described how they are also encouraged to testify of God's works in their lives or share particular blessings and then pray for the new friends they have met that week. These experiences are then shared in their care groups or faith-community. For participant SSDA 15, as a housewife, talks to her neighbors often. She said that they have been asking her about the changes that they see in her and her behavior, especially about her going to church on Saturdays. She answers their questions and witnesses as much as she can. When asked what motivates her to share, she said that she wants her neighbors to be saved. Participant SSDA 16 prays for her neighbors and visits them. Participant SSDA 18 feels challenged by other people from other faith who question her belief. This pushes her to study the Bible more and be ready to answer objections. She also has a desire to share with others and she shares easily with her friends. She expresses genuine concern for others to know the truth. For participant SSDA 22, he said that the best way to witness is to show the truth in his life. He has non-Adventist family members whom he is sharing the truths he discovers from the Bible. UMPs 3 and 6 verify that being involved in witnessing helps the converts to grow in their faith and it keeps them active and alive. When they are mentored to share what they learn and teach others, they multiply themselves through others. They also become the means to bring other secularized

friends who otherwise do not have any link to the Adventist Church unless they are invited and lead by these newly converted secularized Adventists. Ellen White talks of witnessing (*Christ's Object Lesson*, 1900):

> The more he seeks to impart light, the more light he will receive. The more one tries to explain the word of God to others … the plainer it becomes to himself … As we seek to win others to Christ, bearing the burden of souls in our prayers, our own hearts will throb with the quickening influence of God's grace; our own affections will glow with more divine fervor; our whole Christian life will be more of a reality, more earnest, more prayerful. (353, 354)

Remaining Committed to Jesus

The fourth personal factor for the retention of the secularized Adventist is "remaining committed to Jesus." This commitment is manifested in the **happiness in being Adventist**, **pride for their church,** and their **growing faith and relationship with God.** These were expressed by participants SSDA 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, and 22. See the quotes below from the interviews. Another code that was drawn from the data that falls under "**remaining committed to Jesus**" is "**maturing in faith**." Participant SSDA 18 is learning to put her focus on God instead of people. She is also learning to prioritize important persons in her life like God and her family. She is also eager to serve the church. For participant SSDA 19 his journey in faith has been up and down. But now he has taken his faith seriously and is standing up on Sabbath issues at work. He describes himself as maturing in his faith. Participant SSDA 21 has been attending the Adventist Church regularly for a year before she was baptized. She also had regular bible studies for a year before her baptism. She took her time making the decision to become an Adventist because of her family. All of the participants described experiences of continuous attendance to the church, doing activities with the church members, including regular Bible studies with the pastors or elders. Their decisions were not made because of

one evangelistic program.

> Question: "Why do you remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" I guess it's because I'm happy. I'm happy with what I'm doing. I can't even begin to tell you how proud I am of the church that I'm in, the Grow family. I do remain in this religion because I really believe in it … And I also conform that it is the right thing to do. I love what I do, our activities there. (SSDA 14, Pos. 134-135).

> The good experiences are like … it's like I always look forward to Saturdays now … it's always a good experience [in church]. (SSDA 20, Pos. 65).

> So, I then really accepted Jesus Christ. I became active in church … I can now say, "With or without my fiancée it is fine with me, I will continue in this faith." (SSDA 22, Pos. 18).

> Actually, I feel that if there is church every day, I will go every day. Question: "That is your amount of enthusiasm for church?" Yes. It's like I am so thirsty for God. (SSDA 22, Pos. 45-47).

Under the factor **remaining committed to Jesus** is the code **staying an Adventist because of God.** God uses people to bring other people to church, but people in the church also causes people to leave the church. When the main reason for becoming an Adventist is God, then in spite of the negative experiences with people they will remain to look to God as their reason for staying. For participant SSDA 13 and 14, this seems to be true. For participant SSDA 16, she had some negative experiences with Adventists; but in her comments it seems that she has developed an attachment to God, a reliance for her well-being, and an attitude of gratefulness. For participant SSDA 17, she has a strong belief in the rightness of the biblical doctrines of the Adventist Church and she has repeated this in several statements. For participant SSDA 18, she is developing a trust in God that drives her fears away. She experienced being shamed by a church member because of her singing but she wanted to really serve God, so she overcame this obstacle by learning how to lead from YouTube.

There was a time that I would be disappointed with people and sometimes I would be

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disappointed with the community. But I didn't stay in the Seventh-day Adventist just because of the community and people. I stayed because of God … I don't look to people I look to God. That's the reason I'm staying. Because I believe that it was God that brought me here. (SSDA 13, Pos. 49).

There was an argument, bickering with the church mates, there was a debate. I got offended, I feel that I have offended others also … But I can still overcome. Not to the point that I become distant … it's not about them completely … I really want to attend church. (SSDA 14, Pos. 141).

I really want to serve God. because I'm thinking, I've been away from Him for how many years. It's like the feeling that you're a father, and then you did not see each other for years. So you want to make up for it … God, He wants the best for you so why should I not give my best to Him? (SSDA 18, Pos. 113).

Proud of Grow Community/Adventist Church

This code can also be identified under the "church factor category" because the church members are integral in the development of the relationships and the activities of the church which the secularized are proud of. Participants SSDA 13 and 14 mentions of being "proud of their church" and on the same breath speaks of "loving the church or Grow community" they are in. Participants SSDA 15, 18, and 20 also enumerated what they like about their church. The reasons they give are related to the relationships they have developed and witnessed inside the church. These five participants expressed with pride their love for their church or church group which are seen in their expressions and voice. This feeling of pride is also related to the teachings or beliefs of the church where the participants feel that they have found the truths in the Bible together with their church groups. These participants who felt this kind pride and love are secularized who are active and participating in the activities of the church.

Church Factors That Help Retain Secularized People

The involvement of the church and church members are crucial to the retention of the secularized Adventists. They help in the success of assimilating and discipling a new secularized believer. As an institution it can provide a family environment that the believer feel they belong to. It can also provide ministries or programs for the discipleship of the secularized. Since the church members and the church are the nearest influencer and physical example of Jesus, it is important to highlight the important roles they played and the existing programs in the church for the retention of the newly converted secularized people to the Adventist Church. I have put in the "church factor category" as a second grouping for the factors of retention of the secularized Adventist. These factors that were contributed by the church or church members to the retention of the secularized converts are grouped into three: (1) **relational evangelism**, (2) **care group discipleship**, and (3) **missional and creative church**. See figure 13 below. See also table XX in the appendix on the themes for Church Factor on Retention.

Relational Evangelism

Oikos, the biblical word used for a dwelling or a home, implying a literal family or figuratively (Strong and Thayer), is a New Testament concept in spreading the Christian faith. The church is God's family. Further, God wants to redeem people and join them to his family, which is bounded by love for God and for one another. Sharing faith through relationships in this generation is both a challenge and an opportunity. The idea of **relational evangelism** in winning people to Jesus Christ and in discipling them is crucial. Kidder (2008) says that when a church fosters a supportive group that encourages, prays for, holds members accountable, and fosters an environment of

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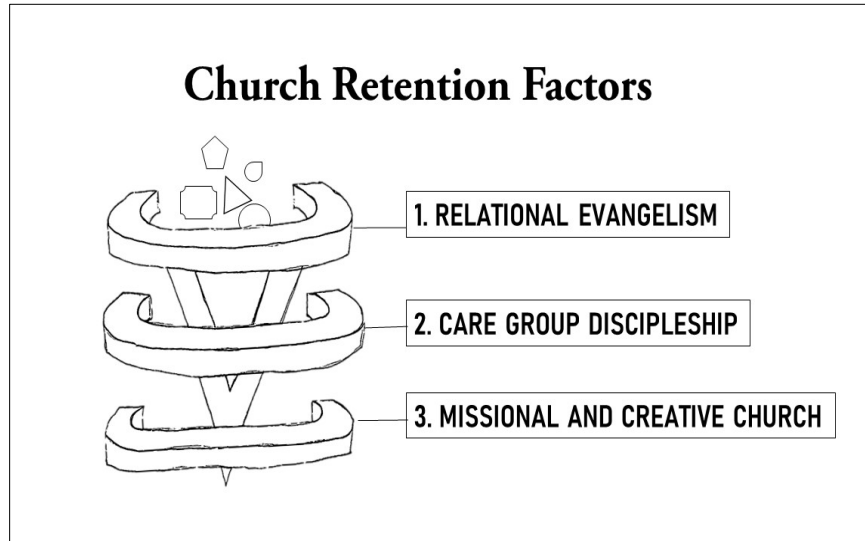
Figure 13. Church Factors in the Retention of Secularized Adventist

growth, spiritual health, and vitality—converts remain and are kept in the Lord and the church. He further states that "we come to the Lord through relationships and we stay in the Lord through relationships." He postulates that our discipleship walk is marked by encouraging and nurturing relationships in the church.

Under the **relational evangelism** factor, there are five interrelated codes drawn out from the data, like: (a) building friendship; (b) connecting with other people; (c) sharing life with others; (d) caring and welcoming church; and (e) having good relationships among members. They described the early stage of the relationship until it reaches the stage of what may seem like family-relationship in the church.

Building Friendship with People

Friendship is one of the DNA of the church planting strategy for the secularized. William Jean-Charles (2020, 15) found out in his research that "developing relationships and getting involved in the church life is invaluable to future attendance" in the church.

For Participants SSDA 13, 14, and 21 they are friends with Adventists who invited them to the Café Life, Grow Group, and Church 05. When asked how Adventists should approach the secularized, participant SSDA 21 said that "friendliness" is a key factor in drawing in the secularized. She confirmed that she was drawn to the study group because of the friendliness of the pastor. On a separate interview, UMP 02 said that it took four years of being consistently friendly to SSDA 21 before she became open to the Adventist message. She corroborated that the biggest attraction for her are the welcoming atmosphere, friendliness, and the inviting attitude of everyone. These are the same reason why they (SSDA 13, 14, and 21) remained in the Adventist Church. These Adventist friends and pastors spent time with the secularized, joining them with activities outside the church or hanging out with their secular friends. For UMP 01 he emphasized the importance of **relational evangelism**. He said that the church members must be able to share God's love because they truly feel God's love and goodness too. For UMP 03, he stressed on the combination of **relationships** and **true teachings from the Bible** as the key factors why the secularized remain in the Adventist Church. For UMP 04 he discovered that it is important to **build relationships** with the secularized and it is equally important that a **good mentoring** is given to a convert. For UMP 05, he simply said, "I think what makes them stay is really … having friends inside the church."

Connecting with Other People

Participant SSDA 14 described how in the Café Life, Grow Group, Growth Group, and other meet-ups that they intentionally connect with people who are non-Adventists. This is a DNA ingrained in these urban ministries, a kind of lifestyle that they promote. Their idea of connecting is not only to share God's Word but to also "share

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their lives and hear the stories of people." For UMP 07 his experience in winning the

secularized was life-changing for him. He discovered that he has to intentionally connect

with people and build genuine friendships with them. His approaches were gleaned from

"Christ's methods": (1) The Savior mingled with people as one who desired their good.

(2) He showed sympathy for them. (3) He ministered to their needs. (4) and He won their

confidence. (5) Then He invited them, "*Follow Me*." (White 1905, *Ministry of Healing*,

73). Other UMPS like 02, 03, 04, 05, and 06 described the same approach and experience

with the secularized.

Sharing Life with Others

In the traditional churches it, is a common practice for the pastor and the elders to

open their homes to the members. In return, they are also in and out of the lives of the

church members. For most of the church members in urban settings, they are able to close

their doors and disengage from the church after attending the services in the church.

However, this is unlikely for the pastors working with secularized. Privacy is not

something that they could afford, they need to **share their lives** with the people they

serve. Participant SSDA 14 described the kind of friendship that he developed with

Adventists and points to it as a key factor to his conversion. He emphasized on

"connecting, sharing lives, hearing their stories, growing together, and sharing personal

stories of transformations." UMP 05 talks of **genuine friendship** where the secularized

can observe closely how he lives his faith in day to day basis and "want the faith that we

have." UMP 04 mentioned the importance of "earlier continuous connection" with the

secularized which also means **sharing the life of a mentor and mentee** or a discipler

and disciple relationship. UMP 02 described this long-term relationship as like a

"**family**" which pray and support them in their struggles in life."

Caring and Welcoming Church

Participant SSDA 16 mentions how the elders in their church show their care to them, giving them advices on spiritual matters. Participant SSDA 17 was barely one-year-old as an Adventist at the time of the interview, and she mentioned that her church is very welcoming and make her feel close to them in a very short time. Participant SSDA 18 was very forthcoming with the ways the Adventist Church made her feel very welcome and they were very supportive of her quest to serve God through preaching and singing. For participant SSDA 21, she had a negative impression that the Adventist Church is very strict, but her interaction with church members overcome this prejudice because the members "made her feel that she belonged there." UMP 03 talks about being "welcomed in the church, not being judged, and letting them feel that the members love them."

Good Relationship Among Members

While it is important that the secularized develop good relationships with the church members, it is also equally important that the church members already have a good relationship with one another and are just extending this to newcomers. They cannot give what they do not have. Participant SSDA 15 described her close relationship with church members. They are like sisters and friends to her. Participant SSDA 16 described the members in her church as "very friendly and know how to talk to people." Participant SSDA 17 met an Adventist lady who encouraged and guided her to get baptized. She described the church members as very welcoming and friendly to her and her child. For participant SSDA 18 she observed that her church has a very good relationship among the

members. They are very warm toward others. She also asked other members what they like about this particular church; and they said the same thing, they are "very warm towards other people and you can feel the love for everyone." For participant SSDA 20 she observed that the Grow Church that she attends has built a reputation that is open and does not judge people. They have a very good relationship with each other. Participant SSDA 21 also described a very good relationship that exists among the church members in her church. They make her feel loved and accepted and they are ready to support her in times of happiness and in times of need. For UMP 08 he described the present status of their church as growing, not only in terms of membership but also in relationship, in leadership, and in outreach. He said that the leaders enjoy their meetings, they accomplish a lot and laugh a lot. The members like to stay in church and enjoy their programs. They visit the officers of the church in their homes; and they eat together and spend time together. They do the same in church, they spend time to eat and do things together after the programs.

The participants who said that the "**Adventist Church feel like family**" are SSDA 16, 18, 20, and 21. Participant SSDA 16 when asked if she considers her church as her family answered candidly, "yes." For participant SSDA 18, she said her church is her family, "their love for me is solid." For participant SSDA 20 she said that her church is "It's like a family. That they're like my support group." UMP 02 and 03 also substantiated that being part of the church family and having the support of that family are important factors for the secularized to remain in the Adventist Church.

> I really love the community I am in right now. Whenever I am struggling, I know that someone will remind me that God is with me and that they are with me also. (SSDA 13, Pos. 59).

we have real brotherhood, relationships … We can treat each other like really true friends … we can debate, argue, throw jokes, we can even bicker, without being too insensitive … we can talk about sensitive things … We can be straightforward to each other without having to overshare or feel that you are oversharing. (SSDA 14, Pos. 179).

The thought of how strict the Adventist Church was has kept me from immediately becoming an Adventist. But over time, through the continued interactions with fellow churchgoers, I began to feel as though I belonged there. The way that they accepted me as their own family, I guess that's the reason why I decided that this was where I needed to be. (SSDA 21, Pos. 33-34).

Care Group Discipleship

The second factor under "church factor" for retention is **care group discipleship**. Edward Gibbs (cited by C. Wagner 1988, 189-96) describes key principles in attracting and maintaining membership: (1) intentional evangelism of the unchurched; (2) assimilation of new members; (3) instructing new followers of Christ in what it means to be a Christian and a church member; and (4) involving each member in ministry. The care group is key to the assimilation, retention, instruction, and involvement of a newly converted secularized person. William Jean-Charles (2020, 15) found out in his research that "developing relationships and getting involved in the church life is invaluable to future attendance in the church."

The Southeast-Asia Pacific Division launched the Integrated Evangelism Lifestyle program in 2013 utilizing the care groups to increase lay involvement in evangelism in the local churches. Central Luzon Conference enthusiastically embraced this program. Six years later, most of the local churches in Metro Manila have thriving care groups that take care of inviting non-Adventist members to the group, growing their interest, nurturing their faith, and involving the members in community outreach. From the data gathered in this study, the "care groups discipleship" were indicated by participants

(SSDA 14, 18, 20, 21 and UMPs 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06) that this factor contributed to why the secularized Adventists remain in the church. In these care groups, the secularized Adventist in Metro Manila experience care group Bible study, openness and acceptance from the members, nurturing from the community of believers, and engagement with their age group. Focusing on the young professionals and young adults was indicated by UMPs 02, 03, 04, 06 to be a unique feature of the Café Life and Grow Group programs. Under the "care group Bible study," the participants (SSDA 13, 14, 16, 20, 21) described their different experiences. These participants have regular weekly Bible studies, including spending a big portion of Sabbath afternoons for Bible studies. UMP 02 utilizes the care group members to start Bible study programs in their work places. UMP 06 described how the care group Bible study group becomes a way of planting churches using secularized Adventists to lead. Another role that "care groups" play is in giving an "open and accepting" and "nurturing environment" for its members and visitors alike. These have been described in the experiences of SSDA 13, 14, 20, 22. UMPs 02, 03, 04, 06 also emphasized the importance of the openness and acceptance that the care group members extend. UMP 03 said that the first thing that a secularized need to find upon entering an Adventist Church is to find a care group where they are welcomed warmly and would make them feel they belong. SSDA 14 described these two traits of the small group as his top reasons for remaining in his community. He said that he felt that he was not judged and was accepted for who he was. His group also supported him in his struggles as a young Christian. They get shocked by his experiences but there is no judgment instead they would pray for him. He said that they are the reason why "he got through those worst and bad times."

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Missional and Creative Church

David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons (2007) discuss the response of the church to the rising attrition of members within the established church and give some guidelines for getting and incorporating new generations within the church. Kinnaman and Lyons think the church must connect people with God by creatively and intentionally sharing the gospel. The church must connect with people where they are and in their culture—speak their language—and the church must serve people and communities. In line with these findings, we can ask the question, "What kind of church would a secularized like to belong?" The number one answer is—a "missional and creative church."

Under this category there are four other sub-categories, like: (1) evangelism is whole year round and not as a single event; (2) members are regularly inviting people to Café Life or Grow Groups; (3) members are starting new groups; and (4) members are listening and learning from people. The two other factors that are connected to being a missional and creative church is the relational evangelism that the church practice. This has been discussed previously as the first church factor category.

Participant SSDA 14 described his church with words like "missional, movement-minded, and forward-thinking." He further said that it is ingrained in the members that "they need to make friends with non-Adventist and connect with them, they need to get to know people and share with them their transformational stories." He said that every week in their meet-up they share with their group what they have done in the previous week to a person or persons. The goal is to form a habit of friendship and accountability. For UMP 01 being assigned to Chinese church without Chinese members is challenging. He worked with the church for a year on changing their focus group (to college students

and "yuppies") and defining their mission statement fitted to their community and to the church. For the church, they focused on discipleship. For the community, he started a Student Center (located in the epicenter of universities and colleges) where the students can freely come and mingle and the Adventist can engage with them. For UMP 04, his experience is with missional communities like the Café Life. Participants SSDA 14 and UMPs 03, 04, 05, and 06 described that "starting new Café Life or Grow Groups, and care groups" is part of the goals of the group they belong to. Changing the mindset of traditional people who looks at evangelism as an event in a calendar instead of having evangelism whole year round is a challenging task, but this is what UMP 01 and SSDA 14 and 20 describe as what they implement in their church or Grow Groups. All of these activities are intentional and makes these churches or groups missional and creative. Table 6 shows the different creative and contextualized ministries that are practiced in Metro Manila by the UMP (urban ministry practitioners) participants which not only attract but also retain the secularized people to the Adventist Church. See table 6.

Table 6. Creative and contextualized ministries used in CLC

Participants	Creative and Contextualized Ministries
UMP 01	University Belt Student Center – hanging-out and relating to university student; counseling and life-coaching; discipling; working with his church to reinvent itself to be able to minister to the secularized in its location; adapted programs that will encourage discipleship and good relationship among members.
UMP 02	Working with the elite and influential people; have Bible studies in offices; have devotionals or Bible studies in Crame; prayer ministry, health ministry, utilizing care groups for ministries, runs Shekinah Fellowship Center across a mall in Cubao.
UMP 03	Operates a church in Shangri-La Plaza; works with young professionals and elite people, has Grow Groups Community, works on media ministry through FB Live.
UMP 04	Runs Café Life, Grow Group and Growth Groups with core leaders in Makati and Dasmarinas Village (subdivision for elite and influential people), involves group in community outreach and advocacies.
UMP 05	Serves a church for the elite; Started Café Life and Grow groups; Runs a semi-virtual church due to pandemic.
UMP 06	Leads out in Café Life, Grow Groups for young professionals in Paranaque.
UMP 07	Experimented with Café Life, Grow Group, and Growth Communities; mentors the Central Luzon Conference Urban Ministry workers and coordinate their work; he leads out in a Grow community in Global City Mandaluyong; worked with core group leaders to produce materials for Bible studies; utilized local tours on weekends; utilized and empowered young professionals to make an accounting group which brought in funds for the urban ministry, local tours, Weekend Get-aways.
UMP 08	Works with UMP 01 in implementing their discipleship thrust in U-belt church; works with his secularized business contacts; works with the young people; collaborates with other workers in urban ministry.

Factors Why the Secularized Leave the Adventist Church

Another theme that came out from the data analysis is "why the secularized leave the Adventist Church?" While this theme sounds negative, and the discussion is much shorter than the other eight themes, it deserves mention in this paper because it supports the findings for the "factors why the secularized remain in the Adventist Church." It also gives us a glimpse into the thinking and feeling of the secularized why they do not remain after having accepted the rites of baptism. We can learn from them. There are nine personal factors why the secularized leave, they are: (1) infrequent prayer habit, (2) busy life, (3) not reading the Bible regularly, (4) struggling with sin and temptation, (5) working/breaking the Sabbath, (6) not attending church, (7) losing connection with God, (8) not well acquainted with the Spirit of Prophecy, (9) not watching/listening to religious programs to continue feeding spiritually. On the Church factors there are six factors drawn out from the data, namely: (10) formalism, (11) no mentoring or discipleship framework, (12) lack of acceptance and understanding from Adventists, (13) losing family and friends, (14) divided over music/persecution, (15) no niched, no community. These fifteen factors can be reversed or prevented. When we include them in our plans we can reduce the attrition of secularized leaving the church (see figure 14).

