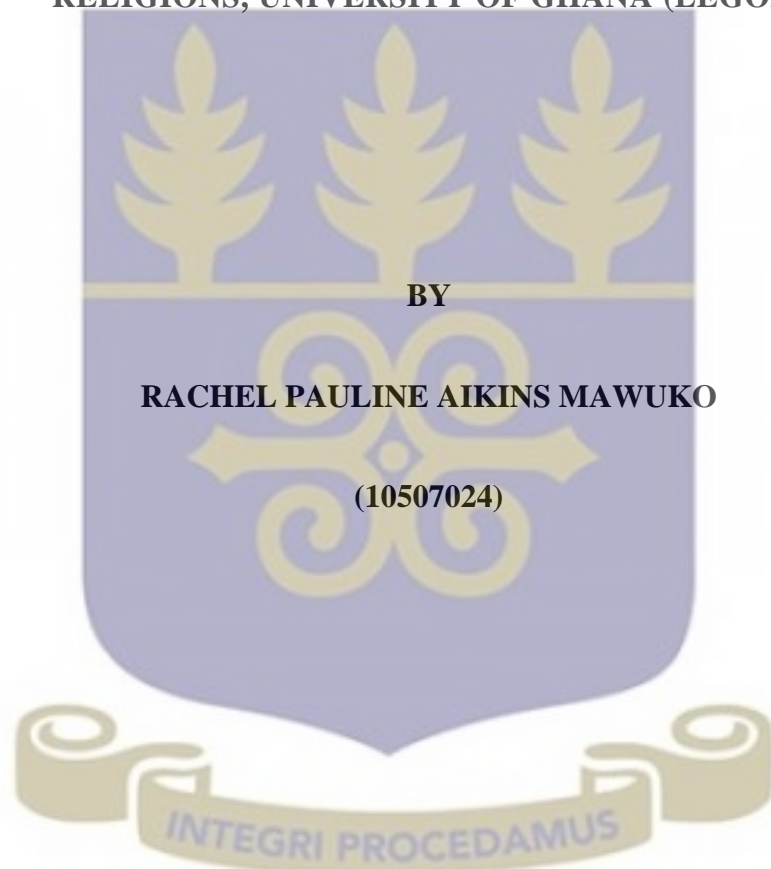


**“NAME IT, CLAIM IT, GRAB IT:” THE HERMENEUTICAL
APPROACH OF LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE STUDY OF
RELIGIONS, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA (LEGON)**



BY

RACHEL PAULINE AIKINS MAWUKO

(10507024)

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
M.PHIL DEGREE IN THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS**

JULY 2016

DECLARATION

This is to certify that this thesis is the result of research undertaken by Rachel Pauline Aikins Mawuko under the supervision of Rev. Prof. Dan Antwi and Dr. Nicoletta Gatti towards the award of M.Phil degree in the study of Religions at the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana.

.....
RACHEL PAULINE AIKINS MAWUKO
(Student)

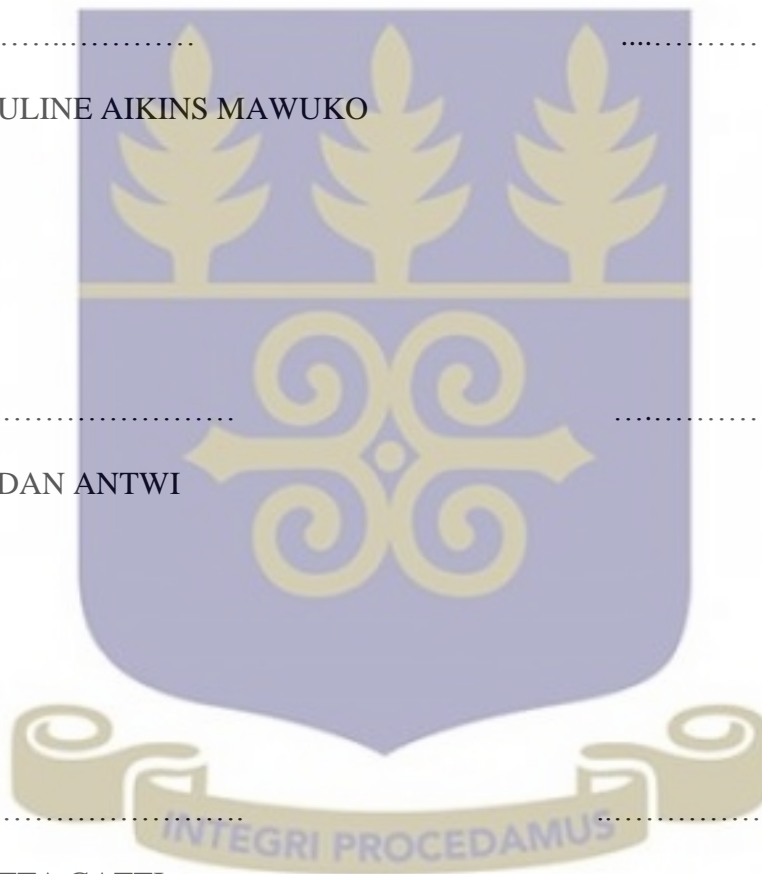
.....
DATE

.....
REV. PROF. DAN ANTWI
(Supervisor)

.....
DATE

.....
DR. NICOLETTA GATTI
(Co-Supervisor)

.....
DATE



ABSTRACT

The proliferation of Prosperity Preaching which characterized the contemporary Ghanaian Christianity has created an intense scholarly debate among those who considered ‘prosperity preaching’ as ‘non-Christian’ and those who perceive it as a way to contextualize Christianity in the Ghanaian context. The study entered the debate from a different perspective which focuses on the hermeneutical approach implemented by proponents of ‘prosperity preaching.’ To reach the aim, the research focused on Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), one of the most significant Charismatic Churches in Ghana. Founded in 1987 by Heward-Mill, LCI seems to reject any kind of theological reflection on the Scripture. However, there is a general agreement that ‘reading’ is ‘interpreting’ and that it is impossible to ‘read’ the Scripture without using “hermeneutic lens.” Against this background, the researcher explored the use of the Scripture in Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) to analyse how LCI read the Scripture; the kind of ‘hermeneutic lenses employed and the effect of LCI hermeneutic approach on the life of its members.

The research employed both primary and secondary sources. The researcher devoted ten (10) months to field research: participant observation; interview of key stakeholders - the provost of ABMTC, administrative leaders of various institutions; pastors; leaders and members -, focus group discussion and visit to LCI Headquarter, branches and Institution such as Anagkazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre (ABMTC), Lighthouse Orphanage (Eastern Region); Lighthouse Mission Schools (Nursery and JHS) in Accra. Furthermore, books written by the Founder, published and unpublished articles, books and documents were consulted.

The research discovered that LCI proclaimed a firm belief in the authority of Scripture: they claim that the Scripture is infallible, inspired and unquestionable. However, it appeared that the real authority behind the interpretation of the Scripture is the Founder and present Overseer of LCI. The reading of Scriptures offered to the community through preaching; bussell discussion and prescribed reading is built on the word of the Founder, and employed the hermeneutical lenses Hedward-Mill developed in his publication: prosperity preaching; tithings; loyalty and disloyalty. His books often ‘substituted’ the biblical reading during the Sunday service and constituted the only accepted material for the ‘theological’ training of LCI pastors at ABMTC. Complete adherence to the Founder’s style and content of preaching is required by all pastors and leaders and promoted by structures devoted to reward ‘loyalty’ and punished ‘disloyalty’. The hermeneutical approach utilized by the church manifested not only a ‘fundamentalist reading of the Scripture’ but promotes also a ‘personality cult,’ where the founder is held in enormous reverence and seen as the person with ‘divine right’ to interpretation.

The study ends with suggestions for further studies on Pentecostal/Charismatic Hermeneutics in the Ghanaian context and suggests a holistic theological education for Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders in order to positively transform communities and contribute to the development of an original and Scripture based Ghanaian Christianity.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my children: Joel Makafui Makadishkem Mawuko, Othniel Horlali Xairo Mawuko and Euodias Edinam Eirene Mawuko, who have always loved, understood, endured and dealt with all of my absence from inimitable occasions with a smile.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis owes its heights of indebtedness to the Triune God: The Father, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit for ideas, insight, ability and the gravity for which the work was commenced and conveyed to its present conclusion. Without their enabling influence, constant provision of strength and nourishment, completion of the research would have been impossible.

I would like to convey my deepest thankfulness to my supervisors: Prof. Dan Antwi and Dr. Nicoletta Gatti, who demonstrated the attitude and substance of genius. They continuously and convincingly expressed the spirit of adventure in research and scholarship. Their depiction of confidence and enthusiasm for the work had a lasting effect and afforded me the passion to complete it. Without their scholarly supervision, persistence and guidance, it would have been difficult to complete the work.

My singular appreciation to the Head of Department, faculty members, and lecturers of the Department for the Study of Religions for their invaluable interest, motivation as well as creating an enabling environment for academic work and research. To the staff, librarians of the department, I express my admiration for their enviable promptness to assist whenever required.

I share the credit of my work with all the respondents, whose remarkable cooperation, support, and contribution to the fieldwork furnished me with the prerequisite information for the successful development of my thesis. Also, a deserving acknowledgement to Professor D. N. A. Kpobi and Dr. John Abedu Quarshie for their guidance during my research. Their inspiring suggestion have been precious for the development of the thesis content.

I am indebted to my fellow students who have been a constant source of encouragement, enthusiasm and inspiration, not only during this thesis project work but also for the two years

of my graduate programme. In addition, Godfred Nsiah and Joseph Aryeh deserve special thanks for their comments and motivation.

