

ABSTRACT

RECLAIMING ECWA BELIEVERS' IDENTITY AND SENSE OF BELONGING IN CHRIST: A PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

by

Emmanuel Datiyong Akanet

I have had the privilege of participating in the Lord's ministry in Nigeria for twenty-eight years before I came to Asbury Theological Seminary in the fall of 2004, and I realize that the Lord enables me to serve better in the areas of teaching, preaching, and writing Christian literature. I served as a teacher and principal in one of my denomination's Bible schools as well as pastoring several churches at different locations and times.

A mission body known as the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) founded the denomination to which I belong—the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) in Nigeria. My previous observations and experiences as well as the history of the church shows that early congregations started on a solid foundation, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, with a desire to grow towards maturity in Christ. At the beginning believers were known for what they profess to be—believers in Christ otherwise called “Christians.” They were not afraid to share their faith with others in obedience to the Lord's command to preach the gospel to all nations of the world (Matt. 28:18-20). They were continuously striving and engaging in Bible studies, evangelistic activities, and constant fellowship in community settings. They collaborated with the missionaries in building and sustaining the body of Christ.

Nevertheless, the time came when missionaries handed over the church leadership

to nationals who followed the examples set forth by the founding fathers. The work continued well. Leaders gave their time and resources in selfless service in the Lord's vineyard, and the congregations trusted them and their leadership. Fifty years after the handover to the nationals, several problems seem to have crept into the life of the church. The spiritual state of believers seems to be declining, and some of the leaders seem to be deviating from the mission of the church—which is to glorify God in life and service. Sensing the problem is what prompted me to be devoted in preaching, teaching, and writing.

This dissertation research includes a brief history of Nigeria and the church, biblical and theological foundations for the research, a literature review on leaders, leadership tasks, leadership approaches, the qualities, competencies as well as the spirituality required of a leader. The ministry intervention aimed at helping ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Assessments confirmed the existence of spiritual decline among ECWA believers and the need for leaders with spiritual vision and direction to lead the church in reclaiming ECWA believers' identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. The ministry intervention of this research was designed with a need for spiritual and visionary leaders to provide learning environments that would facilitate a learning process in helping ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. This need, which has been a burden upon my wife and I, led us into starting a Servant Leadership Ministry to the disable persons, widows/widowers, orphans, senior citizens, and the poor in Madakiya community in which we were brought up and to which we belong.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
RECLAIMING ECWA BELIEVERS' IDENTITY AND SENSE OF BELONGING IN
CHRIST: A PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

presented by

Emmanuel Datiyong Akanet

has been accepted towards fulfillment

of the requirements for the

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY degree at

Asbury Theological Seminary

David L. Thompson

May 9, 2007

Mentor

Date

Richard L. Gray

May 9, 2007

Internal Reader

Date

Ashley A. Andrews

May 9, 2007

Dean, Doctor of Ministry Program

Date

RECLAIMING ECWA BELIEVERS' IDENTITY AND SENSE OF BELONGING IN
CHRIST: A PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

Emmanuel Datiyong Akanet

May 2007

© 2007

Emmanuel Datiyong Akanet

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
CHAPTER 1	
INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM	1
A Brief History of Nigeria	1
Eastern Nigeria Tribal Realities	4
Western Nigeria Tribal Realities	4
Northern Nigeria Tribal Realities.....	5
The City of Jos	7
National Religious Affiliation.....	8
Particular Contextual Setting of the Sudan Interior Mission.....	12
The Evangelical Church of West Africa.....	21
Personal and Ministerial Situation.....	27
General Spiritual Problems in Nigeria	29
Specific ECWA Spiritual Problems	34
Purpose of the Study	38
Research Questions.....	38
Research Question #1	39
Research Question #2	39
Research Question #3	39
Methodology.....	39

Summary	39
Overview	40
 CHAPTER 2	
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS	42
Spiritual Transformation into the Image of Christ	46
Spiritual Disciplines for Spiritual Formation	49
The Discipline of Studying God’s Word	54
The Discipline of Persevering in Prayer	56
The Discipline of Fellowship and Worship	57
Participating in Authentic Community of Believers	61
Organizing Small Groups (Teams) for Effective Ministry	69
 CHAPTER 3	
LITERATURE REVIEW	74
Introduction	74
The Need for Leadership in the Church and in the ECWA	74
The Leader and Leadership Tasks	76
Transformational Leadership	80
Realities of Transformational Dynamics	82
Promoting Transformative Learning	84
Transformational Change	88
Jesus’ Leadership Model	90
Leadership Character	91
Spirituality of a Leader	94

Competencies of a Leader.....	97
Summary.....	103
CHAPTER 4	
PROJECT DESIGN.....	104
Introduction	104
Core Curriculum.....	105
Lesson 1: Spiritual Transformation	105
Lesson 2: Humility	105
Lesson 3: Emotional Intelligence.....	105
Lesson 4: Spiritual Formation.....	106
Lesson 5: Authentic Community	106
Lesson 6: Conflict Resolution.....	106
Lesson 7: Team Building.....	106
Ministry Intervention.....	107
Ministry Orientation	107
Foundational Work.....	108
Presentation Venues	109
Evaluation.....	111
Ministry Intervention	112
Encouragement from Greater Africa and a Testimony	113
Calembo’s International Institute of Southern Africa (ILISA)	114
Akanet’s Servant Leadership Ministry	115
APPENDIX A Lesson Plans for Curriculum	117

APPENDIX B List of Books I Have Authored.....	129
Works Cited.....	131
LIST OF TABLES	
Table 4.1. Ministry Intervention and Organizational Timeline	113

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to God for the great miracles he performed to enable me study in the United States of America.

I am most grateful to my family, my dear wife, Mercy Akanet, and our five wonderful young men, Joshua, Suchet, Ahyuwani, Ahribai, and Abel, in Nigeria for patiently enduring my absence during the period of my studies in the U. S. A.

I am thankful to all the saints whom God used to sponsor my education in the U.S.A. especially the Rev. and Mrs. Keith Tilley now pastoring in Texas, and Randy and Jodi from Southland Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky.

I am most grateful to all members of the Freedom in Christ Ministry class that I attended at Southland Christian Church, for the Christian love they showed me during my stay in the U.S.A. especially the class teacher, Mr. Larry Coleman.

I am thankful to Rev. Dr. David Thompson, my adviser, mentor, and father in the Lord, his love and patience in leading and directing me during the course of my writing. He is an example of a humble man of God.

I am grateful to all the DMIN office team, for their love, patience, and understanding each time I went to their office, asking for assistance, especially Dr. Leslie Andrews, Dr. Milton Lowe, and Mrs. Ginny Proctor.

I am grateful to my friends Rev. and Mrs. Pete Marra, for their love, which made me feel at home while in the U.S.A. I am thankful to all who showed love to me.

I am most grateful to Barrister Sunny Katung in Nigeria for the wonderful financial support he rendered me during the course of my studies in the U.S.A. I thank all the people in Nigeria and America who supported me in any way. God's blessing.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM

A Brief History of Nigeria

Modern Nigerian history, along the coast, like that of Sierra Leone and Gambia, begins with the Portuguese. A Portuguese ship reached the Bight of Benin in 1472. Traders of other countries, the British in particular, then began to reach what was described as the wild, forlorn, fragrant coast. They sought pepper, Elephant's teeth, cloth made of cotton wool very curiously woven, and cloth made of the bark of palm trees. The country takes its name from the Niger River, which means "black." It is the ninth longest river in the world and the third great river of Africa, along with the Congo and Nile. For a time it was known as "the Nile of the Negroes." The name was suggested in 1890s, not by a Nigerian but by a British journalist, Flora Shaw, who later became the wife of the colonial Governor, Frederick Lugard (Gunther 145).

Soon came much more lucrative traffic, that of human beings. Slavery dominates Nigerian history for almost three hundred years. As late as 1786, one could buy a slave in Nigeria for two pounds (£2.00), to sell in America for sixty-five pounds (£65.00). During that period, about 100,000 slaves or more were shipped from Nigeria across the Atlantic each year (Gunther 35).

Janet and Geoff Benge write that the British sent troops to break the power of the slave-trading Moslem kings in the Sudan, not because they saw the evils of slave trading but because they wanted to colonize the region. "The expedition, which was led by Sir Fredrick Laggard, was successful, and in 1903 Nigeria, located on the western edge of the Sudan, became a British protectorate and part of the British Empire" (87).

Nigeria's geographical subdivisions consist of three major parts, according to the three major tribes in the country. Those tribes are the Ibo people in the East, the Yoruba people in the West, and the Hausa/Fulani in the North. The history and politics of the country surround these three major tribes. Several smaller tribes live among those three major ones. The Colonial Masters went to Nigeria by sea and settled in the coastal area of Lagos, which later became the nation's Federal Capital City.

Present-day Nigeria was created by the British colonial government, which began in 1885. Prior to the advent of colonialism, Nigeria was not a nation-state. In pre-colonial Nigeria, each major ethnic group formed what Yusufu Turaki calls a "mini republic" (British Colonial Legacy 65). Even after the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria by the British in 1914, the country was still regarded as a multinational nation. The late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, one time Premier and Finance Minister of the Western Region of Nigeria, describes the situation:

There are no "Nigerians" in the same sense, as there are "English," Welsh, and "French." The word "Nigeria" is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not. There are various national or ethnical groups in the country.... It is a mistake to designate them "tribes." Each of them is a nation by itself with many tribes and clans. (98)

Chief Awolowo indicates a high degree of difference between the people called Nigerians, just as there is between Germans, English, Russians, and Turks. The fact that Nigerians have a common overlord does not destroy this fundamental difference. Awolowo's observation has some truth in it because Nigeria was not and is not a culturally homogenous political unit.

Right at the inception of the country, Awolowo was not in support of a unitary form of government proposed by the British for Nigeria. Ethnic groups in Nigeria lived

under clearly defined geographical boundaries. All aspects of ethnicity, morality, religion, politics, and all social issues were defined within geographical ethnic boundaries. Anything beyond the ethnic boundary was considered foreign. Turaki maintains that the self-identity, worldview, and social life of the individual Nigerian was formed within the ethnic group. The most important features that characterize the worldview of most traditional societies are belief in the existence of the universal Supreme Being, the world of spirits (both good and bad), ancestral reverence and worship, reincarnation, and mysterious powers (British Colonial Legacy 67).

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the tenth most populous country in the world with an estimated population of 120 million people. The country is multiethnic with distinct traditions; hence, its history was termed as a history of nations within a nation-state. Language and geographical boundaries are the most explicit features that distinguish ethnic groups in Nigeria (Gunther 65).

When Britain took control of the Sudan, mainly the northern part of Nigeria, certain things happened to this multiethnic and cultural nation-state. No doubt, the British wanted a safer way to rule the people of the land; therefore, they employed their own method of rulership. Turaki in The British Colonial Legacy in Northern Nigeria writes that under colonialism, the Nigerian social environment was nurtured under religious and cultural intolerance, racial (tribal) inequality, differential and preferential treatment of ethnic groups. He maintains that colonial policy of stratified inequality and ethnic or tribal hierarchy led to institutionalization of superior-inferior status and sociopolitical roles to different ethnic groups within the colonial hierarchical structure. Such was the involvement of the British and the legacy the colonial masters left in Nigeria (7).

Eastern Nigerian Tribal Realities

Eastern Nigeria covers thirty thousand square miles with a population of about eight million. The predominant tribe in the East is the Ibo people, and the capital is a brisk little town, Enugu, which had coalmines almost on its main street. Among the people are at least two thousand separate units. Dr. Azikiwe, who is known as the creator of modern Nigerian nationalism, was the most important politician in the region. Among the Nigerian tribes, the Ibo people claim to be one of the most distinctive and important. They lived in multitudes of villages, fragmented into small family groups; they did not initially have chiefs. They are described as being individual masters of themselves and a mobile, industrious people. Some call them “the Jews of Africa” who spread all over Nigeria as traders and small merchants (Gunther 186).

Before the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM), founders of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) denomination went to Nigeria with the gospel. The Roman Catholic and Anglican churches already had converts among the Ibo people in Eastern Nigeria. The reason for these converts was their early contacts with some of their business counterparts, European traders.

Western Nigerian Tribal Realities

The Western Nigerian subdivision is separated from the East by the long muddy thrust of the Niger River. It has an area of 45,000 square miles, with a population of 6,300,000. Its capital, Ibadan, is by far the largest city in Nigeria and has the largest black population of any city in the world. It is also the fourth or fifth largest city of any kind in all of Africa. The chief tribe in this area is the Yoruba people, and the principal political leader was the late Mr. Awolowo. The East and the West are bitterly jealous of each other

but often combine politically against the Northern division. They are much more like the Europeans than the Northerners are.

During the colonial era, the West was far richer than the East and more developed politically. Their watchwords were, “emancipation and advance” (Gunther 42). People said that the West could be like the Gold Coast if it were on its own, meaning that it could almost at once become a functioning national state (45).

The Yoruba people are one of the master tribes of the African continent, a proud folk, claiming an active culture. They are sophisticated people and look down on the Ibos as barbarians. At the time the Sudan Interior Mission missionaries went to Nigeria, some of the Yoruba in the Western part of the country had embraced Islam, though some of them became Christians because of their contacts and influence under the former colonial masters from Britain and other European countries.

Northern Nigeria Tribal Realities

The North occupies an area of 281,000 square miles, which is as large as the East and West put together. In its early history (1950s), the north had a population of 16,800,000 of whom about ten million were Muslims. The capital of the North is Kaduna, and the primary language is Hausa, which is very different from the languages of the East and the West. When John Gunther visited Kano in 1955, one of the big cities in northern Nigeria, he said, “And here we are in Moslim Africa once more. Kano might be Marrakesh across the sahara. Here we return to oceans of corrugated sand, the stately walk of camels, women behind veils, minarets like tall chessmen, and the soft, gliding handshake of the Arabs” (776).

The social environment of the precolonial Northern Nigeria (then known as Central Sudan) can be divided into two broad groups characterized by different sociopolitical values and organizations, namely, the Muslim and the non-Muslim groups. Politically, the northern area was called the protectorate of Northern Nigeria. In the 1950s, it was known as the Northern region of Nigeria. During the postcolonial period, this political entity was broken down into six states in 1967, ten in 1975, and seventeen in 1991. Presently, the northern states of Nigeria are those states created out of the former Northern Region. In the north, early ethnographers estimated over 250 tribes living in northern Nigeria with over two hundred of these in the non-Muslim area or the Middle Belt, with concentrations in the Plateau, Bauchi, Southern Zaria, and Benue areas (Turaki, British Colonial Legacy 6, 14).

The chief political figure in the North during the colonial era was Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. He was of the Northern People's congress, which was the most important political organization in the North. The Sardauna had a commanding vigor and was intelligent and prestigious. Sokoto is a holy city to the Muslims and Sir Ahmadu Bello was the spiritual head not merely of all Muslims in Nigeria but on the whole West coast of Africa. The Sardauna was a descendant of the old Fulani Kings and had a European education added to that of the Qur'an. The predominant tribe in the North is the Hausa, but in the early 1800s, another African people, the Fulani, descended on the Hausa and conquered them in the name of Allah (God) and the prophet Mohammed. The Fulani promptly intermarried with the Hausa people, and many northerners today bear traces of both heritages.

In Nigeria, there are numerous smaller tribal groups of people among the three major ones already mentioned—Hausa/Fulani, Ibo, and Yoruba. The former colonial masters through the major tribes ruled these smaller tribal groups of people indirectly. Turaki observes that the strong and powerful Muslim group was allowed to make claims on those who were their subjects during the pre-colonial period. He adds that many of the non-Muslim groups were forcedly placed against their wishes under the Hausa/Fulani rulers. Thus, under colonization, the hegemony of the Hausa/Fulani over the non-Muslim groups was consolidated (British Colonial Legacy 89). Most of the smaller tribes, among them is the Bajju people to whom I belong, lived in poverty because of the oppression of the major tribes and the former colonial masters. Some of them still live in it.

The indirect rule worked well in Northern Nigeria, and the North was a region highly favored by the British. Nevertheless, the country's sectionalism into the three subdivisions had a strong influence on the colonial masters. Some of them were pro-Ibo and some were pro-Yoruba while others were pro-Hausa/Fulani. The northerners have a strong sense of belonging as a tribe (because they were highly favored by the colonial masters) with Islam being widely accepted within the people.

The northern part of Nigeria is very important to this study because the primary goal of the Evangelical Church of West Africa's founding fathers, the Sudan Interior Mission, was to evangelize the Sudan, which is the northern part of Nigeria. Moreover, about 85 percent of the ECWA churches today lie in the northern part of Nigeria.

The City of Jos

The city of Jos is also important and worthy of mention in this research. It is in the plateau area and was conquered neither by Islamic crusaders nor by slave traders

before the colonial era. During the colonial period, it had a population of thirty thousand, out of which 1,500 were white. The city of Jos is located in the northern part of Nigeria. Although it is closer to the north, it has a pleasant temperature and atmosphere favorable to the white man who is used to cooler weather.

Jos was the center of tin and columbite mining, which made it of strategic interest to the United States of America. Nigeria produced a large proportion of the world's columbite, a mineral indispensable for the manufacture of special heat-resistant steel. No jet plane can fly without columbite or some similar alloy. The American Air Force could not exist without columbite from Jos and elsewhere (Gunther 786). In the history of SIM, Jos became the mission headquarters. In addition, it is presently the ECWA headquarters, so that both SIM mission and the denomination it founded uses the same building as their secretariat.

National Religious Affiliation

From the religious point of view, the upper region of Northern Nigeria, with twelve large provinces in all, is Muslim. The East and the West were still largely pagan until missionaries arrived with the gospel in the early 1900s; however, a great percentage of the people in the West also had embraced Islam. Most of the smaller tribes in the north rejected the Islamic religion, including the Bajju tribe to which I belong. Those tribal groups had their ancestral religion, which consisted of rules and regulations aimed at governing their societies, especially the control of women and children, and maintaining law and order, peace and coexistence.

Those minority groups had a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of all things, seen and unseen, known and unknown. When missionaries took the

gospel to them, they heartily embraced it; nevertheless, this does not imply they equated the ancestral religion with the Christian faith. A Nigerian theologian refers to the ancestral religion as “non-Christian noble ideas of a supreme Being” (Kato 92), which cannot be sustained as monotheism in the biblical sense. The apostle Paul describes the kind of monotheism the Christian can recognize in the New Testament era in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6. I agree with Kato who describes as “noble ideas” all non-Christian religions, referring to the Supreme Being, apart from God’s plan of salvation.

Three major religions in Nigeria exist: African traditional religion, Islam, and Christianity. The African traditional religion influences both Christianity and Islam; hence, in practice these appear materialize more like folk Islam and folk Christianity. This plurality in Nigeria makes it the most complex and segmented nation-state in Africa (“What Africans Think” 95).

While Islam was predominant in the North, the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches already had converts in the East as well as in the West. Regarding the breakdown in percentage among the three major religions, Christians verbally claim that the country is made of about 50 percent Christians, 45 percent Muslims, and 5 percent other religions and idol worshipers. On the other hand, Muslims, also verbally claim that they are greater in number than the Christians. No proof of the certainty of those figure claims can be provided.

Muslims in Nigeria have tried to propagate their religion even at the national level. The policies they support and their efforts to convert other Nigerians towards their religion are evident. The reason, Turaki maintains, is that in the early 1800s the *Fulani Jihad* (holy war) integrated the various Hausa states and other ethnic groups that fell to

Muslim Jihadists and taught them to insist on Islamizing the country. This incidence was the first time in Hausa land and beyond for there to be political system that incorporated many different peoples, traditions, and states over a vast area constituting an empire. As an empire, it required something other than language, tribe, traditional religion, or something particularistic to hold it together (British Colonial Legacy 4-5).

The challenge to Christianity is that the Muslims dream of turning the country into an Islamic state. Some of the northern states have even gone to the extent of introducing the Shari'a law as a guiding principle in their states, even though Christians live in those states. One northern politician and former military head of state, Gen. Mohamadu Buhari, once, called on Muslims not to vote for any non-Muslim candidate. In the past twenty years, clashes of violence have erupted between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria that have affected their relationship. Such unfortunate activities happened in the middle of March 1987 when Christians, in the words of a Christian reporter, "witnessed another assault and flagrant defiance of their faith in Nigeria" (Kaduna Religious Riot 15). According to him, the religious disturbance broke out at the Kafanchan College of Education's annual Christian program. In about three days, properties worth 75 million naira, Nigerian currency, were destroyed, nineteen people killed (mostly Christians), 154 churches, and 2 mosques burned down. The Christian communities in different parts of the state were stoned in their chapel and fellowship centers (5).

Educationally, Christians seem to be more advanced than Muslims are because the early missionaries established schools for their new converts while the Muslims

rejected Christianity and anything associating with it. Hence, they were reluctant to let their children go to school, fearing they would convert from Islam to the Christian faith.

Thus, the Northern part of Nigeria is predominantly Muslim while the South and most parts of the West are mostly Christian. Even so, Christians do live among the Hausa/Fulani in the North. Northern Nigeria is broadly divided into two geographical areas, the middle belt and the far north. The middle belt area comprises of different ethnic groups whose sociocultural and political context reflects what has been described above.

When missionaries encountered the Middle Belt people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they regarded them as people without ethics or knowledge of God; thus they were described as “pagans,” heathen;” “barbarians,” “uncivilized,” and “minority tribes” (Turaki, Theory and Practice 195). Turaki quotes one of the SIM missionaries, in stating the following:

With the lack of the knowledge of the true God, the pagan combines the lack of such spiritual and abstract ideas as Truth and Love... [E]ven his ideas of sin, honesty, conscience and the like, are as we know, matters of accommodations and expediency, and his fatalism proceeds from his materialism. The Muslim, whose fatalism is the result of his submission to the power and will of God as he knows Him, stands on the other hand on a much higher religious level. The national and social life of the Pagan too is vastly different from that of his more sophisticated and superior brother, the Moslem. (86)

Missionary movements during the colonial era were accused of simply serving as the religious side of colonialism and an attempt to impose Western culture in Africa alongside political and economical domination. A. Scott Moreau disagrees when he writes that at times missionaries arrived before the colonists, at times with them, and at times later. He maintains that missionary movement lived in uneasy tension with colonialism, having very different goals (208). Turaki supports Moreau:

Christian missions did not encounter many colonial restrictions in the non-Muslim areas of the Middle Belt but faced some difficulties in carrying out their mission work in areas where the non-Muslim groups were subordinated to Muslim rulers. For about thirty years after entering the Sudan, Christian missions were not allowed to enter the Muslim Emirates. This prohibition became a cause of disagreement between Christian missions and the colonial Administration. (Theory and Practice 260)

Most of the non-Muslim tribes were poor while their Muslim counterparts continued to be richer and the masses struggled under the oppressive colonial rulers. Until then, most still struggled in poverty. In short, Nigeria has no national religion.