Other than helping us understand what causes new members' attrition these fifteen factors verify the findings of what retains the secularized people to the Adventist Church. To illustrate this point, under the personal factors why secularized leave the church, the factors that helped to grow and mature a secularized Adventist identified under the personal factors for retention the following: (1) **engaging in spiritual disciplines**; (2) **living an obedient life**; (3) **sharing the gospel**; and (4) **remaining**

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committed to Jesus. These factors when not followed or practice becomes attrition factors. A new member who has not learned to feed himself from the Word of God or through reading religious materials and have not established the habits for spiritual disciplines will naturally die. He will not have the strength to fight temptations and will continue to sin. He will not also develop a taste and hungering for righteousness. In the same token, the factors contributed by the church in the attrition of the secularized can be counteracted by the church and church members when they provide the identified church factors for retention: (1) **relational evangelism**, (2) **care group discipleship**, and (3) **missional and creative church**. These relationships, discipling, and involvement in church services and the community assimilate the new believer into the church more securely.
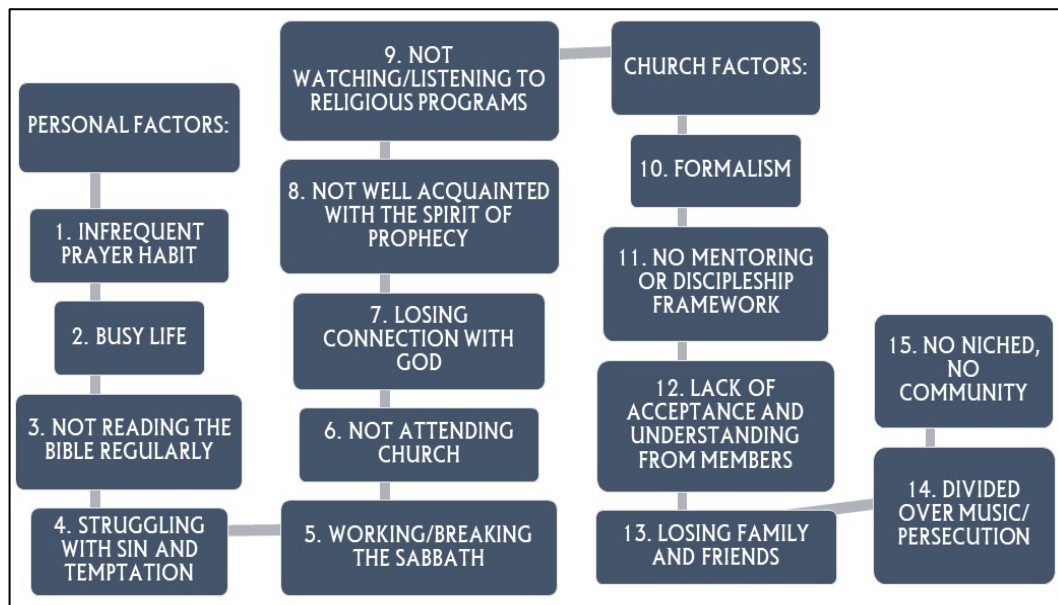
Figure 14. Factors why the secularized converts leave the Adventist Church.

CHAPTER V

In the previous chapter, I discussed the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños,* what factors influence them to join the Adventist Church, and what factors influence them to remain in the Adventist Church. I also included the factors that make them leave the church. In keeping with this progression, I will discuss the answers to the last two research questions in this chapter.

Furthermore, as I mentioned in chapter 4, the two remaining groups of themes will also be discussed in this chapter: (7) contributing factors of Urban Ministry Practitioners in reaching the secularized; and (8) barriers to reaching the secularized people.

I divided this chapter into three sections to make it easy to follow. In the first section, I am answering the question, "What the barriers (internal and external) are to reaching the secularized *Manileños*?" (RQ5). Using the data, I will explain what keeps secularized people out of the Adventist Church and how these challenges can be overcome. The second section discusses the urban ministry approaches and strategies being implemented in the urban initiatives in Metro Manila. It also includes the characteristics and approaches of urban ministry practitioners. Then the last section of the chapter answers the question, "What urban ministry strategies will be effective in Metro Manila?" (RQ6).

What are the Internal Barriers to Reaching the Secularized *Manileños*?

In the case of reaching the secularized people, many thought that the source of challenges only came from outside the church. However, this is not so. Resistance and challenges come from both within the church and from the secularized people. We need to face it, we are part of the problem. The ministry for the unreached secularized people has been slow-going because not every Adventist is open to doing ministry for them.

There is a prevailing mindset that dealing with secularized people is equivalent to dealing with worldliness. Like most Christians, we think we must separate from the world, and because these are people of the world, we must also separate ourselves from them, lest we be tainted. There is a misreading of what Jesus said in John 15:

> If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. (John 15: 18-20, NIV)

To understand better, we need to look at the passage's context. In chapter 15, Jesus explains how they could maintain that close connection with him, living daily as if he were present physically with them. Then he shifted from verse eighteen to the challenges they will soon face because of him. Jesus clarified the difficulties his disciples would face as he sent them to the world. We often misunderstand that the purpose of Jesus in saying the passage, John 15: 18-20, is so that we should avoid the world. However, this is not his intent based on the context. Jesus is sending them to the world, not removing them from the world (chapter 17).

Another idea that stands out is the idea of "free will." The "ifs" in this passage connote choices-left or right, this way or that way. It also implies that not all who are in

the world will love the world. There will be those who will choose to belong to Jesus and listen and obey his teachings. In applying the passage's meaning, it means that there are secularized people who will choose to be followers of Jesus, and for this very reason, we must do what we can to reach them with the Gospel and the Adventist message for the last days.

However, there are barriers to reaching the secularized people with the Gospel. The participants in this study identified five barriers that they have experienced: (1) traditional Adventists are not open to ministry to the secularized people; (2) Adventist "presentation of the message is not appealing to the secularized people;" (3) "Adventists do not know how to reach out to secularized people;" (4) many Adventist Churches have "no discipleship framework for secularized people;" and (5) Adventists are focused on "big religious events" (see figure 15).
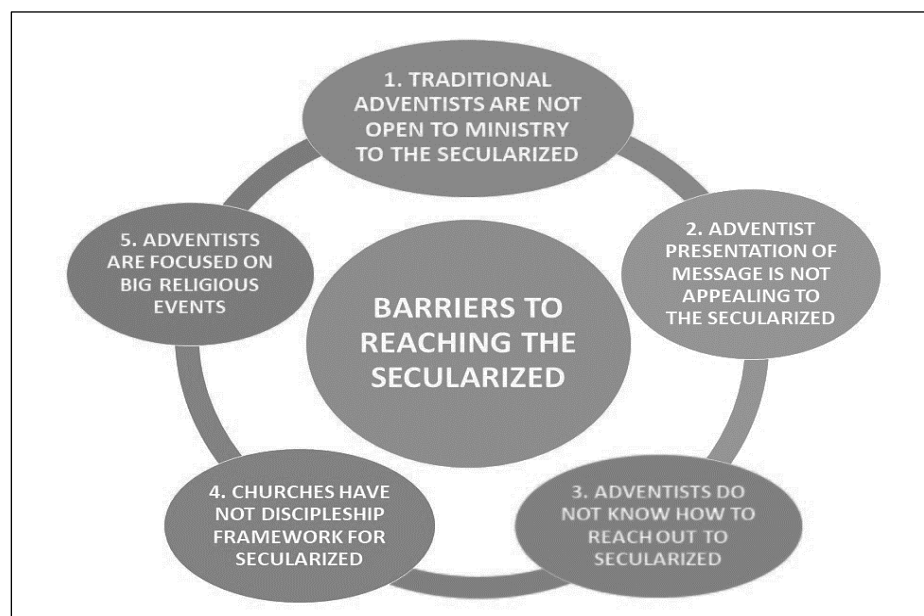
Figure 15. Barriers to reaching the secularized people of Metro Manila

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Based on his more than a decade of urban ministry experience, UMP 07 gave some insights on the barriers he encountered as a practitioner. He pioneered and experimented with the Café Life, Grow Group, and Growth programs (later known as Simply Missions). During his in-depth interview, he admitted that many aspects of urban ministry work in Metro Manila still have not yet been explored. The general opinion and feeling from the UMPs and a few secularized participants is that there is resistance from the traditional Adventists in Metro Manila. UMP 07 described how in the early years of his urban ministry (he started his ministry among young professionals in 2013), the opposition he faced was from traditional Adventist leaders in the local churches and the conference. However, he received support from the ministerial department (CLC), which protected him from the heat of some of the issues. Later he was also mentored by one of the associates of the General Conference Secretariat. The support he received from these leaders lent him credibility in this new initiative of the conference and gave him room to grow in his understanding of urban missions. At present, he is the ministerial secretary of the conference and can continue experimenting with different approaches in the urban ministry work in Metro Manila, as well as mentor those continuing the Simply Missions projects.

What are the current objections coming from the traditional Adventists? One is the location of the "church plants." They are not usually in church buildings. The majority are in condominiums, malls, event places, coffee shops, and offices. (See the results of Bradley's Worship Observation and Online Worship Assessment I conducted in the appendix). For the traditionalists, if the Sabbath worship is not in a proper church building, it is not a church. Another objection is on the format of worship. The Café Life,

Grow Group, and Growth Groups have done away with the Sabbath school format. They adopted a simple worship format with congregational singing at the beginning, welcome remarks, testimonies, then study of the Word (sermon). Lunch comes next (potluck). Care group Bible study is done right after lunch. What has been presented in the sermon is discussed in Serendipity or inter-active style in the afternoon. After their study, they go out for community work. For the traditionalists, the only proper way of having church services is if the sequence of Sabbath School parts (singspiration, opening song, opening prayer, welcome remarks, promotional talk, mission report, lesson study, closing song, and closing prayer) is followed to the letter. For the Divine Worship, it must have all the parts (singspiration, call to worship, the opening song, invocation, stewardship, homily, scripture reading, the altar of prayer, special number, preaching, closing song, and closing prayer) to be considered a proper Divine Worship. A significant deviation from this format is not acceptable to traditionalists. Another objection is to the type of music utilized in their worship. They use a modified "Hillsong" type of music. Some church plants use the hymnal, but the singing is still combined with the "Hillsong" type of music. There are sometimes beatbox and electric guitars. The song leaders sing like those who are in television programs. There is no dress code for platform participants. The pastor is not in coat and tie or long sleeves and tie, nor in Barong. They dress like "yuppies" (young professionals). Sometimes the pastors are just in t-shirt and jeans. The language used is English or sometimes "Taglish" (a combination of Tagalog and English). Traditional Adventists find the church program or worship in the urban initiatives as unfamiliar to be considered as Adventist programs, according to one participant (SSDA 16). During my observations, however, I found most of their programs

or services to be spiritually inspiring and uplifting.

Additional Insights from the Barriers Experienced by Secularized Non-Adventist

Bad experiences with religion and Christians sour a person for a more holistic Christian experience. The secularized non-Adventists describe six negative experiences. The **first** is the **hypocrisy of some Christians and leaders**. As discussed in what attracts the secularized people to the Adventist Church—authenticity, building good relationships, and friendship are on top of the list. It is not surprising that when secularized *Manileños* experience hypocrisy in the church (from the members and leaders), it immediately puts them off Christianity. The **second** negative experience is the **judgmental attitude towards them**. Secularized people do not want to be around judgmental people. As one of their high values is tolerance of other people and their beliefs, being judged by other people is indeed a very bad experience for them. On the other hand, when they experience the welcoming, friendly, and accepting atmosphere in the Adventist Church, they stay. The **third** negative experience of the secularized *Manileños* is the **culture shock on worship styles**. The Philippines has been a majority Catholic country for hundreds of years, so for most of the population their perception of church is a quiet place for prayer and mass, not a place for socialization. They are also used to short and liturgical services, not a whole day affair like what you find in the Adventist Church. They are also not used to having a "school" in church. The **fourth** negative experience that secularized *Manileños* experience comes from **extremists and devout people.** These people tend to be critical of people who do not share the same views on life and lifestyle. They also tend to force their beliefs on other people.

Secularized people are usually more independent-minded than people from the province. They also value their privacy. They consider religion and how they live their life as private domains. People poking on private matters are not welcome. They also value their freedom to believe what they want and to bask in their uniqueness. So, **extreme and devout people** who look down on their beliefs and lifestyles and preach on the peril of their ways put them off Christianity. The **fifth** negative experience of the secularized *Manileños* is being **pressured to convert**. As already mentioned, secularized people value independence (autonomy) and individuality. They do not want to be pressured to make decisions, especially about religion. Lastly, the **sixth** negative experience that secularized *Manileños* experience is being **forced to give donations or offerings**. Secularized people are suspicious that church people are always after getting money from people. They do not have the biblical worldview on stewardship, so they do not see that giving offerings or giving to the church is an automatic response from a grateful heart to God. They can only understand this when they get the conversion experience or fall in love with Jesus. Out of these **six bad experiences with religion and Christians**, the **judgmental attitude** and **hypocrisy** emerged more frequently in the interviews than the other four codes. These six barriers are factors that cause secularized people to be prejudiced against Christianity in general and Adventism in particular.

What Are the Good Urban Ministry Approaches and Strategies Used in Reaching the Secularized People in Metro Manila?

This section of the paper will now deal with the good urban ministry practices implemented in Metro Manila's urban initiatives. In the discussion, the good urban ministry approaches and strategies used by urban practitioners will be described. This

section also includes the good qualities or characteristics of the urban practitioners that make them fit for this kind of ministry. These results were primarily generated from the Focus Group Interviews of eight UMPs and additional in-depth interviews of UMP 07 and 08. (See table XXI in the appendix). This section also supports the findings for the questions that attract and retain the secularized people to the Adventist Church. Then the last section of the chapter answers the question of what urban ministry strategies will be effective in Metro Manila (RQ6).

I have identified ten good urban ministry approaches and strategies for the secularized people. **First** is **having creative and contextualized ministries**. I have discussed in Chapters 1 and 3 how the traditional approach to evangelism does not work for the secularized people. They are not attracted to big events or crusades nor are they interested to see and listen to people they do not know. They only go to a place or event with friends. I have also discussed that they will go to a church if a friend invites them. In chapter 4, I discussed my research findings on what attracts the secularized people to the Adventist Church, and in this chapter, **having creative and contextualized ministries** support these findings. (See table 6 for examples of creative and contextualized ministries that the UMPs use in Metro Manila). Using this approach means that there is a focus on care groups, community programs, transformational leadership of the pastor, prayer ministry, and spirituality of the members. They will return for more if they get this unique experience in church. **Second**, these churches are **implementing discipleship programs** for the secularized people. Many of our local churches have an over-emphasis on numbers and baptism to the detriment of quality membership (disciples). However, what is needed in the Adventist Church is growing disciples. In my observation of their

services and programs, as well as the documents they provided, these urban initiatives emphasize discipleship. They are turning things around when it comes to creating quality membership. They have designed a simple **discipleship program** (Café Life, GO, and Growth Program) called **Simply Missions** and are **implementing** this in their care groups and faith-community. As a result, their discipleship program is gaining traction. **Third**, they are **conducting research-informed programs.** Before the local conference starts an urban ministry initiative, they will survey the target area, the target people, and the needs or interests that will attract the secularized people in that area. Based on their gathered information and observation, they will then design their strategies to meet these needs. These initiatives are church planting in nature, which ties up with the fourth approach. **Fourth** is **church planting through care groups.** The **care group** is such a blessing to the church. In fact, it is the church in minuscule. The secularized people are attracted to care groups because the relationships that are formed within are genuine and authentic, the members are hospitable and non-judgmental, and the secularized people see how good the relationships are between the members. The care groups also foster belongingness and a sense of community (see the five relational factors that attract the secularized people in figure 9). **Fifth,** the urban initiative uses the approach of **targeting specific people groups** in urban settings**.** Not all approaches apply to every people group in the city. Even in secular literature, it is acknowledged that there are "different strokes for different folks." Just as the programs for the traditionalist Adventists are not attractive to the secularized people, the programs for secularized people do not meet the needs of the traditionalists. (To understand better, look at table 6 and how different approaches and strategies are used for different secularized peoples). **Sixth**, they are **multiplying**

multipliers. The urban ministry leaders are cognizant of the importance of keeping the DNA of the church alive by helping the church-plant multiply multipliers. They help the care groups grow and multiply into other care groups. They are not just looking at one church plant. They are looking at as many church plants as they can make in the future. It is not only following the command of Jesus to go and make disciples but also utilizing the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to each member**. Seventh** is **being guided by a clear vision and mission.** The Bible says, "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov 29:18). Much experimentation is going on in the urban ministry in Metro Manila. Nevertheless, there are still a lot of unknown and unfamiliar grounds. However, when a church plant is clear of its vision and mission, it progresses, and the mistakes made are not because they have no direction but as honest mistakes. **Eight** is **getting support and mentorship from the leaders** in the conference and leaders in the church plant. The lack of support from understanding leaders is a deterrent to the growth and progress of urban ministry initiatives. Many urban church plant initiatives have died because of this factor. However, supportive leaders boost the morale of the UMPs and the core groups and inspire them to keep working and in being creative. **Ninth** is **creating genuine and positive relationships** with the secularized people no matter if they are converted or not. As mentioned in chapter 4, everything starts with friendship. There is a hunger among people for genuine interest in their welfare. Ellen White (*Welfare Ministry*, 2008) says, "If God's people would show a genuine interest in their neighbors, many would be reached by the special truths for this time" (192). Furthermore, the **tenth** good urban ministry approach and strategy for the secularized people **are assigning creative practitioners**. This is one of the most crucial. It is one thing to identify the target group

and spend much time planning how to plant a church among them, but if there is no church planter who catches the vision and has the qualities needed to start an urban ministry, the church plant will not succeed. Moreover, considering that not all pastors are equipped and called to urban ministry, choosing the right UMP is one of the most challenging tasks of the conference's ministerial department. These ten approaches and strategies are what made the urban initiatives of the Central Luzon Conference in Metro Manila work at this point (see table 7).

Contributing Factors from the Urban Ministry Practitioners

The UMPs play a big part in the success of the urban initiative for the secularized people. They are keys to winning the secularized people to Jesus. They possess certain qualities that help them observe on the ground, plan, and execute their ministry, invite people to their core groups, build relationships with the secularized people on different platforms, lead out in discipleship, and plant the church (See table 6 and 7). From the focus group interviews and in-depth interviews of the UMPs, there are five top personal qualities of good urban ministry practitioners. In addition to this, there are also top five approaches that the UMPs implement (see figure 16). The top personal quality of a good UMP is that he is **genuinely interested** in people. After all, the point of ministry is to serve people. People in the cities are busy and individualistic. They try to stay away from other people's business. Furthermore, because of this, there is alienation from each other. Many people live lonely lives that they fill with materialism. They become guarded in forming relationships. The UMP builds relationships with people who are formerly strangers to him and each other. He shows that he is genuinely interested in them as persons, and he is there for the long haul. UMP 07 admitted that he had to learn this as a

skill and personal trait if he wanted to reach the secularized people. He had to shed the

attitude that he is just there to convert people to a religion or to get baptisms.

> Do not see them as projects … I do not use the term "interest" … the friendship is like all-encompassing. The concern, the transparency or authenticity is included there. (UMP 07, Pos. 2).

> I think the best approach for them is … not really to make a strategy to reach them but to genuinely befriend them. We could say that that is the key to winning them to the faith…. Because as we mingle with them and observe our lifestyle, how we live our life as a person, they are given time to question and become curious about what you do and what your life is. (FGI 2, UMP 05, Pos. 10).

The **second** top personal quality of a good UMP is that he is **convicted of**

ministering to the secularized people. This characteristic is a must for an urban ministry

practitioner. If his heart is not in this type of ministry, he will quickly get discouraged by

the difficulties and failures he will experience. It takes time to see the results of the work

among the secularized people, so it can be discouraging. There can be many activities in

the urban ministry, but the real test is seen in getting converts who are discipled for

Christ. If the practitioner is not convicted to serve them, he will also not get the
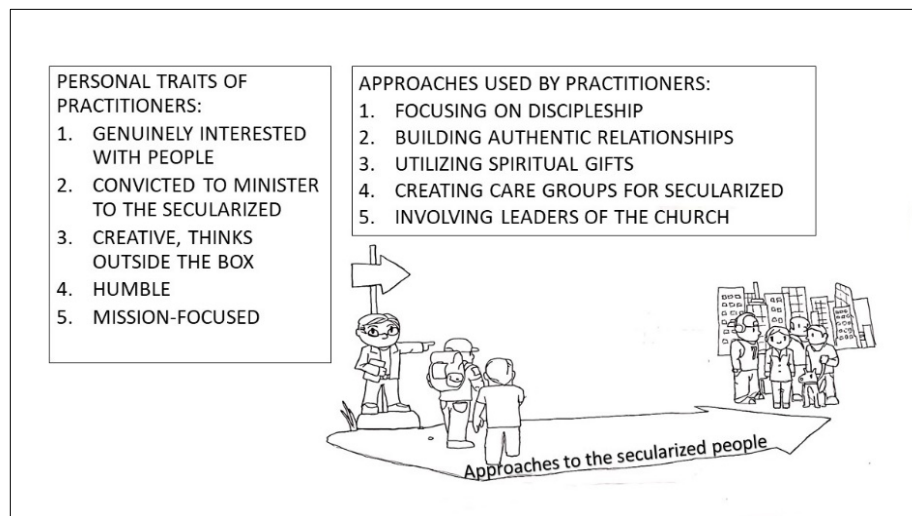
Figure 16. Urban ministry practitioner's traits and approaches.

enthusiasm to be creative, which is the next needed characteristic. A good UMP's **third** top personal quality is that he is **creative and thinks outside the box**. (See table 6 to get an idea of the kinds or types of creative ministries the UMPs are doing). This supports the findings of what approaches and strategies work for the secularized people in Metro Manila. The **fourth** top personal quality of a good UMP is that he is **humble.** Humility is a God-given grace. Due to our fallen nature, it does not come naturally to us. Adulation and materialism surround the UMP, and it is easy to be carried away. He must be grounded in his understanding of who he is in God's sight—a forgiven sinner called to proclaim God's salvation to the lost secularized people. Apart from God, he is nothing. The car, the gadgets, the condominium, and the whirls of social events with famous people are but tools of the trade, bridges to cross, paths to walk. His feet must remain planted on the ground. Not all pastors can remain humble with these bombardments of temptations to pride and self-exaltation. The **fifth** top personal quality of a good UMP is that of being **mission-focused**. Many things demand the time and attention of the pastor. He needs to know how to prioritize and bring every activity into the arena of missions. He needs to utilize the spiritual gifts of his team or members to concentrate on mission-oriented tasks. These are the data's top five personal qualities of good urban ministry practitioners.

In terms of approaches, there are five top approaches that the UMPs practice. **First**, he **focuses on discipleship**. Helping the secularized people develop a relationship with Jesus is a primary goal of the UMP. He is there to see them through their spiritual journey from infancy to maturity. He studies the Bible with them. He spends time modeling for them the Christian principles in daily living. **Second**, he is **building**

Table 7. Best approaches and ministry practices in Metro Manila

10. ASSIGNING CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS

9. GETTING SUPPORT AND MENTORSHIP FROM CHURCH LEADERS

8. CREATING GENUINE & POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS W/ SECULARIZED PEOPLE

7. BEING GUIDED BY A CLEAR VISION AND MISSION

6. MULTI-PLYING MULTIPLIERS

5. TARGETTING SPECIFIC PEOPLE GROUP

4. CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH CARE GROUPS

3. CONDUCTING RESEARCH INFORMED PROGRAM

2. IMPLEMENTING DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

1. HAVING CREATIVE AND CONTEXTUALIZED MINISTRIES

CHURCH PLANTING

APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES

genuine relationships. The **building of authentic relationships** comes first before the discipleship of a secularized person. They would consider coming to church or religious activities if they are invited by friends or people they know. They are also interested in making friends with people who show genuineness in their dealings with others. They want to build relationships with people who are open and accepting. The **third** top approach that the UMP uses is **utilizing the spiritual gifts of members**. He cannot do all parts of the ministry. The members are part of his team. Utilizing their spiritual gifts not only helps them grow, but they are also helping others grow. The **fourth** top approach that the UMP uses is **creating care groups for secularized people**. Secularized people do not easily make a religious commitment, but they seek a community to belong to. The **care groups** create a family environment where love and acceptance are attractive, and forgiveness and accountability are practiced. They grow together by studying the Bible, worshipping together, doing community work, and even going out together. The **fifth** top approach that the UMP uses is i**nvolving leaders of the church**. These include leaders in the local church and the leaders in the conference. The best way to lessen prejudice and educate people is by letting them be involved. If there are sponsoring churches to the urban church plant, you can be sure that there would be some who are not sold out to the creative approaches being used by the UMPs. Getting the leaders involved will help them see for themselves the reality of the lives of the secularized people and the challenges they face, which will help the leaders to look at the ministry differently.