I consider it an honour to extend gratitude to my dear parents: Mr. Lawrence Valentine Yarkwah Aikins and Madam Helen Ampiah-Bonney, whose godly instructions and counselling instilled in me the responsibility for a higher standard.

I cannot find words to express my gratitude to Amy Yankey Dzandu for her financial scaffolds that provided me the hope and soundness for academic pursuit. She is treasured for being the greatest source of my achievement, pride and inspiration. Mrs. Patricia Mintah and Mr. Seth Grant are remembered for their confidence and trust that has brought me this far. It is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge the support and friendship of Messrs Richard Abankwah Yeboah, George Ekem Myres, Kwame Larnor, Michael Ayensah and Mrs. Deborah Ofori. They made me realize nothing can be done without hope, confidence and determinations. With their unceasing support and friendship I scaled the walls of terror to where I am today.

A special thanks goes to Mr. Patrick Poku and Mrs. Victoria Poku for their parental role in my life. Mrs. Victoria Poku has been a mother, friend, burden-bearer and instrumental for the completion of the project. Her emotional, physical, mental support provided the joy to work on schedule. Wherever you are around the world, my indebtedness are always with you. Likewise, my barrels of thanks to Bernice, Henrietta and Rev. Love. They offered me the soundest atmospheric conditions to pursue my work.

An unfathomable acknowledgements to the many people who contributed to the successful accomplishment of my thesis in their own peculiar way. I cannot find any excellent way than this golden opportunity to express my solemn thankfulness for their time, affection, immense suggestions, contributions plus their technical and non-technical assistance.

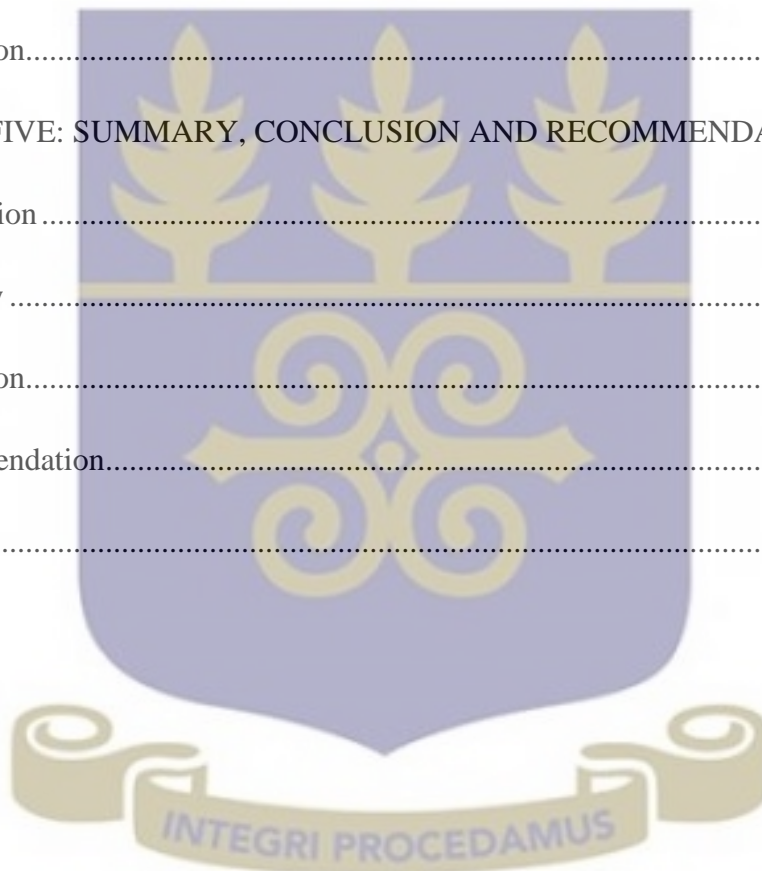
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTORY ISSUES	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	9
1.3 Research Question.....	10
1.4 Literature Review.....	10
1.4.1 History of Prosperity Preaching	10
1.4.2 Origin of Prosperity Preaching in Ghana	15
1.4.3 Socio-Economic Factors.....	20
1.4.4 Cultural-Religious Factors.....	24
1.4.5 Conclusion.....	28
1.5 Methodology	28
1.5.1 Introduction	28
1.5.2 Data collection instruments	29
1.6 Relevance of the Research	31
1.7 Organization of Chapters	32
CHAPTER TWO: PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS	33
2.1 Introduction.....	33

2.2 History of Pentecostal Hermeneutics	33
2.2.1 Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929)	34
2.2.2 William James Seymour (1870-1922).....	36
2.3 The Problem: ‘Fundamentalist’ Hermeneutics	40
2.4 The Starting Point of the Debate	44
2.4.1 James D. G. Dunn.....	44
2.4.2 Gordon D. Fee	47
2.4.3 William W. Menzies.....	51
2.4.4 Roger Stronstad	53
2.4.5 Gerhard Maier and Peter Stuhlmacher	55
2.5 Is it Possible a Pentecostal Hermeneutics?	56
2.6 Characteristics of a Pentecostal Hermeneutics	59
2.7 Outcome of the Debate.....	63
2.8 Conclusion.....	65
CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL.....	68
3.1 Introduction	68
3.2 Historical Development of Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI)	69
3.2.1 The ‘Founder’s History’	69
3.2.2 Foundation: Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI)	70
3.3.3 Development of LCI.....	72
3.3 Present Structure of LCI.....	76
3.3.1 Pastoral Structure.....	76
3.3.2 Bishop Council	77
3.3.3 Lay Pastor(s).....	78

3.3.4 Area Fellowship (Bussell)	80
3.3.5 In-house Support System.....	80
3.4 Social Ministry	81
3.4.1 Compassion Ministry.....	81
3.4.2 Health Ministry.....	82
3.4.3 Ministry to the blind	83
3.4.4 Street Beggars Outreach	83
3.4.5 Prison Outreach	84
3.4.6 Lighthouse Mission Schools and Orphanage	85
3.4.7 Anagkazo Bible School	86
3.4.8 Radio and Television of LCI	91
3.5 LCI Statement of Faith.....	91
3.5.1 Mission Statement of LCI	92
3.6 Main Beliefs of LCI	92
3.6.1 Baptism of the Holy Spirit.....	93
3.6.2 Water Baptism	93
3.6.3 Divine Healing.....	94
3.7 Conclusion.....	95
CHAPTER FOUR: THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL.....	97
International (LCI)	97
4.1 Introduction	97
4.2 Hermeneutics and the Authority of Scripture	97
4.3 ‘Loci’ of Interpretation.....	98
4.3.1 Preaching	98

4.3.2 Publications	104
4.4 Hermeneutical Approach to Scripture by LCI	106
4.4.1 Name it, Claim it, Take it	106
4.4.2 Prosperity Preaching	112
4.4.3 Tithing	114
4.4.4 Loyalty and Disloyalty	120
4.5 Effect of LCI Hermeneutical Approach on Members	124
4.6 Conclusion.....	131
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	134
5.1 Introduction	134
5.2 Summary	134
5.3 Conclusion.....	136
5.4 Recommendation.....	139
Bibliography.....	142



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY ISSUES

1.1 Background

The growing presence of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches has profoundly transformed the face of Christianity worldwide. In Ghana, they have grown from unassuming and inconspicuous beginnings into significant movements, with great influence on people and impressive quantitative growth.¹

Unlike the historic churches that have established traditional liturgies, with ecclesiastical offices and hierarchic positions, Pentecostals/Charismatics churches rely on the experience and presence of the Holy Spirit rather than on organizational structure and rituality.² They model their community life after the teachings of the New Testament, with special emphasis on the Lukan narrative, and see the first apostolic community as the key model in their hermeneutics. Pentecostal/Charismatic churches put strong emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit manifested through ‘speaking in (other) tongues.’ They believe in the power and operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirits through which most of the apostles performed miracles.

Many of these churches claim a rich historical heritage with a sound biblical foundation and consider themselves as the ‘unadulterated’ form of Christianity, where the divine truth is maintained and the biblical faith is lived out through the power of the Holy Spirit.³ Their founders and leaders preach that the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit is evident

¹ Eddie L. Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 21st Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective* (Florida: Charisma House, 2002): 15-194. Christian Religions 71.2% (Pentecostal/Charismatic 28.3%, Protestant 18.4%, Catholic 13.1%, other 11.4%), Muslim 17.6%, traditional 5.2%, other 0.8%, none 5.2%. www.ghanaembassy.org/index.php?page/population.

² Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity*, 17.

³ *Ibid.*, 191.

in the physical prosperity, success, and wealth creation of Christians. For them, material success is the tangible evidence of the love of God for those who serve him.

The title of the research, “Name it, Claim it, Grab it,” is a catchphrase which summarized the content of this model of preaching, commonly known as “Prosperity Gospel.”⁴ Sometimes referred to as the “Gospel of Health and Wealth,” “Word of Faith” or the “Gospel of Success” is normally associated with Pentecostal/Charismatic Preachers.⁵ Proponents of Prosperity Preaching are connected to Pentecostalism either through a specific church membership or by embracing the varied beliefs and practices of Pentecostal tradition.⁶ They focus on empowerment of the Holy Spirit for abundant living: good health, wealth, happiness and prosperity in this life.⁷ Their interpretation for prosperity is that God wants Christians to be financially prosperous, wealthy and visibly attain fortunes. In this regard, the faithful tithing payer, intercessor, and alms-giver receives material wealth, because it is God’s tangible compensation for Christians who positively exercise their faith by tithing.⁸

The faith of Pentecostals/Charismatics in supernatural abilities and empowerment of the Holy Spirit has inspired them to use selected New Testament texts, such as Matt. 6:33; John 10:10; 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 3:14; James 4:2 and 3 John 2, to substantiate their preaching of abundance, security, and material fortunes. The Scriptures are also used to promote self-worth, optimism, healing, deliverance, and restoration from present predicament to abundant life, especially of God’s children who devotedly offer a ‘seed,’ or physical cash in support

⁴ The expression was taken from a popular book by Dag Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, (Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM, 2008): 1-154.