Particular Contextual Setting of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM)

The work of SIM in Nigeria, a multicultural and ethnic society, was started through the heroic efforts of Walter Gowons, Thomas Kent, and Rowland V. Bingham. These three men remained faithful to their call and mission. This mission body started on 4th December 1893 and continued to 19 November 1976. The work was not without difficulties and problems. The pioneers encountered the challenges of disease, death, language barrier, and culture while remaining faithful to their call and mission, according to Bingham, “a common vision, a common love and a common call” (14) to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in the Sudan were the motivating principles of the pioneers.

The burden of Sudan is what inspired and gave birth to the SIM mission body. The greatest concern of the pioneers of SIM was the evangelization of the most neglected mission field in the whole world, the neglected multitudes of heathen and Muslims in the Sudan. This burden of the Sudan was what consumed the hearts of the pioneers. The Sudan was described in North America and Europe as the worst manned mission field in the world (Maigadi 175). Concerning the Sudan, Bingham beautifully describe the region:

The Sudan, literally meaning, “the land of the blacks,” extends in a belt 600 miles wide, for 3,000 miles across Africa, more than one-third as large as the United States, and embraces a population of more than sixty millions of people. Not one missionary lived within its borders, and the gospel was unknown throughout its vast area. Could anyone, appreciating the infinite value of a soul, look out upon this great field and consider unmoved, the well-nigh hopeless destiny of its dying millions? While the Church was just concluding the first century of modern missions, was it possible that this vast, unreached field should continue unoccupied? It is not surprising that young men with the missionary purpose of going, not merely to those in needs, but to those who need them most, should have laid upon their hearts a burden for the Sudan. (1)

To this call, the SIM pioneers, Gowons, Bingham, and Kent, responded. The first primary goal of SIM was to reach the Hausa/Fulani major tribe of northern Nigeria with the gospel in order to stop the spread of Islam. Bingham, leader of the pioneers states that from the inception of their work, and particularly through the longing of A. P. Stirrett, they aimed to reach the great Hausa nation, the strongest race of the Sudan, if not the whole of Africa. Preparatory steps were taken, and a number of workers learned the Hausa language. Then as a step in faith, in 1907, Dr. Stirrett and his companions opened the first Hausa station at Wushishi (11). The Muslims were to be reached by “God’s Word, by full explanation of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ. The means to this end was by medical work, by men set apart and well educated in doctrines and spiritually minded through the native evangelists” (SIM NOW).

The Islamic force was impossible to break completely in Northern Nigeria, as intended by the pioneers. The presence of Islam became one of the determining factors that led to the institutionalization of an indigenous church (ECWA). The pioneers’ aim was to create a visible Christian organization that would stand against the threats of Islam in Nigeria.

As the work progressed, to achieve their aim, they established various agencies such as hospitals, seminaries and schools, a rural development department, bookshops, and radio stations. They also established an indigenous mission body known as Africa Missionary Society (AMS), which has been renamed Evangelical Missionary Society of ECWA (EMS OF ECWA). The mission work extended to other African countries, also in Britain and America. The EMS mission body now has over 1,500 missionaries serving in Nigeria, other African countries, Britain, and America. Presently ECWA has a church in London and several others in America, working in collaboration with the SIM mission headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Africa Now, a SIM magazine, reported in 1959 that with Muslims doubling their numbers in the last twenty years and promising to do more than double in the next decade, Islam was numerically the greatest threat to the spread of the gospel in Nigeria and even in the whole of the African continent. The report states that of every ten pagans converted from idolatry, seven became Moslems and three became Christians (“Islam” 16).

Both SIM pioneers and other mission agencies in Nigeria in 1909 believed that Islam was the greatest obstacle to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, focusing on converting the “pagans” of that time to Christianity and establishing a strong church that could withstand the challenge of Islam was crucial. The SIM attention was focused on the “pagans” and the result was the establishment of the Evangelical Church of West Africa in 1956.

The early SIM pioneers faced various kinds of difficulties and challenges but were victorious over those of disease, language barriers, and Scripture translation;

however, the major challenge to the mission was to break through the cultures of the people. Learning a people's language is not synonymous with learning their culture because Africa has a complex cultural system.

In order to understand the responses of the SIM pioneers, one must have a general understanding of the concept of culture in the Western world during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The renaissance of the Protestant missionary movement in the nineteenth century coincided not only with the rise of colonialism but also with the rise of anthropological research. During the rise of American anthropology, championed by Franz Boas (1858-1942), the general belief among British anthropologists was in the evolution of a universal culture.

Burnett Taylor (1832-1917), known as the father of modern anthropology, was the first to formulate such a theory of culture. He maintains that culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex including knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by people in a society (Maigadi 206).

The word "culture" is in the singular, implying the existence of a monoculture (one culture), which supposedly applies to every society. The understanding of culture was equated with Western civilization. According to Taylor's evolutionary model, any society that did not exhibit a form of Western civilization was either in a process of extinction or progression. This idea was widely affirmed in the Western worldview. Although Boas, the father of American anthropology, tried to correct this worldview, the evolutionary paradigm was already established in people's minds.

The grand theory of monoculturalism became the cultural gospel of the West; however, that “gospel” was challenged when Western explorers, traders, government officials, missionaries, and anthropologists encountered cultural pluralism in Africa and other places. In an attempt to justify the dominant monoculturalism, the West employed political and intellectual measures to undermine the cultural pluralism in Africa in favor of the monoculture ideology (Maigadi 54,77).

On the other hand, colonialism was used as the best means to create a universal culture, while at the intellectual level the theory of cultural evolution, progression toward a universal culture, was used to brainwash the minds of people of other cultures. African cultures were labeled “primitive,” “animistic,” and “uncivilized” (Turaki, British Colonial Legacy 78). The implication for such ideology for missions was, in the words of Barje Maigadi, “no contextualization” of the gospel. Most missionaries, he said, did not see the need to contextualize the gospel in cultures that were thought to be in the process of either extinction or progression (97). To show how Christianity was equated with Western culture, Turaki writes to the issue of Western superiority:

It is not surprising that in this context the idea of “progression” found ready acceptance as an explanation of differences. Clearly, the West was “civilized” and the rest of the world was “primitive.” It was the “white man’s burden” therefore, to educate the world. Missionaries too were affected by the spirit of the time. They equated Christianity with Western culture, and the West’s obvious superiority over the other cultures proved the superiority of Christianity over the pagan religion. (Theory and Practice 54)

Turaki believes that missionaries were influenced by the thought of Western culture superiority over those of African cultures.

In the same vein, a university professor on religious studies, in

SIM NOW, observes that the time is now overdue for the church in Nigeria to look at itself and examine its own soul. It needs to answer in precise terms whether its purpose in Nigeria is not to serve as an effective tool of imperialism or a veritable means of softening up Nigerians for the purpose of convenient exploitation by Europeans. He further asks whether the aim of the religious educators in Nigeria is to make Christians or to Westernize Nigerians, whether Christianity and Westernization are not synonyms in their evangelistic vocabulary ("Leading Africans" 1-3).

Missionaries were greatly influenced regarding the Western cultural evolutionary worldview. The evolutionary understanding of other cultures also influenced Albert D. Helser, a one-time missionary in Nigeria and later on SIM General Director (1957-1962). Describing the cultural state of the Bura people, among whom he did his missionary work, he writes that the people of Garkida have not arrived, that they are a vision and hope coming to life. They are only taking the first steps (education wise) towards venturing in the direction of growth and of richer living ("Leading Africans" 1-3).

While my intention is not to be judgmental of the SIM missionaries, the responses and attitudes of some missionaries clearly indicate that, in their missionary work, they, too, were influenced by this cultural evolutionary understanding of other cultures. Responses of most early SIM missionaries and other mission agencies show that some of them seem to have been too hard on the people and their cultures, among whom they did their mission work. They condemned the people's cultures and their way of life outright. Bingham's writing is evident of how missionaries saw Africans:

There we found a people lower than we found any we had seen ever. From the time they came into the world naked, until they went out of the world

naked, they never possessed a piece of cloth as large as one's hand. The other pagan tribes we had passed through had at least a sense of decency, to the extent of following the fashion of Mother Eve and putting on a leafy apron each day. (56)

Such views of the mission field people and their culture provided the missionaries with a double task—to civilize as well as to Christianize them. In the words of Turaki, three major themes dominated the minds of SIM missionaries in Nigeria. They thought that Africans live in moral depravity and prevailing darkness and ignorance; they believed that Islam is responsible for causing untold suffering in the Sudan because of slave raiding, slavery, degradation, and immoral influence. They also thought the white people, in general, bring both light and liberation to the land of darkness and doing so is their moral and spiritual responsibility to Africa and ultimately to the universal Church (Turaki, British Colonial Legacy 3-4). Later on, some of the missionaries came to realize their misconception of the Africans and their cultures. Ian M. Hay, former SIM General Director in SIM NOW, rightly confessed on behalf of the missionaries:

For more than eighty (80) years in whatever fields we work, SIM has been able to work following our own culture and our own thought-patterns and we have forced the church leaders and churches to fit into our scheme of things. There are still within our hearts attitudes of colonialism and pride. By God's grace we must find a way to eliminate those things from us and to walk humbly before the Lord. (SIM NOW)

Hay's confession came later on after SIM had handed work to the national church (ECWA). However, the SIM missionaries had operated through the misguided misconception about Africans and their cultures.

In the later years of SIM work, some of the missionaries saw the need for change in attitudes on their part regarding the nationals among whom they were working. A field letter report from one of the SIM missionaries confirms the need for change:

Need for Attitude Change: “Superior” Culture of Western Civilization. This is very doubtful but has strong feeling attached to it in many minds. We deplore the “slowness” of the African mind to understand what we say. We seem to think that if they do not think as we do that they are inferior to us. Again, our gadgets give us a feeling of importance. Is our intelligence any greater than theirs or is it their lack of opportunity over the centuries. Strip life to its absolute necessities and then we shall see whose culture is the most useful in this land. Have we come to impose our culture or to show forth our Christ. (Turaki, British Colonial Legacy 599)

Indeed, this missionary caught the vision for change and tried to express it in his field letter report. Nevertheless, some of the problems encountered by SIM missionaries were passed on as a legacy to the ECWA. Those problems include clothing the gospel with Western culture as confessed by Hay (75), the denial of self-governing to the nationals, the absence of self-theologizing principles, and succumbing to the colonial rule of 440 yards, which instructed all Westerners to build and live in their houses 440 yards away from other nationals. These practices had some adverse leadership and theological implications on the part of the ECWA (Maigadi 150).

When the work was handed over to the nationals, SIM churches were registered with the Nigerian government and the name was changed from SIM churches to ECWA. At the beginning, members of the SIM churches were very dedicated to the cause of their faith, well respected for their testimony, with an open mind and a sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. Outsiders did not doubt their testimony and confidence of sharing the gospel of their salvation in Christ Jesus. They were not afraid of sharing their faith with Muslims and people of other faiths.

Bingham, the first SIM president, said the following regarding the foundation of the rock upon which the Church is established: “The Church was founded on a solid

Foundation, upon the Apostles and the Prophets and upon Jesus Christ himself who is the Chief Corner stone” (qtd. in Akanet, Bishara Ikon Allah 12). Also, Steve Strauss, the current SIM U. S. director writes that SIM’S passion to reach the nations with the good news of Jesus Christ is rooted in the worthiness of God. He maintains that the mission body proclaim Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life by collaborating with local churches to plant and strengthen the church around the world (SIM NOW).

Members of the SIM church enjoyed significant spiritual growth, so much so that they had a clear understanding of the believers’ identity in Christ with no difficulty in submitting themselves to the Lordship and authority of Christ; what they believed was what they practiced:

1. Their lives were evidence of spiritual transformation to the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness.
2. Church members had the desire for spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation.
3. They joyfully participated in authentic community of believers including such matters as conflict resolution.
4. Believers were organizing small groups (teams) for effective ministry.

Pastors were committed and faithful in discharging their pastoral duties. The marriage institution was highly respected among the believers and parents took their responsibility of training children in the fear of God seriously.

The Evangelical Church of West Africa

The Evangelical Church of West Africa was founded through the ministry of the Sudan Interior Mission, now known as Serving in Mission, which started its work over one hundred years ago in Nigeria (1893-2007). The gospel message of the Lord Jesus Christ is always proclaimed in a geographical and a sociocultural context. ECWA is a Protestant denominational church in Nigeria. Presently it has a member population of six million and is a growing church, well organized, and composed of several ethnic groups. Along with this growth, and as a legacy inherited from the SIM missionaries, the church has experienced the rise of divisive ethnicity and spiritual decline. In order to understand the ECWA denomination and the reasons for the spiritual problems it is facing, one must understand the factors that led to the institutionalization of the ECWA denomination.

The pioneers (SIM) planted local churches and trained the nationals who shepherded those churches under the direct supervision of the missionaries. No districts, language, nor tribe linked those local churches. Each local church “was kept as a homogeneous unit within each tribe; and each tribe developed its own dynamic church leaders” (Turaki, Theory and Practice 18) and was autonomous and ethically distinctive.

The national pastors’ responsibility was to feed the flock with very few administrative responsibilities. In addition to worship, the primary focus of each local church was mission work (Bingham 42-43, 63). SIM churches in Nigeria operated this way for forty-four years (1910-1954); divisive ethnicity was not a problem among the early SIM churches. The ethnic distinctiveness of each local church and the absence of an elaborate administrative system accounted for the absence of divisive ethnicity at that time.

However, the rise of nationalism in Africa in the 1940s and in the 1950s forced SIM to take a different step from their previous plans. The African revolution, or what Turaki calls the “breakthrough of something new” (Theory and Practice 78) raised some serious concerns about the future of the church in Africa, Nigeria in particular. Both the missionaries and national Christians began to ask questions that needed answers. The issues concerned, whether the course of Christianity in Nigeria would follow the same path it took in China, whether western missionaries who brought the gospel to Nigeria would be forced to retire, if the national church was strong enough yet to stand and face the challenges of the time, and if the new nationalism would sweep out Christianity with the rest of the Western debris (24).

At that time, Africans were fighting for liberation from Western imperialism, and the slogan in the 1940s and the 1950s was, “Africa for Africans” (Turaki, British Colonial Legacy 134). According to Maigadi, an alumnus of Asbury Theological Seminary, the church in Africa though, not a political institution, was viewed by some nationals as an agent of imperial powers. Criticisms of the church both within and outside of the church generated fear in the minds of missionaries about the future of the church in Africa (162).

SIM decided to establish an indigenous church characterized by self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing (SIM NOW). However, the political factors did influence the process more than originally intended by SIM. Turaki summarizes the matter under consideration as follows:

In Nigeria the late 1940s and the early 1950s witnessed a dramatic rise in nationalist’s activities and demands for political independence from Great Britain. During this period, Christian mission in Nigeria held series of meetings on what to do if Nigeria should become independent by the

1950s.... They feared that at independence missionaries and missionary work might cease to exist in Nigeria especially in northern Nigeria. This, however, led mission agencies to plan to found indigenous churches with government registration as means of forestalling government takeover of mission institutions at independence. (Theory and Practice 11-18)

The new political wave in Africa, Nigeria in particular, necessitated in part the need for mission agencies to develop sustainable ways to guarantee the survival of the church if, for any reason, mission bodies were forced to leave. Therefore, one of the ways SIM adapted was the institutionalization of its churches in Nigeria. The need for ECWA to become a visible institution recognized by the government of Nigeria became an important issue for SIM. Until the rise of nationalism, SIM did not consider Africans capable of governing themselves and the church.

Missionaries wrongly believed African Christians were not advanced in knowledge and ability to conduct their own affairs. Nevertheless, as late as 1976, the spirit of nationalism was still in the air even among some of the ECWA leaders at that time. An example of those leaders is Simon A. Ibrahim, former ECWA general secretary (1975-1984). He said that since independence, it has become unfashionable to have a white man in a position of any type of leadership as that was a violation of freedom and selfhood. A right attitude of nationalism, he said, was a positive one, recognizing that in God's providence Africans must lead Africa both politically and ecclesiastically. He maintained that missionary personnel and resources should be laid at the disposal of the church to supplement what the church can produce. That the wealth of experience missionaries have acquired should be laid at the altar for the church to use. Ibrahim concludes by saying that the mission is the forerunner of the church; hence, the mission must decrease and the church must increase in all spheres of the work.

The rise of nationalism in Africa was viewed by Africa Christians as God's providence to bring about changes, not only in the political sphere but also in the religious and spiritual sector. SIM, like its counterparts in other mission organizations in Nigeria and Africa, was not prepared for the sudden revolution. She had little or no time to prepare and develop a genuinely indigenous church that could face the challenges of the time; therefore, SIM had to establish an autonomous institutional church that would be recognized by the colonial government of Nigeria before its independence on 1 October 1960.

The institutionalization of the church in Nigeria was in four categories: licensing and ordination of nationals, the registration of SIM churches, the formulation of a constitution and the establishment of an association, and the consolidation of ECWA ministries. When the work was handed over to the nationals, those churches were registered with the Nigerian Government (1956) and the name was changed from SIM churches to ECWA.

The Evangelical Church of West Africa continued the work of SIM in the same spirit and principles; however, the introduction of Western education in the early 70s liberated many tribes from poverty and oppression. The desire for education caught the attention of many believers, and even Christian success was associated with success in education and accumulation and possession of materials, a worldview that still dominates the hearts of many present-day believers.

The lack of commitment and submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ makes it easier for believers to feel shy about maintaining their Christian values among their peers, in their work place, and to witness for the Savior to the lost world. Others lack the desire

for consistent participation and involvement in spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation, especially when they get good paying jobs either in the private sector or in governmental settings. They seem to forget the One who is the giver of life and strength to work.

Nicanor Perlas says that often people blame their troubled condition on others, on events outside themselves, on failed institutions, and on unjust societal structures. “We do not act out from our deepest beliefs and convictions. We often betray our highest ideals and mock our principles through accommodation and rationalization” (3). He maintains that the harsh reality is closer to home and that believers are hypocrites to themselves.

Perlas’ description of the situation seems to be the problem in ECWA denomination. He recognizes a deep divide between what people personally believe in and what they actually do in their day-to-day lives. Believers have behavior reserved for the one-hour during Sunday service worship and another, often embarrassing behavior, for business dealings, politics, family, and professional relationships (5).

William H. Willimon agrees with Perlas concerning the conflict facing those called in the Lord’s ministry. He calls for worthwhile sacrifices:

Love of the gospel often throws us into conflict with other loves and loyalties. There is a kind of imperialism inherent in the gospel, an imperialistic determination to have all of us. In taking up the cross, we must deny something else. Self-denial is difficult enough. Denial of those most dear to us is worse. Cross produces conflict. When Chrysostom began to struggle with the idea of a call into priesthood, his mother put great pressure upon him not to forsake her in her old age. His mother pleaded with Chrysostom to recall the sacrifices that she had made to ensure that he would be a well-provided-for, educated young man. (111)

Obviously, ECWA believers are seemingly thrown into this conflict of love and loyalties after taking up the cross. They are not able to deny other things for the gospel they claim to have accepted and into which they were baptized.

Like Chrysostom's mother, other loves seem to be pressing too hard upon them, so much so that they seem unable to resist those pressures. Some other loves seem to be calling so loudly and the appeals seem irresistible.

On the other hand, Turaki writes on "Secularism and Materialism" addressing the issue that the African approach to life is deeply religious, but it is being threatened by the Western philosophy of secularism which promotes a way of life and thought that is concerned only with this world and is opposed to thinking in terms of what is sacred or spiritual (791).

Nevertheless, Charles R. Swindoll is convinced that the best attitude should emerge out of a clear understanding and awareness of personal identity. A clear sense of divine mission and a deep sense of God's personal purpose is a sort of God-honoring attitude that encourages Christians to press on, to focus on the goal, and to respond in remarkable ways to life's most extreme circumstances (329). Swindoll believes that when Christians find their identity and sense of belonging in Christ, they should have a clear sense of divine mission and a deep sense of God's purpose in life.

Personal and Ministerial Situation

In a condition of poverty and oppression, my parents, who come from a smaller tribe, Bajju, gave birth to me. My family lives in the Northern part of Nigeria with the Hausa/Fulani major tribe that adheres strongly to the Islamic religion. As they ruled the Bajju people, the Hausa/Fulani major tribe tried to impose the Islamic religion upon them; however, the Bajju people and other smaller tribes rejected Islam. Instead, they left their ancestral religion to embrace the Christian faith. As a result, they were and are cruelly hated and ruled harshly by the Hausa/Fulani major tribe, which had the full support of the British colonial masters.

Before the gospel arrived in Nigeria, the Bajju people and other smaller tribes believed in their ancestral religions. Their religious rules and regulations helped govern in their communities, especially controlling women and children with a strong emphasis on community life. Samuel Waje Kunhiyop argues that while using community as a paradigm for ethical living has its merits, some problems emerge with presenting community exclusively as an adequate category for African ethics (63).

I was born into a Christian family of six children, of which I happen to be the youngest. I felt the Lord's call into the ministry when I was in high school, after which I went to Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS) and have been in the Lord's ministry for twenty-eight years before coming to Asbury Theological Seminary. Since my high school years, I have been convinced of the Lord's call into the ministry; therefore, I have had no desire for any other vocation except the Christian ministry. For this reason, I went to JETS for three degrees and sought further education here at Asbury Theological Seminary.

In my ministry involvement, I have come to realize the spiritual gifts God has endowed on me through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-6) for effective ministry among the body of believers. I discover that I serve better in the areas of preaching, teaching, and writing Christian literature (see Appendix B for a list of books I have authored).

After my graduation from Asbury Theological Seminary, I will return to Nigeria to continue with the ministry of preaching, teaching, and writing Christian literature. God has called me to collaborate with him in building his kingdom. I concur fully with Howard A. Snyder's view that the central kingdom task is to build churches, which live by kingdom principles. Kingdom work, he said, is inviting children, women, and men to Christ, nurturing those who respond in repentance, obedience, and faith into kingdom living, and building committed faith communities of worship and witness (95).