**Effective Urban Ministry Strategies in Reaching
the Secularized People of Metro Manila**

In this last section, I will discuss the last research question: "What urban ministry strategies will be most effective in Metro Manila?" (RQ6). These strategies are gleaned from the positive and negative experiences of the secularized people and urban ministry practitioners. It also includes strategies observed from the worship programs and documents provided by the conference and urban ministry practitioners. Furthermore, it includes factors gleaned from the themes gathered from the study.

Here are the twelve effective strategies for reaching Secularized People:

Ministry of Love

Build the ministry to the secularized people on the principle of love. "Love God and your fellowmen." The first among the many strategies any missiologist should think of should be centered on love. It is the highest and most noble of all qualities mentioned in the Bible. Jesus made it clear in Mark 12:30-31 that it is the embodiment of the whole law: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength…. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these [two]." To love God is our highest worship and service. Nothing is more divine than learning to love God in its purity. Of course, this is impossible unless there is a new-birth experience because humanity cannot produce the kind of love that the Bible is talking about nor give back the kind of love God deserves.

Ellen White (*Sons and Daughters of God* 2008) expounds that "The divine law requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. Without the exercise of this love, the highest profession of faith is mere hypocrisy" (52).

Is it possible to simultaneously develop both kinds of love—love for God and love for humankind? Many Christians are stuck on developing their love for God only. Many do not go further in their growth because most of us find it challenging to love beyond self. So, to love others, our neighbors, and our enemies are difficult, if not impossible. To be able to feel or show love for fellow human beings is the fruit of the workings of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. It is the manifestation of his transformative powers. To the believer who possesses such a quality, it becomes a beacon of light for others, like honey for the bear or food for the flies. As seen by secularized people, love in action is an attraction to investigate Christianity. Ellen G. White (*Ministry of Health and Healing* 2008) described this most powerful influence as follows:

> It is that which reveals the union of the soul with God. By the power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character, the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer. No other influence that can surround a person has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the Gospel is a loving and lovable Christian. (275)

Such powerful influence can only be demonstrated and tested in relationships that last extended periods, with people who are together in seasons of laughter, fun, trials, and tragedies. To show this kind of love for the secularized people is the ultimate form of attraction for the Gospel.

Relational Evangelism

The second urban strategy to reach the secularized people is relational evangelism. This approach or strategy is at the heart of winning people to Jesus Christ and in discipling them. As discussed in chapters 2 and 4 regarding relationships, we become Christians through relationships and remain in the church because of the relationships we have built (Kidder 2008). Our discipleship journey is peppered with

encouraging and nurturing relationships in the church. Developing relationships and involvement in church life ensures a future attendance in the church (William Jean-Charles 2020, 15). Several relational concepts undergird relational evangelism. These concepts make relational evangelism unique because it reaches a very personal level. These are:

Build Good Relationships

In the world of the secularized people, alienation in relationships is rampant (Hunter 1992, 44-54). The secularized people have an innate need to seek genuine relationships and a great need to belong to a community because of these feelings of isolation and loneliness. They are disillusioned with people who use people and take advantage of them. They are wary of strangers who want to befriend them, yet in their personal experience, they crave human connection. Building genuine, authentic, accepting, and loving relationships are one of the best approaches to reaching the secularized people. In the research done by Anderson Corley (2018, 132), the ministry practices that attract most of the secularized people are friendship and building relationships. One of the challenges is how to seek them out to build this relationship. Busyness is a byword in the life of postmodern people; their plate is full, so they do not have time. Nonetheless, there are two ways to develop relationships with them. One is to use the influence of Adventists who know secular people among their friends, relatives, neighbors, and workmates. They can serve as the bridge in creating a network of secularized people who will become open to the Gospel through good relationships. As gathered from the results of this study, the SSDA participants described how their conversion journey started with an Adventist friend, co-worker, or relative's invitation to

the Adventist Church or Adventist event. Literature tells us that the unchurched U1-U3 are usually open to invitations to church from friends or people they know. The second way is to seek them out. Take an example from an urban initiative in the conference where the members of the care groups are instructed to have weekly friendship goals. They also made it a point to make themselves visible on social media platforms. They started the Café Life, Grow, and Growth Communities as a ministry to young professionals. These types of socio-religious groups are where the secularized people are attracted to and where they thrive.

Develop an Open, Caring, and Welcoming Church

The secularized people seek an open, caring, and welcoming church. The research pointed to two descriptions of this kind of church, highly appreciated by the secularized people. These are manifested in a welcoming and non-judgmental atmosphere in the church. It means that the church members welcome anyone regardless of their social and economic status, the type of work they engage in, their race, and their gender or gender identification. There is no judgment on how they look and what they wear when they come to the meetings. They foster an environment where the poor, the prostitute, and the homosexual can sit freely with the professional ones if they come to the church.

Develop a Family Relationship in the Church

The secularized people are looking for a family they can belong. With many dysfunctional relationships in today's world, secularized people look for a surrogate family outside their biological relationships. Part of God's restorative process is for the church to function as God's family here on earth. Through the church, God wants people to experience his love. While it is vital that the secularized people develop good

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relationships with visitors and new interests, it is equally vital that the church members already have good relationships. They cannot give what they do not have. Six participants in this study described at length the good relationships in the churches they attend, which was a factor in their conversion. A church that fosters a supportive group that encourages, prays for, holds members accountable, and fosters an environment of growth, spiritual health, and vitality–will have converts that are discipled and retained in the church (Kidder 2008). Building a family relationship within the church answers the secularized people's psycho-emotional needs and builds a support system that fosters growth, health, and vitality.

Be Authentic in All Dealings with People

Secularized people are attracted to a church whose members show genuine love to people shown in acts of friendship and genuine relationships. The non-Christian Generation Z thinks that the most appealing type of evangelism occurs "when Christians live out their faith, not when they explain it" (Barna 2021). This generation dislikes the direct approach of Christians when Scriptures are quoted to them, when asked to be prayed over during the conversation, and when asked the reasons behind their beliefs or lifestyle choices. They feel that it is too personal and an invasion of their privacy. However, authenticity is something that they look for in a Christian. Research participants in this study used the words "sincerity" and "practicing what the Bible says" to describe how church members should relate with non-believers. This is what "authenticity" looks like for them.

Be willing to share life with others

Pastors need to share their lives with the people they serve. In traditional churches, it is typical for the pastor and the elders to open their homes to the members. This same openness and lack of privacy must be offered to the secularized people while respecting their boundaries. One participant described his friendship with Adventists and pointed to it as a key factor to his conversion. He emphasized his experience of "connecting, sharing lives, hearing their stories, growing together, and sharing personal stories of transformations." One practitioner talks of genuine friendship where the secularized people can observe closely how he lives their faith daily. From this observation, the secularized people may want the same faith for themselves. Another practitioner emphasized sharing the life of a mentor and mentee in a discipleship relationship as shown by Jesus to his disciples. They spent literal days together-eating, drinking, working, teaching, healing, and preaching. Learning from the Master Teacher not only by hearing but also by seeing what he did was the best learning experience for the disciples.

Community for the Secularized People

Create a community for the secularized people. Belongingness or community is a big thing for secularized people. The secularized people are looking for authentic relationships, and they are looking for genuine people to connect with. Postmodern people view life from a community or tribal perspective (Long 1997, 206). For them, becoming a Christian means leaving one community for another. Secularized people like to share their journey with a group of people they can call their community or tribe. This is the group of people they are accountable to. Accountability is an integral part of

discipleship (Smith and Parks 2015b, 32; Barna 2001, 158-160; Logan 2019, 205-206).

The sooner relationships are forged in the care groups or in the church between the

members and the secularized people, the higher the probability that the secularized

people will stay in the church. The friendly unchurched may respond to an appropriate

invitation to church, especially from a friend. However, the focus needs to be more than

the invitations. It is just the start. They need to be able to attend church and then get

introduced to the care groups. In the care groups, they will be more open to studying the

Bible, where they could learn about Jesus, than if they study individually with the pastor.

The participants I interviewed from the conference's urban projects seem to be getting

that sense of community or belongingness in the Adventist Churches they attend. The

goal of every Christian community then is to "establish people in a spiritual community

where intellectual, physical, and spiritual growth occurs" (Bell 2018, 149).

Look for people who are seeking God and invite them in a group. Include in the

conversation how the **grace of God** works in the different stages in their lives. Recognize

the people in journey and how God leads them towards God. Create platforms where they

can communicate, exchange experiences, and reflections on God's prevenient and saving

grace.

<center>Missional Discipleship</center>

Adopt a missional discipleship program in the church. One of the obstacles in

retaining the secularized people identified by the participants is the lack of a discipleship

framework in the local churches, and the UMPs substantiated this. As a result, there is a

lack of a system consistent enough to disciple a secularized seeker. The risk of losing

them is high. The church reported during the GC Session (June 2022) that our attrition

percentage for membership loss is 40% (Nurture and Retention Committee 2020, ix). It is also reported that "global accessions and net losses have developed in step with each other" (2020, 224). This refers to people coming out from our regular membership, not the secularized people's demographic, which poses additional challenges. The Nurture and Retention Committee (2020) described the Adventist understanding of what a disciple should be:

> A disciple is one who experiences continual transformation toward the fullness of Christ in a biblically faithful way, in a culturally appropriate way, at the worldview level, in personal spirituality, in emotional wholeness, in personal lifestyle, in family relationships … and as a disciple-making disciple. Christ's method includes all of these factors in a pre-baptism, baptism, and post-baptism process wrapped into a package called discipleship. (120)

What discipleship meant in the New Testament is to follow Jesus in "an attitude of observation, study, obedience, and imitation" (Willard 2006, 6). The condition of the Christian church now is it is full of members but lacks true disciples (6). The Christian church has drifted away from the original intent of the Great Commission and has turned the command to disciple into plain church membership. As a result, many church members do not have an on-going vibrant relationship with Christ, and little growth is happening. In consequence, there is no power manifested by the church to turn the world upside down. The Adventist Church has not fared any better in this; it has succumbed to the same pitfall of concentrating on baptisms instead of discipleship. The ministry to the secularized people needs to have this at its very foundation. It must be in the DNA of every church planting initiative. Here are some steps we can adopt:

a. Offer a care group ministry network.

b. Design a culturally and stage-sensitive discipleship plan for the church (10-year plan, 5-year plan, yearly plan). This includes researching the discipleship

stages of your members—what they know about their faith and what they

practice. Then design discipleship plans appropriately. Incorporate approaches

and practices from the discipleship models given by George Barna, Bill Hull,

the DMM, and T4T.

c. Provide nurturing materials, Bible study materials, and care group materials.

Growing Spirituality

Help members grow in their spirituality. Spirituality is "a way of conducting

religious life" (Willard 2006, 49). It develops a deep response to God's control over our

lives and being. Being spiritual means living a life patterned after the life of Jesus while

he was here on earth. The secularized people are looking for authentic spirituality in the

lives of Christians. Start by identifying what stages in their spiritual growth the church

members are in. Conduct surveys on what they want to know in order to grow. Start with

their felt needs, then move on to guide them to climb to higher stages of growth. Work

with them to **plan their spiritual path**—spiritual disciplines they want to practice,

biblical knowledge they want to study, and involvement in leadership and service.

Brant's "twelve-step journey for spiritual growth and leadership development" is

an example of planning a **spiritual path** (2011, 116). It is based on Wesleyan spirituality

which is a pilgrimage-based paradigm centered on growth in grace, traveled in steps,

discerned through key markers or turning points, appropriated through a dynamic process

of action and reflection, aided by the accountability of community, and undertaken for

the sake of others (2011, 115). The program helps a believer become passionate about

knowing and loving God by seeking, following, believing, and trusting the Holy Spirit

(116). Here are some examples of factors to spiritual growth that have been identified in

this study:

    a. *Engaging in spiritual disciplines* (worshipping, attending church, doing personal Bible study, maintaining a prayerful life, reading the Bible, fasting, memorizing Scriptures, etc.)

    b. *Living an obedient life* (following the commandments of God, applying biblical truths in daily life, following God's leading and guidance)

    c. *Sharing the Gospel* (testifying of God's works in life, participating in evangelism programs of the church, personal witnessing, and excitement with the Gospel), and

    d. *Remaining committed to Jesus* (enduring hardships and overcoming temptations)

Transformation

The goal of every Christian in his growth in faith is transformation. He needs to change his worldview from that of a sinner, rebellious son or daughter, estrange from his or her heavenly family into a "Christian worldview" where God and his kingdom takes the upper thoughts and preferences. Serving God in this life and promoting his lordship in all its forms (Bosch 1991, 488). We must include in our design for discipleship and nurture the three areas that need transformation: cognitive, affective, and evaluative. All of these areas must be influenced and nurtured in the Word of God. The conversion process must penetrate deep into the psyche of the secularized person: from behavior, to beliefs and belief systems, to the worldview (see figure 4). The process must produce a (1) transformed mind; (2) transformed character; (3) transformed relationships; (4) transformed habits; (5) transformed service; and, (6) transformed influence (Hull 2006,

201

130). This transformation as emphasized by Logan (2019, 199-200), must also include these areas of life: (1) experiencing God; (2) spiritual responsiveness; (3) generous living; (4) personal transformation; (5) authentic relationships; and, (6) community transformation.

Prayer Ministry

Offer prayer ministry for the secularized people. One of the practices that make the secularized *Manileños* different from other secularized people in the world is the practice of prayer. Making a prayer ministry a part of the church's life benefits the members and the secularized people. Ellen White (2008) emphasizes on our great need for daily prayers:

> Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. … His heart of love is touched by our sorrows. ... Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds. He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. ... The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watch-care, not another soul for whom He gave His Beloved Son. (*Steps to Christ*, 99, 100)

> The greatest blessing that God can give to man is the spirit of earnest prayer. All heaven is open before the man of prayer. ... The ambassadors of Christ will have power with the people after they have, with earnest supplication, come before God. (*The Review and Herald*, October 20, 1896)

Among the secularized people, there are still many who believe in prayer and practice it even if they no longer come to church. Many would accept an offer of prayer if asked. In fact, in many personal interviews broadcasted in the media about Filipinos dealing with disasters or difficulties in life, you will always hear the phrase, "just pray"

or "just hold on (to God)." Hence, offering a prayer ministry for the secularized

Manileños is a much-needed approach. There are practical ways the Adventist Church

can adapt this ministry. It can be offered as part of the church services. An honest look at

our prayer meetings on Wednesday nights will tell us that it is due for a revamp. It is

often dry and monotonous. It is not even an actual prayer meeting because praying at the

end is often an afterthought. Here are some ways we can offer a prayer ministry:

a. Design the prayer meeting as a prayer meeting, not as a preaching meeting.

b. Put up prayer booths. This can be done inside the church. This can also be a
   put-up booth in strategic locations in the city.

c. Present weekly programs revolving around prayers. Use the Scriptures and
   prayer chain, read the verses and say a five-sentence reflection, then ask the
   congregation to pray about the verse, repeat this, and so on.

d. Prayer ministry can also be offered through the media platform. Offer a prayer
   hotline that the care groups can operate. This can be promoted in printed
   calling cards and given out strategically in the city.

e. Conduct Prayer Meetings or summits via Zoom.

f. Care groups that focus on prayer ministry can be created. These are just some
   ways of how we can offer the ministry of prayer.

Care Group Ministry

Utilize the strength of care group ministry in the church. The best structure for the

assimilation, retention, instruction, and involvement of the secularized people are the

"care groups." Under this approach, all that needs to happen is for the structure to

become a living organism and not just a program. Each care group must come alive and

become organic, develop a life of its own and multiply. It has been an on-going approach in urban ministry to create Bible study groups in the workplace and create social network groups in event places. Many church ministries have adopted bringing Christ to the workplace instead of waiting for people to come to church since secular people do not choose to come to church. It is both practical and efficient. You do not have to rent or own the place. The members are just in the building or working nearby, so they can come after work. The secularized people need to be discipled in a small group context. If the Adventist Church focuses on the bigger congregation for its programs, it loses the chance to grow these believers, and they eventually go missing in the church. Closer relationships are developed in care groups. The secularized Adventist participants in this study were converted through periods of cultivated relationships and organic exposure or involvement in care groups and faith communities before they decided to be baptized. The care groups will help:

a. Seek the help of Adventists with businesses or leaders in their workplace and start care groups in their workplace.

b. Invite new non-Adventist members to the group.

c. Grow the members' interest in spiritual things and relationships with each other.

d. Nurture the members' faith through religious activities like Bible study, prayer ministry, etc.

e. Build and foster a family relationship with each other. Offer unconditional love and acceptance.

f. Engage with the community. Involve in community work. Witness to others.

Community Outreach and other Advocacies

Include community outreach or advocacies in the plans of the church. The secularized people live in a global society. Globality made people aware of what is happening on the other side of the globe and what is happening on the streets of Metro Manila because of the internet and media. They see the street people every day. They pass by the street sections where the prostitutes frequent. They see the squatters under the bridge or behind large buildings when they work. They know when there are traffic jams due to demonstrations, rallies, and protests by farmers or human rights activists. They are also aware of indigenous people living on the frontiers of human society posted on different media platforms. Moreover, because of this awareness, their social sensibilities are awakened. They ask themselves, "What can they do to change the world they live in?" "How can they make an impact on the lives of others?" Many may not necessarily respond from the spiritual mindset, but most would just want to make a difference in the social landscape. They are looking for advocacies, some form of altruism that will impact someone else's life. Many secularized people are attracted to join groups that reach out to marginalized people or people in need. The Adventist Church has done a lot of community work in the past, especially in the area of health and disaster. However, we have not explored the possibility of making these advocacies become avenues for relational evangelism with the secularized people. The "Simply Missions" initiative has achieved relative success in this aspect and has led many young professionals to join their Café Life and Grow Groups. It is time that we use this as one of the approaches to secularized people.

Missional Leadership

Adapt missional leadership for urban ministry**.** The pastor or the leader in the

ministry for the secularized people plays an important role. Usually, the urban ministry

initiatives are church planting endeavors, and the pastor's leadership and example to his

core group and growing congregation are vital to the DNA of the church plant. The

pastoral model that fits the ministry for the secularized people is the "Missional Model"

(Allan Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk 2006, 14). This leadership paradigm is used for

innovative ministries. The congregation functions like cross-cultural missionaries rather

than behaving like they are there to be entertained and served, which is the usual situation

in many local churches. The atmosphere in the missional church is one of "rapid

discontinuous change" where the leaders develop skills and competencies leading the

congregation and having denominational systems in a context that is missional rather than

pastoral (14). The personal leadership attributes of pastors are concentrated in three areas:

Cultivating People	**Forming Mission Environments and Congregations**	**Engaging Context**
1. Missional imagination 2. Cultivates growth 3. Enables change 4. Creates coalitions	1. Member integration 2. Missional culture 3. Missional Practices	1. Understands society 2. Member engagement 3. Missional Future 4. Biblical Foundations

Traits of the Pastor
1. Personal Maturity
2. Conflict Management
3. Humble yet courageous
4. Develop trust

Figure 17. Interaction of personal attributes and congregational readiness
factors in missional leadership. Adapted from the model of Roxburgh and
Romanuk (2006, 114)

cultivating people, **forming a missional environment**, and **engaging the community** (2006, 114). Adapting from this framework, the pastor should have traits that will fit his ministry context and implement plans to grow a missional church that engages with the community. The traits and approaches of the UMPs identified in the research can be categorized under the framework above (see table 7 for reference).

The pastor assigned to secularized people needs to have the following traits: maturity, good interpersonal skills, conflict resolution skills, and humility to deal with mistakes and be willing to seek help from others. (The following steps for missional leadership are adapted from figure 15).

a. The pastor should cultivate the vision and establish the mission statement for the church's ministry to the secularized people.

b. The pastor should be innovative and creative to open ministries for the secularized people.

c. The pastor should create core teams for different ministries.

d. The pastor should create and plan for missional thinking in his core group, leaders, and church plant.

e. The core teams should study secularism, its problems, challenges, and trends.

f. The core teams should study the target group and draft the strategic plan.

g. The pastor should develop practical and contextualized ministries and strategies.

h. The pastor should create and design an environment of growth in his church.

i. The pastor should teach, encourage, and exemplify missional theology, culture, and practice.

j. The pastor will multiply multipliers.

k. The pastor should coordinate and engage with the community, the civic groups working in the area, and local government agencies and collaborate with them in social uplift and community work.

l. The pastor should utilize the spiritual gifts as well as the professional skills of his members to engage in the community.

m. The pastor should involve local as well as conference leaders.

<div align="center">Health and Holistic Healing Programs</div>

Offer health and holistic healing programs. The Adventist Church has been blessed with the health message. Its biblical foundation is anchored on the belief in the Creator God, his love for his creation, and the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. The human design, which includes the complex biochemical, physiological, social, and moral components, is best fitted for a healthy lifestyle revolving on following the Old Testament dietary laws, the NEWSTART program (nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, temperance, air, rest, and trust in God), and or adopting a plant-based diet (Fraser, *Ministry Magazine* 1999, 5-6). Scientific research from the church and the scientific community backs up our teachings on health. Following a healthy lifestyle not only affords us a quality of life as God promised (John 10:10) while living on this earth. This makes us different from those who do not know God's laws. The Adventist doctrine on health also links this to preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Finley, *Adventist Review* 2020). 1 Thessalonians 5:23 says, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." With such an understanding, we can

offer the world prevention and cure for the onslaught of diseases that debilitate humanity. Many of the secularized people are concerned about living healthily. As an outreach program, medical missionary work exemplifies kindness, love, and sympathy which win people to Christ. Lifestyle centers can be opened to launch these programs. The members of the church can volunteer to run these programs.

Faith Development

Build foundations for faith development. When secularized people come to the Adventist Church, we would have to believe that they are "seekers" otherwise, they would not have come to the church. As seekers, we need to offer them the answers to what they are looking for. Daniel Benedict and Craig Miller (cited by Brant 2011, 122) categorize seekers into four types: "Churched Seekers, Seekers on the Journey, Latent Seekers, and Unbelievers." The "seekers on the journey" and "latent seekers" fit the description of the secularized Manileños. The "latent seekers," by definition of the word 'latent' is that they are open but not necessarily actively seeking. Then, the "seekers on the journey" are described as:

> looking for God in many different places and are on a self-search to define and to create their spirituality. They may or may not have been part of the church at some time in their life, but they are not now committed to any organized religion. Many adopt beliefs from more than one religion. …What distinguishes them from other seekers is that they have a spiritual itch that needs to be scratched, and they are willing to look anywhere and everywhere to fulfill that need.