⁵ Anton Bosch, “The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel,” *Christian Witness Ministries* 257 (2014): 1. In this work, the researcher prefers to use “Prosperity Gospel” or “Prosperity Preaching” since they are broadly used in scholarship.

⁶ Carl Hendricks, “Money Raining From Heaven? An Appraisal of the Prosperity Gospel in a Missiological Framework,” *University Of South Africa* (2014): 4.

⁷ Bradley A. Koch, “Who Are the Prosperity Gospel Adherents?” *Journal of Ideology* 36 (2014): 2.

⁸ Bradley A. Koch, “The Prosperity Gospel and Economic Prosperity: Race, Class, Giving, and Voting.” *Indiana University* (2009): 1.

of 'God's work'. The frequency of Prosperity Gospel in the media and churches by some Pentecostal/Charismatic Preachers, both abroad and in Ghana, have attracted a passionate scholarly debate between those that express a wide range of concerns, like⁹ Emmanuel Anim,¹⁰ Moses Kumi Asamoah,¹¹ Werner Kahl, and Andreas Heuser¹², and those who show appreciation of the phenomenon like Eddie L. Hyatt,¹³ Fee,¹⁴ Stronstad¹⁵ and Anderson.¹⁶

For instance, Anim suggests that the thriving of Prosperity Gospel in the charismatic denominations in Ghana is largely due to the fact that charismatics have tapped into fertile ground already nurtured by the traditional concept of prosperity.¹⁷ He emphasized that prosperity from African Traditional Religion (ATR) is catalogued in terms of wealth, longevity, and fecundity. And since Africans do not honour or accept suffering or poverty, the belief and pursuit of prosperity which is principal in their life endeavours has contributed to the breeding of prosperity preaching as well as the indecorous misapplication of Scripture in Ghanaian Christianity.¹⁸

Furthermore, Anim posits that although some scholars maintain that Prosperity Gospel is an American creation exported to the continent of Africa, the traditional experience offers a fertile ground. In fact, although the American factor is indisputable, the concept of prosperity

⁹ Werner Kahl, "Prosperity-Preaching in West-Africa: An Evaluation of a Contemporary Ideology from a New Testament Perspective," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 2 (2012): 21-42.

¹⁰ Emmanuel K. Anim, "The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination," *Pentvars Business Journal* 2 (2010): 66-73.

¹¹ Moses Kumi Asamoah, "Penteco/Charismatic Worldview of Prosperity Theology," *African Educational Research Journal* 1 (2013): 198-207.

¹² Andreas Heuser, ed., *Pastures of Plenty: Tracing Religio-Scapes of Prosperity Gospel in Africa and Beyond* (Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity, 161; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Edition, 2015).

¹³ Hyatt, "2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity," 15-194.

¹⁴ Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent: A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (2009): 1-143.

¹⁵ Roger Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Baguio: APTS Asia Pacific Theological Seminar Press, 1995), 1-191.

¹⁶ G. Anderson, "Pentecostal hermeneutics Part 1," *Enrichment Journal* (2010): 1-8. http://www.enrichmentjournal.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm

¹⁷ Anim, "The Prosperity Gospel," 66.

¹⁸ Ibid.

is neither new nor foreign to the Ghanaian culture. In his opinion, prosperity is a key concept not only for Pentecostals/Charismatics but also for Africans as a whole. He was categorical that attempts by Pentecostal/Charismatic preachers to offer explanations to people's misfortunes and assure them of peace and security, has revolved in manipulation of Christians through the message of prosperity. Today, every life endeavour of Christians are captured and measured in the light of physical attainment of riches.¹⁹

Contributing his thought on the subject, Asamoah states that Christians have the belief that material prosperity is a divine blessing to those who are obedient to God through faithful payment of tithes, giving to the poor, working hard, walking in humility and being a responsible family person.²⁰ For him this ideology is rooted in ATR, and regrettably has been clutched in the prosperity message by Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders, who frequently draw attention to the literal narrative of various Scriptures for addressing the message of materialism.²¹ Some of these preachers proclaim regular tithe payers have extraordinary power to name, claim and command event in their own interest. This, according to Asamoah, is a misconception; it is unbiblical to interpret prosperity as an embodiment of true doctrine and physical means by which God unleashes blessings to faithful Christians. In fact, such interpretation encourages material wealth and dominance over others.

Prosperity Preachers believe that God's promises of prosperity and victory to Israel in the Old Testament applies to contemporary New-Covenant Christians. Hence, God in his own wisdom, provides prosperity to Christians who esteem him in holiness, serve in righteousness and exercise their faith by giving to the needy. Asamoah insists that these

¹⁹ Anim, "The Prosperity Gospel," 68.

²⁰ Asamoah, "Penteco/Charismatic," 199.

²¹ Ibid.

teachings are not biblical models or promises to the holy people of God, rather, it is a formation of ideas associated with the new age movements.

Kahl asserts that Prosperity Preaching is an unbiblical ideology because it refers to an understanding of Christianity that takes success in business ensuing in physical wealth as proof of faith. A number of scriptural passages used as irrefutable evidences by these preachers are not appropriate to Scripture.²² He was emphatic that meaning of texts are not self-evident to understand a given passage in its own right: The interpreter has to study its linguistic features, the literary and historical context in order to comprehend the world of the pericope.²³ In that perspective, the exegete can understand when, where, why, how, by whom and for whom the text was written at a specific historical period, then it can be contextualized.²⁴ For Kahl, analysis of the text is essential because different cultural, social perception and individual circumstances may uncover aspect of a particular text which might be other way overlooked.²⁵

In contrast to the above assertion, Hyatt strongly stresses that Pentecostals/Charismatics or Third Wavers as they may be called, share a basic single experience. Their contribution to Christianity is a new awareness of spiritual gifts as a ministry to the life of the Church.²⁶ He argues that Pentecostals/Charismatics play significant roles in revivalism: Their important contribution has demonstrated that biblical revivalism, characterized by signs, wonders and spiritual manifestations, is still worthwhile to the contemporary church. Hyatt continued that Pentecostal/Charismatic churches have vividly proven that the visible power and work of

²² Asamoah, "Penteco/Charismatic," 22.

²³ Ibid., 28.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Hyatt, "2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity," 183.

the Holy Spirit as captured in Acts 2 is still present in the Christian life. In spite of modern sophistication, human hearts still long for dynamic encounters with the living God.²⁷

Remarking on the interpretation of Scripture by advocates of prosperity, Asamoah-Gyadu was emphatic that the gospel of Jesus Christ, with its promises of liberation, deliverance, forgiveness, grace and restoration cannot certainly be a gospel of poverty. Nevertheless, the Scriptures neither glorify in poverty nor greed. Scripture consistently cautions about the pursuit of worldly interests that could swage people godly values. For him, biblical interpretations that invoke justification on physical substance and wealth creation is of dire consequences to Christ warnings on wealth possession.²⁸

Advancing the argument on Pentecostal/Charismatic interpretation to Scripture, Gordon Anderson remarks that Pentecostals have their own technique for interpreting Scripture which addresses the same basic issues common to evangelical hermeneutics, but in which the essential features and various importance are exclusive. Pentecostals/Charismatics are uncomfortable to impose foreign ideology to what Scripture specifies, because it can change the original meaning of the text. But they may articulate texts to fit their own views. Anderson states that such biases are unavoidable, since there is no such thing as ‘presuppositionless’ hermeneutics, or else interpretation would have amounted to an “empty headed (tabula rasa) interpretation.”²⁹

In his book “Jesus and the Spirit,” James D. G. Dunn remarks that the earliest Christian churches looked to the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit for their community and life, rather than to organizational structure and formality. He also points out apart from Phil. 1:1,

²⁷ Hyatt, “2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity,” 189. Hyatt quotes, Bultmann strongly asserts that in the New Testament Church, “The chief persons of authority are those endowed with spiritual gifts” (p. 22).

²⁸ J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “Did Jesus Wear Designer Robes?” *Christianity Today International* (2009): 1.

²⁹ Anderson, Gordon L. ‘Pentecostal Hermeneutics.’ Part One.” *Enrichment Journal* (2010): 1. [http:// www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm](http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm).

Paul addresses his letters to the community and not the ‘leaders’ of the community. The implication is that if leadership was required, the Spirit will provide it.³⁰ On a similar thought, Fee observed that notwithstanding some excesses and unscientific hermeneutics by Pentecostal/Charismatic movements, they are frequently praised for recapturing for the church its joyful radiance, missionary enthusiasm, and life in the Spirit.³¹

From the above discussion, it is clear that the debate about Prosperity Gospel is a hermeneutic debate. Critics and supporters of Prosperity Gospel base their arguments on Scripture, and on the ‘appropriate’ way to interpret Scripture: is it a pure ‘spiritual act’ as many Pentecostal/Charismatic preachers assert³² or is it “science, art *and* spiritual act,” following to the well-known definition of Osborn?³³ To sum up, what is interpretation?