Kingdom building is the work SIM started doing in their ministry in Nigeria. Steve Strauss, the SIM USA director said that SIM's passion to reach the nations with the good news of Jesus Christ is rooted in the worthiness of God: "We proclaim Him as The Way, The Truth and The Life" (John 14:6, NIV) by collaborating with local churches to plant and strengthen the church around the world (SIM 5). The Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) is doing the kingdom work of preaching, teaching, and making disciples, which is a continuation of the work of SIM, its founding fathers. The expectation was that the work of kingdom building, as described above, would continue in the same direction as envisioned by SIM leadership: preaching, teaching, and making disciples as Christ said to Peter in Mat 16:17-18.

No doubt, when ECWA took leadership of the church in Nigeria, it made some remarkable progress in the areas of evangelization, preaching, making disciples, and

meeting the needs of church members, both spiritually and physically. Maigadi states that the first general leaders of ECWA considered themselves, people called by God to serve and not to be served. This attitude of servanthood was authenticated by the election of the new national leaders, which took place at the second General Church Assembly at Lagos 12-14 January 1955 (179).

Nevertheless, the progress that has been made also gave rise to certain problems and challenges. Since ECWA took leadership of the church, the number of ministers has increased. ECWA has planted many churches and opened new schools, Bible colleges, seminaries, and even a university (Bingham University 2006). On the other hand, in recent years, my experience and involvement in ministry work in the ECWA denomination shows an apparent decline in spiritual growth among some members of the denomination.

General Spiritual Problems in Nigeria

The pursuit for educational achievement and the struggle for the accumulation of material gain seem to have gotten hold of Christians' attention in Nigeria. This attitude shows laziness in doing those things that matter for spiritual transformation into the image of Christ. Worry about the world and the things in it create room for excuses for not making time for intimate relationship with God and for fellowship with other believers. Spiritual problems in Nigeria have various dimensions. I do not want to be judgmental toward the believers in Nigeria, neither am I of the opinion that Nigeria has no mature believers. Many faithful Christians live in the country. No matter how far a people might depart from God, the faithful ones always remain. The prophet Elijah thought of himself as the only faithful servant of God in Israel, but God said he had

preserved for himself seven thousand people who did not bow down to worship Baal and were still faithful to him (1 Kings 19:18).

Some believers still talk and believe in the power of witchcraft to influence and to harm them, implying that they are still living in slavery to sin. Kunhiyop insightfully describes the spiritual problem faced by many Africans. He maintains that many Africans have embraced Christianity as their religion, and hold to the belief that God is almighty and that Jesus is the son of God who provides salvation through his shed blood. At the same time, however, they also hold to the strong belief that evil forces such as witchcraft, secret societies, and evil spirits are responsible for all the sufferings, sicknesses, and death that afflict God's children (245). A. H. Mathias Zahniser calls the situation described by Kunhiyop as *split-level Christianity*. Zahniser says that on the level of the ultimate God and ultimate salvation, the people are practicing Christians. On the level of the issues that affect them in an intimate way day in, day out, they continue to practice their traditional beliefs and religion (45). The issue of witchcraft seems to be universal. Kato reveals that the belief in witchcraft has to do with a theory that the witch devours the spiritual life of an individual, which eventually causes physical death. He agrees with Kunhiyop that such a belief is prevalent in African traditional religions (22). Of course, one can deny the existence of witchcraft but to do so is to deny the existence and presence of the devil in the world. The devil has no powers over the children of God. The Holy Spirit has sealed them for the day of redemption, indicating that they belong to God (Eph. 4:30).

This spiritual problem can be equated with the one found in the Corinthian church of which Paul wrote to them in first and second Corinthians of the New Testament. The

description of the Corinthian church by Paul provides a picture similar to that of the Nigerian situation. Though Paul refers to Christians in Corinth as believers, still he says they think like “normal and regular” pagan Corinthians. They were self-centered people who were still living according to the dictates of their culture (3:2-4).

God, through the Prophet Joel called upon the Israelites to “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning” (2:12). He calls them to tear their hearts and not their garments, to return to the Lord their God for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love and he relents from sending calamity (2:13). If they return to him, and maintain conformity with God’s character, the results are great blessings:

You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed. (2:26-27)

Scripture testifies to the fact that God’s loving arms are widely open to receive anyone who returns to him in repentance. In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, God made a promise to return the people of Israel from captivity to the land He promised to give their ancestors as inheritance. The Lord said that the days are coming, “declares the LORD,” when he will plant the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the offspring of men and of animals. Just as he watched over them to uproot and tear down and to overthrow, destroy, and bring disaster, so will he watch over them to build and to plant, “declares the LORD” (Jer. 31:27-28).

God did not abandon his people forever, though he allowed them to be captive. He promised them help of restoration. He spoke through the prophet Jeremiah that the

fortunes of Jacob's tents would be restored: "So you will be my people and I will be your God" (30: 22). As did the Israelites, Christians in Nigeria seem to have deviated from God's covenant terms of submission and obedience to him through Christ. This disobedience is the root cause of the problems facing the Nigerian believers.

The people of Israel were faithful in observing their religious rights and ceremonies. Nevertheless, they were sincerely wrong; their practices were not based on faith and belief in God. God described their attitudes as evil and demanded they remove them from his sight. He advised them to learn how to live in right relationships towards their neighbors. This kind of attitude was commonplace in the days of the Prophet Isaiah. He frowned at the people of Israel and for their hypocritical lives:

Stop bringing meaningless offerings—Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—I cannot bear your evil assemblies.... Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight—Stop doing wrong learn to do right—Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.... "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are as red as crimson, they shall be as wool." (1:13-18)

The desire and pursuit for material things have resulted in the believers' engagement and commitment to various kinds of sins in Nigeria. Their attitudes may have a connection to the Western cultural and civilizational influences upon their lives. Some seem to believe that almost everything coming from the Western world is good and is to be totally accepted and absorbed. The reason for such mentality is that the first missionaries who took the gospel of Christ to Nigeria came from mostly America and Canada. Therefore, some people think that whatever comes from the Western world should be good. This attitude is seen in those who either have been schooled in the West or have been

acquainted with Westerners and their culture. Some of them have been brainwashed because of watching television programs from the Western world.

The media seems to be contributing to this deception in the way they structure and present their programs. Eunice Okorochoa in the Africa Bible Commentary says that many new factors are influencing the lives of young people in Africa, not the least of which is their exposure to other cultures through television and videos (1468). Tapiwa N. Mucherera, an African professor at Asbury Theological Seminary, supports Okorochoa as he insightfully says that being forced to live bicultural and bireligious lives create religious and cultural dissonance. He gives a definition of dissonance as the point where one finds himself or herself caught between two different attractive opinions. He maintains that when one is forced to choose that which is counter to one's belief system, dissonance occurs, and when new information is encountered that challenges the consistency of those belief and attitudes, the result is dissonance (60). What he says is true of the media programs where people are forced to believe in a bicultural dissonance.

Coming over to study in America gives one a broader understanding of this issue. Becoming absorbed and adapted into the American way of life is very easy, of which the chief aim in life is to work and enjoy all that is available to bring pleasure and happiness to oneself (so-called American dream).

However, the seemingly pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment leads to the rampant destruction of many families, homes, and relationships, resulting in divorce, abortion, and mistrust among many who profess to be Christians. People often misunderstand what is true freedom. Most think that it has to do with the rights of individuals to do whatever they want to do so long as it promises pleasure and happiness. Also, believers on their

part do not seem to understand who Jesus Christ really is and what he does to persons who put their belief and trust in him—spiritual transformation. Some ministers of the gospel, it seems, are not committed to the task of teaching and making disciples of church members and new converts. They have not experienced spiritual transformation or they did not know the importance of discipleship. Still, they might be doing just what was passed down to them as a legacy by their founding fathers. Part of the problem might also be the need for leadership replacement.

Specific ECWA Spiritual Problems

In every generation, God does not leave himself without faithful witnesses for his intervention in human history. ECWA has more knowledgeable and learned ministers than the past generations of her history. God has grown his Church in wonderful ways through the ECWA missionary arm, Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS) of ECWA, in addition to the ministries of pastors and evangelists in the denomination at large.

Because of the great need for theological education, ECWA has developed the theological institutions she took over from SIM and has opened many others in different parts of Nigeria. Presently, ECWA has one university, three seminaries, four Bible colleges, one college of education, five theological training institutes and seven vernacular Bible schools. Every year many people, men and women, from ECWA and other denominations gain admission into those theological institutions to study God's word for ministry preparation. As a result, they yearly turnout theological graduates who try to do what is required of ministers of the gospel: preaching, teaching, writing, and discipleship, as well as modeling the spiritual leadership style of Christ.

Nevertheless, things do not always turn out to be exactly what they are supposed to be, in terms of believers' identity and a sense of belonging in Christ and to one another, resulting in

1. A lack of spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness,
2. A lack of spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation,
3. A lack of participation in an authentic community of believers, including such matters as handling conflict resolution, and
4. A lack of organizing small groups (teams) for effective ministry.

The need to dwell on God's word cannot be over emphasized. In Crucial Issues in the Believer's life, I stress the importance of God's word in believers' lives. Taking hold of God's Word will not happen without a planned personal discipline, and time must be set aside each day to read, study, and meditate on God's Word. Spiritual growth is possible only by the grace of God and through disciplined effort (26).

Richard J. Foster agrees with my assertion when he writes that the mind is renewed by applying it to those things that bring transformation. He maintains that many Christians remain in bondage to fears and anxieties simply because they do not avail themselves of the discipline of study (54).

Spiritual growth cannot take place when God's children neglect Bible reading and meditation. They have to have an intentional plan and disciplines for God's Word to become part of them, as they desire to pursue spiritual transformation, spiritual formation, and organization of small groups for effective ministry.

The spiritual situation in the ECWA denomination has to be addressed in order to return to God. Deliberate actions are required for reclaiming ECWA believers' identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

1. Spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness,
2. Desire for spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation,
3. Participation in authentic community of believers including for the purposes of conflict resolution, and
4. Organization of small groups (teams) for effective ministry.

My past ministry experience shows that some believers in ECWA are preoccupied with their tribal and sectional groups and meetings at the expense of participating in an authentic community of believers. Some would like to fix their tribal or sectional meetings on Sundays, even at church worship times. Others are in the habit of taking their fellow believers to courts presided over by nonbelievers instead of resolving their conflicts amicably. Some prefer to follow cultural methods of settling their disputes instead of forgiving one another just as Christ forgives them their sins or by following the biblical way of resolving conflicts as taught by Christ (Matt. 18:15-17).

Another factor contributing to the believers' lack of commitment to the Lordship of Christ is the sin of departing from God's biblical principles for living the Christian life. This commitment brings to mind the relationship that existed between God and his people, Israel. God made a covenant with his people Israel and demanded full obedience as the terms of the covenant. At Mount Sinai, God urged Moses and the people of Israel to be careful in keeping the terms of the covenant and to obey his commandments, so that

God would make them his treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. In order to help Israel return to him, God reminded them of his redemptive deliverance from the land of Egypt (Exod. 19:3-6).

However, the Israelites soon deserted God (Exod. 32:34), broke the covenant terms, and started worshiping other gods. Entanglement with other gods compromised Israel's relationship with God right on down through the divide monarchy. This kind of attitude toward God could not go without consequences. God's punishment was to take them into captivity by using foreign invaders; nevertheless, God is compassionate. He promised to bring them back to their land if they would return to him in obedience:

When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart; wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations and when you and your children return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I commanded you today. Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes, have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you. (Deut. 30:1-3)

God's expectation was for them to return to him and be willing to obey him and his commands. The result was that God would restore their fortunes, and circumcise their hearts and the hearts of their descendants so that they would be able to obey him with all their hearts and minds (30:6).

Panya Baba, former ECWA president (1988-1994) aptly describes the spiritual state of the ECWA denomination:

Today, in ECWA we cannot boast of our ministries as ... in the days of the SIM. We may want to excuse ourselves by blaming our socio-economic factors as being responsible for our catalogue of woes. However, let us not forget that we ourselves are largely responsible for our present woes. Our lack of spiritual strength and vision led us to redefine these ministries in terms of our Nigerian socio-political and socio-economic life, in that we lost somewhat our vision, goal and objectives of our Fathers, and ... ministries are seen and viewed as jobs, what we can

get out of them, our benefits. This change from ministry to jobs and from service to God and to our fellowman to daily-paid jobs and as means of earning a living has indeed corrupted our minds and vision, and commitment. (“Presidential Address, Thirty-Eighth General Church Council” 6)

Comparing the ECWA and the founding mission body, Baba believes a spiritual decline exists among the believers in the ECWA denomination. He reminds the church representatives that believers are solely responsible for their own decline in spiritual matters.

Maigadi also describes the spiritual state of the church from a different dimension when he refers to ethnicity as an issue of concern. He maintains that the desire for ethnic representation in the ECWA administrative structure is the cause for rampant embezzlement in some ECWA departments such as medical units and hospitals, the department for rural development, literature departments, and even in some congregations. He observes that a major cause of immaturity and spiritual decline among ECWA members is in relation to the way they practice their faith as compared to the founding fathers, SIM (220).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to design a ministry intervention program to assist ECWA believers to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, I developed three major questions to serve as guides into the research.

Research Question #1

What are the biblical and theological themes through which ECWA believers could reclaim the knowledge and experience of identity and a sense of belonging in Christ and to one another?

Research Question #2

What leadership model/method would most effectively facilitate the reclaiming ministry intervention in the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA)?

Research Question #3

What methods of communication would contribute most effectively to reclaiming the knowledge and experience of identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another?

Methodology

This study was conducted as a modified literary research, mainly research and reflection on texts germane to the process of designing an effective ministry intervention to help ECWA believers reclaim their sense of belonging in Christ and to one another, as well as their identity in Christ.

Summary

Chapter 1 considers a brief history of Nigeria, the different tribal groups, religious states, politics, mission work, and spiritual decline of believers in Christ.

The research reveals that some believers in the ECWA lack strong submission to the Lordship of Christ, his ministry, spiritual hunger and desire for spiritual formation disciplines. Some who started the Christian life with high enthusiasm do not seem to care

for the spiritual things that matter for their spiritual life and faith. They seem to lack the inner desire of sharing the gospel to the lost world.

The main spiritual problem facing believers in the ECWA has to do with a lack of understanding about their identity in Christ and a sense of belonging to one another. As a result, believers do not live their lives in conformity with the faith they profess in Christ Jesus. As a result, they experience

1. A lack of spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness,
2. A lack of engaging in spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation,
3. A lack of participating in authentic community of believers, including for the purposes of such matters as conflict resolution, and
4. A lack of organizing small groups (teams), for effective ministry.

They lack sufficient sacrifice of time to be with God in prayer, to love other people, and to participate in an authentic community of believers. These factors contribute toward the spiritual decline among ECWA believers in Christ.

Overview

Chapter 2 concerns the theological and biblical foundations of this research, the spiritual problems ECWA believers are facing, and God's expectations from them. These biblical and theological foundations address the need for believers in the ECWA denomination to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Chapter 3 explores the leadership model required for a ministry intervention in the ECWA.

Chapter 4 presents the ministry intervention for the ECWA.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The main topic of this research is helping ECWA believers to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. The biblical and theological foundations support the topic and were organized around the four subtopics of

1. Spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness,
2. Spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation,
3. Participation in authentic Christian community of believers including for the purposes of such matters as conflict resolution, and
4. Organization of small groups (teams) for effective ministry.

Believers must have knowledge and certainty of their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. Believers put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. They have assurance of entrance into heaven and seek to become more like Jesus each day (Rom. 8:29). This assurance is the expectation of all believers in Christ. At salvation, believers are placed in Christ and are granted full access to all the valuable resources God offers his children, such as his wisdom (“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” [Ps. 119:105]), forgiveness and grace (“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” [Eph. 1:7]), a new perspective that brings hope and confidence, even at the toughest of times (Eph. 1:18), material provision (“For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” [Matt. 6:32-33]),

and peace (“For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” [Eph. 2:14]).

At salvation, believers enjoy every spiritual blessing because of their identity and sense of belonging in Christ (Eph. 1:3-10). God has poured out his grace to all believers because of his Son, Jesus Christ (1:6). God purchased believers’ freedom with the blood of Christ and forgave their sins (1:7). He shows his kindness to believers along with all wisdom and understanding (1:8). He reveals to believers the mysteries of his will according to his pleasure, which he purposed in Christ (1:9). God brings all things in heaven and on earth together under one Head, even Christ (1:10). All these actions give believers an identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

The ones who believe in Christ know him as “the Truth” and, according to Scripture, knowing him as “the Truth” sets one free (John 8:32). Therefore, Christ provides freedom to the ones who identify with him by faith. Neil T. Anderson agrees with this fact and writes, “The truth, Christ and His Word, should set us free and enable us to conform to the image of God” (56). He went on to say that, the only identity that works in God’s kingdom is a person plus Christ to equal wholeness and meaning. To Anderson, identity in Christ is the only way believers may enter, participate, and live in God’s kingdom (35, 27). Because of Genesis 2:18, Anderson maintains that Adam and Eve not only had a sense of belonging to and with God but also with each other, implying that believers who identify with Christ have a sense of belonging to Christ and to one another.

Justification through faith in Christ leads to freedom, and for freedom Christ set the believers free:

1. Free to experience spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness (Rom. 12:2),
2. Free to engage in spiritual disciplines for spiritual transformation (Heb. 12:11),
3. Free to participate in authentic community of believers including for the purposes of such matters as conflict resolution (Acts 2:42-47), and
4. Free to organize small groups (teams) for effective ministry (1 Cor 12:24-27).

Ruth Schroeder gives the meaning of freedom using the following words:

True freedom means the pursuit of the highest and best in life, the fulfillment of our true nature as children of God. Through Christ, we are able to experience God's forgiveness and live in fellowship each day with Our heavenly Father; we are also free to extend forgiveness to others and live in a spirit of harmony with one another. By the power of Christ, we are free to love God and have a wholesome love and respect for others and ourselves. Freedom in Christ means that we live, not as slaves to endless rules and rituals, but as free sons and daughters of our heavenly Father.
(55)

Schroeder gives a good description of the meaning and importance of freedom, which is obtained through faith in Christ. She states that the purpose of believers' freedom is to have wholeness, love, and respect for themselves and for others.

Schroeder implies that believers who identify in Christ have a sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. The community of believers has the freedom to enter and participate in God's kingdom together with other believers. Identifying with Christ is to acknowledge and accept his Lordship in the believers' lives and the need for continuing dependence upon him (John 15:5).

In the Old Testament, God refers to himself as, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod. 3:14), and in the New Testament, Christ claimed the "I AM" name like God the Father when he said, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). He referred to himself as "the

Truth,” and elsewhere, he told his disciples that they would know the truth and the truth would set them free (John 8:32). This verse reveals the very identity of Christ’s disciples. If God is the “I AM WHO I AM” and Christ is the “I AM,” believers in Christ are accepted as God’s children and are, therefore, members of Christ’s body (John 1:12; 1 Cor. 12:27). They are secured, established, anointed, sealed, and free from condemnation (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Rom. 8:1-2). They are significant because they are branches of the true vine, a channel of his life, and can do all things through Christ who strengthens them (John 15:1, 5; Phil. 4:13).

Nevertheless, this core value identification in Christ that leads to identity and a sense of belonging in Christ and with one another in the family of God seems to be lacking among some ECWA congregations. The absence of the core value seems to explain the lack of spiritual transformation into the image of Christ and liberation from sin and self-centeredness, lack of spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation, lack of participating in authentic community of believers, including for the purposes of such matters as conflict resolution, and lack of organizing small groups (teams) for effective ministry.

When one becomes a believer in Christ, the expectation is to live a new life, different from the former one. Paul in his letter to the Romans urged them not to conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but their renewal of minds should result to a transformation of life (Rom. 12:1-2).

Therefore, the biblical and theological foundations for the four subtopics of spiritual transformation into the image of Christ, spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation, participating in authentic community of believers, and organizing small

groups for effective ministry were treated separately to show that which is expected of believers in Christ and what seems to be lacking in most ECWA congregations.

Spiritual Transformation into the Image of Christ

Spiritual transformation takes place at the time of salvation and depends entirely upon God making the first move toward humanity, also known as prevenient grace. However, God does not force anyone to receive his salvation. Each person has the free will to choose whether to accept or to reject God's offer of salvation. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that *whoever believes in him* [emphasis mine] shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). At the fall, humanity lost their intimate relationship with God (Gen. 3:21-24).

In order to restore humanity into fellowship with God, individuals must believe in God's plan for human salvation. Genuine faith in Christ includes a turning away from sin, which is repentance. Both John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries with a call to repentance (Matt. 3:2; 4:17), and this call was at the heart of Jesus' ministry. He said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5: 32). To repent literally means to change one's mind. That change includes both one's opinions and intentions. When that change happens, transformation takes place. Salvation, which entirely depends upon God making the first move toward humanity, reveals his character of grace.

Paul, speaking of transformation, in his letter to the Romans uses the words "together" or "with" (1:2-4). He draws his readers' attention to the fact that the gospel is about God's Son, Jesus Christ; God's power brings salvation to Jews and Gentiles alike. The gospel, according to Paul, is the revelation of God's righteousness available to all

humanity on the same basis, namely, faith in Christ Jesus. In his presentation, Paul begins by painting the picture of the human condition, starting with the Gentile sinfulness: idolatry that leads both to the worship of creature and to injustice and hatred of every kind (1:18-32). On the other hand, he quickly turns to the Jews by arguing that having the Law does not put them in the position to judge others (2:1-11). He states that some Gentiles do not have the Law but do what the Law demands and some Jews who have the Law still break the Law (2:12-16, 17-27). The only remedy, Paul says, is the hope that lies with heart circumcision (Deut. 30:6) and by the spirit (Rom. 2:28-29). He concludes by saying that both Jews and Gentiles are sinful and, therefore, need help, which the Law could not provide (3:9-20).