As discussed in chapter four, the secularized *Manileños* identify with the U1-U3 spectrum of the unchurched, where most have a Catholic background. They accept the Bible as God's Word but do not own a Bible. If they do, they do not read it. They come to Bible studies with little or no biblical knowledge. The participants in this study

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mentioned many types of Bible studies like the Grow Bible Study series, the Amazing Facts Bible Study, the 28 Fundamental Beliefs (adapted and revised by the pastors), and Prophecy Seminars. These are all helpful. However, as we are dealing with the secularized people who have very minimal Bible background, I suggest we put building blocks (biblical foundations) just as we would teach "folk religionists." The advantage of the secularized people is that most of them have high education and so we will be able to speed up their study by using technology and using guided personal studies. Russell Burrill introduced the three big Cs (Christ, Commandments, and Church) for teaching Bible doctrines (2007, 112, 113). The Adventist's Twenty-eight Fundamental Beliefs are arranged under these three groupings. I have adapted this as a guide and revised it to fit the secularized people. Here is my proposed study plan:

The Great Controversy

The goal in this phase is for the Bible student to become acquainted with the basic chronology of the Bible events and characters. We want the Bible student to understand the Great Controversy theme of the Bible and for them to get an overview of the story of redemption (past, present, and future). The best way to do this is through a chronological Bible storying approach. This type of Bible study lays down the foundation for other Bible studies. It studies from Genesis to Revelation, from creation to the new creation. It is studied by themes that refer to the characteristics or attributes of God using the stories to elucidate who God is. There are available CBS materials online. We can also use the ten-volume Bible Story series the Philippine Publishing House printed. The readings are in story form and easy to read and follow. If they have children, we can encourage them

to read one story daily—at night or during worship. Children and adults will enjoy reading through the volumes.

Who Jesus Is

The goal in this phase is for the Bible student to know and fall in love with Jesus. Jesus is introduced as the Son of God, the Savior, the Loving God, the Healer, and a Personal Friend. The studies help build trust and a relationship with a personal God. The aim is not for information only but more on transformation. We want to see the Bible student receive Jesus as Lord and Savior and have a growing conversion experience. Secularized "seekers" will respond better if they are given studies on who Jesus is first, because secularized people are attracted to Jesus first. However, we are mindful that they need to have a Bible background in order for us to lead them to other levels. To accommodate this, Phase 1 and Phase 2 can be given simultaneously. The Bible studies about Jesus can
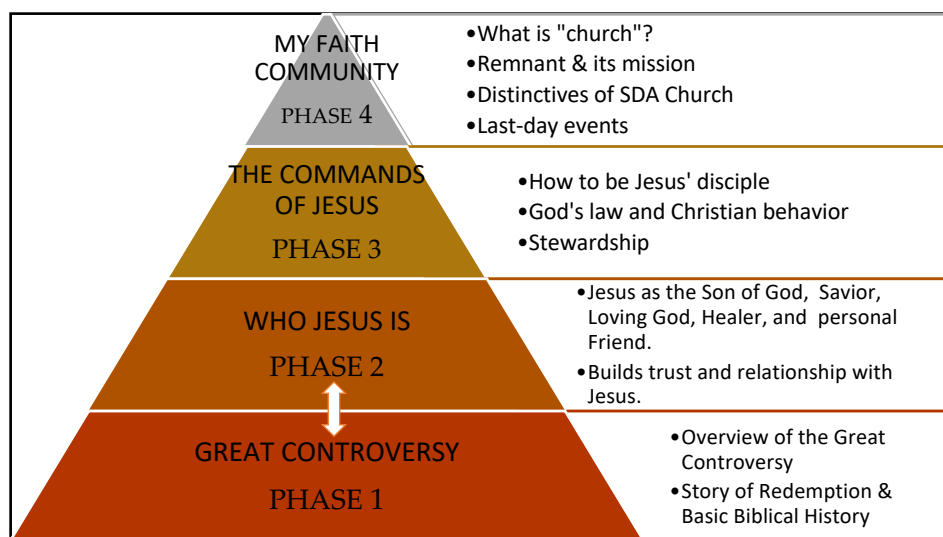
Figure 18. Foundation for Faith Development.

be done in the care groups, and the CBS be given as personal study using workbooks. Some of the participants use the Grow Bible Study materials. There are other well-designed Bible study materials from the GC Women's Department website (https://women.adventist.org/) which I recommend using, like "Women Discovering Jesus," "The Best You Can Be," "Desire, Discover, Depend, Do the Word."

The Commands of Jesus

The goal in this phase is for the Bible student to know what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. It does not aim only to inform but, more importantly, to see a transformation in the Bible student. Most teaching materials available are topical, but this can also be taught using a chronological Bible storying approach. The best framework for studying the Adventist doctrines is when we understand who God is and have started on our relationship with Jesus Christ. These two other building blocks help us not to be legalistic in our understanding of the doctrines and in our motives for following them. The twenty-eight doctrines that Adventists consider pillars of the church fall under this category.

My Faith-Community (Church)

Most secularized persons do not like to be identified with an institutional church. They want the freedom to either attend church or not attend church. They prefer a "church without walls" or a "churchless Christianity." It is, therefore, essential to teach topics about the church (ecclesiology) to a secularized person. He or she needs to know what a church is and why one should join it. This phase includes teaching about the nature of the church. The question of why there are so many denominations should be answered biblically as well as historically. There should be a study on the nature,

identity, and mission of the Last-day Remnant. Topics that should be taught during this phase include the distinguishing features of the true church, last-day events (concerning the Remnant's experience), the Mark of the Beast, and the Seal of God. Other doctrines that need to be taught here are spiritual gifts and ministries, and the spirit of prophecy (EGW). During this phase, the goal is to make the person or Bible interest convinced that the Adventist Church is the Last-day Remnant and true church, and that God expects him or her to join the last-day Remnant (SDA Church). As already mentioned, the Adventist Church teaches twenty-eight fundamental doctrines, out of them are nine doctrines that make Adventist distinct from mainstream evangelical denominations. These nine doctrines fall under these categories: (1) the Second Coming, (2) the Sabbath, (3) the heavenly sanctuary, (4) the investigative judgment, (5) the law of God, 6) the state of the dead, (7) the Great Controversy, (8) the three angels' messages of Revelation, and (9) the gift of prophecy.

Identity and Message

Emphasize on identity and message of the Adventist Church. Our identity as the "remnant church" (Rev 12:17) is very important. It points to our prophetic ties to the remnants of the Bible, which has the identifying marks as (1) faithful ones left after the 1,260 years of the Dark Ages; (2) keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus, they also (3) keep the Sabbath; and, (4) has the manifestation of the Spirit of Prophecy (Rodriguez n.d., 3). The understanding of the "remnant church" directs us to look up to a Sovereign God who is active and involved in human affairs and is in control of the universe. It is important to know that God has not abandoned us to sin and evil but is aiding humankind and providing a way out through the sacrifice of his Son

Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit to gain victories over sin and Satan. It is important to know that God has a remnant people throughout history who remain faithful and loyal to him. The Old and New Testaments are full of these remnants who are faithful to God no matter the cost. There is an on-going process of sifting and cleansing to separate the faithful from the unfaithful within the historical Remnant. In the end, this faithful Remnant will become visible and be joined by others who accepted the call to "come out" from fallen churches and religions. They will become the eschatological Remnant (Rodriguez n.d., 13). The next important thing is to understand the Three Angels' messages in Revelation 14 and proclaim them. Adventists understand that the core of their message as a church is found in Revelation 14:6-12. The first angel's message is anchored in the "everlasting gospel," first proclaimed in Genesis 3:15 and repeated in a heart-felt declaration in John 3:16. We can see this kind of understanding permeate the book of Revelation. It is with this understanding that the message of the first angel is given: (1) fear God and give him glory, (2) the hour of God's judgment has come, and (3) worship the Creator. The second angel's message is a message of judgment: (1) Babylon is fallen. The third angel's message is: (1) whoever worships the beast and its image will receive a mark on the forehead and the hand, (2) they will receive the seven last plagues, and (3) they will burn in hell. It is good news that God is at work for the salvation of humankind from the beginning until the end of the earth's history. He always warns of the impending judgment and provides the way out. In the last day events, God will provide a way to come out of "Babylon," the entity that represents all the deceptions of Satan (Rev 18:4). God also gives the assurance that there will be justice and vindication for all the saints throughout history who suffered and yet remained loyal to God (Donkor, Gallusz,

and Mueller 2021, 22).

Planting Missional Churches

Plant missional churches for the secularized people. Many parts of the world have shifted towards the secularization process. The world can no longer be called "Christendom" because Christianity is no longer the dominant religion. Generations of children of Christians are leaving Christianity or no longer practicing it. The Philippines is the only Christian country in Asia, but it is also on a continuum with secularism. It is not as secular as the Western type of secularism, but it has started its march facing that direction. How do we then respond to the challenges of secularism? First, similar to what the church in the West faced in the late 1990s, we need to come back to the table and reclaim who we are as a church. Our understanding of our identity and purpose as a church will be crucial to our survival and growth. In terms of mission, Lesslie Newbigin challenged theologians and missiologists in the 1970s, "a church that is not a church in mission is not a church at all." He called the Western church to face the challenge of its radical secularization. As a result, theologians looked at the nature and purpose of the church to identify its "missionary nature" (Guder 2015, 9). God is by nature a missionary God; he is a sending God; therefore, his church is "God's sent people." In obedience to our missionary God, the church must understand and commit to its call and mandate to be the servant and instrument of God's mission. This understanding is the focal point of the church's purpose and action (2015, 81). It defines the missional existence of the church. It is no longer a case of having "a church with a mission" but having "a missional church." Once understood in the theological and foundational sense, strategy and innovation will become its by-product. Here are some steps which can help build a

missional church:

a. Create a culture of missions.

b. Define your mission statement and strategies to reflect missional values.

c. Redefine success to reflect missional values.

d. Innovate and Create New Strategies and Methods for Reaching Secularized People.

e. Invite the secularized people to your church or group meetings designed especially for the secularized people.

f. Share personal testimony.

g. Model incarnational ministry to the leaders and members.

h. Discover and develop the spiritual gifts of the new members and then integrate them into the ministries of the church.

i. Evangelism is a whole year-round activity and not just a single event. It is an Discover and develop the spiritual gifts of the new members and then integrate them into the ministries of the church.

j. Evangelism is a whole year-round activity and not just a single event. It is an on-going process. Use relational evangelism.

k. Develop a good relationship with the community. Create points of contact with the community by lending help with community problems.

l. Empower your members by giving them tangible ways to get involved with the community and mission projects.

Table 8 summarizes the suggested twelve effective urban ministry strategies for reaching the secularized people of Metro Manila. The strategies were gathered from the

interviews of secularized participants and Urban Ministry Practitioners; from

observations in their places of worship; from documents analysis which includes their

plans, programs as well as recorded worships online; and, documentary research on

theological-missiological foundations on how to reach the secularized people with the

Gospel.

Table 8. Effective Urban Ministry Strategy for Secularized People in Metro Manila

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into three significant sections. The first section summarizes the findings of this study. The second section presents the conclusions of the study based on the results derived from the analyzed data. The last section focuses on the recommendations for future action and further studies.

Summary

Secularization is fast overtaking our cities. It is no longer a Western phenomenon because it is also on the rise in Asia. Secularism permeates our educational system, country's governance, and way of life. People become secular when urbanization is fueled by materialism. It takes its roots down to our worldview, and as a result, people are changed.

Furthermore, it directly impacts how we view and respond to religion and God. Additionally, there are different levels of secularity. It begs the question, what type of secularism does the secularized *Manileños* have? We must understand so that the Adventist Church can respond with effective approaches to reach them with the Gospel.

Consequently, this qualitative study was conducted first to understand the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños*. Then the following reason is to know what attracts and retains them to the Adventist Church. The next reason is to know what

prevents them from coming near an Adventist Church. The last reason is to arrive at effective approaches to reaching them with the Gospel. Using a qualitative case study research design with purposive and snowball sampling, I selected 22 participants for in-depth interviews divided into two groups, the secularized non-Adventists (SNSDA) and the group of secularized Adventists (SSDA). There are also 8 UMP participants I selected for the two FGDs I conducted. The transcribed interviews, observation of their worship programs and places of worship (face-to-face and through zoom meetings), and ministry documents provided by the pastors and the conference leaders provided valuable data for this study.

Chapter 2 explored the theory of secularism and secularization and the principles of missions. Important biblical principles on the *Messio Dei*, the different types of grace and their functions, Three Angels' Messages, urban ministry, and discipleship were also discussed in this chapter. Chapter 2 also answered Research Question 1.

Chapter 3 discussed the methodology and explained the strategies for establishing the study's rigor. It also explained the study's purpose and the research methodology that was applied.

Chapter 4 discussed the answers to research question two to research question four. It described the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños.* It discussed the factors that attract the secularized people. It also discussed the factors for the retention of the secularized people in the Adventist Church.

In response to Research Question 2, chapter four provided a thick description of the characteristics of the secularized *Manileños.* Twenty-four characteristics were drawn from the data. With the aid of this list and the pre-interview and post-interview

observations, the secularized *Manileños* were put on Rainer's Spectrum of Receptivity to the Gospel. They are graphed and found to be between the U1 to U3 scale, which means that they are found between the "receptive or open to the Gospel" and the "indifferent or neutral" spectrum. The secularized Manileños are not found on the opposite end of the spectrum (U5), meaning they are not resistant or hostile to religion yet.

Interestingly, it was found that secularized people go through phases of **life encounters** (**encounters with God**, **encounters with Christians**, **encounters with tragedies**, and **encounters with persons of influence**) where the Spirit of God uses their **life encounters** as "attracting and deciding factors" to get them ready for relationships and experiences with Christians and the church. This is how God works in the secularized people's lives before they make connections to the church. This has been described more clearly in chapter four (figure 7 and 8).

In response to Research Question 3, chapter four explored the **factors that attract secularized people to the Adventist Church**. Thirteen factors were identified and grouped into three themes: **relational factors**, **experiences in the Adventist Church**, and **unique Adventist features**. Relational factors consist of (1) members are welcoming, hospitable, and non-judgmental, (2) authenticity, and (3) belongingness or community. Factors from the church experiences consist of (1) experiencing care group, (2) attending the church, (3) Involving and participating in community programs, (4) having a pastor who is kind, open, and leads by example, (5) participating in prayer ministry, and (6) getting exposed in the spirituality of members. The unique Adventist features consist of (1) distinctive SDA Bible studies, (2) an Urban Ministry program, and (3) health and holistic programs.

In response to Research Question 4, chapter four explored the **factors that retain the secularized to the Adventist Church**. Twenty-four **faith builders** were identified and grouped into **personal factors and church factors**. The personal factors have four themes: (1) engaging in spiritual disciplines, (2) living an obedient life, (3) sharing the Gospel, and (4) remaining committed to Jesus. The following themes were identified in the church factor group: (1) relational evangelism, (2) care group discipleship, and (3) missional and creative church. As a result of the findings mentioned above, another theme emerged—factors why the secularized people leave the Adventist Church. Fifteen factors were identified. This theme validates the findings for the "factors why the secularized remain in the Adventist Church." It also gives us a glimpse into the thinking and feeling of the secularized and why they leave the Adventist Church after their baptism. There are nine personal factors why the secularized leave, they are: (1) infrequent prayer habit, (2) busy life, (3) not reading the Bible regularly, (4) struggling with sin and temptation, (5) working/breaking the Sabbath, (6) not attending church, (7) losing connection with God, (8) not well acquainted with the Spirit of Prophecy, (9) not watching/listening to religious programs. On the factors contributed by the church and church members, six factors were drawn from the data, namely: (10) formalism, (11) no mentoring or discipleship framework, (12) lack of acceptance and understanding from Adventists, (13) losing family and friends, (14) divided over music/persecution, (15) no niched, no community. These fifteen factors can be reversed or prevented. We can reduce the attrition of secularized leaving the church by addressing them in our strategic plans for the churches.

Chapter 5 discussed the barriers to reaching the secularized *Manileños* and what are the practices and approaches used by urban ministry practitioners in Metro Manila. These findings identified the most effective strategies to reach the secularized people in Metro Manila.

In response to Research Question 5, chapter five explored the barriers to reaching the secularized *Manileños*. The internal barriers consist of (1) traditional Adventists are not open to ministry to the secularized people; (2) Adventist presentation of the message is not appealing to the secularized people; (3) Adventists do not know how to reach out to secularized people; (4) many Adventist Churches have "no discipleship framework" for secularized people, and (5) Adventists are focused on "big religious events." These six factors contribute to the slow growth rate of the Adventist Church's work among the secularized people from within. Additional insights from the secularized non-Adventists were discussed in chapter five on why they have negative attitudes toward religion and Christianity. From these insights, six factors were identified. The top two on the list are having a judgmental attitude and hypocrisy.

In response to Research Question 6, chapter five also identified the most effective ministry strategies for reaching the secularized people in Metro Manila. Ten good practices and approaches used by the UMPs in their ministry to the secularized people were identified. It was found that despite the challenges and substantial barriers to the conversion of the secularized *Manileños* to Adventism, it is possible to lead them to Christ. It was also revealed that the traditional evangelism strategies do not work with them. Instead, the **relational evangelism approach** works better rooted in a **good discipleship framework**. It was also discovered that no single strategy is effective, but

multiple approaches to **creative ministries** are needed. Chapter 5 also answered

Research Question six and combined all the findings into a proposed twelve strategies

addressing the need to reach secularized people with the Gospel effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Metro Manila comprises sixteen secular cities which are home to around

twenty million people (Metro Manila Population 2019). These cities are increasingly

becoming more secular (Rhoderick Abellanosa 2013, 548; Ines San Martin 2015, para.

7). Urbanization and secularization breed materialism and disinterest in religion. The

secularized people are fast becoming resistant to the Gospel due to the secularizing effect

of the city. Traditional evangelism no longer attracts the people in the cities (Finley 1993,

16), and many pastors are ill-equipped or not trained to minister in this context (Ray

Bakke 1999, 229). There is a great need for effective approaches for ministry to

secularized people.

2. External and internal barriers exist to reaching the secularized people with the

Gospel. The ministry for the unreached secularized people has been slow-going because

not every Adventist is open to doing ministry for them. There is a prevailing mindset that

dealing with secularized people is dealing with worldliness and our reaction as Adventists

is to keep our distance. The internal barriers which were identified emanate from the lack

of knowledge and understanding of secularism and a lack of ministry preparation for the

pastors and church planters. We can learn from the secularized non-Adventist (SNSDA)

participants, who identified six barriers (hypocrisy, judgmental attitude, style of worship,

extreme and devout people, pressure to convert, pressure to donate or give offerings) that put them off Christianity and its followers. These barriers should be addressed in our strategies.

3.   The secularized people respond more positively to relational evangelism. The traditional approach of evangelism does not work for them. Big evangelistic campaigns do not draw them in. They respond better to friendship. Building good and authentic relationships and offering belongingness in a faith community attracts them to the church. When the Adventist Church has church members who show love for one another and treat each other like their family, the secularized people want to experience this love.

4.   Providing a positive experience for the secularized in the church through the care group, community programs, ministries of the church, spirituality, and the transformational leadership of the pastor attract secularized to the Adventist Church.

5.   Discipleship is a critical factor in the attraction and retention of the secularized people. The care groups provide the relational environment they need for spiritual growth and missions. The nurturing program must be intentional to address the growing needs of infants in the faith to mature them into disciples who will also disciple others.

6.   Building good biblical foundations is necessary for secularized people who do not know much about the Bible. The distinctive doctrines of the Adventist Church, especially the Great Controversy, the three angels' messages, and the remnant identity, are unique biblical teachings that help the secularized people to understand life's issues. These doctrines also give a holistic understanding of why Adventists must prepare spiritually, mentally, and physically for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

7. Using multiple approaches or creative ministries in urban ministry is essential. Research on the context of the selected target group is necessary. Sensitivity to context must be adopted. Designing an approach fitted for them is imperative. The UMP participants have varying ministry approaches; some evolved from slightly traditional to a more secularly sensitive ministry, and some started from completely secular-oriented church plants. These are good practices that should be continued.

8. Fifteen factors were identified as to why the secularized people left the Adventist Church. It also gives us a glimpse into the thinking and feeling of the secularized and why they leave the Adventist Church after their baptism. On the other hand, it has been found that these factors why they leave validate the factors why they remain in the Adventist Church. Therefore, these fifteen factors why they leave can be reversed or prevented simply by ensuring that the secularized Adventists do the opposite. We can also reduce the attrition of secularized Adventists leaving the church by addressing them in our strategic plans.

9. The condition in which the Adventist Church finds itself in Metro Manila is promising. The conference and practitioners are slowly addressing the internal barriers to reaching the secularized *Manileños*. There is ongoing education and orientation in urban ministry for pastors and practitioners.

10. The proposed twelve strategies will help sharpen the focus on the ministry to the secularized people and enhance the work among the secularized.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Church/Conference Leaders

1. Plant more churches for the secularized *Manileños.* Allocate more funds to church planting in urban cities.

2. Assign more creative church planters for Urban ministry projects with long-term plans in mind. The ministry with the secularized people takes more time than with people from a traditional Christian background. The assigned workers need to commit to longer terms.

3. Provide mentorship to urban ministry workers. It is vital to provide a conducive work atmosphere where the workers assigned to secularized people feel supported and given room to experiment. However, they should also be accountable to the leaders of the church.

4. Provide more training for secular and post-modern people ministry.

Recommendations for Pastors and Local Church Elders

1. If you are thinking of starting a church plant among the secularized *Manileños*, research your context and target people group to understand best what type of ministry approach best fits them.

2. Intensify your church's discipleship program. Study the composition of your church membership and identify if you have secularized Adventists among your members. Include in your strategic plans how you can grow them into mature Christians and utilize them in the church's missions.

3. Strengthen and develop the relationship of the church members and utilize relational evangelism for the secularized people.

4. Be creative in your church ministries. The principles of evangelism are the same, but the approaches change with time. Good research will tell you the needs of the secularized around you, and then you can formulate how you can answer these needs.

5. Multiply and train multipliers. You cannot do the work alone. Follow the example that Jesus gave in choosing and training the disciples. Choose a few, then let these few do the same.

6. Mobilize and set up the care groups to be the unit that provides not only filial feelings but also where spiritual growth and missions happen.

Recommendations for Church Members

1. Grow spiritually. Adventists have so much knowledge but lack the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control). Our particular need is to love God and love our fellow men.

2. Grow in missions. Get involved. Build relationships. Build genuine and authentic friendships with the secularized people and let them get to know Jesus Christ through you and your life. Be the mirror, the light, the salt, the leaven that influences and shows them the wonderful Savior you serve.

3. Look for opportunities where you can engage with the secularized people.

4. Be willing to open your life and your home to the secularized people. They will want to see how you live your Christianity, whether it is genuine or fake.

5. Attend seminars where you can learn how to reach out to secularized people.

Recommendations for Further Studies

This study has not exhausted every angle and every question on the ministry to the secularized people. Thus, in order to boost and propagate the ministry for the secularized people in Metro Manila, further studies are needed.

1. Conduct a historical documentary on urban ministry in Metro Manila and archive documents showing its progression.

2. Conduct a study in a broader population of the secularized *Manileños* to determine the general characteristics of this people group to design a more appropriate approach for them.

3. Conduct a study on retention of the secularized Adventists in the urban church plants to uncover the reasons for their retention.

4. Conduct a focused study on the impact of assigning creative UMPs and their long-term assignment to the success of the urban mission to the secularized *Manileños.*

5. Conduct a study focused on the discipleship of secularized *Manileños*.

6. Conduct a study on mission endeavors across different denominations in Metro Manila to discover the challenges and best practices and compare them with what was discovered in this study.

APPENDIX A

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am conducting a research study as part of my dissertation project, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for my Doctor of Missiology at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Research Title: "Understanding Secularized People of Metro Manila: A Basis for a Contextualized Urban Ministry Strategy."