Boff describes the interpretative process as a dialogue between Scripture and the people who read the text, able to reveal the ‘Word of God’.³⁴ This implies that the task of interpretation involves authors, audience, text, as well as intended purposes for which the message was conveyed.³⁵ Kahl posits that any interpreter of the Bible needs to approach the text with circumspection, because biblical texts are answers to problems rooted in a diverse cultural, economic and social time. Moreover, sociological, cultural, economic, and personal contexts of the reader can determine the interpretation of a specific text. The exegete must, therefore, examine the historical roots and relationships surrounding the text with great humility and carefulness in order to reach an informed understanding of the text before its application.³⁶

³⁰ Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity*, 189.

³¹ Robert Thomas, “The Hermeneutics of Noncessationism,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 2 (2003): 287.

³² For most Pentecostals/Charismatics interpretation is spiritual. Science ignores the power of the Holy Spirit.

³³ Grant R. Osborn, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 5-435.

³⁴ Clodovis Boff, “Hermeneutics: Constitution of Theology Pertinency,” In *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, edited by R. S. Sugirtharajah, 9 (London: SPCK, 1991), 9-35.

³⁵ William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 3-504.

³⁶ Kahl, “Prosperity-Preaching,” 30.

Klein, Blomberg and Hubbard add that although there must be an acknowledgement of the crucial role of God's Spirit in Scripture, scholarship is necessary to acquire the understanding of what the Spirit has inspired. And this can be achieved through a well-thought-out approach, and consideration to the space, cultural, topographical, and sociological factors surrounding the text.³⁷

A hot 'hermeneutical' debate has been aroused in the Ghanaian religious landscape by the 2015 Easter Message of Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, funder and general overseer of Lighthouse Chapel International. Heward-Mills, a well-known charismatic leader, defined Prosperity Preaching as "false religion and non-sense."³⁸

Today Christians are into happiness preaching – everything to make you happy – Christ did not come to make us happy – Christ came to save us from our sins - and to put happiness and prosperity as the reason for Christianity is a false religion – that is not Christianity...Let us not follow comfort – to be a good Christian you cannot be comfortable – to be a good Christian you cannot always try to be happy – this prosperity, money gospel is a nonsense gospel that is not why Jesus came to this world...³⁸

However, in one of his more popular book, "Name it, Claim it, Take it," Heward-Mills, wrote the following statements that suggest an interpretation of the Scripture very similar to the classical tenant of Prosperity Gospel:

I do not have to show of poverty. I am self-sufficient and well paid. I must not behave like a beggar who lacks a tin of milk or sardines. I do not need people to empathize with me anymore, because the Lord has blessed me beyond measure.³⁹

I am a car owner. Prosperity is coming into my life. The day of walking are over. I see myself driving a good car. God has promoted me and the impossible had become possible. I believe in hard work; I have the spirit of diligence. I am not a lazy person; I work very hard. And I reap what I sow.⁴⁰

³⁷ Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 4.

³⁸ "Prosperity preaching is 'nonsense,' Bishop Dag, <http://www.modernghana.com/news/609567/1/prosperity-preaching-is-nonsense-bishop-dag.html>. Accessed 29 May 2016.

³⁹ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 79-80.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

I am free from the curse of working for nothing. I rake the curse of labouring in vain. My sweat is not in vain, I reject every thought of poverty and lack. I refuse every projection and prediction of poverty in my family. I am not going to struggle to prosper, I will enjoy the prosperity of God. I have enough in my barns, I will not lack anything good. I have enough in Jesus name, I am always scattering, yet I am always increasing, men give me what I give back in good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over.⁴¹

Moreover, the plaque at the entrance of Anakazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre (Mampong) specifies the reasons why the Centre was established. Among other concepts, visitors can read:

This campus was not built for the propagation and study of theology that is traditionally taught in secular universities and other accredited institution. This campus was not intended to become a centre to analyse and question the authenticity of God's Word. This campus was not built to analyse, discuss, question or even receive the two hundred or more other opinions and theories about God that the great theologians of our world have. This campus was not built to teach or present various schools of thoughts about ministry exist today... This campus was not built to help men to question their faith in God. This campus was not built to quench the fire and the zeal of God in men.⁴²

1.2 Statement of the Problem

LCI seems to reject any kind of 'reflection' on the Scripture, because thinking "can quench the fire and the zeal of God in men". However, there is a general agreement that 'reading' is 'interpreting' and that it is impossible to 'read' the Scripture without "hermeneutic lens."⁴³

Against this background, the researcher explores the use of the Scripture in Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), in order to analyse Heward-Mills' hermeneutical approach. In addition, it evaluates the impact of his hermeneutics on members of the church.

⁴¹ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 86-87.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Gadamer, H.-G. *Truth and Method* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 1-62.

1.3 Research Question

The main research question is: How does LCI read the Scripture? Which kind of ‘hermeneutic lenses are employed?

The secondary question is: In what way does LCI hermeneutic approach affect the life of the member of the church?

1.4 Literature Review

The discussion of the literature review is organized into three thematic sections, namely the range of scholarly perspectives on the History of Prosperity Preaching, the Origin of Prosperity Preaching in Ghana and the Factors which helped the spreading of the Prosperity Gospel.

1.4.1 History of Prosperity Preaching

The widespread of Prosperity Preaching among Pentecostal/Charismatic churches have been attributed to Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts, Pat Robertson, and E. W. Kenyon who were early Evangelical and Pentecostal Preachers in the nineteen centuries. They portrayed prosperity as a covenant and fulfilment of divine promise of God to his people. The message was popularized by televangelists and the writings of Normal Vincent Peale on ‘Positive Thinking’ in the 1950s.⁴⁴

For many scholars like Hellstern, Gbote, Goliama, and Nelson, the origin of Prosperity Gospel has been ascribed to Kenneth Hagin of Tulsa, Oklahoma. He served as a Baptist preacher before becoming a pastor with the Pentecostal Assemblies of God. He claimed to have received a revelation in 1934 on Matthew 23:11. Soon after, Hagin began teaching that his prayer for health and wealth were answered, and purchased a car to demonstrate his claim

⁴⁴ Eric Z. M. Gbote, “Prosperity Gospel: A Missiological Assessment,” *HTS Theological Studies* 1 (2014), 1.

of divine blessings. In his view, failure to own an extravagant car is a sign that he had not understood the Gospel. In 1974 he founded his own Bible Training Centre which became the epicentre for spreading his preaching of prosperity.⁴⁵ Then Pat Robertson, a Pentecostal evangelist who embraced the prosperity concept, spread the message worldwide. In his video, “Secrets of Financial Prosperity,” Robertson reveals that the visible evidence to the life that God blesses is to “get out of debt, earn supplemental income, build a safe retirement and invest profitably. Other examples to a blessed life is to learn effective money-management, acquire wealth, and develop an attitude toward wealth that will honour God.” These ideas were embraced by many Pentecostal evangelists that are common among Pentecostal/Charismatic preachers across Africa, Latin America, South Korea as well as Western and Eastern Europe.⁴⁶

Mark Hellstern argues that the origin of Prosperity Preaching can be much earlier around the beginning of the seventeenth century among the Puritans and the first settlers at Jamestown in the United States. These people viewed material prosperity as an end goal of their “New Jerusalem,” but for the good of the community rather than individual.⁴⁷ The early nineteenth-century religious revivals advocated pietism, individualism, reductionism, and anti-intellectualism in North American religion. These are the values that are present in contemporary Prosperity Movements.⁴⁸

The American Industrial Revolution created moral justification for wealth and the concepts of self-help became closely aligned with the idea of upward social mobility and economic

⁴⁵ Liz. Castor Michael Goliama, “The Gospel of Prosperity in African Pentecostalism: A Theological and Pastoral Challenge to the Catholic Church” (Dr. Theol., Wien 2013), 1.

⁴⁶ Goliama, “The Gospel of Prosperity,” 146.

⁴⁷ Mark Hellstern, “The ‘Me Gospel:’ An Examination of the Historical Roots of the Prosperity Emphasis within Current Charismatic Theology,” *Fides et Historia* 3 (1989): 73.

⁴⁸ Hellstern, “Me Gospel,” 84-85.

success as evidence of moral merit.⁴⁹ The ‘rich’ adopted a Christian version of ‘survival of the fittest, which argued that the poor deserved to be poor and that charity constituted interfering with God’s just punishment for moral failure.⁵⁰ When political conservatism and privatization coincided with economic growth and prosperity of America, most rich Christians justified their materialistic acquisition by claiming divine sanction.⁵¹ Contemporary Prosperity Preachers developed the concept that God desires prosperity for all his children, then they used various aspects of Scripture to emphasize different degrees of prosperity teachings as divine endorsement to wealth creation.⁵² In the 1990s and 2000s, it was adopted by influential leaders in the Charismatic Movement, and promoted by Christian missionaries throughout the world.⁵³

For a better understanding of Prosperity Preaching, some statements, commentaries, beliefs and teachings of these fathers of Prosperity Gospel have been catalogued below.

Oral Roberts pointed out that 3 John 2, “I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers,” was a revelation that had cured him from his crises.⁵⁴ A few days after the revelation, he received what was believed to be practical confirmation that God wanted him prosper materially. He purchased a car to affirm God’s intention of flourishing him, and the ‘new car’ became a symbol and commencement of his preaching of prosperity. The car also became the centre point of his preaching thus “what a man can do if he believes God.”⁵⁵ At this juncture, Roberts preaching on prosperity had gained grounds: people were so enthralled and claiming health, wealth and blessings.

⁴⁹ Alissa Jones Nelson, ‘The Lord Has Given and the Lord Has Taken Away’: The Prosperity Gospel, the Book of Job, and the Latin American Context,” *DOC* (2015): 1.

⁵⁰ Nelson, “The Lord Has Given,” 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵² Hellstern, “Me Gospel,” 87-88.