However, God's response is the greatest good news ever: Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's righteousness is given apart from the Law and is available to Jews and Gentiles alike by faith. Paul then raises three questions (3:27-31), which he answers in the rest of the argument:

1. The Jews have no basis for boasting;

2. The exclusion of boasting is based on the Law of faith, apart from the Mosaic Law; and,

3. Faith in one God for both Jews and Gentiles is the only answer (3:21-26).

Abraham is presented as an example of the common ground on which both Jews and Gentiles may stand. He believed God, and his faith was credited to him as righteousness. This theophany occurred while he was still uncircumcised (a gentile), thus making him the father of all, both Jews and Gentiles alike. This revelation implies that both Jews and Gentiles must believe as Abraham did (4:1-23, 25).

In addition, Paul recaps his argument by going back to Adam in order to point out the equally universal scope for Gentiles as well as Jews, that the righteousness made available is in Christ Jesus (5:12-21). He goes on to say that sin is nullified through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He uses the analogies of death, burial, and resurrection as pictured in the Church's sacrament of baptism as being practiced among Christians (6:1-14). Theologically this practice means that all believers who identify in Christ enter into the family of God through faith by baptism in Christ Jesus. Through baptism, the believer is given identity and a sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. On this basis believers experience transformation leading to the image of Christ, needing to engage in spiritual disciplines for spiritual formation, hence participating in authentic community of believers and organizing accountability groups for effective ministry.

Paul's argument ends with God's mercy for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles, from start to finish. Having laid this theological foundation of God's mercy, Paul begins the twelfth chapter in his letter to the Romans. He starts by saying that the preceding mercies of God call believers into the service of God, based on a renewed mind, by the spirit, that can determine what pleases God (12:1-2). The following are the basic theological foundations for the exhortations that follow. The believing community of Jews and Gentiles together as one body is the common ground in which all is to be worked out (vv. 3-8), first at the interpersonal level (vv. 9-21) and then in the world at large (13:1-7), with love being the strongest ingredient that holds the community of believers together (vv. 8-10).

The whole argument concludes with prayer and exhortation to accept one another, followed by a series of Old Testament texts that include the Gentiles in God's history (15:9-12). Ending his argument in prayer, he writes, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (15:13).

Identifying in Christ makes one a member of his body, the Church, and at salvation, believers experience transformation in their lives, making them new creatures. As a new creation in Christ, the believer has a new desire to submit to the Lordship of Christ, a desire to fellowship with other believers, to love one another in the faith, and even to love nonbelievers. Seeing a lack of this kind of inner transformation among most ECWA believers indicates that most might not have experienced it or do not fully understand their new position as new creatures in Christ.

Spiritual Disciplines for Spiritual Formation

Spiritual formation is not a universally understood term. For some, it corresponds to conversion or sanctification. For others, it relates to some aspects of morality, speaking to the character of a person. Others consider it as involving skills needed for use in ministry.

Spiritual formation is the process of drawing closer to God and investing oneself in the pursuit of spiritual maturity. It is seeking God with all of one's heart, soul, and mind. It is the vital first step in the development of all Christians. When a believer responds to God's love, spiritual formation begins. As the believer loves God in return for his salvation and desires to please him in his or her life, the believer begins to draw closer to God (Streets 43).

Jesus was asked a question by a Pharisee, an expert in the Law and part of a larger group of Pharisees, who wanted to test Jesus: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” (Matt. 22:36). Jesus replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment” (vv. 37-38).

The response given by Jesus shows that nothing is more important than loving God. Nothing else in life should take precedence over the love for God—not wealth, not power, not family or friends, not career, not possessions, and not fame. Love for God is foundational, especially for a believer or a community of believers.

Jesus demonstrated the foundational importance of loving God when he was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. After his baptism, Jesus was led by the Spirit of God into the desert to be tempted by Satan. He experienced three temptations and was able to resist each of them successfully. The gospels give a complete account:

“If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the Temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “If you will bow down and worship me,” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan; For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” (Matt. 4:1-10)

Jesus’ responses indicate that he had a deep love and devotion to God. He trusted God to meet all his needs. He did not rely upon his own power and ability. He refused to compromise with Satan. He mentioned the priority of the word of God for life, the desire

to honor God by not putting him to the test, and the need to worship and serve him above all else in life. Jesus loved God with all his heart, soul, and mind. He was able to resist the offers of the Satan.

Jesus' disciples are called upon to embrace a love for God that is not to be substituted by anything else. Believers today must do the same. They need to know who has called them to serve and whom they are called to serve—God. God requires a wholehearted commitment to himself, not a superficial relationship that is taken for granted and often overlooked as insufficient. George Barna in Fish Out of Water maintains that people without a continual, authentic love affair with God are empty and legalistic. His presence and loving involvement in one's life is the air that Christians must breathe to survive (156).

Spiritual formation includes developing a relationship with God. He desires intimacy with all of humanity and wants to know the believer and the believer to know him. God wants to be close to the believer and the believer to be close to him. God desires an intimate love relationship with each believer as Henry Blackaby and Claude King write, "A love relationship with God is more important than any other single factor in your life" (43). In order for spiritual formation to take place, believers must discipline themselves by taking some intentional steps leading to that effect.

Philip Tait, a professor in Jos ECWA Theological Seminary, Nigeria, says that a discipline is any activity within believers' power that enables them to do what they cannot do by direct effort. Disciplines are designed to help believers be active and effective in the spiritual realm of their own hearts. These practices help to withdraw from

total dependence on merely human or natural things to kill the flesh and let it die and to depend on the ultimate reality of God and his kingdom.

Spiritual formation is a process that involves molding and shaping, cutting off the old self and putting on the new with a new desire, with pressure applied in just the right places to reshape believers into Christ likeness. The apostle Paul put it best in his letter to the Romans:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (12:1-2)

Paul urges the believers in Rome not to be conformed to the pattern of this world. Rather, they were to be transformed (changed in structure, appearance, character, or condition) by the renewing of their minds. God intends to change believers into the image of Christ so completely that Christ himself will live within their hearts, directing every aspect of their lives. The believer's inner being is transformed so radically that the person becomes a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). The goal of this process is for believers to become mature and complete in Christ (Col. 1:28-29). God will be content with nothing less than the believers' transformation into Christ likeness, but believers must have a desire to be what God intends them to be. The work of transforming believers into the image of Christ is of God himself but the believer has to trust him by faith.

John Wesley, the eighteen-century evangelist whose life, ministry, and writings have shaped many believers, taught of four primary sources of truth: Scripture, reason, tradition, and experience.

The foundation for believers' faith is the Scripture—the Bible. Wesley believed that God himself had inspired and guided the process of writing and compiling all that was revealed to the Prophets and Apostles who wrote the Bible:

We believe, indeed, that “all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God”; and herein we are distinguished from Jews, Turks, and Infidels. We believe the written word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice; and herein we are fundamentally distinguished from those of the Roman Church. (Thorsen 2)

Through the study of the Bible and meditation on it, spiritual formation begins.

The Bible provides the foundation for truth. God created humankind as rational beings. He has given them the ability to think, and he expects them to use reason in their relationship with him (Isa. 1:18). Christianity is neither unreasonable nor irrational.

Therefore, reason, guided by the Holy Spirit, informs understanding of Scripture.

Traditions of the Church are those beliefs and practices that have been handed down from the time of Christ to the present day. Traditions are also important for understanding the truth about God and His salvation plan for humanity. Believers can learn a great deal from faithful people who have gone before them. Though not equal to Scripture, tradition is an important source of truth. Believers think seriously about their faith and struggle with the hard questions of life and belief according to God's plan.

Wesley also believed that the experiences of God's work in the believers' lives are an important factor for understanding and teaching for spiritual formation. Through the Holy Spirit, God communicates with believers in understandable ways.

Wesley's sources of truth are also called the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. Scripture is at the top, supported by tradition, experience, and reason. “The quadrilateral allows us to

maintain a gestalt-like understanding of Wesley's approach to theology without becoming over concerned with trying to uncover a systematic theology" (Thorsen 24).

These are the tools God uses to communicate truth to believers, and they are consistent. If believers understand what God is teaching them through each source, their messages agree because God does not give mixed messages (Barnwell 20).

That process for spiritual formation must begin somewhere. When one becomes a believer in Christ, he/she begins the process of transformation and continues throughout the person's lifetime. Believers have used several spiritual disciplines that lead to spiritual formation. The list of all spiritual disciplines is not exhaustive in this research; however, the three major disciplines of study, prayer, worship and fellowship are presented to serve as samples of the kind of spiritual disciplines necessary for spiritual formation.

In human relationships, people move from a shallow level of relationship to a deeper one by spending time together with the person with whom they are relating. In the same way, getting to know God requires spending time with him and getting to know him better. Relationship with God grows as the believer invests time to be with him and listening as he speaks through his word and talking with him in prayer.

The Discipline of Studying God's Word

In the spiritual discipline of study, believers are encouraged with the written and spoken Word of God. This discipline is the positive counterpart of solitude. David Watson says that he spends time chewing over the endless assurance and promises to be found in the Bible. As he does, Watson claims that his faith in the living God grows stronger and holds him safe in God's hands (89). In the discipline of study, believers see

the Word of God at work in their lives and in the lives of others, in the Church, in history, and in nature. Therefore, believers need to withdraw into silence where they can prayerfully and steadily dwell on God's Word. Study does require giving much time on a regular basis to meditate upon those parts of the Bible that are most meaningful for spiritual formation, with a constant engagement of the Bible as a whole (Ps. 119:105).

Emmanuel Akanet suggests five ways towards getting hold of God's word:

You need to *hear* [original emphasis] the word of God. You can hear God's word in the home, in the Church and through personal or group Bible studies (Rom 10: 17; Rev. 2: 7; Neh. 8:8).

You have to *read* [original emphasis] God's word, the Bible. Reading the Bible gives you an overall picture of what God has revealed to humanity. Reading the Bible is the foundation of a daily quiet time with the Lord. You are free to mark your Bible as you read it, so that some portions needed for reference can easily be identified. The believer may keep a notebook in which to write ideas and thoughts that God gives him or her in the daily Bible study (Rev. 1:3; 1 Tim. 4:13; Deut. 17: 18-19).

You need to *study* [original emphasis] God's word, the Bible. Studying the Bible is more in-depth than just reading it. It involves writing down your discoveries. Bible studies should be an ongoing personal discipline and small groups are helpful to give the believer an effective way of studying the Bible (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; Ezra 7:10).

You need to *memorize* [original emphasis] God's word, the Bible. To memorize the Scripture is to hide them in one's heart so that God, through the Holy Spirit can use them to change your heart, your attitudes, your thinking, your habits and your character. To learn some verses of scripture by heart, you need to be motivated in programs that are geared towards that and you surely need someone to help you during your recitation (Psalm 119:9-11; Prov. 7:1-3; 22:17-21).

You need to *meditate* [original emphasis] on God's word. Meditation involves a careful consideration of what you have read and applying what you have studied and what you have memorized. Meditation is like the thumb that is needed in combination with the rest of the fingers to firmly grasp something. (Crucial Issues 24-25)

Taking hold of God's word in these five ways would not happen without deliberate plan of discipline to read, study, memorize, and meditate in God's Word. That time must be set aside each day to read study and meditate from God's word. Spiritual formation is

possible by the grace of God and through discipline efforts by the believer(s). The need for believers to study the Bible devotionally and prayerfully in order to progress towards spiritual formation must be stressed. Taking hold of God's word prepares the believer to live the Christian life, face challenges and oppositions from the devil. It gives victory in the spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-15). Jesus used Scripture to win victory over the devil's temptation (Matt. 4:1-11). Experience in my pastoral work in some of the ECWA churches have shown a poor turnout of parishioners during times of Bible studies and meditations on God's Word. Recent church records show that in a congregation of five to six hundred people, one may find that only fifteen to twenty people were likely to turn up for the midweek Bible study. This turnout shows that either they did not understand its importance or those other things of more importance to them caught their attention.

The Discipline of Persevering in Prayer

Prayer is conversing, communicating with God. When believers pray, they are talking to God, aloud or within their thoughts. Discipline in the area of study, meditation, worship, solitude, and fasting all require prayer to succeed. Prayer can be a discipline as is seen from the Lord's advice to those with him in the garden of Gethsemane when he said, "Watch and pray that you will enter not in to temptations" (Luke 22:40; Matt. 26:41). Prayer is communicating with God. As such, it may serve several needs for believers. In prayer, unbelievers cry out to God for forgiveness and mercy. In prayer, believers worship, adore, and give thanks to God. In prayer, believers ask God's help to face the challenges of life. In prayer, believers come to God in complete dependence, offering their weakness for God's strength, their failures for God's perfection, and their

inadequacies for God's power. Jesus encouraged his disciples to be persistent in their prayer life (Luke 18:1).

By communicating with God in prayer, believers come to know him more fully and to accept his will. Some people think of prayer as a mysterious activity or as a very formal sort of speech, filled with "thee" and "thou." In reality, prayer is just talking to God, being sincere in telling him one's needs (Matt. 6:5-8). He understands the human language; believers can talk to him as they do to a friend. They can imagine that God is present with them. They can share with him their sorrows and hurts, their deep desires and needs and their greatest joys. God urges his children to communicate with him by calling upon him. He promised that he would hear and respond. Here is what he said to one of his prophets:

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me, and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you. (Jer. 29:11-14)

God has good plans for his children, therefore, they need to trust him and his promises in his Word. Believers can learn to trust by their commitment to prayers, and the study of his Word, the Bible. When God's children seek the Lord, they will find him, just as he spoke through his prophets and apostles: "Seek me and live" (Amos 5:4); "You will seek me and find me" (Jer. 29:13); "Seek the Lord while he may be found" (Isa. 55:6); "But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33).

The Discipline of Fellowship and Worship

In the discipline of fellowship, the believer engages in common activities of worship, study, prayer, and service together with other believers. This discipline involves

coming together in a large group or meeting with a few believers. Corporate fellowship mediates God's force and presence much better than individual fellowship. When believers come together, individuals find the opportunity to serve others using their spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:11-13).

Fellowship during worship is the act of putting God first in the community of believers. The New Testament is filled with examples of corporate fellowship of believers, when they meet as members of Christ's body to honor God. They do so through singing, testimonies, prayers, preaching and teaching. The writer of Hebrews challenges the people of God "not to give up meeting together" (10:25). These words express God's prescription for becoming like-minded with other followers of Christ. Each part of Christ's body has value to the others. Corporate fellowship in worship allows believers to function as a body, enabling them to meet each other's needs to a greater degree than if each of them were to interact with God individually or in private (1 Cor. 12:1-30).

Activities of fellowship during corporate worship can be formal or informal. They may include structured participation by the congregation (liturgy), or they may be casual. Although Scripture does not prescribe the level of formality that should be applied to the worship service, but it does suggest some important elements that should be included in the fellowship service. Some of those elements include (1) music or songs (Ps. 92:1; 96:1; Eph. 5:19), (2) prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:42), (3) affirmation of faith (1 Cor. 15:3-5, example of the Apostles' Creed), (4) personal testimonies (1 John 1:1-3), (5) giving tithes and offerings (Deut. 16:17; Mal. 3:10; 1 Cor. 16:1-2), (6) baptism (Acts 16:13-15), (7) the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-26), (8) Scripture reading (Luke 4:16-21; Acts 2:42), and

(9) preaching (Acts 8:4; 15:35). This list demonstrates the variety of ways in which a group or body of believers might express its love and devotion to God and his kingdom. Worshiping God has always been a central activity for his followers. The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, provides references to God being constantly worshiped (Ps. 95:6; 100:2; Zech 14:17; Rev. 4:8-11; 5:8-9; 11:16-18; 14:3; 15:3-4). In the Old Testament temple, the people offered sacrifices of worship to God at various times throughout the year. In addition, when Mary, the mother of Jesus, found out that she was pregnant with God's Son, she cried out in a song of worship (Luke 1:46-55). The book of Acts also describes the early Church's passion for worship (Acts 2:42-47; 16:25).

The purpose of worship is to ascribe worthiness to God. He alone desires worship and affection from believers. His position as Creator of all things gives him the right to be worshiped. Other purposes of worship are for believers to (1) align themselves with the will of God; through worship, believers surrender their will for themselves to his will for them (Jer. 29:11); (2) acknowledge their total dependence upon God—for this life and for eternal life (John 14:6); (3) admit their sinfulness and their need for forgiveness (Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:1); and, (4) admire God's constant involvement in their lives (Matt. 6:33). When believers choose to worship God, their outward actions expose the posture of their hearts. In worship, the symbols of lifting hands, kneeling, keeping silent, and singing are all expressions of a deep passion, submission, and gratitude to a generous and awesome God.

The "fellowship" vocabulary of the New Testament underscores and extends the rich interaction and profound sharing involved in the fellowship and worship just commended. It guards against an over spiritualization of the concept. The most common

New Testament verb for engaging in fellowship is *koinoneo*, with the related noun, *koinonia* also quite prominent. The verb indicates “sharing” or “having a share” in something (Danker 552; Hauck 259). Thus in Hebrews 2:14, Jesus “became [*kekoinokeken*] flesh and blood”(NLT). The saints’ sufferings make themselves “partners with Christ in his suffering” (Rom 8:17). The noun *koinownia* carries similar meaning in nominal form (Danker 553). In the New Testament, believers not only fellowship with one another but they participate in the persons of the triune God (e.g., with the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. 1:9; with the Father and the Son in 1 John 1:3).

The strong engagement involved in this “sharing” easily moves to actual “giving” or “contributing a share” in something, a very tangible “sharing” (Danker 552). Thus, Paul describes the Macedonians who wanted to have a “share [*koinonian*] in the gift for the Christians in Jerusalem” (2 Cor. 8:4; i.e., to give financial help to them; cf. Rom. 15:26). Paul praised the Philippians because they supported him financially; literally they “fellowshipped [*ekoinonesen*] in the matter of a gift” (Phil. 4:15; see also Hauck 804-09).

Clearly, a more careful look at the New Testament’s talk of “fellowship” points in at least two directions. First, it deepens and strengthens the level of interaction sought in interpersonal relationships between ECWA believers and the triune God and with one another in gatherings for worship and other purposes. It aims at persons truly transformed through worship and fellowship. Second, this language provides a clear foundation for the holistic ministry intervention envisioned, with no compartmentalization into personal and social holiness.

As mentioned above, spiritual formation is part of God’s enablement as well as the believer’s deliberate actions of discipline. Believers who are not engaged in some sort

of spiritual disciplines show that either they have lost the desire for spiritual formation or they did not realize their importance. The fact that ECWA believers are lacking in some of these spiritual disciplines implies that either of these cases applies to them.

Participating in Authentic Community of Believers

Authentic community is displayed in the early Church as it is presented in the book of Acts (2:42-47). It started on the day of Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit. Many people, convicted of their circumstances, repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. That day, three thousand people were added to the small group that soon was identified as the community of believers, the Church.

Worship and fellowship happen in the context of community. David E. Streets beautifully describes “community” when he says that wherever people gather for whatever reason, community could be experienced. Relationships are present in community; therefore, authentic community is living the Christian life with others and experiencing Christianity through relationships. In addition, community is the followers of Christ applying their love, humility, and desire to serve, interacting with the people with whom they live, work, play, and serve (59). In like manner, Julie A. Gorman stresses the importance of community:

Christians should be concerned about community because it traces its origins directly back to God. The essence of community finds its roots deep in biblical-theological soil. Without God, there would be no community. Some people equate community with small groups and claim that the act of instituting small groups is biblical. (23)

Gorman went on to say that, community is rooted in the very nature of God’s personhood and, therefore, existed before creation. Gilbert Bilezikian agrees with her. He writes, “Community finds its essence and definition deep within the being of God. It is grounded

in his nature and reflects his true identity as a plurality of persons in oneness of being” (16, 43).

God made humans in his image for community. Personhood is only known in relation to others. This identity as relational beings is carved out of interpersonal relating. Because God knew and experienced community, he made his creatures capable of the same. The creature must be separate but with a drive to relate. Through encounters with others the self exists “in the image of God” (R. Anderson 74). Bilezikian maintains that community as God ordained it was not an incidental concern of his nor did it happen haphazardly as the creative result of a transcendental cosmic brainstorm. Community, he said, is deeply grounded in the nature of God. It flows from who God is. Because he is community, he creates community and it is a gift of himself to humanity (27).

Love and humility were key characteristics of the early Church. Because they loved each other so much, they wanted to satisfy the needs of all who lacked anything. Their humility enabled them to think of others as better than themselves. Their selflessness led them to sacrifice their possessions and prioritize the needs of those around them. Also, relationships were key ingredients in the early Church as it experienced authentic community. Keith Taylor observes that Jesus came proclaiming a gospel that has relationship at its very essence (35). Jesus not only proclaimed love of neighbor as the second most important commandment (Matt. 22:34-40), but he also provided instructions on how to restore a brother or sister who sins against another person:

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to

listen even to the Church, treat him as you would a pagan or Tax collector.
(Matt. 18:15-17)

Restoring a brother who sins (resolving conflict) is one of community principles of living, which Jesus taught his disciples. He intended them to live in community so he taught them how they should live in harmony with one another.

Jesus sought genuine relationships with his disciples. He did more than simply select twelve men so they could receive his instructions; he intended to draw them closer to one another and to himself. “His intent was to establish the twelve disciples as a community, as messianic, eschatological Church” (Gorman 51). Taylor identifies the deepening relationship among Jesus’ disciples:

The disciples’ fellowship during those three years involved a growing commitment to Christ and to each other. They were to live together, to love one another, to serve one another, and to work in harmony. Jesus directed his most severe criticism towards the religious leaders of the Law (Matt. 23:23) who forfeited relationships to preserve their religious purity. (36)

Believers in Christ most understand the importance of community and strive to participate in authentic community of believers. Believers need to examine the nature of the disciples’ relationships with each other as a model for establishing authentic community among themselves. Bilezikian writes that the disciples were bonded together by an intense loyalty to each other in community by the principle of maturity and reciprocal servanthood (49). The disciples were more than business partners or coworkers. They lived with each other and experienced one another’s lives. They learned together (Matt. 5), worried together (John 20:19), and they rejoiced together (John 20:28). Believers need to appreciate the uniqueness of relationships in Christian community. Relationships are critical in pursuing spiritual formation in a community of

believers. Ken Hemphill identifies a tie between relationships with God and community. He writes that any claim to vital relationship with God that does not find expression in human fellowship is fraud. Christian community is not sentimental or easy attachment of a random selection of individuals but the mutual relationship of those who remain in Christ and, therefore, belong to one another (88).