Purpose of Study: I have been informed that the researcher will conduct interviews and focus group discussions for the purpose of gathering information on the socio-cultural significance of secularized people of Metro Manila.

Duration of participation in the study: I understand that I will be required to answer some questions which will take one hour or more of my time.

Benefits: The successful completion of this research may contribute to a better understanding of secularized people of Metro Manila.

Risks: I have been informed that there are no physical, psychological, emotional, or social risks to my involvement or participation in this study.
Voluntary Participation: I have been informed that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I am aware that there will be no penalty or loss of benefits. Further, I am entitled, if I decide, to cancel my participation in this study without any penalty. Furthermore, I understand that there will be no cost to me for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: I understand that the information I have given will be used only for the said purpose disclosed to me and that my identity in this study will not be disclosed in any published document. I also understand that the researcher will keep the records safe and secured from the reach of any person.

Contact: I am aware that I can contact the researcher's supervisor Lester Merklin (Department of World Missions, Theological Seminary, Andrews University Berrien Springs, MI 49104 USA, 269-471-6915), with email address: lmerklin@andrews.edu, or the researcher himself at 0977-309-8625, with email address: maidizon@hotmail.com, for answers to questions related to this study.

I have read the contents of this Consent and received verbal explanations to questions I had. My questions concerning this study have been answered satisfactorily. I hereby 22 give my voluntary consent to participate in this study. I am fully aware that if I have any additional questions I can contact Ermela T. Dizon, or her advisor.

_____ _____ _____
Name   Signature (Participants)   Date

ERMELA T. DIZON_____   _+63-977-309-8625_____ _____
Researcher /Signature   Phone   Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL PACKET

UNDERSTANDING SECULARIZED PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA: A BASIS FOR
A CONTEXTUALIZED URBAN MINISTRY STRATEGY
Researcher: Ermela (Maila) T. Dizon
Contact: maidizon@hotmail; 0977-309-8625

Objectives

The purpose of this study is (1) to explore the factors that influence secularized people to join and remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and (2) to develop urban ministry strategies to reach other secularized persons based on the findings of this research. To accomplish this purpose, this research will specifically answer the following questions: (1) What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila? (2) What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church? (3) What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? (4) What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?

My Working Definition

Secularism. It refers to the belief system or philosophy that rejects religion, a worldview that separates God and this life and the spiritual reality. Secularism has a spectrum, the degree varies from one society to another (Hans Weerstra 1997, 5). Metro Manila has its own brand of secularity (Kleber Gonçalves 2013, 123) different from New York, or Tokyo, since its society is highly influenced by Catholicism yet increasingly secular (Rhoderick Abellanosa 2013, 548; Ines San Martin 2015, para. 7).

Secularized Person. A person who essentially rejects religious faith and worship because he/she essentially believes, and lives life accordingly, as if there is no God, or if there is a God, that He has nothing basic to do with life here as we know it (Weerstra 1997, 5; Yazid et al. 2014, 394). Many of them "may not deny the existence of God" but are liable to think that "human being has no need of God" and religion. Their attitudes toward the church range from "indifference to antagonism." (Yazid, et al. 2014, 394; Michele Buonfiglio 1995, 3).

SECULARIZING EFFECT ON CHRISTIANITY

POST-MODERNIZATION   PLURALISM   SECULAR WORLDVIEW

| ULTRA RELIGIOUS | VERY RELIGIOUS | SOMEWHAT RELIGIOUS | AMBIVALENT/ THE NONES/ LIMINARS | SOMEWHAT SECULAR | VERY SECULAR | ULTRA SECULAR |
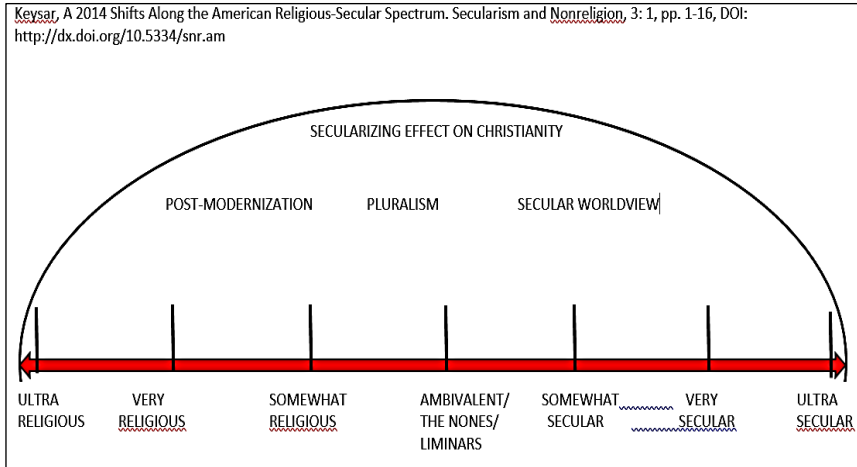
Characteristics of Secularized Person

(Adopted from Barna, George and David Kinnaman. 2014, 127. *Churchless: Understanding Today's Unchurched and How to Connect with Them.* Austin, Texas: Tyndale Momentum).

1. Does not believe in God or thinks God has nothing to do with his/her life;
2. Identify himself as atheist or agnostic or with no religion;
3. He disagrees that faith is important in his life;
4. He is indifferent to religion or antagonistic toward any religion or church;
5. He has not prayed to God (for a long time, if ever);
6. He has never made a commitment to Jesus;
7. He does not understand the deity of Jesus or believes that Jesus is just a highly moral man;
8. He is highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented;
9. He disagrees that the Bible is accurate in the principles it teaches;
10. He has not attended a Christian church (in the last year, if ever);
11. He has not read the Bible (in the last year, if ever);
12. He has not attended religious gathering (in the last year, if ever) (Religious gathering may be regular worship service, weddings, burial, Christmas, thanksgiving).

Research Participants

In-depth Interview for Individuals
The age group of the secularized people is from eighteen to thirty-five years old (young adults). This is the boundary of this research (Johnson 2018a, location 2695).

The following criteria will guide the researcher in the selection of the *secularized non-Adventist participants*: He or she must (a) have *lived in Metro Manila for at least 3-5 to five years* (b) He or she must possess at least *one or more characteristics* of *a secularized person* (Adapted from Barna and Kinnaman's List) (c) He or she must be willing to participate in the study. Six to eight secularized non-Adventist participants will be interviewed for this research.

The following criteria will guide the researcher in the selection of the *secularized Adventist participants*: (a) He or she must have *lived in Metro Manila for at least 3-5 years*. (b) He or she *must be a baptized Adventist and a member of the SDA church for less than 3 years*. (c) He or she used to be without religious commitments or spiritual interests. (d) He or she must be willing to participate in the study. Six to eight secularized Adventist participants will be interviewed for this research.

Focus Group Interview

Six to eight Adventist urban ministry practitioner participants will be interviewed for Focus Group. The participants will be divided into two groups: younger urban ministry workers (20–40 years old) and older urban ministry workers (41-65 years old). The following criteria will guide the researcher in *the selection of the Adventist urban ministry practitioners*: he or she (a) *has served in Metro Manila for at least 2-3 years as an urban ministry practitioner*, (b) he or she must have *led to Christ at least 2 secularized persons*, (c) he or she must be willing to participate in the study.

Observation

This research will also collect data through observation. The researcher will also visit and observe the selected practitioners in their ministry location. The observation guide (Spradley's work revised by Dr. Rosario) will be followed based on the nine elements: space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal, and feelings.

Document analysis
The researcher will analyze documents including denominational policies and handbooks, committee minutes, workers' reports, seminar materials, and the likes – related to urban ministry work of CLC.

APPENDIX C

FAITH STAGES TABLES

Table 9. Faith stages of secularized non-Adventist

PARTICIPANT'S CODE	SECULAR CHARACTERISTIC Based on Barna and Kinnaman's List (2014)	UN-CHURCHED	SCORES	INTERPRETATION
SNSDA 01	#4 Indifferent to religion #6 Has never made a commitment to Jesus #7 Does not understand the deity of Jesus #8 Highly materialistic	U1	35	Highly Receptive
SNSDA 02	#9 Disagrees that the Bible is accurate	U3	24	Neutral, non-commital
SNSDA 03	#11 has not read the Bible in the last year	U2	32	Highly receptive
SNSDA 04	#2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 Identifies self as agnostic, indifferent to religion, does not understand the deity of Jesus, believes that Jesus is just a highly moral man, disagrees that the Bible is accurate, has not attended a Christian church in the last year, has not read the Bible, has not attended religious gathering	U5	9	Antagonistic, Resistant
SNSDA 05	#11,12 Has not read the Bible, has not attended religious gathering in 3 yrs	U2	29	Receptive
SNSDA 06	#8 Highly materialistic vs religiously oriented	U2	31	Receptive
SNSDA 07	#5, 11 Has not prayed to God for a long time (before) Has not read the Bible for a long time	U1	37	Highly receptive
SNSDA 08	#6, 11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, has not read the Bible in the last year.	U3	24	Neutral, noncommittal

SNSDA 09	#6, 10, 11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, has not attended a Christian church for years, has not read the Bible	U3	27	Neutral, noncommittal
SNSDA 10	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time	U2	31	Receptive
SNSDA 11	#6,9,11 Has never made a commitment to Jesus, disagrees that the Bible is accurate in the principles it teaches, has not read the Bible	U3	25	Neutral, noncommittal
SNSDA 12	#11 Has not read the bible in the last year	U2	32	Receptive

Table 10. Faith stages of secularized Adventist

PARTICIPANT'S CODE	SECULAR CHARACTERISTIC Based on Barna and Kinnaman's List (2014)	FORMERLY UNCHURCHED	SCORES	INTERPRETATION
SSDA13	#5, 10, 11 has not prayed to God for a long time, has not read the Bible	U3, Neutral, non-committal	39	Highly Receptive
SSDA14	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time #5 has not prayed for a long time	U3, Neutral, non-committal	38	Highly Receptive
SSDA15	#5, 10 Has not prayed to God for a long time, has not attended a Christian church for a long time	U3, Neutral, non-committal	39	Highly Receptive
SSDA16	#10, 11 Has not attended a Christian church for a year before becoming an SDA, has not read the Bible for a year before becoming acquainted with SDA's	U3, Neutral, non-committal	37	Highly Receptive
SSDA17	#5, 11 has not prayed to God for a long time, has not read the Bible	U3, Neutral, non-committal	38	Highly Receptive
SSDA18	#8,10,11 Highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not attended a Christian church for years, not read the Bible for years	U3, Neutral, non-committal	38	Highly Receptive
SSDA19	#8, 11 highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not read the Bible for a long time	U3, Neutral, non-committal	36	Highly Receptive
SSDA20	#11 has not read the Bible for a long time	U3, Neutral, non-committal	39	Highly Receptive
SSDA 21	#8, 11 highly materialistic vs. spiritually-oriented, has not read the Bible for a long time	U4, Resistant	38	Highly Receptive

| SSDA 22 | #10-12, not attended a Christian Church, not read the Bible, not attended religious gathering | U3, Neutral, non-committal | 38 | Highly Receptive |

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION NOTES

For Secularized Participants

1. SNSDA 01 (Face-to-face Interview)

SNSDA 01 seemed honest with his answers, actually, too honest sometimes. But I think he was able to express himself quite well, since, I guess, religion is also one topic that he's open to talk about. I think he also enjoyed participating in the interview, like he got to know himself better after the interview.

2. SNSDA 02 (face to face interview)

SNSDA 02 is the twin of SNSDA 01. They are grown sons of the newly SDA convert _____. He went to catholic schools from elementary to college. He has an outgoing personality. In his interview he was very comfortable and outspoken. He had some issues with being left to his grandma at a young age by his parents, though the interviewer did not pursue the topic. He is happy and accepting about his mother's new-found religion. He has a positive image about the Adventists from his mom's church. He respects the pastor and accepts bible studies with him. He is very worldly, has a very secular approach to religion. He loves his girlfriend, who influences him to attend evangelical church. He admitted to some radical views about religion that he has not admitted to anyone else.

3. SNSDA 03 (Face-to-face Interview)

SNSDA 03 seemed comfortable with the interview. I think she was also open and honest with her answers. I didn't see any defensive reply or reaction or anything like that. I think she was genuine with all her answers. It was an OK interview with her.

4. SNSDA 04 (Face-to-face Interview)

My interview with SNSDA 04 almost did not push through because her parents wouldn't allow her out, since the Covid-19 lockdown was about to be pronounced during that time. But thankfully, they allowed her somewhere nearby.

SNSDA 04 was a quiet type of person, but she gave her full participation during the interview. I think she was just willing to help. She was very open to talk about her beliefs and personal experiences. I think she was also comfortable with the questions, and I think she gave all her honest answers to them, no defensiveness or anything like that.

I wanted to give her the Great Controversy book as a token after our interview but she politely refused, saying that she just don't want to have anything to do really with religion. Thankfully, I also had this little book about families with me, she accepted that one.

5. SNSDA 05 (face to face interview)

SNSDA 05 is from Batangas. She has the quiet confidence of a career woman. She is not a practicing catholic. She does not go to church nor read the Bible. She admits that she is materialistic and is focused on work and having a good time. She has been honest in her answer but the researcher did not sense any curiosity about faith and spirituality.

6. SNSDA 06 (face to face interview)

SNSDA 06 is a shy but inquisitive newly graduate from college. She is an intern in the bank where she met the Adventist who referred her for interview. She did not fully understand where she was invited to (the interview) and the researcher had to give her an orientation. Being the first participant, an adjustment was made by the researcher, SNSDA 06 was shown the research information usually given to the gatekeepers, particularly on the page where the characteristics of the secularized were listed. The researcher asked her to choose among the listed traits describes her. She identified four. So, it was confirmed that she is qualified to take part in the research. The researcher then added showing this list to interviewees in the orientation and it helped remarkably in transitioning into the interview. It also helped the interviewee to calm down, probably assuring them that being identified as secular is not a negative thing. Going back to SNSDA 06, she is a modern catholic, open to other religion, very prayerful. She does not understand the difference between a protestant and a catholic.

7. SNSDA 07 (Phone Interview)

SNSDA 07 expressed herself well during the interview. I think religion is one of her favorite subjects to talk about since, I think, she's a sincere seeker. She seemed very comfortable and honest with her answers. She actually gave me other non-SDA contacts to interview.

8. SNSDA 08 (Phone Interview)

I felt that there were instances during the interview that SNSDA 08 was not so comfortable. I don't know if it's just her personality. Or maybe she just agreed with the interview because she couldn't say no to my referral. I'm not sure. But overall, I think she gave honest answers. Her voice was just so low, like there were times I felt like she was almost whispering. Maybe she just doesn't want anyone around the house to hear what she's saying. I think there are personal issues as well, that she, of course, could not mention, that's why she could not fully express her answers to some of the questions, I think.

9. SNSDA 09 (Phone Interview)

SNSDA 09 is gay, a transgender, I think. I believe he mentioned it in the interview. He was quite expressive with his answers. He was very comfortable. There were times I felt like it's a beauty pageant Question and Answer portion. ☺ He thinks and answers fast. And his answers are quite interesting. I could sense that he was sincere with all of his answers.

10. SNSDA 10 (Phone Interview)

SNSDA 10 seemed comfortable enough with the phone interview. Although I know it would have been a lot better if it's a personal interview. But she was okay. I could notice that she might actually be talkative, it's just that the interview set up did not allow for much expression. There were some inhibitions I guess because she doesn't know me, she doesn't see me, things like that. But I think she was open and honest with her answers.

11. SNSDA 11 (Phone Interview)

SNSDA 11 expressed her answers quite well. She was also more of a silent type of person but I think she was comfortable with the interview. She did not give much elaborate answers. Her answers are more direct to the point but insightful still. I don't know if this would be helpful, since she did not speak about it in the interview, although she somehow brought up the subject in general, but she's a lesbian, I think. Because that's what my friend (her aunt) told me. My friend said that she just doesn't admit it, but she has a girlfriend. I just included it here just in case it would matter for the research.

12. SNSDA 12 (Phone Interview)

SNSDA 12 was okay. She was comfortable with the interview. She was not nervous or anything. I think she was also honest with her answers. She answered the questions sincerely. I did not notice any contradictions or anything like that.

For Secularized SDA Participants

13. SSDA 13 (face to face interview)

SSDA 13 is a paradox. She is very much a modern woman with the way she looks, acts, and dresses. But she is also conservative in her personal values, she is very private about herself, and she admits to being a stickler for schedules and routines. She was excited to share about her conversion story. She is a seeker of truth. Her happiness is real with her new-found faith. She was comfortable during the interview and very honest. She was also spontaneous in relating her story.

14. SSDA 14 (Phone Interview)

SSDA 14 specifically asked for the questions before we had our interview. I guess so that he can be prepared with his answers. We scheduled a face-to-face interview but the lockdown was announced so we opted instead for a phone interview, since I noticed that he would be uneasy with a video call. Even with the phone interview, I noticed that he was somewhat uncomfortable at first, but as we went along he began to feel comfortable sharing his experiences. I think he's been honest and open with his answers. He shared about his struggles, the fact that he's gay and all. He was actually one interviewee that was so thankful at the end of our conversation and said that the interview was a blessing to him.

15. SSDA 15 (Phone Interview)

SSDA 15 seemed honest about all her answers. She becomes emotional at times especially when she talks about her family's salvation and her particular experience with an answered prayer. She also seemed comfortable in answering the questions. Overall I think she gave a genuine account of her conversion story and everything she related.

16. SSDA 16 (Personal and Phone Interview)

SSDA 16 seemed somewhat uncomfortable in answering the questions especially during our face to face interview. But I think she tried to answer as best as she could, though I find some of her answers vague and off beat at times. She somehow had difficulty explaining herself. I think that she was vague about some of her answers because they relate to some personal things which, I guess, she felt she should not disclose.

17. SSDA 17 (Phone Interview)

SSDA 17 felt nervous all throughout the interview. She admitted it. I realized that was why she was always saying the word "ano" to replace certain words in most of her sentences. But I'm glad that she went on with the interview despite her nervousness. She was not comfortable but I think she's been honest with all her answers.

18. SSDA 18 (Face-to-Face Interview)

SSDA 18 was very comfortable in answering all the questions. She also seemed honest about all her answers. She talked a lot during the interview. I think it was helpful that it was a face-to-face interview. She might not be as open if it was done over the phone. It was not actually a scheduled interview with her. I just went to ____ church that Sabbath before the lockdown to find if there's anyone I can interview, since I had a schedule in the afternoon at Punta, which did not happen because the church was closed when I went there. Anyway, I'm just glad that SSDA 18 was willing to participate in an interview like that.

19. SSDA 19 (Phone Interview)

SSDA 19 was not speaking that much (at least not as much as the others) during the interview. I'm thinking part of the reason is that he's a guy, and I noticed that the guys are not comfortable with phone interviews. I had some cancelled, some declined, some just wrote his answers, and so on. The bottom line is, they're just not comfortable talking about something personal over the phone with someone they do not know. So I'm thankful that SSDA 19 still obliged, and I think he did his best. There are just certain portions that I think he was not being so honest about, because I noticed that there were some contradictions with his answers. He was not also explaining his answers that much. Some of his answers are just one liners with no further explanations. But overall, I think his answers would still be a lot of help for the research.

20. SSDA 20 (Phone Interview)

SSDA 20 was also comfortable with the interview. She was very open to share her experiences, and I think, honest with her answers. I did not notice anything questionable about her answers and the way she delivered them. She's also from Grow Community, and her answers are along the line with other Grow people I interviewed, when it comes to their experiences with the community and all. SSDA 20 was also very accommodating. She gave me time although she was working from home because of the lockdown.

21. SSDA 21 (face to face interview)

SSDA 21 is a new convert to the Adventist Church. It took her five years of friendship to the church members and the family of Pastor _____ before she was open to making a commitment to Christ through baptism. She is very enthusiastic about her faith. She was living the high life before becoming an Adventist. She was very open and spontaneous about her conversion story.

22. SSDA 22 (face to face interview)

SSDA 22 is forty-two years old and very enthusiastic about his new-found faith. He is a divorcee and is in a relationship with an Adventist nurse stationed in _____ Saudi Arabia. The girlfriend has a brother who is a pastor in the US, but she has not been going to church in Saudi for several years. You could say that she led SSDA 22 to look for the truth in the Adventist Church, and SSDA 22 lead her to re-examine her faith and attend church again. SSDA 22 is now one of the elders in _____ Church. He has plan to go back to Mindanao and build a church there for the mountain people. He is very happy in his new-found faith. He is just beginning to involve his children in the church. He said that even if he does not end up with his current girlfriend he is forever grateful that God used her to lead him to the Adventist Church.

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction: Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of this interview. Read and explain the informed consent form and ask the respondent to sign it before proceeding with the interview. Ask the participant for a short personal information list. Verify the secularity of the participant by asking him/her to check the characteristics that describe him/her from the Barna and Kinnaman List. Ask permission to record the interview.

Table 11. In-depth interview Guide

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	
SECULAR NON-SDA	SECULAR SDA
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?
2.1. What do you think about when you hear the word RELIGION? Should all religions be equal? Should there be a separation of church and state? Are all religions the same?	3.1. How long have you been a member of this church?
	3.2. What motivates you to remain a member of the SDA church?
2.2. What do you think about when you hear the word CHRISTIAN? Do you consider yourself a CHRISTIAN? Do you belong to any church? If yes, how long have you been a member of your church? (If you are a member of one) Why are you a member of that church? Do you consider yourself religious? How often do you go to church?	3.3. Do you consider yourself religious? Why or why not?
	3.4. What do you think of the Bible? What is the Bible to you?
	3.5. What do you think about when you hear the word PRAYER? What circumstances make you pray?
2.3. What do you think of the Bible? Do you have a Bible at home? Many people in the Philippines like to read or study the Bible, why do you think they do that?	3.6. Many people in the Philippines like to read or study the Bible, why do you think they do that?

2.4. What do you think about when you hear the word PRAYER? Do you pray? If yes, how often do you pray? What circumstances make you pray? 2.5. Do you watch or listen to religious broadcasts? Which religious broadcasts? Why do you watch/listen to them? 2.6. Have you ever attended a church other than your own church? If yes, which church? What made you attend that church? Will you ever return to that church? Why or why not? 2.7. Have you ever heard about the SDA Church? What do you think of it? Do you know any SDA? Do you have an SDA relative or friend? What do you think of him or her? What do you think of Adventists? 2.8. If you have a choice about religion, what kind of church/denomination would you like to join? 2.9. Have you ever considered joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Why or why not?	3.7. Do you watch or listen to religious broadcasts? Which religious broadcasts? Why do you watch/listen to them? 3.8. How and why did you join the SDA church? When did you first hear about the SDA Church? What did you think about it before? What do you think of it now?

Conclusion/At End of Interview: Thank the respondent for his or her time. If you have any snack or gift prepared for the respondent, this is the time to give it. If you want, you may also take a photo together with the respondent for documentation purposes. You can also tell the respondent that if there are additional questions the researcher will get in touch with him or her.