⁵³ Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel,” 67.

⁵⁴ Anton Bosch, “The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel,” *Christian Witness Ministries* 257 (2014): 3.

⁵⁵ Bosch, “The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel,” 4.

In 1955, he published his first book entitled “God’s Formula for Success and Prosperity.” A follow up publication in 1970 was the “Miracle of Seed-Faith.” The book had the biggest impact in terms of spreading the message of prosperity across the world.⁵⁶ The concept and content of prosperity and faith was captured on the principle of sowing and reaping. He stated that believers will have abundant and assorted blessing in their lives when they sow into God’s Kingdom.⁵⁷

Almost all Prosperity Preachers trace their roots back to Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin. In his publication, “How God Taught Me about Prosperity,” Hagin asserted that he never read prosperity in any book, it was “The Lord Himself who taught him about prosperity.” He was insistent he received the message directly from heaven as a revelation in 1959, and that became the motivating drive for his Prosperity Preaching.⁵⁸

Kenneth Copeland held a strong view that the grief over the loss of children is in the same class as the loss of labour and income. He adds that Jesus had come to preach the gospel to the poor and the gospel is that the poor does not have to be poor anymore.⁵⁹ Using Galatians 3:14, Copeland declared that Jesus redeemed Christians from curse so God’s blessings of material wealth could be attained by them, but Christians have failed to lay claim to what rightfully belongs to them.⁶⁰ In a more moderate perspective according to Copeland, God’s financial prosperity is not given to believers to live in luxury, but rather to enable them to do something about the poverty in the world.⁶¹

Jerry Savelle affirmed that when Jesus of Nazareth “moves in with Christians, he starts making things better in their life,” and teaches them how to get out of poverty and enjoy

⁵⁶ Bosch, “The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel,” 5.

⁵⁷ Bosch, “The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel,” 5.

⁵⁸ Koch, “The Prosperity Gospel and Economic,” 7.

⁵⁹ Hellstern, “Me Gospel,” 82.

⁶⁰ Kenneth Copeland, “How You Can Solve the Prosperity Puzzle,” *Believers Voice of Victory* 4 (1986): 4.

⁶¹ Copeland, “How You Can,” 4

prosperity.⁶² Wealth is interpreted in Prosperity Preaching as a blessing from God, obtained through a spiritual law of positive confession, visualization, and donations.⁶³

Charles Capps repeatedly preached that “You Can Have What You Say.”⁶⁴ He explains that the abridged life-span of people is due to their faulty, careless, and playful confession. Elaborating his concept, Capps states that human predicaments are due to Adam's prior sin of having failed to take dominion and authority over the serpent. Once Christians take their rightful place, things will change for the better, poverty will be turned into riches and lack will give up its place for abundance.⁶⁵

Another father of prosperity, Joel Osteen uses Romans 4:17 to support the view that words of Christians have creative power. He says Scripture teaches that Christians can bring forth things that are not as though they were. Hence, Christians must first of all conceive things they need in their minds, believe them, and speak them out. When this is persistently done by faith, Christians will have exactly what they confess.⁶⁶

For Prosperity Preachers the Scripture promises prosperity for believers, and positive confession means believers are speaking in faith what God has already spoken about them. Positive confession is practiced in order to name, claim, and physically grab what is already believed and spoken.⁶⁷

⁶² Jerry Savelle, *Living in Divine Prosperity* (Oklahoma: Harrison House, 1982), 12.

⁶³ Moses Kumi Asamoah, “Penteco/Charismatic Worldview of Prosperity Theology,” *African Educational Research Journal* 1 (2013): 198.

⁶⁴ Hellstern, “Me Gospel,” 81.

⁶⁵ Charles Capps, *The Tongue: A Creative Force* (Oklahoma: Harrison House), 1976.

⁶⁶ Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 198-207.

⁶⁷ Coleman, *Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity*, 199.

1.4.2 Origin of Prosperity Preaching in Ghana

In the previous section, we analysed the relationship between Pentecostalism and Prosperity Preaching. Similarly, to understand the origin of Prosperity Preaching in Ghana, this segment explores the history of Ghanaian Pentecostalism and some prevailing factors that contributed to the growing presence of Pentecostal/Charismatic churches and their focus on Prosperity Preaching.

Apostle Peter Newman Anim, formerly known as Kwaku Anim Mensah (1890-1984) has been described as the ‘Father’ of Pentecostalism in Ghana before the advent of Pentecostal Missionaries.⁶⁸ He was the third son among six children of Simon Appiagyei and Hannah Lartebea from Boso in the Volta Region of Ghana. He had his earlier education at Boso and Anum Basel Mission School, completing in 1908. In 1911, Anim worked with the Basel Mission Factory as a weighing clerk, but discontinued 1912 due to health related issues. After several effort to work was unsuccessful because of his physical health, he returned to his hometown and got married to Dora Sakyibea in 1916.⁶⁹ They had four daughters; three died in their early stages. Anim’s wife passed on in 1920 and the surviving daughter also died shortly after the mother’s demise. Anim remarried Esther Osimpo and had Moses Appiah Anim.⁷⁰

In 1917 Anim became acquainted to Pastor A. Clark through a Christian magazine called ‘Sword of the Spirit.’ The magazine was published by Faith Tabernacle Church (FTC) in Philadelphia. The leader of the church was Clark and he was the editor of Sword of the Spirit. Anim wrote to Clark, requesting more Christian literature, and that marked the commencement of affiliation between him and Clark. Anim was fascinated with the titles of

⁶⁸ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 94.

⁶⁹ E. Kinsley. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), 3-450.

⁷⁰ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 99.

the articles in the Sword of the Spirit, mainly ‘Principles of Prevailing Prayers’ ‘Divine Healing’ and ‘Baptism by Immersion.’⁷¹ The materials from Clark challenged Anim to pray more earnestly, committed to God as well as study the Bible to enable him preach the Gospel.⁷² When Anim begun to pray as directed by Clark, he experienced a miraculous healing from a guinea worm and chronic stomach disease. His experience of healing transformed his faith, beliefs and relationship with God, but his new style of Prevailing Prayer was not compatible to the Presbyterian worship at the time. In 1921, Anim dissociated himself from the church at Boso and relocated to Asamankese in the Eastern Region.⁷³

While at Asamankese, he started a Prayer Ministry and people who visited the place received divine healing. In 1923, the traditional chief of Asamankese offered a parcel of land for church building. The Prayer Ministry adopted the name Faith Tabernacle Church (FTC), although it had no link with Clark’s organization.⁷⁴ The testimonies of individuals who experienced miraculous healing drew many people from surrounding villages, towns and regions to Faith Tabernacle Church.⁷⁵ In the quest to expand the church, FTC embarked on intensive evangelism in 1924 and started branches of FTC in Akwapim district: Coaltar, Asuokyene, Pampanso and Kwahu within Eastern Region. The rest are Teshie and Nungua - Greater Accra Region, Keta, Anlo - Volta Region and Togo.⁷⁶

In 1926, Clark was excommunicated from FTC over allegation of adultery. The action sparked an argument between Anim and members of FTC in Ghana on whether to continue or discontinue ties with Clark.⁷⁷ The problem lingered on until Anim came into contact with

⁷¹ Paul Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), Ghana from 1980 to 2008,” *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology* (2010): 1.

⁷² Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church,” 15.

⁷³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 100.

⁷⁴ Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church,” 15.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁷⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 103.

another religious magazine ‘The Apostolic Faith,’ published by a Pentecostal movement in Portland. Anim dedicated most of his time to study the teachings of the Holy Spirit in order to gain deeper faith and greater spiritual power than what his primary religious experience had afforded him. When he understood the work and operation of the Holy Spirit, he discussed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues with the members of FTC, but they opposed his views.⁷⁸ The misunderstanding sparked a split between Anim and FTC. Leaving the church in 1930, Anim started “The Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) in the same year with great emphasis on work of the Holy Spirit and Faith.”⁷⁹

The widespread of Anim’s ministry in Ghana was the outbreak of the experience referred to as the ‘Holy Spirit Outpouring.’ In 1932, a member of Anim’s Group, Stephen Owiredu, went to his farms near Brekumanso to pray for one of his twin child who was sick. As the prayer intensified, he spoke in an unfamiliar language (speaking in tongues). When Anim was told about the event, he and four others visited Owiredu’s family. During the time of prayer four others in their company received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church,” 15.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸⁰ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 101. Narrating the event in June 2009 at Brekumanso-Asamankese, in an interview with Mercy Owiredu (also known as Maame Yaa Attaa), the surviving twin daughter of Owiredu, she states: “My father said he encountered 10 recurrent deaths of his children before our (the twins) birth. My father said we were twins, he was so glad God has restored him. Unfortunately, my sister died, then I became ill and unconscious for a month. This time he was desperate and depressed that he decided to commit suicide. After three unsuccessful attempt of suicide, he remembered Anim’s teachings on ‘Prevailing Prayers.’ He resorted to Scriptures and read it many days, asking God to heal his child. One morning, he took me to the farms where he had attempted the suicides. Praying hours for divine healing in an extreme anxiety, he started screaming, and praying aloud. Suddenly his voice changed, then he noticed he was praying in a different language. According to him, a voice told him to dip his Bible into water; give me some to drink and bath me with the rest. He rushed home and did exactly what he had been directed. I threw-up and soiled myself after taking in the water. That encounter marked the beginning of my recovering. However, he continued speaking the language, some family members thought my father was developing insanity. They sent representatives on three different occasions to Asamankese to inform Anim about the state of my father. Anim came with some members of AFC, while they were praying some of them started speaking in tongues. That was when people realized my father was not crazy but had received the power of the Holy Spirit that enabled him to speak in a different language. They called this experience ‘Dispensation of the Holy Spirit, because it is reminiscent to what the early Apostles experienced in Acts 2’”. Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), 18-19.