Other characteristics that are typical of authentic community include love, acceptance, encouragement, servanthood, and accountability. Among them love is the most important. It provides the basis for the existence of the other four characteristics. When love is in place in a community of believers, love for people will matter most. Genuine concern for others is essential for authentic community to take place. Love for others, including strangers, causes the acceptance of others in their various circumstances. Love encourages participation in a community of believers, serving everyone according to their needs. When one becomes a believer, by faith through Christ, the understanding of love is of great importance. Commitment to love others in the community of believers must deepen, enabling the believer to look beyond the limitations and shortcomings of others in the community.

Acceptance of others evolves out of love. Jesus accepted people just as they were because of his deep love for humanity. He had the hope of transforming their lives so that they might realize their God-given potentials. He demonstrated his unconditional love and acceptance in his encounter with the woman at the well (John 4:1-26), the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11), the woman with the alabaster jar of pure nard

(John 12: 1-11), even with the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43). Believers must have the habit of accepting one another and others (love) in the community of believers to be able to help them reach their full potential.

Love is the fundamental character of the community of believers, the Church. The Church as one family of God is a community with distinctive characteristics, which makes it unique and different from other types of community. The New Testament writers present some basic characteristics of the community of believers. Addressing the problem of division in the church of Corinth, the apostle Paul defines the Church in terms of the body of Christ with different parts that have different functions for the good and existence of the body (1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:4-5). According to Paul, although the Church is composed of different people of social, economic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, it is defined as a single community in terms of its relationship with Christ. Being united in Christ, their identity and sense of belonging, the Church becomes one in Spirit, one in hope, one in the Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God the Father (Eph. 4:4-5). In this way, Maigadi affirms that the presence of the Holy Spirit, the hope and faith of the community, and the symbolic ritual of baptism provide the church with a sense of belonging in Christ that transcends cultural identities (277).

Paul also defines people in the community of believers as new creatures (1 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10). They are a community that has been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, making them new creatures. This newness, Paul says, requires breaking away from the old life, that alienates them from God and from one another. The experience of a new life in Christ makes the church, a community, united and identified in Christ by

faith, while constantly striving to attain “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

Writing to believers scattered throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, the apostle Peter describes the church as a “chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God” (1 Pet. 2:9). According to Peter, the uniqueness of the church lies in its sense of belonging to God, liberated from the bondage of sin and set apart to participate with God in redeeming the world. Though in the midst of severe persecutions, Peter exhorted the Christian community not to be distracted by anything but to view themselves as a contrast community and therefore, “aliens and strangers in the world” (1 Pet. 2:11).

In his thirty-ninth Presidential Address to the ECWA General Church Council, the Rev. Baba adopted Peter’s definition of the Church to define the spiritual state of ECWA:

Who are we? We are truly, what the Apostle Peter states in 1 Peter 2:9-10. We are a new people with a rich heritage in Jesus Christ. If truly this is what we are in Jesus Christ, then may I make a passionate appeal to all of us here and to all ECWA members, that we drop the weapons of war from our hands? If we also want to be brothers and sisters, to work together, to fellowship together, and to be in unity, oneness, then, let the weapons of pride, of selfishness, of greed, of vainglory, of covetousness and envy and dominance fall from our hands. (11-12)

Baba identifies some of the causes for spiritual decline in the ECWA, among others, including pride, selfishness, greed, vainglory, covetousness, envy, and dominance. He then stresses the need to stop those habits. The appeal made by Baba, Maigadi says, is not yet a reality in ECWA. The sense of belonging in Christ and to one another as a contrast community in ECWA is being distorted by divisive ethnicity among ECWA leaders and members. The church in which divisive ethnicity reigns cannot claim to be an authentic community of believers as described in the New Testament. Maigadi contends that the

distinctive characteristics of the church as the body of Christ, a new creation, and the people of God as described above reveal in part the expected character of the church. The *agape* love Jesus advocates and commands his disciples to maintain in their relationship with God and to one another is to be the foundation upon which other characteristics of the community of believers is built (279; Matt. 5:43; Mark 12:9-31; John 13:34-35).

By the expression of *agape* love among members of a community of believers, the world around them will know they belong to Christ and to one another. Where believers truly love God and their neighbors, as Jesus taught and exemplified, divisive ethnicity would be a detestable thing in their midst because it is not of God and his kingdom.

Paul writes that God has poured out his love into the believers' hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). *Agape* love is the spiritual glue that holds members of God's family together and its primary function in God's kingdom is to maintain relationships between God and within members of his community.

Authentic community is the expression of believers' lives in the context of relationships. Believers should follow the example of Christ as they relate to one another and to others. They should strive to recreate a loving community as modeled in Acts 2:42-47 by embracing humility. Believers are encouraged to abandon their own "selfish ambition or vain conceit" and "look to the interest of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). Humility causes believers to be more concerned in establishing a loving community, to relate appropriately with one another and less concerned about their individual selves. Where genuine love, humility, and concern for one another in the community of believers are all present, conflicts are more easily and appropriately resolved. When believers come

together as a community, conflict becomes inevitable. Conflict exists in all spheres of life. It is found in the home, at places of work, in relationships, and in most pages of the Bible. Adam and Eve entered into conflict with God in the garden (Gen. 3:6-11). Elijah was in conflict with King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and the prophets of Baal because of their false worship (1 Kings 18:16-29). Jesus was in conflict with King Herod because Jesus' birth was a threat to Herod (Matt. 2:3-12). Paul experienced conflict with Christians whom he was persecuting (Acts 9:1-6), with the Jews when he became a Christian (Acts 23:1-8) and with the Roman authorities who imprisoned him (Acts 28:17-20). Conflict abounds where truth opposes falsehood.

The community of believers needs to stay healthy so that members would be able to render some sort of service to the community, using their individual spiritual gifts. One mark of a healthy community includes the ability to resolve conflict when it occurs. This fact accentuates the need to understand what conflict is, and the factors that contribute to it. "Conflict," according to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, is one person believing one thing and another person believing something else. It is two people having a difference of opinion and each of them thinking they are right. Conflict is controversy, disagreement, or opposition (279). A healthy community of believers should be aware of the danger of allowing unresolved conflicts and be able to handle them mutually. Despite these observations, not all conflict is bad. Conflict in the Bible was a means to enhance understanding of God, his character, and principles in dealing with people. Jim Van Yperen writes that in Scripture, conflict is the very stuff of faith. It is the creative tension between Law and grace, sin and forgiveness, justice and mercy. Conflict

begins and ends the salvation story from the Garden of Eden to Golgotha, from the destruction of the temple to the New Jerusalem (241).

According to Streets, conflict occurs when one person believes one thing while someone believes something else. Conflict is created when a desire to institute reform exists because people are resistant to change. He maintains that motivation to resolve conflict arises when leaders in a community possess humility that leads them to ascribe greater importance to people's welfare. It encourages them to abandon pride and stubbornness and be concerned with unity in the community they are leading. Where leaders do whatever they can to help the community of believers maintain kingdom principles, humility is demonstrated (71).

Evidence of the presence of these abnormalities in the ECWA and the shifting away from Christ's expectations of his Church indicate the need for a ministry intervention. This intervention seems imperative in order that ECWA believers would be able to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Organizing Small Groups (Teams) for Effective Ministry

The purpose of a small group is not meetings but maturity, not making connections as much as knowing God. True spiritual community leads to growth. Stuck groups are usually those that have closed their minds to change. They have chosen to remain within their comfort zones. Group vitality is energized by movement and growth both in the individual and in the group (Gorman 94). Gorman in search of group definition quotes three different sources (Adler and Ronman; Barker, Wahlers, Watson, and Kibbler; Hestenes and Gorman, respectively):

A group consists of a collection of people, who interact with each other, usually face to face, over time in order to reach goals. (224)

A small group is a collection of individuals, from three to fifteen in number, who meet in face-to-face interaction over a period of time, generally with an assigned leader, who possess at least one common characteristic, and who meet with a purpose in mind. (9)

A Christian small group is intentional face-to-face encounter of no more than twelve people who meet on a regular basis with the purpose of growing in the knowledge and likeness of Jesus Christ. (78)

Gorman states that a group is not a group without interaction, that people simply occupying the same area at the same time does not turn them into groups. For face-to-face encounters groups are limited in size, usually no more than twelve, with seven or eight as the optimum number (110).

Gorman's numerical recommendation for small groups, fall in line with Moses' experience with his father-in-law in the wilderness. Moses was called by God to lead the Israelites and their families out of Egyptian bondage and away from the oppression of the Pharaoh (Exod. 3:7-10). Once they were out of Egypt, Moses occupied the position of leadership through the wilderness with directives from God himself. He served as the judge over all disputes among the Israelites and the people came to him seeking God's will. One day Jethro, Moses' father-in-law visited him in the wilderness and noticed how he alone was trying to do a group's task by himself. At that moment, Jethro taught Moses a key leadership principle of delegation and showed him how no leader can do all the work that needs to be done in a group (Exod. 18:13-23). Barna supports this principle of delegation. He writes, "No single individual, even when called and gifted to serve as a leader, has all the resources and abilities required to satisfy the leadership needs of a group" (Developing Leaders 39). He maintains that God does not want people to think that they are indispensable to his kingdom (39-40). Of all leaders, none is perfect. No

leader is capable of doing all that needs to be done. Every leader must be humble enough to admit his or her shortcomings or imperfections. A leader in a particular area of specialization will always have someone else more capable and gifted than he or she is.

The idea of giftedness and the importance of others participating and sharing responsibilities are presented in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. The Corinthian church had some issues that needed attention in the areas of leadership, authority, skills, and duty. Paul identifies the Church as the body of Christ to demonstrate interdependence among members of the Church and the value of each person in the community of believers. He compares individuals with specific spiritual gifts for ministry to individual parts of the human body:

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ (12:12). But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to those that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ and each of you is a part of it. (12:24-26)

Paul illustrates how every part of the body has a need for other parts of the body. He presents the Church as a team with everyone working together for the common good of the whole body, and each part having an important role to play. Each part of the body is dependent upon the others in order to accomplish a common goal. Wayne Cordeiro explains that the Church is not an “organization.” It is more like an “organism” with living parts that must move and work together as a whole. Each individual part cannot stand alone, but each has an assigned role. He maintains that apart from the whole body, one part is useless because God created the body to function as a whole (185).

A lack of humility prevents some leaders from organizing small groups or teams for effective ministry. Some of them allow pride and arrogance to dominate their lives to the extent that they do not want to delegate responsibilities and to empower members of their groups. Some of them who believe they are indispensable are always reluctant to ask others to help them in areas in which they are lacking. Such leaders do not see the need to create opportunities for developing their group or team members. On the other hand, humility helps some leaders in understanding the value of working together as a group or team. Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith explain that a team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goal, and approach for which they hold themselves accountable (45).

Once the concept of a small group or team is established and embraced within the community of believers, individuals in the community see themselves as teammates with everyone having a significant task to perform. Stan Toler insightfully suggests the best way of building a winning team. He writes that investing in a team pays long-term dividends. One's ultimate success in ministry is not conditioned on building capacity or programming expertise. The leader's success will rest on the ability and desire to invest in others to build a winning team. Toler presents six essential skills for developing a team in ministry: learning the art of delegation, affirming others, providing adequate support, motivating teammates, evaluating results, and rewarding performance (180-83).

From my ministry experience in the ECWA denomination, I have observed that historically the organization of small groups for effective ministry has not been given much attention. Either communities of believers are ignorant of small groups or congregations have a lack of interest. Therefore, the need for this research and

subsequent ministry intervention will help ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 describe a Christian identity problem in the Nigerian ECWA. Select members' assessments, critical analyses, and leadership assessments converge in pointing to members' lack of a sense of belonging to Christ and to each other as key ingredients of this identity problem.

Ministry interventions to address this problem will inevitably involve questions of leadership and communication. Research questions 2 and 3 of this study focus on discovering the most effective means of communication and the most appropriate approaches to leadership for a ministry intervention designed specifically to help members of ECWA reclaim their sense of identity in Christ—a clear sense of belonging to Christ and to one another in Christ.

Four major concerns emerged from the literature: (1) the need for leadership in the ECWA, (2) the leader and leadership tasks, (3) transformational leadership, and (4) the leader's character, including the spirituality and the competency of a leader. They provide the outline for the literature review.

The Need for Leadership in the Church and in the ECWA

In the Introduction to The Maxwell Leadership Bible, John C. Maxwell explains that the most critical problem facing the church today is the leadership vacuum that grew during the twentieth century. He refers to the findings of Barna:

Leadership remains one of the glaring needs of the Church. People are often willing to follow God's vision, but too frequently, they have no exposure to either vision or true leadership. After fifteen years of digging into the world around me, I have reached several conclusions regarding the future of Christian Church in America. The central conclusion is that the American church is dying due to lack of strong leadership. In this time of unprecedented opportunity and plentiful resources, the church is actually losing influence. The primary reason is the lack of leadership. Nothing is more important than leadership. (viii)

Elsewhere, Barna strongly supports the need for leaders who would facilitate spirituality in sinful, selfish, and misguided mortals. "Nothing is more important than leadership," Barna then concludes (Leaders on Leadership 18).

James D. Berkley strongly supports the idea that the Church has a need of capable leaders. Following Paul in Ephesians 4, he believes that leadership is necessary and that God supplies persons—some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers. The people gifts are intend to build up on the body of Christ (145).

Similarly, J. Oswald Sanders explicitly states, "[R]eal leaders are in short supply" (18). All through the Bible God can be found searching for leaders. Sanders says that if the world is to hear the church's voice today, leaders are needed who are authoritative, spiritual, and sacrificial and a person must qualify to be a spiritual leader (18). A tension stands between the affirmation that God gives people as leaders in the church (Berkley) and the experience that God is searching for leaders (Sanders). At least one possible implication is that persons given as leaders for the church for a variety of reasons do not realize their full potential as leaders. Another implication might be that persons selected for leadership are selected by criteria that subvert the gifting processes by which God intends to provide for the church.

Through what has been presented thus far, the leadership vacuum to which Maxwell refers is not confined to the North American church. Evidence points to a similar crisis in the Nigerian church. Baba's analysis that leadership in the ECWA has devolved from earlier approaches to leadership as ministry based in profound commitment to daily paid jobs and simple means of earning a living surely describes an acute leadership need. Similarly Maigadi's finding that ECWA members express major concern about fair ethnic representation in leadership shows a shift from missional concerns to political and polity concerns in the church's deliberations over leadership (220). This shift shows either a mistrust of leadership or a misunderstanding of what leadership is primarily about. Regrettably, similar to the church in America, the spiritual state in the ECWA denomination is declining due to lack of strong and spiritual leadership. Spiritual and capable leaders are needed to relate well with God (to catch his vision) and with the people they lead.

The lack of strong leadership in the church is not limited to the church in America alone. It also applies to and affects the church situation in Nigeria, the ECWA denomination in particular; thus, ECWA believers have a need for spiritual and capable leadership to help reclaim their identity and sense of belonging to Christ and to one another. The need raises the question of a leadership approach appropriate for the ministry intervention necessary for this task.

The Leader and Leadership Tasks

Building on the leadership foundation Jesus provided in Matthew 20:25-28, Warren Bennis gives a beautiful definition and description of leaders:

Leaders are, by definition, innovators. They do things other people have not done or do not do. They do things in advance of other people. They make new things. They make old things new. Having learned from the past, they live in the present, with one eye on the future. And each leader puts it all together in a different way. (133)

In addition, he says leaders must be right-brain as well as left-brain leaders, thinkers who can be intuitive, conceptual, synthesizing, and artistic (133).

Implicit in Bennis' description is the notion of leaders as change agents in the communities they serve. As change agents they must be people qualified to lead if they expect others to follow. Particularly they must be persons whom others trust. Bennis names four characteristics he says leaders must have in order to generate and sustain trust:

1. Constancy—Leaders are all of a piece; they stay the course;
2. Congruity—True leaders have no gap between the theories they espouse and the lives they practice;
3. Reliability—Leaders are ready to support their coworkers in the moments that matter; and,
4. Integrity—Leaders honor their commitments and promises.

Bennis maintains that when these four factors are in place, people will side with the leader. These ingredients cannot be taught, he thinks. They can only be learned (150). In other words, not only cognitive but personal development is involved.

Streets agrees with Bennis on the need for leaders to have the qualifications to lead. He stresses the importance of humility as another ingredient foundational to leadership. He assumes an extensive list of skills, talents, traits, and abilities as strengths for Christian leadership, but for greater effectiveness, leaders should establish their gifts

and strengths on the foundation of humility (38). In agreement with Bennis and Streets, Sanders writes, “No leader lives a day without criticism, and humility will never be more trial than when criticism comes” (118).

In addition, Sanders emphasizes discipline as another essential leadership quality. He states that without this essential quality, all other gifts remain dwarfs and cannot grow: “Before we can conquer the world, we must first conquer the self” (52). An effective leader has learned to obey a discipline imposed from without, and has then taken on a more rigorous discipline from within. Many who aspire to leadership fail because they have never learned to follow, Sanders warns. God gave leaders gifts and talents that fit the mission to which they were called. What raised these leaders above their fellows was the degree to which they developed those gifts through devotion and discipline (52).

Berkley underscores the difficulty of the leadership task:

After all, where is it that we find genuine Christian leaders? In the fore, taking the opposition. On their knees, working at the wash. Away from leisurely pursuits, finishing what someone else did not. Over a barrel, trying valiantly to reconcile differences. Behind the scenes, orchestrating a grand endeavor. Ahead of the pack, dreaming dreams others may follow. Outside the circle where it gets very lonely at times. Nothing easy about that. (142)

If Berkley is anywhere near correct in this assessment, the import of discipline and humility as leadership basics highlighted by Sanders and Bennis becomes obvious. The difficult leadership task requires tough and capable leaders.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner draw these elements together in their description of leadership. They maintain that beyond the horizon of time is a changed world—a world different from today’s world. Some people see across this boundary of

experience into the future. They believe that dreams can become realities: they open eyes, lift spirits, build trust, and strengthen relationships. They stand firm against the winds of resistance and give others the courage to continue the quest. They are leaders, known by their vision and their capacity to lead persons into the new world they envision (7).

Barna in Leaders on Leadership describes leadership in a different dimension. He believes that for believers to become holy, righteous, committed to Christ, or radically obedient to God, “they need leaders who will do whatever it takes to facilitate such qualities in human sinful, selfish, misguided mortals” (18). This commitment does not represent some crass pragmatism but instead is a way of calling for tenacity and creativity in truly Christian leadership.

Few cultures in the world remain static. Globalization and the explosion of communication and technology have thrown settings long comparably stable into accelerating change. In such a world, Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, and James H. Furr believe that leaders cannot depend on tradition for many insights. Whether or not one accepts their view of tradition, the current setting for ministry surely demands continuous learning, and congregations must develop the capacity to adjust their way of life by learning new competencies, as these writers contend. They stress the need for leaders to play a critical role in acquiring these new skills. When congregational leaders do not exhibit transformational traits, initiating and guiding transformation becomes difficult (95-96).

Herrington, Bonem, and Furr pick up the other side of leading for change when they insist that among the transformational tasks for church leaders is that of engaging believers in disciplines for spiritual transformation (95-96). According to his particular

agenda, persons must be engaged in the process of their own transformation if lasting change is to occur. Change is more than something that change agents “do” by themselves.

The various definitions, descriptions, and explanations of leadership reviewed reveal that both the leadership position and the leadership task are challenging and difficult. These difficulties underscore the need for leaders who possess a widely recognized set of life qualities, leaders who are able to generate and sustain trust from their followers and who know what is expected of them as leaders. These are the kinds of leaders needed to foster innovative and transformative leadership for reclaiming ECWA believers’ identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Transformational Leadership

Language such as change agent and transformational leader is eminently appropriate to this study. Baba’s candid picture of the ECWA situation shows that a veritable cultural shift in spiritual awareness and leadership attitudes and behavior are called for. Talk of a ministry intervention aimed at helping ECWA reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ clearly aims at profound transformation. Herrington, Bonem, and Furr assert that the nature of leadership required for initiating and guiding transformation represents a major shift for many congregations. For a variety of reasons, the leadership skills most pastors learn in seminary are often inadequate for this challenge.

They compare two leadership styles with their advantages and disadvantages, transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership is based on transactions or exchanges between leaders and their followers. This leadership style

allows followers to express a variety of basic self-interests, such as physical and emotional security, and leaders shape situations in which the followers accomplish the actions desired by the leaders in exchange for rewards that meet the followers' needs. Transactions may include money for jobs, flattery for loyalty, and votes for favors. Transactional leaders tend to set up rules and standards to check for noncompliance and to maintain the status quo. The leaders rely on reactive tactics as they focus on power and political leverage and alignment.

Transformational leadership allows the leader to help followers embrace a vision of preferred future, to inspire and empower followers to achieve new levels of personal and corporate performance. Transformational leaders encourage individuals and support innovative ventures. Followers gladly commit to a future they help to create. Followers internalize the spirit and goals of the organization because they trust the leaders.

This research focuses on church leaders whom Herrington, Bonem, and Furr call congregational leaders. They say that when congregational leaders do not exhibit transformational traits, initiating and guiding transformation becomes difficult. They observe that the transactional mode is less effective when deep change is required (96).

Transactional leadership, with its focus on leverage, political exchange, and maintaining the status quo, plays easily into the hands of fallen human interest. While transactional leadership could perhaps be effective in bringing order out of a chaotic situation, it is ill-suited for character transformation toward spiritual vitality and life in the mind of Christ. It is much more apt to perpetuate nepotism and reinforce precisely the human tendencies to inappropriately leverage others that Jesus condemned in pagans and sternly placed off limits to his disciples' approach to leadership (Matt. 20:20-28).

Transformational leadership would clearly be the preferred leadership style for ministry intervention in reclaiming ECWA believers' identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. Transformational leadership describes servant leadership without using the following terms: based on trust, shared power, and the common good. It aims at real change beyond present realities and allows followers to see that they can help to make the change. The reclaiming ministry intervention requires a leadership model that provides opportunities for change, beginning with the believer's heart, attitude, and perspectives.

Transformational leaders simultaneously take risks, challenge old ways of doing things, and initiate innovative actions consistent with the group's vision (Herrington, Bonem, and Furr 97). A transformational leadership is equal parts of science and art requiring continuous learning and skill development. Being an effective change leader is coming to grips with leadership realities (97). In addition, Bernard M. Bass states that transformational leadership contributes to effective leadership under stress; however, he maintains that transformational leadership does not replace transactional leadership. Instead, it adds substantially to helping individuals, groups, and organizations that are under conflict and stress (652).