Demography & Contact Info of Secularized Non-SDA and SDA
1. Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____ Marital Status: _____
2. Highest educational attainment: _____
3. City of Residence: _____
4. Religious Affiliation: _____ Phone/Cell: _____ Email: _____
5. Current occupation (if any) _____
6. Economically speaking, do you consider your family: rich, above average, middle class, below average, poor, extremely poor? _____

7. Do you consider yourself a high-tech or techy individual? _____
8. How long have you lived in the city address you gave (number 3 question)? _____
9. Before this current address, where did you live in the last 5 years? _____
10. What kinds of values do you see yourself as having: ___traditional ___ western ___modern ___progressive ___Christian ___provincial

Table 12. Focus interview guide

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	
	Ministry Practitioner (ages 21-45)	Ministry Practitioner (ages 46-65)
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	2.1. What are the differences between urban people and rural people?	
	2.2. What do you feel when conversing with them? (Are you comfortable conversing with them?)	
	2.3. What are the difficulties you encountered in trying to reach a secular urban person? How long before they joined the Church?	
	2.4. How successful are you in reaching secular urban people? How many secular people have you baptized & retained in the last 12 months?	
	2.5. Which kinds of secular people do your converts mostly come from?	
	2.6. What do you use as an opening wedge to lead a secular person to ask for a Bible study?	
	2.7. What Bible lessons or topics do you give/teach a secular person? Where did you get your lessons?	
	2.8. What interests a secular person in the church that you pastor? What kinds of activities or programs would a secular person be interested in?	
	2.9. What kind of church would a secular person like to join?	
	2.10. What other ideas do you have to effectively reach secular people in the city?	
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to	3.1. How well do you understand secular urban people?	
	3.2. How comfortable are you to converse with the secular people?	

remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	3.3. What are the difficulties you encountered in trying to reach a secular urban person compared to rural person or to a religious urban person? 3.4. What kind of programs do you have in your church that focus on nurturing secularized SDAs? 3.5. What Bible lessons or topics do you give/teach a secular person after baptism? Where did you get your lessons? 3.6. What motivates the secular audience/persons to attend your Bible study or programs? 3.7. What interests a secular person in the church that you pastor? 3.8. What activities or programs would a secular person be interested in? Do you have this in your church? 3.9. What kind of church would a secular person like to join?
RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	4.1. What are the differences between urban people and rural people? 4.2. What are the difficulties you encountered in trying to reach a secular urban person compared to rural person or to a religious urban person? 4.3. How successful are you in reaching secular urban people? Please explain. 4.4. What do you use as an opening wedge to lead a secular person to ask for a Bible study? 4.5. What Bible lessons or topics do you give/teach a secular person? Where did you get your lessons? 4.6. What motivates the secular audience/persons to attend your Bible study or evangelistic meeting? 4.7. What interests a secular person in the church that you pastor? 4.8. How long does it take you to lead a secular person to join the SDA Church? 4.9. In your opinion, what kinds of activities or programs would a secular person be interested in?

| | 4.10. In your opinion, what kind of church would a secular person like to join?

4.11. What would it take for a secular person to change church affiliation?

4.12. What other ideas do you have to effectively reach secular people in the city? |
|---|---|

Demography: Urban Ministry Practitioner
1. Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____ Marital Status: _____
2. Highest educational attainment: _____
3. Residence: _____
4. Phone/Cell: _____ Email: _____
5. Job Description: ___District Pastor ___Church Pastor ___Church Planter ___Church Elder ___Layman
6. How long have you been in the ministry? _____
7. How long have you been assigned in Metro Manila? _____
8. Economically speaking, do you consider your family: rich, above average, middle class, below average, poor, extremely poor? _____
9. Do you consider yourself a high-tech or techy individual? _____
10. How long have you lived in the above address (number 3 question)? _____
11. Before this current address, where did you live in the last 5 years? _____
12. What kinds of values do you see yourself as having: ___ traditional/conservative ___Christian ___ western ___modern ___progressive ___provincial

TRIANGULATION MATRIX

Table 13. Triangulation matrix

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCES					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	In-Depth Interview	FGD	Documents such as strategic plans, annual plans, work plans, reports, promotions	Observation	Researcher	Literature Review on secularism, urbanization, conversion, retention, worldview change, discipleship
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	In-Depth Interview	FGD	Documents such as strategic plans, annual plans, work plans, reports, promotions	Observation	Researcher	Literature Review on secularism, urbanization, conversion, retention, worldview change, discipleship
RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	In-Depth Interview	FGD	Documents such as strategic plans, annual plans, work plans, reports, promotions	Observation	Researcher	Literature Review on secularism, urbanization, conversion, retention, worldview change, discipleship
RQ1: What are the					Researcher	Literature Review on

biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?						secularism, urbanization, conversion, retention, worldview change, discipleship

APPENDIX G

OBSERVATION GUIDE

Adapted from Spradley's (1980, 78) grand tour observation strategy, which focuses on nine elements: space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal, and feelings. Some parts of the descriptions of some of the elements were modified. Rosario (2018).

Title of the Study: UNDERSTANDING SECULARIZED PEOPLE OF METRO MANILA: A BASIS FOR A CONTEXTUALIZED URBAN MINISTRY STRATEGY

Date of Observation: March 7, 2020   Time of Observation: 10:00 AM -2:30 PM
Venue of Observation: CHURCH 1

Purpose of the Observation: To interview converted secularized Adventists and to observe the urban ministry program as it is run.

1. Space: What does the physical setting look like? Is this a common or unique type of setting? How might the setting restrict certain possible activities and interactions? How might it encourage others?

   I came in on a Sabbath. It is in one of the homes in a gated community for the rich and famous in Metro Manila (Dasmarinas Village). Coming in was daunting because of the security check at the gate. I had to wait until I was cleared by someone from the house of the host. It might put off people who are not from the village or first-time visitors. They are worshipping in the home of an Adventist lady doctor married to a non-Adventist. The home is very spacious. The main worship is done in the receiving area. They let the members of the group use a guest room for the restroom or CR. They let the group also use a formal dining area for lunch. Then in the afternoon the group separates into smaller groups using the receiving area or the patio and garden for their bible study and discussion.

2. Actor: Who are the people involved? Why are they involved? Is their presence usual or unusual? Are they related in fashion to other people present?

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At the time of my visit, the daughter of the host was the song leader accompanied in the electric guitar by a regular visitor (lady). The presider was one of the leaders of the group. The pastor was the speaker. The testimonies came from two regular members. They speak in English with a small amount of Tagalog. They told me that they have regular attendees of twenty-five every Sabbath.

3. Activity: What are the people doing? How are these activities related to each other? Are they expected or unexpected? Are they easy or skilled activities?

    The sequence of the program was expected by the regular attendees but not by visitors like me. They are not skilled activities but easy for anyone to participate in. They do not have a Sabbath school discussion and follows a different worship format. The Bible study is scheduled in the afternoon after lunch.

4. Object: What are the physical props in this particular setting? What roles do they play? How would the setting change if these objects were missing?

    Because it is inside the home there is a bit of restriction about movements. Once the program starts it is hard to go to the restroom because of the people you have to pass through. The living room is also not well-lighted inspite of the skylight in the center of the room. They have added seats from the dining area and a few monoblock chairs. There was an electric guitar. There was a projection screen and LED projector. There is also a light focused on where the participants are to stand. They have also good sound system. It will be harder to hear and concentrate on what is going on in front if they do not have these equipment.

5. Act: An act is a single event performed by the actor or actors. How common is it? Is it related to other's acts? Are other people doing similar acts?

    Singing, Bible study, Fellowshipping, Potluck, Testimonies. The things they did are also commonly done among other churches. But I think it's the spirit that's different. You really feel the spirit of worship. Like when the song leaders sing, the whole congregation sings.

6. Event: An event is a set of related activities that people carry out. How do we know when acts come together to make events? Which events are most common? Which events seem to be most important? Is it coordinated?

    Most common: sermon, singing. Most important: singing, prayer, testimonies, group Bible study. I think they are well-coordinated.

7. Time: What kinds of sequencing can be observed? Are these sequences cyclical or unique? Are they apparent or subtle? How are they linked to the physical nature of the setting? To the motives of the actor or actors?

We waited for more than thirty minutes before the singing started. When I came in and got introduced to the people there mostly the family members are around plus the pastor, the musician, and another guy. They just began to set up the worship area. It was almost 10:30 when the worship started. The worship ended just before 12noon.

They had the music part, welcoming with some reports of their activities, opening music, prayer, very short inspirational talk, two testimonies, special song, sermon by the pastor, closing. The potluck was prepared by the hosts buffet style then everyone found their seats starting from the formal dining table spilling over the receiving area. Everyone was comfortable with each other. I was the only visitor. During mealtime everyone was talking to each other. The pastor was not the center of attention. At one pm, others started to gather around their small group and proceeded to discuss about the bible lesson for that Sabbath. I was told that it revolves around the passages of Scriptures shared during the sermon. I started my interview with two persons right after lunch so I only got to observe for a few minutes how they are doing the small group discussion. I was told that they usually end around three in the afternoon if they have some outreach or activities to do or around four pm if they are not leaving the place.

8. Goal: What sorts of things are the actor or actors trying to accomplish? How are these goals present in the setting and the actions? Are they steady or do they change?

They have a worshipful environment which is relaxed and yet meaningful. They have Bible study that impacts their everyday lives. They want in-depth studying of God's Word.

9. Feelings: What sorts of emotions are being expressed by the actor or actors? How can you be sure? What sorts of feelings does this setting bring out in you?

The atmosphere of the worship and activities is like for a family. They have shown their easiness and comfort with each other. They don't feel pressured for time. The worship is not early so they sleep in and not hurry going to the meeting place. They also take time to spend in the afternoon bible study and with each other. The pacing is very relaxed and because the programs are not elaborate they are able to cover what is necessary for the discipleship growth of the group.

The two persons I interviewed seemed to be at home and expressed feelings of being at home and comfortable even though they live far away from Dasmarinas Village. I did not feel the excitement to worship though. Almost everyone came late. I feel that the group is in a rot and need a boost of energy. Perhaps they need a change of venue.

Date of Observation: March 7, 2020   Time of Observation: 9:30AM -1PM
Venue of Observation: CHURCH 2

Purpose of the Observation: To Observe what kind of religious programs does CHURCH 2 offer for the Secularized and the Young Professionals of Metro Manila.

1. Space: What does the physical setting look like? Is this a common or unique type of setting? How might the setting restrict certain possible activities and interactions? How might it encourage others?

   CHURCH 2 is meeting in _____, Makati is under renovation. I have visited the place before the pandemic. The place has a bar resto at the first floor and the event place is on the second floor. They have an elevated platform which serves as the stage. The decoration is very millennial with some framed posters on the walls and a smattering of comfortable seats around. During the Sabbath we visited. They have put chairs to accommodate six persons in a row. There were two rows. They had Gerson Santos from the General Conference as a special guest so they were expecting a crowd. They also had a table at the landing of the stairs as the reception area and then they turn it into a snack counter in between the program.

2. Actor: Who are the people involved? Why are they involved? Is their presence usual or unusual? Are they related in fashion to other people present?

   There were three song leaders accompanied by a band. The host was a well-dressed lady. The style is hosting a program not presiding in church. The guest speaker was Gerson Santos from the General Conference.

3. Activity: What are the people doing? How are these activities related to each other? Are they expected or unexpected? Are they easy or skilled activities?

   There were printed programs so the flow can be followed by the attendees. The program started with singing and then welcome. There was no Sabbath School Lesson discussion. It went straight to opening prayer and then special number before

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the guest speaker stood up. The guest spoke for 45 minutes and the program ended at around 12:30 PM.

4. Object: What are the physical props in this particular setting? What roles do they play? How would the setting change if these objects were missing?

There is an elevated one-foot high stage. Good chairs were available. There is a band playing so there is the guitar, electric organ, and a Cajon box or beat box. There were microphones stationed to the instruments and at the center of the stage. There were also tarpaulin stands on the left and right side of the stage advertising the event.

5. Act: An act is a single event performed by the actor or actors. How common is it? Is it related to other's acts? Are other people doing similar acts?

Fellowshipping was done in the hall and in the bar before the program started. There was singing, two testimonies or praise were given, then during the break there was fellowshipping again while people are getting snacks. The snacks and lunch were for free. Based on how the people acted it seems that the free snacks and lunch are usual happening. The break was short just enough to go to the toilet or eat whichever you prefer.

6. Event: An event is a set of related activities that people carry out. How do we know when acts come together to make events? Which events are most common? Which events seem to be most important? Is it coordinated?

The program is well coordinated. They have prepared for this event. The most common parts with the Adventist local churches are the congregational singing, prayer before and after the event, special music before the speaker delivers his message.

7. Time: What kinds of sequencing can be observed? Are these sequences cyclical or unique? Are they apparent or subtle? How are they linked to the physical nature of the setting? To the motives of the actor or actors?

The morning program starts at 10AM. The parts are: Fellowship –singing, testimonies, break, more singing, speaker, end of the program, free lunch for everyone. The afternoon is spent on Bible study by groups.

8. Goal: What sorts of things are the actor or actors trying to accomplish? How are these goals present in the setting and the actions? Are they steady or do they change?

God-centered worship. They want to make sure everyone experiences true corporate worship and good fellowship. The Café Life, Grow Group format has done away with the Sabbath School format. They have put their group Bible studies in the afternoon to follow a designed program for nurture and discipleship.

9. Feelings: What sorts of emotions are being expressed by the actor or actors? How can you be sure? What sorts of feelings does this setting bring out in you?

Simplicity and Sincerity. I believe that you can worship God with these uppermost in your mind. Less clutter in the mind and in the environment help you to concentrate on God. The place and the design speaks of comfort. The venue is not intended for a crowd. It gives you space in the mind and in the spirit to worship and let you reflect. These things are hard to achieve in a local church. It is not so much as the smallness or largeness of the place but if there are too many people the distraction is frequent. The whole ambiance invites you to connect with God on a deeper level.

Date of Observation: March 14, 2020   Time of Observation: 8:30 AM-1:30 PM
Venue of Observation: CHURCH 3

Purpose of the Observation: To Observe what kind of religious programs CHURCH 3 offers for the Secularized People of Metro Manila.

1. Space: What does the physical setting look like? Is this a common or unique type of setting? How might the setting restrict certain possible activities and interactions? How might it encourage others?

It was a common traditional church setting. The church building is old. The church could accommodate around 300 people so I guess not everybody knows everybody.

2. Actor: Who are the people involved? Why are they involved? Is their presence usual or unusual? Are they related in fashion to other people present?

There was a church pastor that also lives in the house adjacent to the church. There were the elders and other church members. There wasn't so many attendees when I came because they were starting to get strict about gatherings at that time due to Covid-19. Manila was actually placed under in total lockdown the following day. Usual. Yes, related.

3. Activity: What are the people doing? How are these activities related to each other? Are they expected or unexpected? Are they easy or skilled activities?

   It was the usual, more like provincial type of setting/programming. I also noticed that the responses that they're using during the Hour of Worship are from way back 10 years ago, which CLC has already replaced a couple of times. That's what I did not actually expect. But most if not all of the activities/program sequence are expected.

4. Object: What are the physical props in this particular setting? What roles do they play? How would the setting change if these objects were missing?

   Regular church equipment—piano, benches, elevated pulpit, etc.

5. Act: An act is a single event performed by the actor or actors. How common is it? Is it related to other's acts? Are other people doing similar acts?

   Very common. They were doing the same things that most traditional churches do. Yes.

6. Event: An event is a set of related activities that people carry out. How do we know when acts come together to make events? Which events are most common? Which events seem to be most important? Is it coordinated?

   Like I said, it was very traditional. The Lesson Study, I think, has been most important. Because the people participated. Many got involved in the discussion. It was more like free-flowing. It was more semi-coordinated.

7. Time: What kinds of sequencing can be observed? Are these sequences cyclical or unique? Are they apparent or subtle? How are they linked to the physical nature of the setting? To the motives of the actor or actors?

   Traditional Sabbath School followed by Hour of Worship sequence. (Singing, prayer, welcome remarks, special number, message/lesson).

8. Goal: What sorts of things are the actor or actors trying to accomplish? How are these goals present in the setting and the actions? Are they steady or do they change?

   I had the impression that it was more like the routinary/business-as-usual type. Not too deep a goal except to just have a program because it's the Sabbath.

9. Feelings: What sorts of emotions are being expressed by the actor or actors? How can you be sure? What sorts of feelings does this setting bring out in you?

Not that much emotion from the actors. Everything was sort of routinely/mechanically done.

Date of Observation: March 7, 2020   Time of Observation: 8:30 AM -1:30 PM
Venue of Observation: CHURCH 4

Purpose of the Observation: To Observe what kind of religious programs does CHURCH 4 offer for the Elite and influential People of Metro Manila.

1. Space: What does the physical setting look like? Is this a common or unique type of setting? How might the setting restrict certain possible activities and interactions? How might it encourage others?

    The church is at the 2ⁿᵈ floor of a 2-storey building. They use monoblock chairs which are arranged in circles for Sabbath School groupings. They just arrange the chairs into two columns and several rows for the Hour of Worship. There is no rostrum. There is just a less than 1 foot elevated stage/platform in front. It's a not so common physical setting for SDA churches but still acceptable, I think. The chairs arranged in circles encourage better small group participation. And the not too elevated platform with is good for more intimate interaction between worship leaders/participants and the congregation. There's less formality while solemnity and reverence were still preserved.

2. Actor: Who are the people involved? Why are they involved? Is their presence usual or unusual? Are they related in fashion to other people present?

    There are several song leaders, presider, speaker, etc. The usual. There are also guest foreign singers, and the speaker is also a foreigner. I think usual. Yes, they are.

3. Activity: What are the people doing? How are these activities related to each other? Are they expected or unexpected? Are they easy or skilled activities?

    There was a fellowship breakfast before Sabbath School. Sabbath School started with the lesson study among separate groups. There is none of the usual singing and other program parts during Sabbath School. Just the lesson study. This one was somehow unexpected but easy type of worship.

4. Object: What are the physical props in this particular setting? What roles do they play? How would the setting change if these objects were missing?

Monoblock chairs, electric organ, and microphones. There's not that much physical props. The setting was simple and neat.

5. Act: An act is a single event performed by the actor or actors. How common is it? Is it related to other's acts? Are other people doing similar acts?

   Singing, Bible study, Fellowshipping, Potluck, Testimonies. The things they did are also commonly done among other churches. But I think it's the spirit that's different. You really feel the spirit of worship. Like when the song leaders sing, the whole congregation sings.

6. Event: An event is a set of related activities that people carry out. How do we know when acts come together to make events? Which events are most common? Which events seem to be most important? Is it coordinated?

   Most common: sermon, singing. Most important, singing, prayer, group Bible study. I think they are well-coordinated.

7. Time: What kinds of sequencing can be observed? Are these sequences cyclical or unique? Are they apparent or subtle? How are they linked to the physical nature of the setting? To the motives of the actor or actors?

   Fellowship breakfast--Lesson Study—Hour of Worship—Potluck—Afternoon Program
   A little bit unique. Subtle.

8. Goal: What sorts of things are the actor or actors trying to accomplish? How are these goals present in the setting and the actions? Are they steady or do they change?

   God-centered worship. They want to make sure everyone experiences true corporate worship and good fellowship. Like when the Pastor prays for people/visitors as they leave.

8. Feelings: What sorts of emotions are being expressed by the actor or actors? How can you be sure? What sorts of feelings does this setting bring out in you?

   Solemnity and reverence without being too traditional. I was truly blessed when I attended their worship. It was a little different from what I'm used to in regular churches. Also the people are friendly and welcoming. The overall spirit is truly good.

APPENDIX H

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document Analysis 1

Title of the document: Becoming Missional
Author: Reylourd Reyes
Date of Publication: December 2016
Purpose of the Document: Report and Promotion
How the document answers the research questions:

Table 14. Simply Missions strategic papers

Research Questions	Significant Quotes	Paragraph and Page Number
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?	1. Propagate a culture of multiplication through planting churches of care groups.	Page 1
	2. Create missional communities who will be the hands and feet of Jesus in the communities	Page 1
	3. Raise Centers of Influence (COI) as bridges of God's love for the secularized people of Metro Manila	Page 1
	4. Hanging out with people like Jesus did.	
	5. "The Saviour 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." Ellen G. White	Page 25 Page 38
	6. "In the cities of today, where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by no ordinary efforts. Ministers…will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts. They must make use of every means that can possibly be devised for causing the truth to stand out clearly and distinctly." Testimonies, Vol. 9, 109.	Page 39
	7. "Young men and women should be educated to become workers in their own neighborhoods and in other places. Let all set their hearts and minds to become intelligent in regard to the work for this time, qualifying themselves to do that for which they are best adapted." Testimonies, Vol. 9, 118-119	Page 47
	8. "Many young men who had the right kind of education at home are to be trained for service and encouraged to lift the standard of truth in new places by well-planned and faithful work. By associating with our ministers and experienced workers in city work, they will gain the best kind of training." Testimonies, Vol. 9, 118-119	Page 48

	9. "Acting under divine guidance and sustained by the prayers of their more experienced fellow workers, they may do a good and blessed work. As they unite their labors with those of the older workers, using their youthful energies to the very best account, they will have the companionship of heavenly angels; and as workers together with God, it is their privilege to sing and pray and believe, and work with courage and freedom…" Testimonies, Vol. 9, 118-119	Page 49
	10. "There should be no delay in this well-planned effort to educate the church members. Persons should be chosen to labor in the large cities who are fully consecrated and who understand the sacredness and importance of the work. Do not send those who are not qualified in these respects. Men are needed who will push the triumphs of the cross, who will persevere under discouragements and privations, who will have the zeal and resolution and faith that are indispensable to the missionary field." Testimonies, Vol. 9, 118-119	Page 50
	11. "There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen." MH 143, Ellen G. White	Page 70
	12. "there is means now tied up that should be in use for the unworked cities…these cities have been neglected for years." Manuscript 11, 1908	Page 71
	13. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the past, but let no-one, because of this, block the way by criticism." Testimonies, Vol.6, 476	Page 72
	14. People are not projects, so aim for Authenticity and Consistency.	Page 74
	15. Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."	Page 76
	16. "We should all become witnesses for Jesus. Social power, sanctified by the grace of Christ, must be improved in winning souls to the Saviour. Let the world see that we are not selfishly absorbed in our own interests…but that we desire others to share our blessings and privileges. Let them see that our religion does not make us unsympathetic or exacting. Let all who profess to have found Christ, minister as he did for the benefit of men." Desire of Ages, 150	Page 76-77
	17. Lead people to Jesus with Intentionality, that's real Christianity.	Page 79

	18. "Workers with clear minds are needed to devise methods for reaching the people. Something must be done to break down the prejudice existing in the world against the truth." Evangelism, 129.	Page 80
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1. Café Life Group which focuses on Community, Authenticity, Friendship, and Experience 2. Café Life App which promotes Moments, Movie, MP3, Mingle (movie nights, dating, etc.) 3. Better Lifestyle Movement 4. Meet people where they are - Community and Relevance 5. Intentional discipleship 6. Project Lingap 7. Wipe a Tear – reaching victims of human trafficking	Page 53 Page 55, 58 Page 59, 112-122 Page 69 Page 90 Page 105-111 Page 123
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1. Café Life in Ortigas, BGC, Eastwood, Makati, Alabang, Nuvali. 2. Project Grow (a discipleship Community for Young Professional) – Grow Gathering, Grow Groups, Growth Groups 3. Missional Living 4. Community building – business, lifestyle, advocacy, development 5. Evangelizing 6. Intentional discipleship 7. Well thought of Training Program and written modules 8. Project Lingap 9. Wipe a Tear – reaching victims of human trafficking	Page 7, 130-136 136-170 Page 92 Page 90 Page 91, 145, 147 Page 105-111 Page 123
RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	1. Propagate a culture of multiplication through planting churches of care groups. 2. Create missional communities who will be the hands and feet of Jesus in the communities 3. Raise Centers of Influence (COI) as bridges of God's love for the secularized people of Metro Manila 4. Hanging out with people like Jesus did. 5. Café Life in Ortigas, BGC, Eastwood, Makati, Alabang, Nuvali. 6. Project Grow (a discipleship Community for Young Professional – Grow Gathering, Grow Groups, Growth Groups 7. Intentional Discipleship 8. Missional Living 9. Community building – business, lifestyle, advocacy, development	Page 1 Page 1 Page 1 Page 1 Page 7, 130-136 136-170 Page 90 Page 92