Narrating the experience of the Holy Spirit baptism by AFC in a published article in 2009, Adomako-Mensah expresses that the experience of the Holy Spirit in 1932 enabled the recipients to spread the Gospel across the nation and effectively do God's work. It drew the attention of church leaders, workers, believers to AFC at Asamankese to experience the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministries.⁸¹ It was reported that a branch pastor of FTC, Kwadwo Duku, and Ankama, a member, walked about 160 miles to Asamankese for the Holy Spirit experience. The mother of Ankama who was unable to travel to the place due to her health condition prayed and received the baptism at home. Her husband, who was motivated by her experience, walked to Asamankese for the outpouring of the Spirit. It was recounted that many visited Asamankese for this prolific phenomenon referred to as the "Dispensation of the Holy Ghost" at the time.⁸²

In 1935, Anim affiliated with UK Apostolic Church through Odubanjo, a representative of FTC in Nigeria. As the news of the baptism of the Holy Spirit spread, AFC mapped out strategies to evangelize communities, which led to overwhelming growth of membership with new challenges of leadership and training. Anim requested UK Apostolic Church to send missionaries to assist him with evangelization, leadership training and church work in Ghana.⁸³ The church sent James McKeown as their first resident missionary to Ghana in 1937. Upon his arrival, McKeown's contracted malaria and was taken to the Ridge Hospital in Accra. McKeown's acceptance of orthodox medicine led to his separation from AFC. Basically, AFC's beliefs in 'Divine faith and healing' was in contrast to McKeown's acceptance of medication. In his article 'The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI) in Ghana from 1980 to 2008,' Paul Adomako-Mensah states,

⁸¹ Adomako-Mensah, "The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), 20.

⁸² Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 101.

⁸³ Adomako-Mensah, "The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church," 20.

The ‘no medication’ stance of Anim’s Church was an overstretching of the doctrine of divine or faith healing to an uncomfortable extreme. The group considered medical profession and Christians who use orthodox medicines as devilish. Persons who engaged in sexual immorality were viewed as candidate for hell. Sores were not to be treated, wearing reading or sun-glasses was considered a sin. It was like worshipping the god of sun out of which the sun glasses were made. Splint were forbidden for people who had a fracture on their legs or arms. Pregnant women in labour were not assisted, they did everything by themselves, because faith alone was sufficient for the situation. No one was permitted to assist them at birth. These practices resulted in deaths of many women and babies at labour.⁸⁴

An interview in May 2009 with the former General Deacon of CAC, John Donkor, revealed that at the time when there was no scuffle on medicational issues, the church held on to the Word as the solution to everything and it worked effectively, adding that

The faith of Anim, the chief executives at that time and some of members were so strong that there was no compromise of our faith. People called us “kyiribentoa,” literally meaning “no medication.” We believed in divine healing and it worked for us. We also believed that if a member lives a life of righteousness, there will be no sickness. There was a meeting in 1954 at Nsuta Beposo, Anim realized that some of the members were taking medication and others were defecting to other churches on the subject of no medication doctrine. Therefore, to avoid members defecting to other churches, Anim pronounced that those who believe in faith healing can depend on their faith in the Lord for divine healing and those who wanted to attend hospitals and clinics could do so. Anim did not take any medication until he passed on in 1984 at age 94. All what we were using was hot water to heal wounds and massage when one got sick.

On the grounds of medicinal misconstruction, Anim rescinded his affiliation with McKeown and UK Apostolic Church in 1939.⁸⁵ He named his community Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), while McKeown chose Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast, it was renamed Church of Pentecost in 1962.⁸⁶ Around the 1953s, Anim’s Christ Apostolic Church, McKeown’s Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast and Assemblies of God were the leading Classical Pentecostal churches in Ghana.⁸⁷ They evangelized communities across the nations with strong emphasis on speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

⁸⁴ Adomako-Mensah, “The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), 21.

⁸⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 111.

⁸⁶ Kojok, “The Birth and Effects of Charismaticism,” *GhanaWeb* accessed March, 2015.

⁸⁷ Samuel Nsiah Bakialoge, “The Contribution of Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) to the Church of Pentecost.” (B.Th., *University of Ghana* 2012), 25.

By the mid-1970s, the above mentioned churches including International Church of the Foursquare Gospel evangelized communities within the Southern hemisphere, while Assemblies of God did likewise in the Northern section of the country. Salvation, healing, deliverance, miracles and baptism of the Holy Spirit predominated their preaching.⁸⁸

Scholars debate about the factors that contributed to the spread of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches and their focus on Prosperity Preaching. Some underlined socio-economic factors while others privilege cultural-religious factors, as the following section illustrates.

14.3 Socio-Economic Factors

In the 1970s and 1980s Ghana experienced a persistent socio-economic crisis which were attributed to internal and external factors. The internal causes included inappropriate domestic policies and natural disasters, a combination of which resulted in a rapid decline of the productive sectors of the economy, whereas the external reasons were heights in international terms of trade and escalation of world interest rates.⁸⁹ The economic situation precipitated a military revolt in 1981 by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings under the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) for social and political change. He faulted the problems on domestic policy mismanagement and widespread of corruption by previous governments. However, when he came to power, Rawlings discovered the economic distortions were more complicated than economic abuse.⁹⁰ As the economy situation worsen, survival for health, success, shelter, clothing, self-development became the concern of Ghanaians.

⁸⁸ David T. Tenobi, *A Historical Glimpse of the Holy Spirit Revival of the church from 1900* (Suhum: DanChrist Printing Works, 2010), 1-162.

⁸⁹ Kwodwo Ewusi, *Structural Adjustment and Stabilization Policies in Developing Countries: A Case Study of Ghana's Experience in 1983-1986* (Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1987), 15.

⁹⁰ Ewusi, *Structural Adjustment and Stabilization*, 15.

In the early 1980s the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) proposed “Structural Adjustment Programme” to recover Ghana’s productivity. In 1983, the proposal was acceded by the government in exchange for assistance packages to ease the social and economic suffering that had bemused Ghanaians. By the 1990s, the effects of structural adjustment was evident. The economy was stable, government deficits dropped drastically, and inflation trickled. There were improvement in education, employment and appropriate policy implementation that contributed to social and economic growth in Ghana.⁹¹ Anderson posits that like other Africa countries Ghana witnessed a century of rapid social change with its accompanying industrialization and urbanization, as well as a transition from a traumatic pre-colonial rule to post-colonial political order. These factors, according to Anderson affected the formation of new religious movements all over the world and those in Africa are not exception.⁹²

In his PhD thesis “The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity,” E. Kingsley Larbi states that during the difficult times in Ghana, Christian churches, especially the African Initiated Churches (AIC) inspired people to pursue abundant life in which health, material blessing and protection from evil powers are significant. The churches encouraged withdrawal from wickedness in preparation for the celestial city where believers will enjoy what society has denied them on this earth.⁹³ The churches advocated a radical pursuit of abundant life in the here and now, through discipline, hard work, and proper behaviour. A kind of behaviour that facilitated enjoyable viable life and reinforces Christ identity. Larbi writes

People search for God because they are in need of salvation. They meet Him as they search for salvation and in meeting him, they know that they have encountered ‘the joy of man’s desiring’, the sum of his religious striving and ideals – that is

⁹¹ K. Botchwe, “The recovery ‘involved a major reorientation of economic and financial policies’ in Ghana,” *The Courier Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-European Community* 111 (1988): 7.

⁹² Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton: African World Press, 2001): 3-240.

⁹³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 51.

salvation. This is the common denominator in all religions.’ For all “men look to their different religions for an answer to unresolved riddles of human existence.” This common sear is for salvation.⁹⁴

Larbi’s reading was affirmed by Anderson. In his view, the social, economic situation resulted in a sense of oppression, disorientation, and marginalization that left people seeking to form new relationships in smaller social groups, where they could really belong and regain some human dignity. And the African Initiated Churches (AIC) or African Pentecostal Movements did provide what was described as a “place to feel at home.”

On a similar account, Christian G. Baeta states that emergence of AIC’s was more of a religious pragmatism, a search for answers from the realms of the supernatural to life issues where both traditional resources and the western form of Christianity had proven inadequate.⁹⁵ The attempt by these churches to alleviate Christians and Ghanaians from excessive pain during economic crises was what produced Prosperity Gospel, although the original intents was innocuous.⁹⁶ Larbi also asserts that the context of the IMF structural adjustment and economic recovery programme of the government, plus the frequent stress of material blessings by AIC’s were perceived by many as means for attaining worldly goals.⁹⁷

Goliama speaks that at the time of difficulties, these Pentecostal/Charismatic churches provided liberation for the poor and the oppressed, and sometimes offered their members with sacred objects believed to have miraculous healing and powers to solve their personal problems. Some emphasized on tithing, sacrifices, or making ‘pacts’ with God so as to

⁹⁴ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 51.

⁹⁵ Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana* (Accra: African Christian Press, 2004), 1-139.

⁹⁶ Personal observation: I was young at the time, but I could recall the preaching the spark the change was power of the Holy Spirit, freedom from spiritual powers and holiness as the only warrant for God’s material blessing. In the aspect of giving, you do it without expecting anything from God since he could replenish by means of good health, answered prayers, protection or other means far beyond expectation.