Realities of Transformational Dynamics

Herrington, Bonem, and Furr maintain that even though every congregation requires a unique transformation, they believe that certain aspects of transformation are predictable and can be described as "universal." They say six dynamics summarize their perspectives on congregational transformation:

1. Spiritual and relational vitality drives transformation. Long-term transformation is only possible when a congregation faithfully and corporately pursues God's will for its future.

2. Congregational transformation requires transformed leaders. The spiritual health of the pastor and other key leaders is intimately intertwined with that of the congregation and a congregation will rarely grow beyond the health of its pastor and key leaders.

3. Transformation occurs through intentional processes. Change is difficult, but effective congregational change requires someone to lead it toward a common destination. They maintained that the interaction between the change process and the other aspects of spirituality, relational vitality, and learning disciplines should reflect an intentional design process.

4. Each transformational process is unique. No two congregations are alike; consequently, the journey to a new future must be contextualized for a particular people, time, and place. Principles may be transferred, but prescriptions need to be carefully tailored to fit a particular context or environment.

5. Congregational transformation requires specific skills. Change leaders should plan to invest time in personal and congregational learning and should continuously look for individuals who possess specific needed skills.

6. Healthy change takes time. For a congregation to experience deep and lasting change, all of its major parts must be moving in the same direction. When significant aspects of its body life are incongruent with the vision, vital energy is lost and confusion sets in (159-60).

The leadership model required for reclaiming ECWA believers' identity and sense of belonging needs to have these perspectives on the realities of transformational change. These perspectives provide the basis for deep, lasting, Spirit-led, congregational or communal change.

Promoting Transformative Learning

Beyond effective leadership for profound change, the other requirement for the ministry intervention with which we are concerned is a method of communication that would contribute most effectively to the learning process for success of the ministry intervention. As Herrington, Bonem, and Furr suggest, leadership and congregational transformation are in significant measure learning processes. Although the transformation sought is not simply cognitive, learning still constitutes a major aspect of the transformation envisioned. By the very nature of the case, the topic of church leadership assumes an adult constituency—adult leaders and adults needing leadership. Hence, adult learning strategies can be expected to be germane to the transformational ministry intervention.

Patricia Cranton claims that adult learning has been viewed as a process of being free from the oppression of being illiterate, a means of gaining knowledge and skills, a way of satisfying learners' needs, and a process of critical self-reflection that can lead to transformation. She believes that whether or not the literature of the decade advocates a particular type of adult learning, individuals will continue to acquire specific sets of knowledge, engage in learning to solve immediate problems, and question their own and others' assumptions and societal values (3). Cranton argues that adult learning is a distinctive process, in the following ways:

1. Adult learning is voluntary. Adult learners are assumed highly motivated and interested in content that is relevant to their immediate needs (5).

2. Adult learning is self-directed. Therefore, learners should be part of the instructional design decision, identifying needs, setting objectives, gathering materials, selecting methods, and evaluating the process of their learning context (5).

3. Adult learning is practical in nature. She says that because adult learning is practical, immediate problems will surface; adults primarily want to apply their learning to their work or personal lives the next day (6).

4. Adult learning involves sharing of experiences and resources. She assumes that adults bring a rich and varied set of life experiences to the learning environment, and that they wish to share these resources with others and benefit from the experiences of other members of the learning group (6).

5. Adult learning is often related to individuals' self-concept. Self-concept influences learning ability in adults. Low self-concept is seen as inhibiting learning, and increased self-concept is a product of learning (7).

6. Learning is threatening or anxiety provoking for adults. Transformative learning, she says, can be seen as a painful process and resistance to learning can be a consequence of anxiety or fear of change (7).

The diversity of adults' learning styles should be included in discussions of the nature of adult learning. S. Brookfield reminds leaders that people learn differently. The practical literature, he argues, usually advises educators to adopt a variety of teaching roles in order to meet the needs of learners with different styles (69).

Transformative leaders providing transformative adult learning contexts and environments will, I believe, produce transformative change. In order to help ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another, transformative leaders need to take the lead in such a great task. However, as previously noted, Cranton maintains, that adult learning is voluntary. Therefore, the major concern of a transformative leader desiring to engage adults in a learning process would be how to motivate them to begin a learning project. This beginning points involves engendering trust, articulating a vision of what can be, and being credible.

This concern, Malcolm Knowles says, prompted Tough A. to be interested in determining what motivated adults to begin a learning project. When embarking in a learning project, adults anticipate several outcomes and benefits. Some of the benefits are immediate: satisfying curiosity, enjoying the content itself, enjoying practicing the skill, enjoying the activity of learning. Others are long-term: producing something, imparting knowledge or skill to others, and understanding what will happen in some future situation. Tough concludes that an adult learner proceeds through several phases in the process of engaging a learning project and speculates that helping them gain increased competence in dealing with each phase could be one of the most effective ways of improving their learning. He identifies three phases of adults learning projects:

1. Deciding to begin. Beginning requires setting an actual goal, assessing one's interests, seeking information on certain opportunities, choosing the most appropriate knowledge and skill, establishing a desired level or amount, estimating the cost and benefits.

2. Choosing a learning planner, an individual learning consultant for a group of people. Competence in choosing a planner and using him or her proactively rather than reactively, collaboratively rather than dependently, was found to be crucial in this phase.

3. Engaging in the learning episodes. The critical elements are the variety and richness of the resources, their availability, and the learner's skill in making use of them. (Knowles 46-48).

Knowles discovered that adults come into an educational activity largely because they are experiencing some inadequacy in coping with current life problems. Adults want to apply tomorrow what they learned today, so their time perspective is one of immediacy of application. Therefore, they enter into education with a problem-centered orientation to learning (58).

Both Cranton and Knowles agree that adult learning is voluntary and that adults are motivated to start a learning project with some beneficial expectations that have the potential of improving and enhancing their ability to solve life problems. Knowles maintains that adults choose a planner they believe they can work with together, proactively rather than reactively and collaboratively rather than dependently. Cranton and Knowles indicate that adults like to apply tomorrow what they have learned today. Helping them gain increased competence in dealing with each learning phase could be one of the most effective ways of improving their learning effectiveness. Adult learning attitudes support the idea of transformation—a desire to initiate and sustain change in their individual lives. In essence, adults are willing to engage in learning processes that result in transformational change.

One could reasonably expect believers in ECWA, most of whom are adults, to be willing to engage in a transformative learning process if (1) they can see the practical benefits for them, (2) they can participate in designing or shaping their learning experience, (3) they can look forward to participating in a variety of learning experiences, and (4) they can expect to work collaboratively with transformative, spiritual, and competent leaders. Leaders who have a vision of ministry intervention to help congregants reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another and with the ability to articulate what practical difference that vision might make in their lives could well motivate adults to join the process.

Transformational Change

Transformative adult learning eventually leads to a transformative change, which must be properly managed. Toler understands that people are spiritually and emotionally vulnerable when they face changes in the routine of life, changes which may reduce their stability to zero. The change involved in transformational leadership may actually produce or increase this vulnerability:

Change agents are usually considered mavericks. They continually color outside the lines and are willing to stretch traditional ideas. Change agents can make others feel uncomfortable. However, change agents are vital. Without these fearsome leaders, no church or organization could grow, improve, or revitalize itself. (215)

Toler says initiating change is not difficult, but managing it is. Only a highly skilled leader can manage the process of change effectively (215).

I concur with Toler that transformational leaders are change agents needed to bring about the desired change. Change, which is not only needed but often desired by adults, is also difficult to manage. Toler proposes six (6) guidelines for managing change:

1. Enlightening others. All change begins with a period of enlightenment, a growth in understanding.
2. Creating a sense of urgency. Momentum can be maximized by creating a sense of urgency around the needed change, which can then drive a team toward the goal.
3. Generating a team orientation. Change is not brought about individually, no matter how tireless or determined one may be. Team effort makes significant change in any organization possible.
4. Engaging in strategic planning. Change will not succeed without a clear, achievable plan. To create a lasting change, one must have a sustainable plan.
5. Anticipating needs in its costs, funding, and the human hours needed to accomplish the task. Anticipating future obstacles and the resources needed to overcome them, such as cost, funding, and people power, provides a plan. Without a plan, the effort will fail.
6. Evaluating progress. Evaluation is the final step in leading change. Three areas must be evaluated in every change management effort: Effective evaluation—Are we on stage? Performance—Does the team understand what is expected of them and are they able to do it? ownership—Did the people buy into this plan? A change that is owned by just the leader, or just the leadership team, is unlikely to become reality (214-17).

Toler concludes by saying that starting change might be easy but managing change effectively requires these six critical skills: “Master them, and you will master the art of change” (18).

Not only are change agents needed to bring about the desired change in ECWA denomination, capable leaders are needed who should be able to sense the spiritual

decline of believers. Leaders who are able to determine the best communication method of learning, to motivate and engage adults in a learning project that leads to transformative change and have the ability to sustain and manage change. Jesus himself provided another approach to leadership, the kind that was opposed to the one used by leaders of his generation. His kind of leadership approach is worthy of consideration in this research.

Jesus' Leadership Model

Jesus rightly presents the best picture of a leader and the characteristics that qualify a good leader. He said to his disciples, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant and whoever wants to be first must be your slave" (Matt. 20:25-28). Jesus presented the picture of a leader with a servant attitude, the one who should put the interest of followers above personal interests. He emphasized the attitude of servanthood, that the leader should be ready to serve others rather than them serving the leader. Such leaders should see themselves as slaves of the people.

He gave himself as an example. Though being Lord and Master, he came to serve humanity and to give his life for their salvation (Matt. 20:28). Therefore, a leader should be one who has the qualities outlined in the Jesus' model of leadership. In essence, the leader should be "spiritual" in the sense of maintaining a good relationship with God and the attitude of servanthood toward the followers. I believe that leaders with this kind of attitude should be able to gain trust and respect from the people they are leading. Leaders

should have those leadership qualities required to provide a learning environment that motivates adults to desire entering into a learning project.

Thus, Jesus embodies the key characteristics of transformational leadership described in the leadership literature. His teaching on leadership laid out a countercultural, counter-transactional approach to leadership (Matt. 20:20-28). He dramatizes servant leadership in the classic act of washing his disciples' feet (John 13). Finally he commissioned his disciples, telling them that he was sending them in the power of the Spirit, just as the Father had sent him (John 20:20-23), tying the leadership of his Church to his own example and approach.

Leadership Character

This research has given primary attention to who leaders are and what they do. One can see these matters integrated amazingly in Jesus himself. Inevitably these concerns have now and again raised issues of leaders' character.

Leadership boils down in many ways to relational issues. The starting point in Christian relationships, including leadership relationships, is to love people in order to grow them. Rick Gray says of leadership, "The primary task of the leader is to love the people." Maxwell asserts that believers often misunderstand the nature of leadership. Confusion exists as to whether a follower of God should lead other people at all and whether leadership means something quite other than being "boss." Being a leader, says Maxwell, means serving others, as Jesus plainly said (Matt. 20:25-28). Maxwell concludes by saying that those who live as salt and light to the world as Jesus commanded have begun to obey God's call to leadership. "Leadership is influence—nothing less nothing more," (Introduction viii). Perhaps a more adequate view, then,

synthesizes the two as “influence through serving.” This synthesis reveals that Jesus’ command to love finds its best response precisely in terms of service (John 13).

Maxwell markets, for a general readership, the emphasis made by more academically oriented writers such as Robert K. Greenleaf and Peter G. Northouse on moral and ethical leadership as a critical facet of effective leadership.

Greenleaf believes that the essential quality that sets servant leaders apart from others is that they live by their conscience, which he says is the inward moral sense of what is right and what is wrong. That conscience is the voice of God to his children. Greenleaf believes that the spiritual or moral nature of people is also independent of religion or of any particular religious approach, culture, geography, nationality, or race (6). He calls the conscience “moral authority” and presents four dimensions:

1. The essence of moral authority or conscience is sacrifice. Sacrifice can manifest itself in four dimensions of life-making physical and economic sacrifices: cultivating an open inquisitive mind, purging of self-prejudices, showing deep respect and love to others, and subordinating one’s will to a higher will for the greater good (6).

2. Conscience inspires one to become part of a cause worthy of commitment. When people stop asking themselves the question, “What is it we want?” and ask, “What is being asked of us?” the conscience opens up and allows them to be influenced by it (7).

3. Conscience teaches that end and means cannot be separated. Greenleaf stresses the fact that ends actually preexist in the means. If one reaches an admirable end through the wrong means, the end will ultimately turn to dust in that person’s hands. Conscience that constantly tells people the value of both ends and means and how they are inseparable (8).

4. Conscience introduces people into the world of relationships. Conscience moves them from independent to an interdependent state where everything is altered. In addition, conscience transforms passion into compassion, engendering sincere care for others, a combination of both sympathy and empathy where pain is shared and received (9).

Greenleaf concludes that when people strive to live by their conscience, it produces integrity and peace of mind. Power and moral supremacy emerge from humility where the greatest becomes the servant of all (11). He writes that the Church has performed below expectations:

Churches are needed to serve the larger numbers of people who need meditative help if their alienation is to be healed and wholeness of life achieved, but I regret that, for the most part, churches do not seem to be serving well. They can be helped to do much better. (231)

Greenleaf observes that the Church has failed to offer the much-needed leadership expected of her.

In these matters, Greenleaf concurs with Horthouse's emphasis on ethical leadership. Northouse claims ethical theory provides a set of principles that guides leaders in making decisions about how to act and how to be a morally decent person (325). Along the same lines, Bernard Montgomery says, "Leadership is the capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose, and the character which inspires confidence" (qtd. in Sanders 27). This definition of leadership stresses both the competencies and character of the leader. I believe these two qualities are essential and needed in a leader to produce transformation and the required change in a denomination such as ECWA. Capacity and will, in Montgomery's definition, refer to the leader's competencies while character refers to the leader's spirituality—relationship with God

and interpersonal relationships with people. Sanders affirm that both the spirituality and natural competencies of a leader are interwoven in their functions:

Spiritual leadership blends natural and spiritual qualities. Yet even the natural qualities are supernatural gifts, since all good things come from God. Take personality, for instance. Montgomery said that the degree of influence would depend on the personality, the incandescence of which he is capable, and the flame, which burns within, the magnetism, which will draw the hearts of others toward him. Both natural and spiritual qualities reach their greatest effectiveness when employed in the service of God and of His glory. (28)

He concludes by saying that spiritual leadership transcends the power of personality and all other natural gifts as well as requires superior spiritual power that can never be generated by the self.

Spirituality of a Leader

Stressing the purpose of personal management, Berkley cites Bobby Clinton, a mentor of leaders, who observes, “Few leaders finish well.” Berkley supports Clinton’s remark:

Many ministers start well but end up spent, empty, and discouraged. That is why personal management is so needed. A good system of personal management includes a number of things to help us enjoy our life in Christ more and enable us to serve in ministry week in and week out with vitality, clear heads, and warm hearts. Personal management can help us develop the attitudes and exercise the behaviors that enable us to finish well. (3)

To show the importance of personal spiritual management, Berkley refers to Charles H. Surgeon’s work:

We are, in a certain sense, our own tools, and therefore, must keep ourselves in order. [I]t will be in vain to stock my library, or organize societies, or project schemes, if I forget the culture of myself; for books, and agencies and systems are not remotely the instruments of my holy calling. My own spirit, soul and body, and my nearest machinery for sacred service; my spiritual faculties, and my inner life, are my battle-axe and weapons of war. (4)

Referring to famous leaders' works shows Berkley's emphasis on the importance of leaders' spiritual and personal growth. He explains the meaning of leaders' spirituality: personal management means being well, alive in Christ, serving well in Christ, and finishing well in Christ. The leader's call to ministry is a noble calling—a glorious life and work that can both thrill and terrify leaders. Those leaders are stewards of the mysteries of God, handlers of sacred revelation. The one thing required of stewards is trustworthiness, as the salt and light of the world. Leaders must guard against losing their saltiness and, at the same time, fan the flame within them. Berkley says that although all believers are a royal priesthood, leaders are responsible for helping all priests, people of God, do their priestly work: to worship, bless and serve God, offering acceptable sacrifices to him through Christ (4).

Berkley insists that leaders need to manage several aspects of their lives well in order to serve and finish well:

1. Their relationship with the living God. Focus should be on abiding in Christ, growing in love and intimacy with the Father through Christ, and responsiveness to the stirring of the Holy Spirit (6).

2. Their relationships with spouse and children. This relationship has to do with moving in the direction of greater closeness and trust and viewing family members as the first recipients of Christ-like love (6).

3. A good grasp of God's Word. They need to learn more, submitting all thinking, feeling, and experience to the gracious scrutiny of the Lord (7).

4. A good prayer life. They need to become more mature in prayer, having the conviction that prayer is a major task, making prayer the first priority and letting it get a deeper hold in their lives (7).

5. Confrontation of sin. Leaders must come to terms with its reality, to see how pervasive it is, understand how serious it is and become better equipped to resist its lure (8).

6. Recognition of spiritual opposition. Leaders are able to discern the enemy's presence, practices, and tricks, learning to stand in Christ against him (8).

7. Integrity. Doing what leaders say they will do, they resist the temptation to rely on the ways of the flesh to accomplish spiritual work and fulfilling promises ((8).

8. Motivation. This means sorting out the inner drive, knowing whose reputation should be enhanced, making sure that God's kingdom is advanced, and knowing to whom the leader desires to attract people (9).

9. Basis for authority. Leaders continually submit to the Lordship of Christ and exercise the authority he gives through servanthood (9).

10. Identity. Leaders know who they are in Christ and embrace their new identity in Christ (10).

11. Perspective. Leaders develop a grateful heart, which is an indicator of good health, not complaining and grumbling but giving thoughtful praises to God (10).

12. Stewardship. Leaders surrender control of time, money, and spiritual gifts to the Lordship of Christ and see God's call expand into new areas (10).

13. Character. By desiring to become more like Christ, leaders develop more humility and compassion, showing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit and treating people the way Christ did. (10)

Berkley's comprehensive and wide-ranging characterization of agendas critical to vital spiritual leadership underscores the import of this feature of Christian leadership. The leader's spiritual life is of critical importance. I agree with Berkley that leaders should manage well their spirituality to be able to lead those they are serving and to be a model to the people. He concludes with a presentation of biblical requirements of leaders, namely, commitment, conviction, competency, and character. The list on managing spirituality is about character. This challenge is worth presenting to the ECWA leadership in anticipation of introducing the ministry intervention to help ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging to Christ and to one another.

Competencies of a Leader

Kouzes and Posner present five practices of exemplary leadership capabilities available to anyone in any organization, community, congregation, or situation who accepts the leadership challenge. Those five practices state that (1) leaders model the way through setting examples by aligning action with shared values, (2) leaders inspire a shared vision when they enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations, (3) leaders challenge the process by searching for opportunities and by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve, (4) leaders enable others to act when they strengthen them by sharing power and direction, and (5) leaders encourage the heart when they celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community (7-38).

Kenneth O. Gangel describes what he calls “What Leaders Do.” He goes on to say that churches, mission boards, colleges, seminaries, and parachurch organizations experience crisis times not because of bad people, not because of laziness, not because of insufficient funding, not because their contributions to the kingdom are not needed but because of ineffective leadership (31). He presents the following:

1. Leaders relate—leadership focuses on human resources—the way they treat people, the way they develop people, and the way they relate to people (31).

2. Leaders organize—good administration, detailed and comprehensive job descriptions, and organizational charts with lines of authority and span of control are needed (34).

3. Leaders achieve—if leaders can be distinguished from managers then they are further marked by their focus on goal achievement rather than time spent in the office (37).

4. Leaders think—better thinking comes through intelligent practice. Good leaders cultivate the skills of observation, fact-finding, reflection, reasoning, and judgment to arrive at a solution that advances the cause of the organizations they serve (38).

5. Leaders envision—vision grows out of mission and describes how the organization will design its future to achieve its mission (41).

6. Leaders endure—effective leaders stay in a ministry as long as necessary to get the job done using their ability to plan, make decisions, and envision a ministry’s future. This requires a willingness to see oneself in ministry for a long time (42).

7. Leaders make good things happen—leaders relate, organize, achieve, think, envision, and endure in order to make good things happen (44).

Gangel concludes by asking the same question, “What do Leaders do?” The answer, he says, is that they do precisely what God has called them to do, and they recognize that their calling to lead springs from his grace (31-44). Here competencies and character (leading out of a sense of divine calling) converge.

Using transactional language, Bass maintains that the greater a leader’s competence is perceived by the follower, the greater the probability that follower will transact goods with him or her. He concludes that competence builds up the leader’s credit so the leader can subsequently depart from the group’s norms and move the group in novel ways, yet still be accepted by the group (98). As shown above, moral and spiritual character itself is a “competence” critical to leadership, and especially to spiritual leadership.

I maintain that this description of what leaders do fits best the kind of leaders who are needed to lead people, grow them, and to make available a transformative learning environment. This type of leadership could help ECWA believers reclaim their identity and sense of belonging to Christ and to one another.

Maxwell focuses these and other insights on the multiplication and leading of leaders themselves. He argues that a leader’s toughest challenge is to create a climate for other potential leaders. Successful leaders should be able to create climates in which their followers learn models of leadership and are developing to full leadership positions (Developing the Leaders around You 17).

First, leaders must be environmental change agents. Maxwell proposes that the leaders in any organization must be more like thermostats than thermometers. A thermometer is passive; it records the temperature of the environment but can do nothing to change that environment. A thermostat is an active instrument; it determines what the environment will be and effects change in order to create a climate. The attitude of leaders, coupled with a positive atmosphere in organizations can encourage people to accomplish great things, and consistent accomplishment generates momentum. Maxwell maintains that leaders cannot overlook the importance of momentum:

With momentum, Leaders look better than they actually are.
 With momentum, Followers increase their performance
 Without momentum, Leaders look worse than they actually are.
 Without momentum, Followers decrease their performance.
 (Developing the Leaders around You 18)

He believes that momentum is the greatest of all change agents, and to maximize the value of momentum, leaders must (1) develop an appreciation for it early, (2) know the key ingredients of it immediately, and (3) pour resources into it always (18).

Dale Galloway's description of momentum states that faith is seeing something before it becomes reality. Without that kind of vision one would have no momentum, and without passion for souls, one lacks momentum. He writes, "If you focus on negative circumstances and all that's wrong, you will look in vain for momentum" (52-53).