	10. Evangelizing 11. Church Planting 12. Multiplying 13. The use of Simply Ventures (financial support for ministry) – Simply Accounting PH, Simply Foods, EPIC Travels PH (Experience places, Images, & Connection) 14. Project Lingap 15. Wipe a Tear – reaching victims of human trafficking	Page 93-104 Page 105-111 Page 123

Document Analysis 2

Title of the document: Bonifacio Global City: A Church Planting Proposal
Author/s: Reylourd Reyes, Aziz Amoyen, Wilson Sia, Aser bacdayan, Simply Missions
Date of Publication: April 2014
Purpose of the Document: Proposal and Promotion
How the document answers the research questions:

Table 15. BGC Church planting proposal

Research Questions	Significant Quotes	Paragraph and Page Number
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?	1."Our approach to the overall church planting process can be described in three words: organic, relational and missional. Rather than follow the traditional model that is geared toward a specific launch date, we have chosen to allow things to develop naturally through mobilizing our core team to permeate their workplaces and communities with gospel intentionality. This will occur primarily through being a friendly co-worker, serving the community and living with a missional mindset. Since our approach is organic, the whole idea of a timeline is out the window. Therefore, instead of using words like "timeline" we like to use words like "stages", "phases" or "seasons" to talk about the overall church planting process. As we are ultimately dependent on God's grace and sovereignty, we envision the planting process to move through the following seasons of the church Plant."	Page 5 Page 5-6

	2."Seasons of the Church Plant – Exploration stage, Cultivation Stage, Formation Stage, Multiplication Phase"	
	3. "We envision BGC Church Plant being a growing, missional, Christ-centered body of believers who love and impact the city by both proclaiming and demonstrating the Good News of Jesus. Our goal is to be a dynamic reproducing Adventist congregation multiplying disciples, leaders, groups, and new missional churches throughout Metro Manila."	Page 7
	4. "Our mission is to be a biblical community that multiplies and empowers passionate, maturing Christ-followers and churches."	Page 7
	5. "Our Core Values is to be MISSIONAL. We got united to share the good news the Jesus way and live the gospel in our lifestyle."	Page 7
	6. "RELEVANCE. We believe the gospel message is relevant to our lives today and does not end with a changed life, but has a dynamic rippling effects resulting in a changed world, from individuals, to families, to communities, and to nations."	Page 7
	7. "COMMUNITY BUILDING We believe that real community happens in groups, which allow deep interpersonal and transformational relationships. We encourage effective partnerships with ministries and with the broader community."	Page 7
	8. "PASSION We keep our ultimate calling in our mission. We show commitment, enthusiasm and dedication in everything we do. We do what we love and we love what we do."	Page 7
	9. "GROWTH We expect the best of fellow disciples and ourselves. We strive for positive outcomes, continuous quality improvement, and need-based decision making. We are committed to develop the kingdom of God."	Page 7
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	"We envision BGC Church Plant being a growing, missional, Christ-centered body of believers who love and impact the city by both proclaiming and demonstrating the Good News of Jesus. Our goal is to be a dynamic reproducing Adventist congregation multiplying disciples, leaders, groups, and new missional churches throughout Metro Manila."	Page 7
	"Our mission is to be a biblical community that multiplies and empowers passionate, maturing Christ-followers and churches."	Page 7

	"Our Core Values is to be MISSIONAL. We got united to share the good news the Jesus way and live the gospel in our lifestyle."	Page 7
	"RELEVANCE. We believe the gospel message is relevant to our lives today and does not end with a changed life, but has a dynamic rippling effects resulting in a changed world, from individuals, to families, to communities, and to nations."	Page 7
	"COMMUNITY BUILDING We believe that real community happens in groups, which allow deep interpersonal and transformational relationships. We encourage effective partnerships with ministries and with the broader community."	Page 7
	"PASSION We keep our ultimate calling in our mission. We show commitment, enthusiasm and dedication in everything we do. We do what we love and we love what we do."	Page 7
	"GROWTH We expect the best of fellow disciples and ourselves. We strive for positive outcomes, continuous quality improvement, and need-based decision making. We are committed to develop the kingdom of God."	Page 7
	1. Discipleship Strategies - Missional Communities . "Diving deep and growing together in community groups is the heart of Project Grow. We believe that growing deeper in our relationships with God and with others happens best in communities. These are not clubs. We are convinced that we can be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. That is why we hope that not only do community groups provide a context for inward spiritual growth, but also provide a community that has an outlook for serving and blessing others around our community."	Page 8
	A. The CAFE Life This community group offers life coaching sessions to the yuppies out there who are struggling with their personal & emotional issues in life. -Project Lingap We engage the yuppies in service through various community building projects and	Page 8

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| | meaningful mission trips. Currently, Project Lingap is serving a community in Banaue, Ifugao Province.

-Better Lifestyle Movement BLM aims to influence the yuppies to be more health conscious and to be aware of the current trends on wellness. One of the programs this community offers is Eight Weeks to Wellness, a lifestyle improvement program.

-Simply Ventures Simply Ventures is a community of young entrepreneurs who have experience in their fields or professions. This group conducts career enhancement

seminars and promotes business ethics to its members. |

Page 9

Page 9 |
| | B. Grow Groups Led by our coordinators, these groups meet once a week and have faith discussions that give each member the opportunity to learn and experience the presence of God. All maturity levels of faith are welcomed and embraced. Whether you're a seeker or long-time believer, you are encouraged to pursue God and grow in your spiritual walk through conversations with others, prayer, worship and Bible study. Growth Group Growth group aims to help the yuppies that have committed their lives to be Christ's disciples take every step towards life transformation. Led by Reylourd Reyes, this group meets on Friday nights or after the Grow Gatherings.
C. Grow Gathering A dynamic and relevant spiritual gathering for the yuppies. It is the time when God's story and our story meet.
What to Expect at Grow Gathering:
1.Welcome & Icebreaker

  One of our leaders will welcome guests and give a quick run-down of what to expect during the day and will proceed to an icebreaker.

2. Praise & Worship

  Our worship team will lead out in singing a couple of songs. At Project Grow, we enjoy both classics & contemporary. This is the time when we just lay our hearts out and give praises to God. | |

	3. Grow Talk & Thanksgiving One of our life coaches, an invited pastor or a yuppie will share Bible-based, inspiring and relevant message about life transformation. We also receive free-will offerings and tithes after the message. 4. Potluck & Fellowship Everyone is welcome to join. We have a theme every Saturday (Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, etc.) You don't have to worry if you are not able to bring food. We've got something for you. 5. Grow Group Discussions Everyone break out into groups of 4 or 5 to discuss the topic of the day. We share our life stories and navigate to pattern it with God's story.	
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	"We envision BGC Church Plant being a growing, missional, Christ-centered body of believers who love and impact the city by both proclaiming and demonstrating the Good News of Jesus. Our goal is to be a dynamic reproducing Adventist congregation multiplying disciples, leaders, groups, and new missional churches throughout Metro Manila."	Page 7
	"Our mission is to be a biblical community that multiplies and empowers passionate, maturing Christ-followers and churches."	Page 7
	"Our Core Values is to be MISSIONAL. We got united to share the good news the Jesus way and live the gospel in our lifestyle."	Page 7
	"RELEVANCE. We believe the gospel message is relevant to our lives today and does not end with a changed life, but has a dynamic rippling effects resulting in a changed world, from individuals, to families, to communities, and to nations."	Page 7
	"COMMUNITY BUILDING We believe that real community happens in groups, which allow deep interpersonal and transformational relationships. We encourage effective partnerships with ministries and with the broader community."	Page 7
	"PASSION We keep our ultimate calling in our mission. We show commitment, enthusiasm and dedication in everything we do. We do what we love and we love what we do."	Page 7

	"GROWTH We expect the best of fellow disciples and ourselves. We strive for positive outcomes, continuous quality improvement, and need-based decision making. We are committed to develop the kingdom of God."	Page 7
	. 1. Discipleship Strategies - Missional Communities . "Diving deep and growing together in community groups is the heart of Project Grow. We believe that growing deeper in our relationships with God and with others happens best in communities. These are not clubs. We are convinced that we can be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. That is why we hope that not only do community groups provide a context for inward spiritual growth, but also provide a community that has an outlook for serving and blessing others around our community."	Page 8
	A. The CAFE Life This community group offers life coaching sessions to the yuppies out there who are struggling with their personal & emotional issues in life. -Project Lingap We engage the yuppies in service through various community building projects and meaningful mission trips. Currently, Project Lingap is serving a community in Banaue, Ifugao Province. -Better Lifestyle Movement BLM aims to influence the yuppies to be more health conscious and to be aware of the current trends on wellness. One of the programs this community offers is Eight Weeks to Wellness, a lifestyle improvement program. -Simply Ventures Simply Ventures is a community of young entrepreneurs who have experience in their fields or professions. This group conducts career enhancement seminars and promotes business ethics to its members.	Page 8
	B. Grow Groups Led by our coordinators, these groups meet once a week and have faith discussions that give each member the opportunity to learn and experience the presence of God. All maturity levels of faith are welcomed and embraced. Whether you're a seeker or long-time believer, you are encouraged to pursue God and grow in your spiritual walk through conversations	Page 9

	with others, prayer, worship and Bible study. Growth Group - Growth group aims to help the yuppies that have committed their lives to be Christ's disciples take every step towards life transformation. Led by Reylourd Reyes, this group meets on Friday nights or after the Grow Gatherings.	
	C. Grow Gathering A dynamic and relevant spiritual gathering for the yuppies. It is the time when God's story and our story meet. What to Expect at Grow Gathering: 5.Welcome & Icebreaker One of our leaders will welcome guests and give a quick run-down of what to expect during the day and will proceed to an icebreaker. 6. Praise & Worship Our worship team will lead out in singing a couple of songs. At Project Grow, we enjoy both classics & contemporary. This is the time when we just lay our hearts out and give praises to God. 7. Grow Talk & Thanksgiving One of our life coaches, an invited pastor or a yuppie will share Bible-based, inspiring and relevant message about life transformation. We also receive free-will offerings and tithes after the message. 8. Potluck & Fellowship Everyone is welcome to join. We have a theme every Saturday (Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, etc.) You don't have to worry if you are not able to bring food. We've got something for you. 5. Grow Group Discussions Everyone break out into groups of 4 or 5 to discuss the topic of the day. We share our life stories and navigate to pattern it with God's story.	Page 9

RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in	A. "Church Planting Strategies for BGC:
	1. Exploration Stage (January 2013-March 2014)
	   -Recruit Church Planting Launch Team
	   -Establish Local Church Partnership
	   -Study Target Community and Primary Ministry Focus (Yuppies) Groups
	   -Confirm and Refine Existing Adventist Urban Missional Church Models
	   -Develop Statements of Mission, Values and Vision for a New Church
		Page 5

Metro Manila?	-Launch Team Designs Basic Outreach and Planting Strategy	
		Page 6
	Exploration Phase Goal: Establish a strong church planting core-team, launch team on site, partner with a church and develop a tested, relevant discipleship program for the church plant.	
		Page 6
	2. "Cultivation Stage (April 2014-June 2015) -Implement the Improved Discipleship Plan -Begin Gathering Core Group every Sabbath -Develop a Worship Service Fitted to theCommunity -Begin Developing Small Group Leaders -Develop a Strong Presence in the Community through Community Extension Programs -Recruit and Train Sabbath Worship Teams -Find a Place of Worship for the Formation Phase Cultivation Phase Goal: Grow a local core group of at least 30 people and five functioning small groups before launching public worship service.	
		Page 6
	3. "Formation Stage (July 2015-June 2019) -Establish Church Leadership -Procure an Office or a Function Hall that will Serve as a Worship Hall and Center of Influence -Establish Financial Plans and Structure -Disciple/ Mobilize New Converts/ Attendees for Ministry Involvement	
	-Expand Network of Small Groups and Leaders -Fine Tune Assimilation of Newcomers and Members -Equip, Train and Empower New Leaders -Launch Appropriate Age Group Ministries -Assess Evangelistic Effectiveness & Enhance Corporate Outreach -Continue Intensive Bible Teaching/ Preaching Formation Phase Goal: Formally organize the church meeting in its own worship venue with a strong leadership founded in mission. 4. "Multiplication Phase (July 2019-June 2020) -Train a Core Team that will Start and Plan for a New Church Plant -Prepare the Established Church to Plant a New Church	Page 8

	-Develop Financial Support for the New Church Plant -And do the phases once again."	Page 8
	B. "BGC Church plant is led by a strong and growing core group of Adventist young professionals. As a community of faith driven by its core values, we believe that we can best reach out to seekers who belong in our age group. This is why we started with developing missional communities, small groups, and worship service that will enable us to lead seekers to discipleship. We believe in growth and development. We recognize that as time goes by, members and the church plant will evolve. We are envisioning that in the next 3-4 years, this young and vibrant community will turn into passionate and mature individuals. Sooner or later we will develop ministries, small groups, and worship service that will cater to families and to a more adult community. But until then, we believe and we are committed to start the church plant right, and develop a missional culture among us." C. "What is Project Grow Are we a church? Yes we are. We are a Christian community that exists to help the yuppies who, after years of college, graduate school, and other professional preparations, find themselves in the busy time of getting established in their new careers and settling into their new lives. We lead these urbanites to grow in every aspect of life and offer a holistic approach in Christian living. Most of us are in our 20's and 30's. We are early in our careers and we focus on navigating a "Christ-centered" life in a "ME-centered" world." D. "Discipleship Strategies Missional Communities Diving deep and growing together in community groups is the heart of Project Grow. We believe that growing deeper in our relationships with God and with others happens best in communities. These are not clubs. We are convinced that we can be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. That is why we hope that not only do community groups provide a context for inward spiritual growth, but also provide a community that has an outlook for serving and blessing others around our community. The CAFE Life This community group offers life coaching sessions to the yuppies out there who are struggling with their personal & emotional issues in life. Project Lingap We engage the yuppies in service through various community building projects and meaningful mission trips. Currently, Project Lingap is serving a community in Banaue, Ifugao Province.	Page 8

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| | Better Lifestyle Movement BLM aims to influence the yuppies to be more health conscious and to be aware of the current trends on wellness. One of the programs this community offers is Eight Weeks to Wellness, a lifestyle improvement program. Simply Ventures Simply Ventures is a community of young entrepreneurs who have experience in their fields or professions. This group conducts career enhancement seminars and promotes business ethics to its members." | |

Document Analysis 3

Title of the document: Center of Influence, E-Merge Space
Author/s: Simply Missions
Date of Publication: December 2016
Purpose of the Document: Report and Promotion
How the document answers the research questions:

Table 16. Center of influence – Emerge Space

Research Questions	Significant Quotes	Paragraph and Page Number
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?	"A Center of Influence Centers of Influence follow Jesus' holistic method of ministry. Ellen White says," It is through the social relations that Christianity comes in contact with the world." 2MCP, 622. These centers will facilitate that vital contact. These centers will feature a wide variety of activities such as lifestyle education, treatment rooms, bookstores, reading rooms, restaurants, literature ministry, lectures, small groups, instruction on preparing wholesome food, and more. The activities of each center will vary depending on an accurate assessment of local community needs."	Page 1
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day	. Coworking space, by definition, is a shared working environment designed to maximize the productivity of its tenants. Unlike the traditional office model, coworking space encourages interaction and collaboration between different professions . Grow Space. Come in searching, leave inspired. A hidden oasis. Your secret spot.	Page 12 Page 12 Page 25

Adventist Church?	. Work in an Urban Oasis in BGC for P90 an hour.	
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?		

RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	Needs Assessment In recent years, the paradigm has slowly shifted away from climbing the proverbial corporate ladder towards building your own brand. Millennials are now actively seeking more than job security and stability. Many people enjoy the freedom that comes along with being a freelance worker. They are their own bosses and are not bound by the constraints of a fixed schedule. Our job is to provide freelancers/independent contractors/ entrepreneurs with an environment free of distractions and conducive to productivity.
	Business Concept
	   1. Co-Working Space
	   2. Meeting Area
	   3. Workshops
	   4. Events Place
	Co-working space, by definition, is a shared working environment designed to maximize the productivity of its tenants. Unlike the traditional office model, co-working space encourages interaction and collaboration between different professions.
		Page 9
		
		Page 12

	. Grow Space. Come in searching, leave inspired. A hidden oasis. Your secret spot.	Page 12
	Work in an Urban Oasis in BGC for P90 an hour.	Page 25

Document Analysis 4

Title of the document: U-Belt Manila
Author/s: Simply Missions
Date of Publication: December 2018
Purpose of the Document: Report and Promotion
How the document answers the research questions:

Table17. U-Belt ministry

Research Questions	Significant Quotes	Paragraph and Page Number
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?	MISSION - To lead people in the University Belt to become disciples of Jesus Christ by proclaiming the everlasting gospel.	Page 1
	VISION - A community of disciplers	Page 1
	OUR RESOLVE - In order to fulfill its Mission and Vision, UMAC is committed to do the following:	Page 1
	Proclaim - To preach the Christ and His Second Coming — in every media possible in the best manner possible--leading people to accept Christ as Savior and Lord.	
	Serve - To share Christ through deeds of love– responding to the needs of the society and in the conservation of the environment.	Page 1
	Nurture - To build up the believers, in their relationship with God, and with one another, in their emotional and physical aspect and in other areas of life leading to a fully quality of life.	Page 1
	Train - To equip members to be effective workers for Christ— developing their spiritual gifts which provides the church with committed and competent ministers of the gospel.	Page 1
	Provide - To provide and manage facilities, funds and other resources--enabling the church and its ministries to properly function towards the attainment of the church mission and vision.	Page 1
	OUR DESIRE:	Page 1
	Faith - Have an intimate and living relationship with God, resulting to a constant awareness of His presence, confidence in His salvation, passion for His will, and longing for His coming.	
	Mission - Have the passion to share Christ, serve others and embody the spirit of service and love for people.	
	Growth - Have a progressive mindset, willing to learn and improve, realizing that Christian life is a process, and that we are constantly being transformed into the character of Jesus Christ.	Page 1

	Excellence - Do and give our utmost, realizing that God is our Master to whom we offer no less than our best, and which our ministry in the city needs.	
		Page 2
	"Who we are: The University Belt Manila Adventist Church is a faith-based community that celebrates the grace of God by striving to honor Him with their lives and by loving their fellow men. In response to t God goodness, UMAC is committed to the Gospel Commission-- of leading people to become disciples of Jesus. With a big composition made up of collegiate and young urban professionals, and its center situated within the University Belt, UMC is committed to reach out to the universities and schools, and other people in the area, helping them not only in their pursuit of professional education and personal development but also in finding the best of life in Jesus."	
RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1.Grow Academy The instructional arm which compliments the Grow Group in matters of specific instruction and training regarding the Bible and various aspects of Christian living. 2. Grow Ministries and Services Composed of various ministries to cater the needs of members and the broader community, enabling the church to cast an edifying influence on society. 3. Grow Gatherings and Events Weekly gatherings and special events like retreats, camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events, seminars, etc. 4. Pastoral Services Includes various spiritual and religious services like personal bible study, counseling, life coaching, providing inspirational talks and messages, dedication and blessings, marriages, baptism and funeral officiation.	
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1.Grow Academy The instructional arm which compliments the Grow Group in matters of specific instruction and training regarding the Bible and various aspects of Christian living. 2. Grow Ministries and Services Composed of various ministries to cater the needs of members and the broader community, enabling the church to cast an edifying influence on society. 3. Grow Gatherings and Events	

	Weekly gatherings and special events like retreats, camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events, seminars, etc. 4. Pastoral Services Includes various spiritual and religious services like personal bible study, counseling, life coaching, providing inspirational talks and messages, dedication and blessings, marriages, baptism and funeral officiation.	
RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	1.Grow Academy The instructional arm which compliments the Grow Group in matters of specific instruction and training regarding the Bible and various aspects of Christian living.	Page 2
	2. Grow Ministries and Services Composed of various ministries to cater the needs of members and the broader community, enabling the church to cast an edifying influence on society.	Page 2
	3. Grow Gatherings and Events Weekly gatherings and special events like retreats, camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events, seminars, etc.	Page 2
	4. Pastoral Services Includes various spiritual and religious services like personal bible study, counseling, life coaching, providing inspirational talks and messages, dedication and blessings, marriages, baptism and funeral officiation.	Page 2

Table 18. Summary of document analysis Café Life, Grow Project, and U-Belt

Research Questions	Becoming Missional	BGC Church Planting	COI E-Merge	U-Belt
RQ1: What are the biblical, theological, and missiological foundations for reaching secularized people in Metro Manila?	1. Church Planting 2. Church Growth 3. Missional Communities 4. Christ's Method, MH 73 5. Relevant Ministries 9T, 109 6. Training the Youth, 9T 118-119 7. Personal Ministry, MH 143 8. Light of the world, Mat. 5:16 9. Sympathy to man, desire for others to be saved, DA 150 10. Lead people to Jesus with intentionality. 11. Well-thought-out plans for reaching people, Ev 129	1. Church Planting (Organic, Relational, and Missional) 2. Missional Living 3. Church Planting in stages 4. Discipleship Multiplication 5. Core value is "missional" 6. The Gospel as "relevant" 7. Community building through care groups 8. Live with passion. 9. Growth as individuals and as a group (positive outcomes, quality improvement, need-based decision making)	1. Center of Influence - "It is through the social relations that Christianity comes in contact with the world." 2MCP, 622	1. Discipleship 2. Proclaiming the 3 Angels' Messages 3. Preach the Gospel and 2nd Coming 4. Service through love 5. Nurture, growth and maturity in all aspects 6. Equipping Members to be effective workers 7. Use of Spiritual gifts 8. Live out the beliefs. 9. Develop intimate relationship with God. 10. Assurance of salvation. 11. Obedience to Christ. 12. Witness to others. 13. Excellence -"Do all with your might." "Do all to the glory of God."