⁹⁷ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 51.

receive divine blessings.⁹⁸ He however argues that Prosperity Gospel is an American model of ministry imported into Africa. That is why most churches in Africa lack creativity to design pastoral ministries that are suitable to the local African pastoral contexts. He maintains that Prosperity Gospel churches diminish the charisms of the Spirit endowed upon African Christians and rely on foreign structures.⁹⁹

Contrary to Goliama's view, Asamoah-Gyadu articulates that the internationalism of the African Pentecostal movements and their leaders must be understood in terms of personal visits abroad, visits of foreign evangelists to Africa, correspondence and adaptation of the American Pentecostal Bible School culture. He added that access to international televangelists: video and audiotapes of influential foreign ministries like Kenneth Hagin and Rheinhard Bonnke had a pronounced influence on Africa.¹⁰⁰ In his article, "Born of Water and the Spirit:" Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa," Asamoah-Gyadu indicates that for Christians, Jesus is "the centre of history" "the focus of Scripture", and "the heart of mission." Evangelicalism usually stresses the power of the Word, while Pentecostalism takes the matter further by its emphasis and active promotion of the experiential presence of the Holy Spirit in new tongues, healing, deliverance, revelations, and in pneumatic phenomena.¹⁰¹

He however admits that Prosperity Gospel has been fertile in Africa due to traditional thinking.¹⁰² Prosperity Preaching in Ghana, according to him is deeply rooted in African Traditional Religion (ATR). The Christian prayer vigils and healing camps are similar to traditional shrines where people visit to have their destinies discovered and "spiritual

⁹⁸ Goliama, "Gospel of Prosperity," 344.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 346.

¹⁰⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit," 402.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 366.

¹⁰² Asamoah-Gyadu, "Did Jesus Wear Designer Robes?" 1.

problems” dealt with. Message of prosperity resonates with African religious ideas because of the traditional belief in mystical causality. Moreover, the ritualized offering of prayers and tithes which are given prominence because the giver is entitled to tangible blessings constitute ritual actions that are supposed to make things happen.¹⁰³

Kahl reinforced the assertion that Prosperity Preaching certainly seems relevant to many in Ghana as the only solution in a situation of extreme economic hardship. Essentially where some can only afford one or two instead of three meals a day.¹⁰⁴ In the same vein, many children have either dropped out or cannot access education due to cost involved and the sick cannot afford medical treatment.¹⁰⁵ For Kahl, Prosperity Preaching is so attractive to many West Africans because ATR always places great emphasis on salvation through all kinds of material needs and individual business success.¹⁰⁶

1.4.4 Cultural-Religious Factors

To accentuate the claim that ATR has been the bedrock for Prosperity Preaching in Ghana, the researcher explores few known proverbs, songs and prayers within African Traditional Religion and Akan culture to authenticate or contradict the assertion. Additionally, written prayers and praises of Afua Kuma, a native of Obo-Kwahu has been catalogued for similar intents.

According to Kofi Asare Opoku, Africans view God uniquely from other spirits and divinities. Africans believe the power of God transcends deities and possesses inimitable attributes of immanence.¹⁰⁷ He is present everywhere, involves in the affairs of people, rules and sustains the universe with love, compassion and justice.¹⁰⁸ These beliefs and expressions

¹⁰³ Asamoah-Gyadu, “Did Jesus Wear Designer Robes?” 3.

¹⁰⁴ Kahl, “Prosperity-Preaching,” 37.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Kahl, “Prosperity-Preaching,” 37.

¹⁰⁷ Poku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 27.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

from Akan perspective about God are typically communicated in the names ascribed to him. For instance, Akan believe that *Onyame* (God) brought into being everything the world contains. He demonstrates great care and compassion for his creatures by providing all their needs.¹⁰⁹ The expression *Onyame ma wo yare a, oma wo ano aduru*, implies “If God gives sickness, he also gives you a cure.” It portrays God as the greatest physician. Also, it proves that God is the cause of misery, and he makes provision for the victim to be healed.¹¹⁰ For the Akan, God constantly exercise care, protection, and healing to all. His providence is also believed to be unfailing. Thus “If God gives you a cup of wine and an evil-minded person kicks it over, he fills it up again.” God’s providence is not a mere sentimental assertion, it is a reality that is principally enshrined in his omnipotence and attributes.¹¹¹

A proverb in Akan states that “No one desires to eat salt.” This suggest that everyone wishes to prosper.¹¹² By tradition, People of Akan view themselves as *Onyame mma* “God's children.” *Onyame* (God) is understood to be *Obaatanpa* meaning good parent, a parent who is practically involved in the daily affairs of his people and provides their needs. The expression *Toturobonsu* suggests God is the Source and giver of rain. God is seen as the one who sends forth rains and sunshine to be enjoyed by people. McCaskie postulates that the name *Onyame* consists of two words: “*onya*” thus to have, succeed or achieve and “*mee*” denotes to be filled to capacity, satisfied, or complete. It implies anyone who relies on God will be gratified or fulfilled.¹¹³ Also, *Odomakoma* which indicates God of grace portrays the availability of all good things at the disposal of God’s children, including wellbeing. The

¹⁰⁹ Poku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 28.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Poku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 28.

¹¹² Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel,” 68.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 69.

idea of *Onyame ba* “God’s child” is taken to mean the child has complete access to life and in the midst of lack, *Onyame* (God) provides.¹¹⁴

With this perception, *Onyame* supersedes all things and capable of flourishing, refreshing and nourishing his children in all situation so they can enjoy life to the fullest. Anything negative is believed to be caused by forces of darkness. For the Akan, Supreme God never curses or inflict pain on people, although the other deities are perceived to inflict suffering, sorrow, incurable diseases on individual in the society due to their wicked intentions towards others or the community. People may be cursed, killed when they offend the deities: When people visit farms, sacred places and sea or river side on the days they are forbidden. The Akan prayers and praises of Afua Kuma of Obo-Kwahu.

Amansahene: Jesus the Arbitrator.
He who brings nations together
Milk and honey flow in his vein
Children rush to meet him
Crowds of young people
Rush about to make him welcome.¹¹⁵

Onyankopon Aponyinam: God the Provider.
Who has medicine for hunger.¹¹⁶

Ankankyere-Damfo-Adu: The Friend of all.
Though we have said nothing yet,
He knows all about our needs.
He is the fertile forest-land on which farmer labour with cutlasses in hand.¹¹⁷

Onyankopon Toturobonsu: God, the Source of all Rain.
You are the rain which floods us with food.
You give in excess and able to meet everyone’s need.
By your bountiful blessings our hands are full.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel,” 68.

¹¹⁵ Afua Kuma, *Jesus of the Deep Forest: Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma* (Accra: Asempa Publishers), 5-46.

¹¹⁶ Kuma, *Jesus of the Deep Forest*, 27.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

These expressions, proverbs and perceptions of Akan people about God denote progress, happiness, success, continuity. Poverty is detestable and people will do everything within their power to shun or possibly escape it.¹¹⁹ Young men in ancient times were noted to have pooled their resources to purchase talisman, with the intention of countenancing prosperous life and securing themselves from poverty.¹²⁰ The proverb, “*obi bo wo dua se ma onwu a enyeyaw se ose ma ohia nka no*” suggest that the pronouncement of death on someone is better than the curse of poverty. Again, the phrase, a poor person has no family or friend suggest people are neglected to their fate when they encounter poverty.¹²¹

The notion about poverty and attitude of people towards the poor compel many Africans to pursue *ahonya* (wealth). Wealth brings respect, honour, promotion and inheritance, society accords respect to the wealthy and reject the wisdom of the poor at functions. People view wealth as a compulsory procurement and will marshal every efforts to ensure protection against hunger, sickness, poverty and other bizarre conditions.

Incontrovertibly, the cultural practices could be another factor that has facilitated the belief and spread of Prosperity Gospel in Ghana. The socio-economic crisis deepened the search for salvation, peace, disentanglement from negative forces perceived to cause poverty and hope in God. On the other hand the culture, and the feeling that acquisition of wealth negates poverty, brings respect and elevation allowed individuals to pursue prosperity and sometimes wrongfully access fortunes.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel,” 70.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 23,

¹²¹ Ibid., 71.

¹²² There is this popular song we sung when we were children: when I was a poor person, my family did not know me, when I became a rich, my family wrote me a letter. Go and tell my family that I am still a poor person. Unfortunately, this is characteristically of most Ghanaians. They are practical, real and irrepressible truth.

1.4.5 Conclusion

It can be inferred from the discussions that ‘Prosperity Gospel’ is a debated issue. Despite scholars’ debate about the factors that contributed to the spread of the concept, there were social, religious and cultural factors that promoted it in Ghana. Proponents of the concept believe it is a physical reward from God, while critics of the expression consider it to be a misnomer that create social segregation. The Literature review facilitated a better understanding of the subject. It aided the collection of data, analysis and realization of research objectives. It explicitly identified diverse views on ‘Prosperity Preaching.’ Whereas some individuals believe contribution to Christian organizations bring God’s blessings: good health, enrichment and promotion; others hold the view that aspect of African culture and practices, as well as economic and social difficulties have contributed to the spread of prosperity among Ghanaian Charismatic community.

1.5 Methodology

This section presents the general approach and specific techniques adopted to address the research problem. The procedure the researcher used to collect data for the development of the research are discussed.

1.5.1 Introduction

The research employed a qualitative analyse based on primary and secondary sources. The researcher selects Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) as the case-study for the following reasons: (a) It is one of the most successful Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in Ghana; (b) has strong emphasis on baptism and work of the Holy Spirit; miracles, divine healing, signs and material wealth of the believer; (c) the founder beliefs are easily accessible because they are expressed in a number of publication.