Leaders must model the leadership they desire. Maxwell states that part of creating an appealing climate is modeling leadership. People emulate what they see modeled—a positive model yields a positive response. He maintains that when people follow the leader, they can only go as far as the leader goes (Developing the Leaders around You 17).

Second, one must look for the leader within the person. The future lies not in any job but in the person who holds the job. Leaders with vision see the leadership traits within the person. Maxwell insists that some of the qualities to look for in a person include: (1) positiveness—the ability to work with and see people and situations in a positive way; (2) servanthood—the willingness to submit, work with others, serve people, and follow the leader; (3) growth potential—is a hunger for personal growth and development and the ability to keep growing as the job expands; (4) follow through—is the determination to get the job done completely and with consistency; (5) loyalty—the willingness always to put the leader and the organization above personal desires; (6) resiliency—the ability to bounce back when problems arise; (7) integrity—trustworthiness, solid character, consistent words and walk; (8) “big picture” mind-set—the ability to see the whole organization and all of its needs; (9) discipline—the willingness to do what is required regardless of personal mood; and (10) gratitude—an attitude of thankfulness that becomes a way of life (Developing the Leaders around You 23).

Third, in providing growth opportunities, leaders must look at potential leaders among those they are leading and ask, “What do these people need in order to grow?” Leaders must encourage those around them to see themselves at a starting point of growth, to develop the leadership potential in them. Maxwell suggests that as a leader examines potential leaders and determines their needs for growth, the leader should keep in mind the following ideas for growth opportunities: (1) exposing potential leaders to people successful in their field, (2) providing a secure environment where potential leaders are free to take risks, (3) providing potential leaders with an experienced mentor,

(4) providing potential leaders with the tools and resources they need, (5) spending time and money to train potential leaders in their areas of need (Developing the Leaders around You 26-27).

Fourth, leaders should lead, not manage, with vision. An important part of leadership involves casting vision, which some leaders forget to do because they are caught up in management. True leaders understand the difference between leaders who are innovators and creators, working with people, and managers, who are maintainers, tending to rely on systems and control. Maxwell writes, “An effective vision provides guidance. It gives direction for an organization, direction that cannot effectively result from rules and regulations, policy manuals, or organizational charts” (Developing the Leaders around You 27). He concludes that leaders must invest time and money in their potential leaders, commit to promoting from within, and show their people that personal and professional growth within the organization are not only possible but also actual. Those successful leaders recognize that personal growth and the development of leadership skills are lifetime pursuits.

I strongly agree with Maxwell that paying attention to leaders’ personal growth and spirituality is equally important as leaders’ competencies and skills required for effective leadership. Some leaders in the ECWA denomination, in the past, have paid little or no attention to their personal spiritual growth, which, I believe, contributes to leadership deficiencies in the denomination. The leadership challenge and deficiencies are not limited to the ECWA denomination alone. Believers in other parts of the African continent seem to be facing these leadership problems, but leaders in Africa seem to be

rising up to the challenge by taking the initiative to organize and plan towards providing leadership that promotes transformative learning and change.

Summary

The ministry intervention toward which this study is moving to help the ECWA believers reclaim and live their Christian identity was approached as a leadership and communication issue. Consequently, Chapter 3 focuses on literature that identifies the most likely effective approaches to Christian leadership in this ministry intervention. The literature also concerns itself with discovering modes of communication most appropriate to this ministry. The need for leadership renewal in the ECWA is revisited.

Transformational leadership emerges as the best approach for effecting the desired changes required for ECWA to reclaim a strong sense of identity in Christ. The ministry intervention process is, in significant measure, an adult education endeavor. The qualities necessary for transformational leadership, including matters of both leadership competency and leadership spirituality, summarized as servant leadership are identified. Jesus' own life and teaching regarding leadership is shown to be the integrative leadership model normative for Christian leadership.

With these guiding concepts and specific instruction in place, the design of a ministry intervention aimed at helping the Nigerian ECWA to reclaim its strong sense of identity in Christ, of belonging to Christ and to one another is presented.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

Introduction

Chapters 1 and 2 pinpoint a Christian identity problem in ECWA in Nigeria. Assessment by select ECWA members, critical analyses, and leadership assessments converged in pointing to this denominational problem. The core of this issue appears to be a specifically Christian identity problem—the lack of a sense of belonging to Christ and to one another in Christ.

Ministry interventions to address this problem inevitably involve questions of leadership and communication; thus, research questions two and three of this study focused on discovering the most effective means of communication and the most appropriate approaches to leadership for a ministry intervention designed specifically to help members of ECWA reclaim their sense of identity in Christ, a clear sense of belong to Christ and to one another in Christ.

The purpose of the study was to design a program to assist ECWA believers to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. Essentially the task here is the design of a ministry intervention based on the findings of the research in the preceding chapters, especially Chapters 2 and 3. This chapter presents the core curriculum of the endeavor and the design of the ministry intervention program itself, including its basic orientation, foundational work, venues of presentation, and tentative schedule.

Core Curriculum

The research establishing biblical and theological foundations allowed the identification of seven themes especially important to recovery of strong Christian identity and a clear sense of belonging to Christ and to one another in Christ. The presentation of these themes will take place in widely varying venues, allowing for different degrees of elaboration. In the whole process, however, they will provide something of a core curriculum for the preaching and teaching missions built into the intervention ministry. Here I present the themes in the form of a series of lessons, listing only the lessons' topics and purposes (see Appendix A for a more complete outline).

Lesson 1: Spiritual Transformation

The purpose of Lesson 1 is to provide an understanding and awareness regarding spiritual transformation—newness in Christ as found in 1 Corinthians 5:17. This lesson enables participants to have knowledge and experience of transformation in Christ, so that they, too, will be able to help others gain the same experience.

Lesson 2: Humility

Lesson 2 aims at helping participants increase their understanding and awareness of humility as a leadership competency with the intention that they will develop and utilize it in their own leadership development and experience. Humility may be a motivating factor towards serving others in the community of believers.

Lesson 3: Emotional Intelligence

The purpose of Lesson 3 is to enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of emotional intelligence as a leadership competency with the intention

that they develop and utilize it in their own personal lives and leadership development. They may use it in their relationships with others in the community of believers, as well.

Lesson 4: Spiritual Formation

The purpose of Lesson 4 is to help participants to increase their understanding and awareness of spiritual formation as a leadership competency and a process leading to spiritual maturity, with the intention that participants will develop and utilize this competency in their own spiritual lives and leadership development.

Lesson 5: Authentic Community

The purpose of Lesson 5 is to enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of authentic community as the right place for all believers to be identified. The intention is that participants will develop and utilize this competency in their own locality to worship God and have fellowship with one another in the believers' community.

Lesson 6: Conflict Resolution

The purpose of Lesson 6 is to enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of conflict resolution as an ingredient of authentic community life and a leadership competency. The intention is that participants will be able to develop and utilize this competency within their communities and to develop their leadership skills.

Lesson 7: Team Building

The purpose of Lesson 7 is to enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of organizing small groups (teams) for effective ministry among believers. Participants will realize that team building is a leadership competency they can utilize in

developing their own leadership skills and for serving one another in the community of believers.

Ministry Intervention

The distinctly Christian response to any need is a ministry response (i.e., a servant response). Jesus conceived of his own ministry as a response to specific human need. He articulated this construal of his ministry in his explanation of his unconventional behavior of “eating with tax collectors and sinners” (Mark 2:13-17). He responded to questions about this behavior in terms of the link between human need (the “sick” and their need of a “physician”) and his own purpose (why he “came” [Mark 2:17]). Similarly, in his programmatic statement summarizing his whole ministry, he claimed he had come “not to be served but to serve” and to “give [his] life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). Therefore, a most fitting response to the perceived need in ECWA is along the lines of the following design, judging from the research.

Ministry Orientation

Although the ministry will take place in several different venues, the program’s orientation is toward leadership change, a ministry involving the leading of leaders. Maxwell’s (and others’) conviction is the guide. He believes that effective change solely rests on the leader(s) of an organization. He writes, “Change the leader, and change the organization. Everything rises and falls on leadership!” (Developing the Leader within You 49). He cautions about the difficulty of such an endeavor, but then concludes, “Unchanged leaders equal unchanged organizations” (49). Maxwell may overstate his case for emphasis, but the critical importance of this orientation surely holds.

Consequently, this ministry will particularly target leaders from various levels of ECWA, seeking to engage them in appropriate participation in this ministry intervention. Hence, my presentation of the ministry intervention deals with the *structure* of the unfolding process of engaging ECWA leadership, not with the *content* of the presentations at the various venues. The content, outlined earlier under “Core Curriculum” and in more detail in Appendix A, I will adapt to specific settings.

The ECWA leadership with which I am concerned includes congregational leadership (pastor and board of elders), regional leadership (local overseer of several churches), district leadership (chairperson and local overseers/district council), and general church leadership (the denominational president, district chairs, and departmental heads). Running through each of these levels of ministry are agencies with their own leaders (men, women and youth fellowships). Gatherings for pastors at the regional, district, and national levels are also offered.

Formally, my leadership contacts will begin with national leaders and pastors in the spring of 2008. At each of these levels, I will be teaching curricular content, casting vision, and encouraging participants to make these leadership and transformational themes part of their ministries.

Foundational Work

Cranton (3) and Knowles (90) both emphasize that adults are more apt to buy into change processes in whose design they have collaborated. This dynamic means that in the several venues available I will engage participants where possible as collaborators. This opportunity will be especially important at critical leadership levels. This establishment of an acceptance of the ministry is foundational to the project. Without support by

ECWA leadership, the intervention will be significantly more difficult. This collaborative approach will also influence my style and approach in other venues where I will need to be creative in gaining people's participation.

Presentation Venues

Wide arrays of presentation venues are open to me for this ministry intervention. I have already mentioned consultation with denominational leaders. These consultations will offer both small and large group settings for presenting my vision for reclaiming our identity in Christ. Opportunity for discussion and sharing among colleagues enhances the value of these meetings.

I will likely be teaching at ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos, beginning in the fall of 2007, perhaps as early as summer 2007. These classes, no matter what particular course title, will provide formal academic settings in which to teach parts or all the core curriculum. This venue also contributes significantly to the objective of leading leaders because both present and future ECWA pastors will comprise the classes.

Teaching seminars featuring persons known for the quality of their work are widely appreciated and used in ECWA ministries. I will begin offering such seminars at various denominational levels in the fall of 2008. Prior to my coming to Asbury Theological Seminary, I already had a history of offering seminars of this sort on a wide range of topics, many of which are the subjects of my earlier publications (see Appendix B). Renewing that seminar ministry, now focused around ECWA's reclaiming its identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another should be accepted easily.

Congregational settings should also be open to me. Before my coming to the United States, I accepted invitations to preach at churches in cities and villages all across

Nigeria, including churches both inside and beyond ECWA. These local churches provide a rich setting for disseminating the transformational themes of the core curriculum. They offer opportunity for public proclamation, for consultation with church boards, pastors, and agency leaders in their own locales, and for one-on-one encounters regarding Christ's answer to the needs of ECWA. In these settings, I can encourage pastors and local leaders to make these themes part of their ministries.

As the timeline shows, focus of this ministry intervention is aimed at the leaders in the ECWA denomination, fellowships groups, conferences, congregational meetings, and tithe conferences scheduled twice a year at all district levels in the ECWA denomination. The need exists to share the vision of this ministry intervention with leaders of various districts in ECWA and encourage them to share this vision with their congregations and to include the content of this study in their preaching, teaching, and in other areas of their ministries. When they catch the vision, they will eventually see the need as shown in this research and would desire learning environments, becoming spiritually capable leaders with a heightened desire for personal and communal transformational experiences leading to real change. Transformational change leaders would be able to initiate, sustain, and manage change. Transformational leadership helps their subordinates see themselves as part of the vision and perhaps even own it.

Barna in Leaders on Leadership writes, "Positive change rarely intimates returning to the way it used to be. Most positive change I have witnessed has been about creating a better future than returning to a cherished past" (206). Although this study began by describing the admirable commitments of the SIM pioneers and early converts, the reclamation of ECWA identity in Christ will not simply be a transplant of SIM to

ECWA twenty-first-century life. ECWA will have to surrender to the Savior who ransomed them with sufficient depth that they can understand the meaning of being his people now.

Evidence of surrendering to the Savior Servant will show in the ECWA believers' attitude in their relationships with and material participation in the community of believers and in the larger community of needy persons in their various localities. As discovered in Chapter 3, the New Testament's main vocabulary for fellowship designates a personal engagement and tangible sharing with others. That vocabulary stems from a root word *koinos* with the connotation of participation in something where the bond is that of relationship or love. "Fellowship" means to share with someone in something that the other person does not have (Hauck 797). For the Greek world, friendship was a supreme expression of fellowship, which included a readiness to share material possessions in a community or between two individuals (Hauck 798). These same concepts surfacing in the New Testament fellowship are guided by these insights. The ministry intervention aims at spiritual transformation, which will ignite holistic ministries, meeting practical personal and community needs in the name of Jesus all across Nigeria.

Evaluation

Toler declares that evaluation is an integral part of leadership. He insists that three areas must be evaluated in every change management effort. Evaluation at two points will be especially important to this ministry intervention. First with regard to intervention launch and ministry development, I need to measure the level of engagement of ECWA leadership in the project. In addition, I must ensure the development of a term in order

not to make the intervention, something limited to “Akanet’s project.” Longer-term evaluation will seek evidences of qualitative change in ECWA leadership's approach to life and ministry. At each point, appropriate adjustments or endorsements can be made in view of these assessments.

Ministry Intervention

The ministry intervention aims at providing a program that would be convenient for ECWA believers to engage in a learning process leading to spiritual transformation and spiritual formation in order to assist them to reclaim their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another. The steps towards the realization of the intervention and the organizational timeline are contained in Table 4.1

Table 4.1. Ministry Intervention and Organizational Timeline

Time	Ministry Event
Fall 2007	Start teaching in seminary
Spring 2008	Contact ECWA leaders; share ministry intervention vision with them
Fall 2008	Schedule seminars for pastors at district and regional levels
Spring 2009	Schedule seminars with agency leaders at district and regional levels—men, women, youth fellowships
Summer 2009	Evaluation of team building and intervention ownership and development
Fall 2009	Schedule for lecture and paper presentations at annual fellowship conferences
Spring 2010	Schedule seminars for widows and widowers
Fall 2010	Schedule seminars for a) Freedom in Christ ministry b) Servant leadership ministry
Spring 2011	Start accepting preaching and teaching invitations from churches, conferences, and other organizations
Fall 2011	Ministry intervention as described in timeline continuous each year according to ECWA conferences and fellowships plans; ministry intervention proposed plan will continue to be emphasized in teaching lectures and seminary's chapel services
Spring 2012	Qualitative evaluation of change in ECWA's leadership life and ministry.

Encouragement from Greater Africa and a Testimony

The need for transformative leaders seems to be of great concern among many ecclesiastical leaders in many African countries. Other Africans are leading awakenings similar to that proposed in this study. Two ministry initiatives that are taking place in

Africa today encourage one to think that a ministry intervention of the sort here proposed has, by God's grace, a reasonable likelihood of success.

Calembo's International Leadership Institute of Southern Africa (ILISA)

A premier example of these African ministries is the International Leadership Institute of Southern Africa founded and led by Alfred Calembo. His ministry aims at recruiting and training potential leaders who would also train others in their localities. The ministry appears to be flourishing, apparently meeting well the needs of adult learners and meeting perceived leadership needs. Calembo demonstrates the servant leadership attitude needed to be able to influence the influencers in a community. His ministry is administered at the national and international levels. Its main aim is influencing the direction of his denomination by shaping leaders who would go and shape others, too.

The core values of Calembo's ministry emphasize the importance of visionary leadership, relevant evangelism, stewardship, and leadership multiplication processes that seek and train men and women who, in turn become leaders of leaders who will effectively train others. According to Calembo, the curriculum emphasizes the importance of character and integrity because credible leaders exert greater influence on their followers. His ministry focus is based on

- Training and mobilizing leaders of leaders,
- Evangelization and Church planting,
- Ministering to HIV/AIDS, widows/orphans and vulnerable children,
- Community health,
- Education, and

- Economic empowerment and emergency food relief.

Producing leaders with a vision such as Calembó's who will lead transformational learning programs like his is the goal of this proposed ministry intervention. Calembó exemplifies the fruit anticipated when ECWA believers find their identity and sense of belonging in Christ and to one another.

Akanet's Servant Leadership Ministry

My own experience encourages me to think that new awareness of ECWA's identity in Christ, of belonging to Christ and to one another, can take hold across the denomination from national to local grassroots levels to energize and shape local ministries and Christian witness. Based on my understanding of the gospel, which offers full liberation from the ravages of sin and the call to Christian leadership as a call to serve, my wife and I started a "servant leadership ministry" in the community in which we were raised. This ministry extends God's grace and love to the disabled, the sick, the less privileged, and to HIV/AIDS victims and other needy persons within the range of our influence. The ministry focuses on the following:

- To support and encourage young widows struggling with young children ages 1-15;
- To support and encourage disabled persons and the disadvantaged to be self-supportive and self-reliance;
- To support and encourage young persons in leadership positions to strive towards excellence, able to balance their lives between family and ministry demands;
- To encourage and support senior citizens who have no relatives to support and care for them,

- To help and support the sick who have much difficulty or no means of getting medical care; and,
- To provide economic empowerment and emergency food relief to the different groups as described above.

The ministry is microcosm, done in a neighborhood environment that could be done at regional and national levels. However, the success and positive response to our limited efforts has encouraged me to think similar ministries could be creatively replicated in many local ECWA congregations. The spirit and direction of the holistic ministry could also set the tone and direction for national and regional leadership and would be a harbinger of spiritual renewal in ECWA.

APPENDIX A

Lesson Plans for Curriculum

1. Lesson Plan for Teaching Spiritual Transformation

Purpose of the Lesson: To provide an understanding and awareness regarding spiritual transformation—newness in Christ (1 Cor. 5:17). This lesson is to enable participants to have the knowledge and experience transformation in Christ, so that they too would be able to help others gain the same experience.

Devotions: a) Transformation implies identifying oneself in Christ (1 Cor. 5:17).
b) Transformation starts with a renewal of mind (Rom. 12:1-2).

Questions: Who among the participants has not yet identified himself in Christ?
Is anyone willing to do that now?
Is anyone yet to experience a change of mind from the old life before salvation?

Meaning:

- Transformation means a change from the inside out (2 Cor. 3:18).
- Spiritual transformation takes place at the time of salvation, when an individual places his/her faith in Christ as Lord and Savior.
- Spiritual and relational vitality forms the heart of the transformation (Herrington, Bonem, and Furr 12)
- Vitality depends entirely upon God's action in the believer's heart, and the one who believes is transformed into the image and likeness of Christ.
- This mature condition of spiritual transformation is whenever one believes, and it is limited to whoever believes.
- Transformation is described as "together" and "in Christ" (Rom. 1:2-4).
- Evidences of transformation are exhibited at various levels of the believer's relationships:
 - a) Good interpersonal relationship is evident of spiritual transformation (Rom. 12:9-21);
 - b) Spiritual transformation is key to relating with the rest of the world (Rom. 13:1-7).
 - c) The transformational leader helps followers embrace a vision of a preferred future. The leader inspires and empowers followers to achieve new levels of personal and corporate performance. Followers gladly commit to a future they help to create.
 - d) Because transformational leaders are trusted and respected, followers tend to internalize the spirit and goals of the organization (Herrington, Bonem, and Furr 96). Spiritual transformation results in change of attitudes such as humility and emotional intelligence. These are separate lessons worthy of teaching (see Appendixes B and C). Session ends with prayer in small groups.

2. Lesson Plan for Teaching Humility

Purpose of the Lesson: Aims at helping participants increase their understanding and awareness of humility as a leadership competency with the intention that they will develop and utilize it in their own leadership and experience.

Devotions: The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

- Humility helped the Samaritan to be willing to stop and help the person in trouble.
- It encourages one to show love to people in need.

Questions: To what situation was Jesus referring when he shared this story?
What does this parable mean to us?
(Believers must be ready to show love to their neighbors in need.)

Definitions of humility:

- Humility is the condition of being humble; lack of pride; modesty; submission and self-abasement.
- Humility lowers pride, dignity, or stature of oneself; to humble oneself or endure disgrace or degradation.
- Humility is showing love and respect for people of all categories.

Questions: Imagine looking at a large picture of Jesus' crucifixion in a Catholic Church; what do you notice? What one detail of that crucifix is most certainly incorrect?

In most paintings, films, and artistic depictions, the crucified Christ is partially covered with a loincloth. However, in the ancient world, victims of crucifixion were always crucified naked. The shameful exposure is often intended to continue even after the victim was dead, since it was common to deny victims of crucifixion, burial. (Seamands, Wounds That Heal 47-49)

Another Definition of Humility: having or showing feelings of humility rather than of pride; to be aware of one's own shortcomings; to be modest and meek and showing respect for others.

Questions: The character of Christ, which believers strive to imitate, stems largely from his two main attributes: love and humility. In your opinion, which comes first in his life? Is it love for God and people or humility? In addition, why do you think so? (Jesus humbled himself in obedience in order to take up the cross to provide salvation for humanity.) Most effective corporate leaders seldom practice humility and are usually hard on their subordinates. What advice did Jesus give to his disciples regarding such attitudes?

- He told them not to behave like the worldly rulers but that leaders should be ready to serve as slaves and servants (Matt. 20:25-27).
- Jesus taught his followers how to practice humility (Mark 10:43-47).
- Jesus deliberately chose to be humble (Phil. 2:1-7).

Session ends with prayer in small groups.

3. Lesson Plan for Teaching Emotional Intelligence

Purpose of the Lesson: To enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of emotional intelligence as a leadership competency with the intention that they develop and utilize it in their own personal lives and leadership development.

Devotions: The story of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1-16)

Questions: What happened in the story?

What would participants benefit from this story?

- Cain could not control his emotions that led to the killing of his brother, Abel.
- Leaders must learn to control their emotions in order to respond appropriately to challenges of life and in their leadership experiences.

Emotional Intelligence Defined: Emotional intelligence is self-awareness. It is the ability to understand what is going on inside of oneself at the time it is happening. Emotional intelligence is the understanding of feelings and emotions in order to prevent the negative impact of those emotions and feelings. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to practice self-management, social awareness, and relational management (Goleman, Primal Leadership 153-56).