RQ2: What factors influence a secularized person to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1.Café Life 2.Better Lifestyle Movement 3.Community and Relevance 4.Intentional Discipleship 5.Project Lingap 6.Wipe a Tear	1.Café Life 2.Project Lingap 3.Better Lifestyle Movement 4.Simply Ventures 5.Grow Groups 6.Grow Gathering 7.Community and Relevance 8.Intentional Discipleship	1. Co-working Space. Grow Space. Rent a space for work.	1.Grow Academy 2.Grow Ministries and Services 3.Grow Gatherings and events-retreats, camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events. Seminars. 4.Pastoral Services-personal Bible study, counseling. Life coaching, inspirational talks and messages, other services like wedding, baptism and funeral.
RQ3: What factors influence a secularized Adventist to remain in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	1.Project Grow – Grow gathering, grow groups, Growth Groups 2.Missional Living 3.Community Building 4.Witnessing/Evangelism 5.Intentional Discipleship 6.Training Programs and Printed Modules 7.Project Lingap 8.Wipe a Tear	1.Grow Groups 2.Grow Gathering 3.Community and Relevance 4.Project Lingap 5.Better Lifestyle Movement 6.Simply Ventures 7.Intentional Discipleship 8.Growth Groups – training others to lead other care groups		1.Grow Academy 2.Grow Ministries and Services 3.Grow Gatherings and events--retreats camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events. Seminars. 4.Pastoral Services-personal Bible study, counseling. Life coaching, inspirational

				talks and messages, other services like wedding, baptism and funeral.
RQ4: What urban ministry strategies will be most effective to reach secularized people in Metro Manila?	1.Church Planting 2.Care Groups 3.Better Lifestyle Movement 4.Create Missional Communities 5.COI 6.Using Christ's Methods, MH 73 7.Café Life, Project Grow 8.Intentional Discipleship 9.Missional Living 10. Creating Financial Ventures to support ministry 11. Project Lingap 12. Wipe a Tear	1.Church Planting 2.Create core groups for each church plants 3.Partner with local church 4.Research and target communities 5.Focus on young professionals 6.Develop and implement plans for church plant and discipleship 7.Develop worship service fitted to the communities 8.Train and develop care group leaders 9.Develop presence in the community through initiatives or extension programs – Project Lingap, Better lifestyle Movement, Wipe a Tear 10. Start public worship when the core group reached 30 people and has 5 care groups	1.Center of Influence – Co-working space, meeting area, workshops, events place	1.Grow Academy 2.Grow Ministries and Services 3.Grow Gatherings and events-retreats, camping and hiking, community outreach programs, sporting events. Seminars. 4.Pastoral Services-personal Bible study, counseling. Life coaching, inspirational talks and messages, other services like wedding, baptism and funeral.

| | | 11. Establish church leadership
12. Establish financial plans and structure
13. Assimilation of new members
14. Equipping, training, and empowerment of new leaders
15. Follow Intensive Bible Study program
16. Create Missional Communities
17. COI
18. Using Christ's Methods, MH 73 | | |

APPENDIX I

ASSESSING ONLINE WORSHIPS

DURING THE PANDEMIC

When the church shifted from face to face worship to online platform, those who responded immediately to the situation experimented what computer programs to use. Many used the Facebook or zoom platforms although there are other programs available. These two are the most practical and user–friendly for people in Metro Manila. The most urgent need that the pastors wanted to address is for the members to have regular Sabbath worships in their homes. This is crucial to their spiritual survival. The pandemic brought out the fact that most of the members do not know how to worship God independently from the church structure. The live streaming or zoom meetings only addressed half of the number of membership who have internet access according to the Associate Ministerial Director of Central Luzon Conference during my interview with him last July 2021. For those who do not have internet, the pastors needed to go and visit as the health protocols allow in each area and it took some months for this to happen. The secularized are adroit in technology so it became easier to transition them from face to face to online worship.

To enhance this research, I watched the online worships of Church 1 (April 25, 2020, May 9, 2020, November 13, 2021), Church 4 (March 28, 2020, October 31, 2020,

and November 7, 2020), Church 3 (July 18, 2020, November 27, 2021), Church 5

(October 3, 2020, November 14, 2020). The evaluation is adapted from Chuck Lawless'

list in how to evaluate church worship service (https://www.renewingworshipnc.org/

evaluate-worship-service/).

**Table 19. Online worship evaluation of four Adventist Churches in Metro Manila**

Areas	Church 4	Church 1	Church 2	Church 5
1. Response to God - Do I want to know God more as a result of attending the service? How am I responding to his holiness and presence?	Yes, the program invites the viewer to have the feeling of wanting to know God more, this is drove home more when the participants discuss with enthusiasm the Sabbath school lesson and share their personal learnings from it.	Yes, the program invites the viewer to have the feeling of wanting to know God more, this is drove home more when the participants share their testimonies, give their thanksgiving, or explain the meaning of the songs to them before singing.	Yes, the program invites the viewer to have the feeling of wanting to know God and worship Him. The simplicity of the program does that.	Yes, the program invites the viewer to have the feeling of wanting to know God more in the sermon.
2. Music – Would I know the gospel by the lyrics of the songs? Is the music focused on God or the worshipper?	The music is mostly from the church hymnal. During the first two months of live streaming during the first year of pandemic, the pastor's family is leading the music. Later, other members joined and took over. The music is familiar and viewers can easily sing along. Since they are church hymns, they are God focused.	The music is mostly the "Hillsong" type. The lyrics are on the screen so it is easier for viewers to follow the words. The way of singing is heartfelt. These types of songs are mostly focused on feelings toward God.	The music is mostly the "Hillsong" type. The lyrics are on the screen so it is easier for viewers to follow the words. The way of singing is heartfelt. These types of songs are mostly focused on feelings toward God.	There is no congregational singing, perhaps they limit their streaming to one hour only. They also use contemporary music for special songs. The lyrics are on the screen.
3. Jesus and the Gospel – Do I know	Yes, Jesus is often referred to throughout the worship	Yes, Jesus is often referred to throughout	Yes, Jesus is often referred to throughout	Yes, Jesus is often referred to throughout

more of Jesus than when I first came? Is my love for Him sweeter and bigger because of what I have heard and learned?	so you are also encouraged to express the same feelings.	the worship so you are also encouraged to express the same feelings. The part of the program where testimonies are given enjoins viewers to love God more.	the worship so you are also encouraged to express the same feelings.	the worship so you are also encouraged to express the same feelings.
4. Word of God – Is the Bible central to the worship activities or parts? Are the worshippers "feeding from the Word"?	Yes, the worship is centered on God's Word.	Yes, the worship is centered on God's Word.	Yes, the worship is centered on God's Word.	Yes, the worship is centered on God's Word.
5. Application – Is there a decision made for transformation? What areas of life need to be changed?	The sermon addresses areas for character transformation.	The sermons are more for feeding.	The sermons are more for feeding.	The sermon addresses areas for character transformation.
6. Excellence in Worship – Is there respect and reverence for God and the things of God? Is there an underlying drive to	Yes, there is respect and reverence, there is also an anticipation for worship.	The creator of the program has developed a more creative way of showing parts of the program – music, stewardship, transitions.	The creator of the program has developed a more creative way of showing parts of the program – music, stewardship, transitions.	U-Belt is more concerned with the engagement of the viewers and communicating their segments on discipleship. The

give God the best in all parts?				streaming is a tool, not the focus.
7. Would I like to come back because God's presence is real in this church?	Shekinah has the regular format of Sabbath worship on their live streaming but there is an anticipation to worship.	The program is intended for worship – coming together of believers to encourage one another and to express worship to God. The nurturing or discipling part is on a different schedule.	The program is intended for worship – coming together of believers to encourage one another and to express worship to God. The nurturing or discipling part is on a different schedule.	Yes, I would like to come back to this church (watch their steaming). I will grow spiritually here.
8. Will the program attract and retain a secularized?	Not really. It is too traditional.	Yes, with the invitation and guidance of an Adventist friend.	Yes, with the invitation and guidance of an Adventist friend.	Not really, it is more for members.

ENGEL SCALE OF CONVERSION STAGES
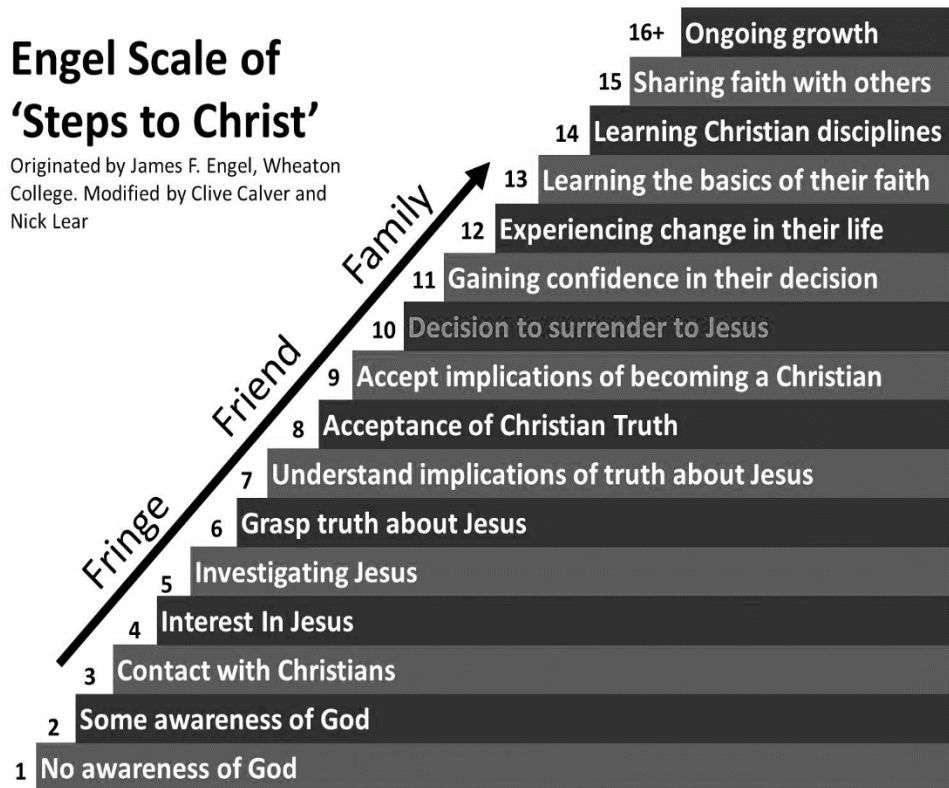
Engel Scale of 'Steps to Christ'

Originated by James F. Engel, Wheaton College. Modified by Clive Calver and Nick Lear

16+ Ongoing growth
15 Sharing faith with others
14 Learning Christian disciplines
13 Learning the basics of their faith
12 Experiencing change in their life
11 Gaining confidence in their decision
10 Decision to surrender to Jesus
9 Accept implications of becoming a Christian
8 Acceptance of Christian Truth
7 Understand implications of truth about Jesus
6 Grasp truth about Jesus
5 Investigating Jesus
4 Interest In Jesus
3 Contact with Christians
2 Some awareness of God
1 No awareness of God

Family
Friend
Fringe

Jim Putman's Spiritual Growth Stages

Jim Putnam identifies five stages defined by attitude through which people go through: unbelief (the person is categorized as spiritually dead), ignorance (becoming a spiritual infant), self-centeredness (being a spiritual child), other-centeredness/God-centeredness (being a spiritual young adult), and intentionality/ reproducibility (becoming a spiritual parent). Putnam's discipleship model focuses on five discipleship shifts: from

reaching to making disciples, from informing to equipping disciples, from program to purpose of discipleship, from activity to relationship, and from accumulating disciples to deploying disciples.

Source: http://jimputman.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-5-Stages-Of-Spiritual-Growth-1.pdf

1. Spiritually Dead – people in this stage have not yet accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. They may completely reject God, they may be "spiritual", they may even claim to know God or be a Christian, when in reality, they are their own god.

2. Spiritual Infant – in this stage, people have accepted Christ, but have not moved much past that point. They can be new believers or they might be stagnant, long-time Christians. Life is generally all about them and their needs.

3. Spiritual Child – in this stage, people are growing in their relationship with God and are also beginning to grow in their relationship with other Christians. They are applying God's Word in their life and allowing others to walk beside them in their journey following Christ. However, it is still mostly about them, their needs, comfort, etc.

4. Spiritual Young Adults – in this stage, people are making a big shift from being self-centered to a more others-centered. They are beginning to understand their role as a giver, rather than a taker – ministering to others, putting others first – being doers of the Word.

5. Spiritual Parent – in this stage, the parent has a solid understanding of God's Word and a deep, abiding relationship with the Father. They are living out God's Word in their lives daily. They are others-centered and God-dependent. They are able to reproduce mature disciples of Christ by inviting others to follow them as they follow Christ.

APPENDIX K

TABLES OF THEMES

Table 20. Characteristics of secularized people in Metro Manila

Characteristics of Secularized	Participants With The Traits
1. Comes from a Catholic background	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
2. Believes that God exists	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12 SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
3. have the Bible, do not read the Bible/ does not read the Bible	SNSDA: 01, 05, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21 SNSDA: 03, 04, 06, 08, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 14, 19, 21, 22
4. prays spontaneously/ Prays irregularly	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 19, 22 SNSDA: 08, 11; SSDA: 13, 15, 17, 20, 21
5. a nominal Christian (36 comments put together)	SNSDA: 01, 03, 05, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
6. Does not attend church/ Irregular church attendance	SNSDA: 01, 04, 09, 16, 22 SNSDA: 01, 05, 06, 10; SSDA: 16, 17
7. Holds certain beliefs in God	SNSDA: 01, 03, 05, 06, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 19
8. Has belief in Jesus	SNSDA: 01, 10, 12
9. doubts about God	SNSDA: 01, 02, 04
10. Has doubts about his beliefs (God, bible, prayer)	SNSDA: 01, 02, 04, 09, 11

11. Judging other people is an issue (related to experienced judgmental attitude from Christians) (Theme 2 Category 3)	SNSDA: 02, 03, 09; SSDA: 14 SNSDA: 01, 02, 07, 09; SSDA: 18, 21
12. Leads a busy life	SNSDA: 04, 09, 10, 12; SSDA: 13, 14, 18, 19, 22
13. living in the moment	SNSDA: 03, 09, 12; SSDA: 18, 19, 21, 22
14. disenchantment with religion	SNSDA: 01, 02, 04, 09; SSDA: 16
15. believes in relativism	SNSDA: 03, 08, 09, 10; SSDA: 15, 19
16. respecting other religion	SNSDA: 02, 03, 04, 06, 08, 09, 10, 11
17. tolerance for other people's views and beliefs	SNSDA: 02, 03, 04, 05, 08, 09, 11, 12
18. separation of state and religion	SNSDA: 02, 03, 04, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11; SSDA: 17
19. Concern about the judgment	SNSDA: 01, 07; SSDA: 15, 17
20. Likes his autonomy	SDSDA: 09, 12; SSDA: 22
21. Pro LGBT plus	SNSDA: 02, 09, 11; SSDA: 14
22. looking for meaning in life	SSDA: 16, 18, 19
23. Materialism	SSDA: 13, 22
24. believes in naturalism/pantheism	SNSDA: 02, 04
25. Looking for peace and harmony with people	SNSDA: 02, 08
26. Death and mortality issues	SNSDA: 01, 04
27. Likes certainty in life	SNSDA: 01
28. Co-habitation	SSDA: 15
29. Equality is an important issue	SNSDA: 10

Table 21. Person with influence on the secularized people's religious response

Person with Influence	
Participants with non-Adventists persons who has influence on his/her spiritual responses	SNSDA 02 – grandmother (Catholic), a priest, girlfriend who attends Victory Church
	SNSDA 04 – grandmother (Catholic)
	SNSDA 06 – grandmother and nanny (Catholic), a friend who became a Christian
	SNSDA 11 – grandmother (Born-Again)
Participants with Adventists persons who	SNSDA 01 – Adventist pastor
	SNSDA 02 – mother who became an Adventist, Adventist pastor

influenced his/her spiritual responses	SNSDA 03 – grandmother and aunt
	SNSDA 05 – work supervisor, Adventist pastor
	SNSDA 07 – Adventist husband
	SSDA 13 – Adventist friend and workmate
	SSDA 14 - Adventist friend and workmate
	SSDA 15 – Adventist boyfriend (now husband) and mother-in-law
	SSDA 16 – Adventist friends, Adventist employer
	SSDA 17 – Adventist husband and in-laws
	SSDA 18 – Adventist father and brother
	SSDA 19 – Adventist mother and girlfriend
	SSDA 20 – Adventist boyfriend (now husband), Adventist members
	SSDA 21 – Adventist co-worker and friend, Adventist pastor
	SSDA 22 – Adventist girlfriend, Adventist pastor

Table 22. Perception, experience, and feelings of secularized people toward God

Perception of God	
1. Believes that God exists	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
2. Doubts about God	SNSDA: 01, 02, 04
3. God is a force, not a person	SNSDA: 04
4. God is a creator/magical	SNSDA: 07
5. God is a leader	SNSDA: 11
6. God is like a family	SNSDA: 11
7. God controls present and future	SNSDA: 11
8. God is Supreme/Higher Being, Creator	SNSDA: 01
9. God is Saviour	SNSDA: 12
Experience with God	
1. Did not know God	SSDA: 22
2. Bending Machine God	SNSDA: 01, 03, 12; SSDA: 13
3. Guidance from God	SNSDA: 03, 06, 08
4. Trusts God	SNSDA: 03, 05, 06, 09

5. Searching for God (see spirituality)	SNSDA: 02, 07; SSDA: 13, 16, 18, 19, 20
6. Experienced miracles (see spirituality)	SNSDA: 02; SSDA: 15, 16, 18, 22
Feelings toward God	
1. Afraid of God's punishment	SNSDA: 01, 07
2. God and death unknowable	SNSDA: 01
3. Believes in God	SNSDA: 02, 06, 09, 10, 11, 12; SSDA: 19
4. Feels close to God (see spirituality)	SNSDA: 02, 03, 05, 06, 07, 09, 11; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22
5. Longing for God (see spirituality)	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07; SSDA: 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22
6. Senses the presence of God (see spirituality)	SNSDA: 02, 07, 09, 10; SSDA: 13, 15, 16, 18, 22

Table 23. Indicators of secularized person's spirituality

Spirituality	
1. Searching for God	SNSDA: 02, 07; SSDA: 13, 16, 18, 19, 20
2. Longing for God	SNSDA: 01, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07; SSDA: 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22
3. Feels close to God	SNSDA: 02, 03, 05, 06, 07, 09, 11; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22
4. Senses the presence of God	SNSDA: 02, 07, 09, 10; SSDA: 13, 15, 16, 18, 22

Table 24. Secularized SDA responding to spirituality

Participants who were conscious of God's call	Theme 2: Category 4: Feels close to God	Theme 2: Category 4: Longing For God	Theme 2: Category 4: Searching for God
SSDA 13	yes	yes	yes
SSDA 14			
SSDA 15	yes		
SSDA 18	yes	yes	yes
SSDA 20	yes	yes	yes
SSDA 21	yes		
SSDA 22	yes	yes	

Table 25. Factors why secularized people join the Adventist Church

Factors	Participants
1. Relationship/friendship with Adventists (78 comments)	SNSDA: 01, 02, 07; SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22; UMP: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08
2. Adventist Bible Study (41comments)	SNSDA: 01, 05, 07, 08; SSDA: 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21; UMP: 02, 04, 06, 08,
3. Members are welcoming, hospitable, and non-judgmental (41 comments)	SNSDA: 02, 09; SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22; UMP: 01, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08
4. Care groups experiences (34 comments)	SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21; UMP: 02, 03, 04, 06
5. Attend the Adventist Church (29 comments)	SNSDA: 07; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 21, 22
6. God's call (24 comments)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22
7. Positive image of Adventists (13 comments)	SNSDA: 01; SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22
8. Happy memories with the Adventist Church	SSDA: 14,15,16,17,18,19, 20, 21
9. Good relationships of church members (19 comments)	SNSDA: 07; SSDA: 16, 17, 20, 21; UMP: 01, 03, 08
10. CLC Urban Ministry programs – Café Life, Grow Group, Growth Group, Storying and In-depth Bible Study, program is not long	SSDA: 13, 14, 20; UMP: 03, 04, 06, 07, 08
11. Authenticity (17 comments)	SNSDA: 09; SSDA: 14, 22; UMP: 01, 02, 03, 05, 07, 08,
12. Encouraged family unity (15 comments)	SSDA: 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
13. Community programs (13 comments)	SSDA: 13, 14, 18, 20; UMP: 05, 06
14. Adventist Church became family (15 comments)	SSDA: 15, 18, 21; UMP: 07, 08
15. Sense of community	SSDA: 13; UMP: 01, 07, 08
16. Pastor is kind, open, and puts no pressure (see also UMP factors in the appendix)	SNSDA: 01, 02, 05, 21; UMP: 02, 03
17. God's leading and intervention	SSDA: 21, 22; UMP: 02, 08
18. Health and holistic approach	SSDA: 16, 21; UMP: 01, 08
19. Prayer ministry with church	SSDA: 16, 17, 20
20. Spirituality of the members	SSDA: 07, UMP: 02

Table 26. Personal factors that retain secularized people in the Adventist Church

Personal Factors	Participants
1. Growing Faith and practice (50)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; UMP: 01, 06
2. Attends Adventist Church (10)	SSDA: 07, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22
3. Positive change (24)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22
4. Personal bible study (27)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21
5. Happiness in being Adventist (19)	SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22
6. Maintains prayerful life (33)	SSDA: 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22
7. Age and maturity (14)	SSDA: 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
8. Listen/watch religious programs (20)	SSDA: 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20
9. Staying because of God (12)	SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 22
10. Living the Christian faith daily(12)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 18, 22
11. Witnesses to neighbors and friends (19)	SSDA: 15, 16, 18, 22; UMP: 03, 06
12. Proud of Grow community/ Adventist Church (10)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 18, 20
13. Serving God and the church (12)	SSDA: 18, 20, 22; UMP: 01, 02, 06
14. Reading and studying SOP/Adventist books (10)	SSDA: 13, 14, 22
15. Love of God (11)	SSDA: 22; UMP: 01, 06, 08
16. Growing and remaining against all odds (19)	SSDA: 22; UMP 01, 06, 08,
17. Excitement with the Gospel (10)	UMP: 06, 08

Table 27. Other personal factors that help retain secularized people to the Adventist Church

1. Love of God (11)	SSDA: 22; UMP: 01, 06, 08
2. Growing and remaining against all odds (19)	SSDA: 22; UMP 01, 06, 08,
3. Excitement with the Gospel (10)	UMP: 06, 08

Table 28. Church factors that help retain secularized Adventist to the Church

Church Factor	Participants
1. Relational Evangelism	
1.1 Builds friendship (33)	SSDA: 14, 21 UMP: 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07
1.2 Connecting with other people (25)	SSDA: 14, 15 UMP: 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07
1.3 Sharing life with others (20)	SSDA: 14 UMP: 02, 04, 05, 07
1.4 Caring and welcoming church (23)	SSDA: 14, 16, 17, 18, 21 UMP: 01, 03, 05, 06, 08
1.5 Good relationship Among members (35)	SSDA: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21; UMP: 01, 03, 04, 05, 08
1.6 Church is family (13)	SSDA; 16, 18, 20, 21 UMP: 02, 03,
2. Care group discipleship (31)	SSDA: 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22 UMP: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07
3. Missional and creative church (10)	SSDA: 14, 15, 20, 21 UMP: 01, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07

Table 29. Good urban ministry practices and approaches to the secularized

Approaches	Participants
1. Creative and contextualized ministries (37)	SSDA: 14; UMP: 01, 02, 03, 05, 06, 07, 08
2. Focus on Discipleship (39)	SSDA:22; UMP: 01, 02, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08
3. Friendship (37)	UMP: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08
4. Spend time with people (21)	UMP: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07
5. Forming core groups (15)	UMP: 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 07, 08
6. Mentoring by church leaders (28)	UMP: 01, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08

7. Clear Vision (23)	UMP: 01, 05, 06, 07, 08
8. Researched informed programs (23)	UMP: 01, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08
9. Creative practitioners (20)	UMP: 01, 04, 07, 08
10. Using different DNA of church	UMP: 01, 02, 07, 08
11. Targeting sectors of Urban society (14)	UMP: 01, 04, 07, 08
12. Plant churches through small groups (8)	UMP: 02, 06, 07, 08
13. Supportive Conference Leaders (15)	UMP: 01, 04, 07
14. Multiplying multipliers (13)	UMP: 07, 08

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