Emotional intelligence is essential for building leadership relationships. Leaders must be able to live in their emotional impulses. They must respond rather than react to situations or circumstances of leadership. Leaders need to be able to sense what other people are feeling, so that they can respond appropriately because handling relationships smoothly is an essential ingredient for effective Christian leadership.

In Relation to Leadership Tasks:

- Leaders need to lead in control of their emotional impulses
- Leaders need to respond positively rather than react negatively.
- Leaders need to sense the feelings of other people and respond appropriately.
- Leaders need to handle relationships smoothly (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Fernando, Leadership Lifestyle 59).

Emotional Intelligence Focuses on Five Specific Areas:

1. Self-awareness includes knowing and controlling one's emotions. It is the ability to answer the question, "What is going on inside me?" (1 Sam. 18:6-7; Goleman, Emotional Intelligence 48).

2. Managing one's emotions is the ability of the leader to avoid extremely difficult situations. If not held in check, surging emotions can damage one's leadership ability permanently. David's adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11-12; Goleman, Emotional Intelligence 43).

3. Motivation is the ability to motivate and stimulate oneself to action. Motivation is marshaling emotions in order to achieve a goal. Daniel Goleman observes Jesus temptation to abandon his mission (John 12:27-28), Jesus prayer, "Not my will but thy will" (Luke 22:42), and his experience on the cross (Luke 23:39; Goleman, Emotional

Intelligence 80).

4. Empathy is the ability to feel what other people are feeling. It is the ability to recognize what is happening emotionally in other people (Goleman, Emotional Intelligence 43). It is the ability to handle relationships, so that leaders may understand the dynamics of relationships in order to accomplish effectively the goals of the group. It is the ability to manage the emotions of others just as Solomon was able to manage the emotions of two mothers, each claiming the same child to be their own (1 Kings 3:16-28; Goleman, Emotional Intelligence 256)

Session ends with prayer in small groups.

4. Lesson Plan for Teaching Spiritual Formation

Purpose of the Lesson: To help participants increase their understanding and awareness of spiritual formation as a leadership competency and a process leading to spiritual maturity, with the intention that participants will develop and utilize this competency in their own spiritual lives and leadership development.

Devotions: Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus is tempted in the wilderness

Questions: What is the value of this experience in the life of Jesus?

- To prepare Him for ministry
- To be aware of the devil's devious and to resist him.

What does it mean to us?

- To learn in the foot steps of Jesus Christ, regarding the way he handled temptations.

Spiritual Formation Defined: Spiritual formation is the process of drawing closer to God. It is the task of investing oneself in the pursuit of becoming spiritually mature. It is being formed spiritually into the likeness of Christ. It is seeking God with all of one's heart, soul, and mind. Spiritual formation is the vital first step in the development of Christian leaders.

Love for God: The Great Commandment as taught by Christ (Matt. 22:37-38).

- Nothing is more important than loving God.
- Christian leaders must embrace a love for God that is second to none.
- God requires a wholehearted commitment to himself (Barna, Fish Out of Water 156).

Relationship with God: A Lifelong Developmental Perspective:

Spiritual formation includes developing a love relationship with God. God desires an intimate love relationship with each of his children (Blackaby and King 43).

Relationship is key to understanding the passage in Luke 15:11-32, the lost Son.

• The thrust of the parable is to emphasize the relationship between God and his children as demonstrated in the Father and Son relationship. The relationship is so important that issues like pride, disobedience, rejection, and sin are overcome through love and forgiveness so that the relationship can be restored.

• All leaders have extensive responsibilities and needs, but Jesus said those things are of secondary importance when compared to the relationship with God.

• God shapes or develops a leader over an entire lifetime.

• God intends to develop a leader to reach the maximum potential and accomplish those things for which the leader has been gifted.

• Observing a leader over time provides many keys to analyzing and overviewing a leader's maturity. Life can be seen in terms of several time periods, each yielding valuable informative lessons.

• Each leader has a unique timeline describing his or her development to attain God's high potentials (Barna, Leaders on Leadership 156).

Continuous Pursuit of Spiritual Things for Spiritual Formation:

How can this process happen? Seeking first, God's kingdom includes (Matt. 6:33)

- Bible study and meditation.
- Maintaining an intimate prayer life.
- True worship: in spirit and in truth.
- Participating in authentic community of believers for fellowship.
- Organizing small groups (teams), for effective ministry.

End session with prayer in small groups.

5. Lesson Plan for Teaching Authentic Community

Purpose of the Lesson: To enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of authentic community as the right place for all believers to be identified. The intention is that participants will develop and utilize this competency in their own locality to worship God and have fellowship with one another.

Devotions: Fellowship in community of believers (Acts 2:42-47).

Questions: What is unique about this fellowship experience?

- They spend time studying the Scriptures, praying, and breaking bread.
- The apostles were doing many miraculous signs.
- Everyone felt great respect for God
- All believers were together, sharing everything.
- They sold their properties and shared the money according to their needs.
- They met in the temple every day for fellowship.
- They ate together in their homes, sharing their food with joyful hearts.
- They were praising God and were liked by all the people.
- Every day the Lord added those who were being saved to the group of believers.

Q. How is the Acts 2 experience different from your experience among the community of believers? How can we return to the original intent of authentic community of believers?

- Communities of believers seem to be doing some of those activities but not in the same way the first believers did.
 - Some communities of believers tend to be more political, racist, marginalized, and unfriendly toward some people other than the dominant group.
 - Some rich believers seem to be reluctant to share their resources with those in need.
 - Some communities of believers seem to give more attention to raising and managing money than the spiritual aspect of the community.
 - In order to return to the original intent of authentic community, believers must purposefully seek to engage in the fellowship activities outlined in Acts 2:42-47.

Authentic Community Defined: Christian fellowship and leadership happen in the context of community. Where people gather for whatever reason—to work, worship, play or serve—community context and life are created. Where community occurs, relationships are present. Authentic community is living the Christian life with others (Taylor 49). In a community of believers, followers of Christ apply their Christ likeness in their interaction within themselves and with others with whom they live, work, play, and serve.

The Early Church Displayed Characteristics of Authentic Community: Acts 2, 4. Jesus proclaimed a gospel with characteristics of community life:

- Love for God and for others (Matt. 22:37-40).
- He commanded his disciples to love each other and he called them friends (John 15:9-14).

- He gave his disciples a plan for restoring broken relationships (Matt. 18:10-35).
- He used relationships as a backdrop to explain God's acceptance of sinners who repent and return to him (Luke 15:20-24).
- Jesus developed and maintained relationships with his disciples (Taylor 36; Hemphill 88).
- Therefore, believers and their leaders are expected to be involved in deep relationships with those they are leading.

Additional Characteristics of Authentic Community:

- Showing love to one another and to others (John 3:16; 15:13; Matt. 22:37-40).
- Acceptance evolves out of love: the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-26), the woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11), Mary with the pint of nard oil (John 12:1-8).
- Encouragement (Acts 13:15; 20:4; Rom. 15:5).
- Servanthood (Matt. 20:25-27).
- Accountability (Rom. 14:12).

Francis A. Schaeffer summarizes these insights:

There is no use saying you have community of love for each other if it does not get down into the tough stuff of life... I am convinced in the twentieth century that people all over the world will not listen if we have the right doctrine, the right priority, but are not exhibiting community.
(71-72)

Session ends with prayer in small groups.

6. Lesson Plan for Teaching Conflict Resolution

Purpose of the Lesson: To enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of conflict resolution as an ingredient of authentic community life and as a leadership competency. The intention is that participants will be able to develop and utilize this competency within their communities and to develop their leadership skills.

Devotions: Israel's experience in the wilderness (Exod. 14:5-14).

Questions: What kind of problems were they facing in the wilderness?

What lesson can we learn from their story?

- When they left Egypt, they were caught up between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea.
- Moses told them to wait patiently, be calm and see the Lord's deliverance.
- He told them to trust and believe and the Lord was going to fight their battle.
- Believers are to listen and learn from Moses' call to the Israelites when conflict among them arises.
- The Lord will always make a way when none is apparent.

Conflict Resolution Defined: Conflict is one person believing one thing and another person believing something else. It is two people having a difference of opinion and both of them thinking they are right. "Conflict is controversy; disagreement or opposition (Van Yperen 279).

- Conflict exists in all areas of life: in the home, at the work place, in relationships, and among believers in the church.
- Conflict is found in the Bible: the Fall in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3), between Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14), and in the history of people in the Bible.
- Jesus' teaching shows how to resolve conflict (Matt. 18:15-17).

Advantages of Conflict:

- Conflict enhances the understanding of God and his ways in dealing with people (Van Yperen 241).
- It helped to deepen the disciples' understanding of who Jesus was (Matt. 16).
- It shows how the faith of humankind is shallow and how they easily turn away from God (Exod. 13).
- Conflict increases the need for faith, awareness, and opportunity of growth (Van Yperen 241).
- Conflict can be a learning experience (Van Yperen 242).
- It can be a means of providing solutions to problems (Lencioni 202-03).
- Conflict can result in change of attitude, development of character, and improvement of conditions (Barna, Fish Out of Water 140).

Disadvantages of Conflict:

- Conflict creates divisions in a group or community (1 Kings 12:12-17).
- It is always linked to emotion.
- It festers when unresolved, like the prodigal's older brother (Luke 15).

Conflict is Inevitable:

- People have differences of opinion and perspectives.
- Change is always needed and initiation for change brings conflict.
- Resistance to change (Barna, Fish Out of Water 139; Lencioni 202).

How to Resolve Conflict:

- Conflict requires immediate action.
 - Conflict resolution involves confrontation.
 - The cause of the conflict has to be determined.
 - Appropriate approach towards resolution has to be followed.
 - Progress of approach and development towards conflict resolution is to be monitored.
 - God's will must be sought when resolving conflict.
 - Time must be spent in prayer to determine what needs to be done.
- Session ends with prayer in small groups.

7. Lesson Plan for Teaching Team Building

Purpose of the Lesson: To enable participants to increase their understanding and awareness of organizing small groups (teams) for effective ministry among believers. To help participants realize that team building is a leadership competency they can develop and utilize these skills to mature their own leadership.

Devotions: The Church is described as a unit (body) with different parts but functions for the same purpose (1 Cor. 12:12-30).

Questions: What were the issues Paul was addressing in the Church of Corinth?
What can we learn from this passage?

- The body with many parts works together for the common good of the whole body.
- In the same way, the body of Christ works together for the same purpose—to glorify God.
- This passage in 1 Cor. means that individual believers must work together in a community for building one another, for fellowship with one another, and for the glory of God.

Definition of Team Building: Team building is the task of assembling individuals into small groups to work together towards accomplishing a common task or goal (Katzenbach and Smith 45).

Some Facts about Teams:

- God created the Church with its various parts or gifts to work together to achieve excellence just as the various parts of the human body do (1 Cor. 12).
- Individuals may represent different functions in the Church; it is only when they operate in community that the body of Christ is able to achieve its best.
- Individuals who work on the same church staff or have the same vision of community should bring a rich diversity of skills, spiritual gifts, life experiences, and worldviews for the benefit of all believers in the community. This diversity needs to be appreciated and used to strengthen the church (Herrington, Bonem, and Furr 128).
- In a team, a common goal is set, and that goal can only be achieved through the mutual, corporative efforts of the team members.

Facts about Learning in Teams:

- Team learning is the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire. It is the process of changing the group's purpose from communication and coordination to learning. It is about taking individuals with all of their gifts, experiences, and knowledge and molding them into a living unit capable of producing far more than the sum of its respective parts. Teams have significant, shared performance goals (Senge 236).
- In the context of change leadership, learning is not ultimately about acquiring new knowledge. New information may help to increase a team's capacity to meet its goals, but this information is a means to a larger end.

- For transformational leaders, learning expands a group's capacity to achieve its desired results.

The Need to Build Teams:

Leaders cannot do all the work in a community; they need others to help—Moses' experience and Jethro's advice (Exod. 18:13-26; Barna, Fish Out of Water 39).

- Leaders do not have all the gifts to accomplish all the tasks that need to be done. They need to delegate so others can share the responsibilities.
 - One part of the body needs the help of all other parts (1 Cor. 12).
 - Leaders accomplish more effectively when they develop teams, and a team accomplishes more than an individual (Lencioni vii).
 - Leaders and all believers need moral support and encouragement to and from one another (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25).
 - Leaders and all believers need encouragement from God (Rom. 15:4-5).
 - Two are better than one (Eccles. 4:9).
 - Leaders lead better through teams or small groups. (Katzenbach and Smith 15; Philips 214).
 - Jesus demonstrated the importance of working in teams:
 - a) Jesus called his first disciples (Matt. 4:19),
 - b) Jesus sends out his disciples in teams of two (Mark 6:7), and
 - c) Jesus sends out his seventy-two followers in teams of two (Luke 10:1).
 - Clearly, team ministry was the standard in the New Testament. The twelve disciples were the basic team with which Jesus sent out his seventy followers in teams of twos. The context of the team was also his model for training ministers (Fernando, Leadership Lifestyle 131; Barna, Leaders on Leadership 53).

Session ends with prayer in small groups.

APPENDIX B

List of Books I Have Authored

By God's grace, I have had the privilege of writing some Christian literature for the spiritual growth of believers in the ECWA and other denominations in Nigeria and in Africa. I wrote in both the English and Hausa languages because most of the ECWA believers are Hausa-speaking congregations, especially in the northern part of Nigeria, which is predominantly Muslims. The list of books I have authored include:

1. Crucial Issues in the Believer's Life . Jos, Nigeria: Ehendero Printing, 2003.
2. A Letter for Today's Youths . Jos, Nigeria: Bible Translation Trust, 1993.
3. Bishara Ikon Allah . Jos, Nigeria: Konsel Commercial, 1991. [The Gospel is the Power of God]
4. Ka Rabu da Damuwa . Zonkwa, Nigeria: Oyeku Printing, 2001. [Keep Worry Away from Your Side]
5. Abin da Allah ke So . Zonkwa, Nigeria: Oyeku Printing, 1996. [What God Wants]
6. Yin Girma cikin Ruhaniya . Jos, Nigeria: Bible Translation Trust, 1990. [Growing spiritually]
7. Albishirinku Yan Ikklesiya . Jos, Nigeria: Bible Translation Trust, 1992. [Good News for Church Members]
8. Shugaba da Shugabancinsa . Oyeku Printing Press. Zonkwa, Nigeria. 2000. [The Leader and His Leadership]
9. Hikimar Rayuwa Domin Mutanen Allah . Zonkwa, Nigeria: Oyeku Printing, 1998. [Wisdom for Living for the People of God]
10. Hakikanin Koyarwa akan Gwauraye da Marayu . Zonkwa, Nigeria: Oyeku Printing, 2002. [Doctrine on Widows and Orphans]

11. Yin Tafiya Tare da Allah . Jos, Nigeria: Bible Translation Trust, 1994. [Walking with God]

WORKS CITED

- Adeyemo, Tokumboh. Africa Bible Commentary. Nairobi, Kenya: World Alive, 2006.
- Akanet, Emmanuel. Bishara Ikon Allah . Jos, Nigeria: Koncel, 1993.
- . Crucial Issues in the Believer's Life. Jos, Nigeria: Ehendero Printing, 2001.
- Allen, Roland. Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962.
- Anderson, Neil T. Victory Over the Darkness: Realizing the Power of Your Identity in Christ. Ventura, CA: Regal, 2000.
- Anderson, R. S. On Being Human: Essays in Anthropology. Pasadena, CA: Fuller Seminary, 1982.
- Awolowo, Obafemi. Path to Nigerian Freedom. London: Faber and Faber, 1947.
- Baba, Panya. "The Presidential Address of Rev. Panya Baba to the Thirty-Eighth General Church Council of the Evangelical Church of West Africa." 15-19 Apr. 1991. Jos, Nigeria.
- . "The Presidential Address of Rev. Panya Baba to the Thirty-Ninth General Church Council of the Evangelical Church of West Africa." 4-8 Apr. 1992. Jos, Nigeria.
- Barna, George. Fish Out of Water. Nashville: Integrity, 2002.
- . Leaders on Leadership. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1997.
- Barnes, Andrew E. "Evangelism Where It Is Not Wanted: Colonial Administrators and Missionaries in Northern Nigeria during the First Third of the Twentieth Century." Journal of Religion in Africa 25 (1993): 41-441.
- Barnwell, Ray E., Sr., ed. Knowing Christ. Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2002.
- Bass, Bernard M. Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership Theory, Research, & Managerial Applications . New York: Free, 1990.

- Benge, Janet, and Geoff Benge. Rowland Bingham: Heroes, Then and Now. Seattle, WA: YWAM, 2003.
- Bennis, Warren. On Becoming a Leader. New York: Basic, 2003.
- Berkley, James D., ed. Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994.
- Bilezikian, Gilbert. Community 101. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
- Bingham, Rowland V. The Burden of SIM. Toronto, Canada: Evangelical, 1951.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Claude King. Experiencing God. Nashville: Lifeway, 1990.
- Brookfield, S. Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987.
- “Conflict.” The American Heritage Dictionary of English Language. 1979 ed.
- Cordeiro, Wayne. Doing Church as a Team. Honolulu: New Hope, 1998.
- Cranton, Patricia. Transformative Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.
- Danker, Frederick William. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: Chicago Press, 1978.
- Fernando, Ajith. Jesus Driven Ministry. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002.
- Foster, Richard J. Celebration of Discipline. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.
- Galloway, Dale. On-Purpose Leadership. Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 2001.
- Gangel, Kenneth O. “What Leaders Do.” Barna, Leaders 31-46.
- Goleman, Daniel. Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam, 1995.
- . Primal Leadership. Boston: Harvard Business, 2002.

- Gray, Rick. "Christian Leadership." Class lecture. Asbury Theological Seminary. Wilmore, KY. Spring 2005.
- Greenleaf, Robert K. Servant Leadership. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2002.
- Gorman, Julie A. Community That Is Christian. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Gunther, John. Inside Africa. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1995.
- Hauck, Friedrich. "Koins, Koinonos, Koinoneo, Koinonia, Sugkoinonos, Koinonikos, Koinow." Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965. 3: 789-809.
- Hemphill, Ken. The Official Rulebook for the New Church Game. Nashville: Broadman, 1990.
- Herrington, Jim, Mike Bonem and James H. Furr. Leading Congregational Change. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Ibrahim, Simon. General Church Council, Secretary's Report. Jos: ECWA press, 1992.
- "Islam." Africa Now 3 (1959): 16.
- Kaduna Religious Riot. Christian Association of Nigeria. Publicity Committee. 1987.
- Kato, Byang H. Theological Pitfalls in Africa. Nairobi, Kenya: Evangelical, 1987.
- Katzenbach, Jon R., and Douglas K. Smith. The Wisdom of Teams. New York: McKinsey, 1993.
- Kingdom, Church, and World IS501: "The Character of a Methodist." Reading Packet for Small Groups. Fall 2002.
- Knowles, Malcolm. The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species. Houston: Gulf, 1978.
- Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. Christian Reflections on Leadership Challenge. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

- Kunhiyop, Samuel Waje. African Christian Ethics. Kaduna, Nigeria: Baraka, 2005.
- “Leading Africans Speak Out: The Kind of Missionary We Want.” Africa Now 17 (1961): 1-3.
- Lencioni, Patrick. The Five Dysfunctions of a Team. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Maigadi, Barje. “The Christian Faith and Divisive Ethnicity in Africa: A Case Study of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) in Nigeria.” Diss. Asbury Theological Seminary, 1997.
- Maxwell, John C. Developing the Leaders around You: How to Help Others Reach Their Full Potential. Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1995.
- . Developing the Leader within You. Atlanta: Injoy, 1993.
- . Introduction. The Maxwell Leadership Bible. ed. John C. Maxwell. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982. viii.
- Moreau, A. Scott, ed. Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.
- Mucherera, Tapiwa N. Pastoral Care from a Third World Perspective. New York: Peter Long, 2001.
- Northouse, Peter G. Leadership Theory and Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: sage, 2004.
- Okorochoa, Eunice. “Cultural Influence.” Adeyemo 1468.
- Perlas, Nicanor. “Socially Engaged Christianity.” Center for Alternative Development Initiatives Oct. 2006: 1-6.
- Sanders, J. Oswald. Spiritual Leadership. Chicago: Moody, 1994.
- Schaeffer, Francis A. The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1970.

- Schroeder, Ruth. Freedom through Christ. Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1979.
- Seamands, Stephen. Wounds That Heal: Bringing Our Hurts to the Cross. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
- Senge, Peter. M. The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Organization. New York: Doubleday, 1990.
- SIM. Third Annual Conference at Wushishi Kaduna State, Nigeria. 1909.
- SIM NOW. "Planting the Church around the World". Spring 1993.
- Snyder, Howard A. Kingdom Church and World . Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001.
- Streets, David E. "Understanding the Cross of Christ as it Relates to Leadership Development at Wesley United Methodist Church." Diss. Asbury Theological Seminary, 2004.
- Swindoll, Charles R. Great Lives from God's Word. Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2006.
- Tait, Philip. "Christian leadership" Class lecture. ECWA Theological Seminary. Jos, Nigeria. Fall 2000.
- Taylor, Keith. "The Correlation between Church Health and Church Growth in the Western Canadian District of the Christian Missionary Alliance in Canada." Diss. Asbury Theological Seminary, 2003.
- Thorsen, Donald. The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason & Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology. Nappanee, IN: Evangel, 1990.
- Toler, Stan. Practical Guide for Pastoral Ministry. Anderson, IN: Wesleyan, 2007.
- Tough, A. The Adult's Learning Projects. Toronto, Ontario: Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.

- Turaki, Yusufu. The British Colonial Legacy in Northern Nigeria: A Socioal Ethical Analysis of the Colonial and Post-Colonial Society and Politics in Nigeria. Jos, Nigeria: Challenge, 1993.
- . "Secularism and Materialism." Adeyemo 791.
- . Theory and Practice of Christian Missions in Africa: A Century of SIM/ECWA History and Legacy in Nigeria 1893-1993. Kaduna, Nigeria: IBS Africa Nigeria, 1999.
- Van Yperen, Jim. "Conflict: The Refining Fire of Leadership." Barna, Leaders 239-59.
- Watson, David. Meditations on His Word. Nashville: Lifeway, 1988.
- "What Africa Thinks." Africa Now 23 (1963): 7.
- Willimon, William H. Calling and Character . Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.
- Zahniser, A. H. Mathias. Symbol and Ceremony. Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1997.