It is important to notify that there are a limited number of researches on LCI,¹²³ direct data are not easily come by for a general distrust of the Church towards academic research. In general, strict control operated by the hierarchy of the church makes information gathering difficult. Some of the informants expressed their fear to be label as ‘disloyal sons’ if they express any form of critique towards the founder and his close associated.

1.5.2 Data collection instruments

Both primary and secondary sources were utilized for this study. Semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and document analysis were used as the primary source for data collection. Detailed discussion of these sources of data collection has been explained below.

Secondary sources for the research included articles, journals, books and online sources related to the research topic. The sources were read and reviewed to provide the needed information regarding possible gaps in previous works.

Primary sources comprehend:

- a) *Participant observation*: the researcher dedicated ten months, from April 2015 to March 2016, for participant observation by attending LCI Sunday Worship services, mid-week teaching meetings at Madina and North Kaneshie. During the same time, she visited a number of LCI institutions: Anagkazo Ministry and Bible Training Centre (AMBTC), Lighthouse Missions Schools (Nursery and JHS) and Lighthouse Orphanage in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions.

¹²³ Louisa Mills-Odoi, “The Concept of Miracle in the Teaching of Dag Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International” (master’s thesis, TTS, 2008); 1-147; Albert Toss Mills-Odoi, “The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse Chapel International” (master’s thesis, TTS, 2008); 1-154; Prince Eric Opare, “A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP) of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) as a Model for the Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) in its Quest for Mission to Muslims in Ghana” (Master’s thesis, TTS, 15), 1-189; and Faustina Aba Wiba Coffie. “Public Relations Practice in the Lighthouse Chapel International and the International Central Gospel Church” (Master’s thesis, University of Ghana, 2013), 1-111.

- b) *Interview*: the researcher interviewed over 15 key personalities of the church. They were selected in order to have an insight in the organization of LCI: Its main beliefs and hermeneutical approach. The number of people interviewed consisted of 5 senior pastors, 5 lay pastors, 4 shepherds, and 2 administrative leaders and the provost of AMBTC, Mampong. Most of the interviewees asked for anonymity because they were afraid of being tagged ‘mercenaries’ or ‘dissenters’ ‘law-breakers’ or face dismissal.
- c) *Focus group discussion*: Two separate groups (group ‘A’ and ‘B’) living in two distinct areas (Madina, North Kaneshie), were involved in focus group discussions in September 17 and 26. Each group entailed 12 individual members selected from LCI with 10 to 20 years’ experience. All of them are trained leaders (Shepherds, Sunday school teachers, Music directors, Bussell shepherds and Counsellors). Three people among the group started with the fellowship at the Medical School within Korle-Bu in the late 1980s, most of them began with the church’s first cathedral at Korle-Gonno branch, while others started 10 years ago with their present branches. Among many Scriptures that are frequently quoted in the teachings, sermons and publications of Heward-Mills, the researcher proposed to each group to discuss four of the following biblical verses - John 10:10; 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 3:14; James 4:2. The academic status of these individuals’ ranges from WASSCE; Ordinary level (O’level); diploma; bachelor and master’s degrees.
- d) *Publications*: a number of book written by Dag Heward-Mills were analysed in order to understand his use of the Scripture and the ‘hermeneutic lenses’ he utilizes in his interpretation. The books were: ‘Name it, Claim it, Take it,’ 2008; ‘Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich,’ 2010; ‘Bearing Fruit: After Your Own Kind,’ 2007; ‘Loyalty and Disloyalty,’ 2011;

‘Salvation Gospel: Seven Great Principles,’ 2007; ‘The Lay People and the Ministry,’ 2005; and ‘The Art of Shepherding,’ 2010.

1.5.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis focused on understanding the meaning of the experiences shared by each participant. Text data relating to the interview questions were aligned with the research questions, and analysed by content analysis in order to describe the phenomena in relation to each of the research questions.

Validity was achieved by undertaking multiple methods to investigate the problem from different angles in order to strengthen the adequacy of the findings. Moreover, all the questions posed in the interviews were directly linked to the researcher’s objectives and covered all aspects of the topic. Data was also transcribed and analysed with a very high degree of accuracy. Finally, secondary sources of data were assessed to determine the legitimacy of the information given.

1.6 Relevance of the Research

The research offers a contribution on academic and pastoral levels:

Academically, it provides a better understanding on current dimensions of Pentecostal Hermeneutics. Since there are not sufficient information about LCI, this work provides other researchers with comprehensive, information about LCI, as well as inspire students for further research on the subject. The researcher acknowledges that many scholars have delve into Pentecostal Hermeneutics. However, the hermeneutical approach adopted in the research affords a more perspective. In that regard, it will afford students and Pentecostal/Charismatic scholars with useful information and strategies for conducting research within the academy.

On the pastoral level, the work will provide support and clarity for many dissatisfied or wounded individual and communities. It will serve as a source of information for Pentecostal/Charismatic readers who are struggling with theological and experiential issues as regards their Pentecostal identity. It will further impact passionate students of Scripture; those struggling to find quality resources on the Holy Spirit. This work remains accessible, not only for students and scholars but a wide variety of searching readers: pastors, teachers, and parishioners alike. The research provides awareness in relation to the teachings, beliefs and practices of LCI, and contributes to the ongoing debate on Pentecostal/Charismatic Hermeneutical approach.

1.7 Organization of Chapters

The work is organized into five chapters: chapter one deals with introductory issues. It comprises background of the study, statement of the problem, methodology, a review of literature associated with problems addressed in the study. Chapter two discussed Pentecostal Hermeneutics. The debate centred on the possibility and nature of Pentecostal/Charismatic hermeneutics and deals with the issue of fundamentalist approach to the reading of Scripture. Chapter three presented a comprehensive overview of Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI). It detailed organization, beliefs, social responsibility of the church to the public and how the pastoral structure is used to address the needs of members as well as prevent disloyalty to church hierarchy. Chapter four focuses on the use of Scripture in LCI. The main *loci* of interpretation (preaching, publications etc.) are presented to discover the ‘hermeneutic lenses’ utilized in reading the Scripture. Finally, chapter five closes the research with a summary, discussion of the main findings, and recommendations for future research and pastoral practice.

CHAPTER TWO

PENTECOSTAL HERMENEUTICS

2.1 Introduction

The literature review has underlined the relationship between Pentecostalism and Prosperity Preaching. It has helped to collocate LCI in the Pentecostal/Charismatic landscape. For this reason, before analysing the structure, beliefs and approach to interpretation of LCI, this chapter discusses the debate surrounding Pentecostal hermeneutical approach to Scripture as theoretical framework of the research.

The chapter focusses on how Pentecostals employ Act 2:1-12, the Pentecost narrative, as the initial evidence for baptism of the Holy Spirit and as criterion of interpretation. Fundamentalist approach to interpretation and the internal debate about the necessity, nature and distinctiveness of Pentecostal hermeneutic are analysed to draw implication for contemporary Pentecostal life and spirituality.

2.2 History of Pentecostal Hermeneutics

Interpreting Scripture with an emphasis on special enablement of the Holy Spirit began with the revival moment in the nineteenth century.¹²⁴ The infant Pentecostal revival invaded hearts of communities and grew rapidly. The revival spread through Kansas and Missouri to Texas, California, then to the parts of the earth.¹²⁵ Contrary to expectations and wishes, Pentecostalism developed into various denominational structures, and later admitted into mainstream Evangelicalism.¹²⁶ But one conspicuous thing that has been constant with Pentecostalism is the experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Charles Fox Parham

¹²⁴ Roger Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective* Stronstad. Baguio (Baguio: APTS Asia Pacific Theological Seminar Press, 1995), 15.

¹²⁵ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 15

¹²⁶ Ibid.

and his students in Kansas in 1900, and has since become the foundation of Pentecostal hermeneutics.

2.2.1 Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929)

In 1900, Charles Fox Parham, leader of the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, led his students to seek out and experience baptism of the Holy Spirit as indicated in Acts 2. After vigorously praying and searching the Bible evidence of baptism of the Holy Spirit, the students concurred that while there were various experiences when the Spirit fell, the proof on each occasion was that the recipients spoke with other tongues.¹²⁷ In one of such prayer meetings Parham prayed for Sister Agnes N. Ozman, she received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and begun to speak in tongues. She spoke in the Chinese language, and was unable to speak English for three days, becoming the first person to experience Pentecost in the early 19th century. It was after some nights that Parham himself received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Their place of meeting was described by Parham as a place reminiscent to the ‘Upper Room’ experience as recorded in Acts 2, with visual, and audible evidences of blazing flames signifying the presence of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁸

As Parham’s theology of baptism of the Holy Spirit evolves, he reached the conclusion that initial evidence of the Holy Spirit baptism is speaking in tongues. Furthermore, on the grounds of Mark 16:17, Parham declared that missionaries could visit other countries without necessarily attending a school to enable them communicate in the language of that country. He believes the Holy Spirit will empower the missionaries to evangelize in the precise language of the people.¹²⁹ By the close of 1900, Parham and his group were prepared

¹²⁷ Martin William Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2010), 1-161.

¹²⁸ Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 21.

¹²⁹ Gary B. McGee, “Tongues, the Bible Evidence: The Revival Legacy of Charles F. Parham,” *Assemblies of God Theological Seminary* (1999): 1.

to encounter Acts 2 in a new way. When the revival commenced in 1901, he announced that the students had spoken other languages such as German, Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, Syrian, Hindi, and Spanish. He noted that “cloven tongues of fire” appeared over the heads of speakers. The daily services continued for months with a great number of people attending, counting over 800 conversions, 1,000 testimonies of physical healing, and several hundred receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.¹³⁰

The event inspired Parham to expand his ministry. In 1905, he moved to Houston, Texas, where he evangelized and started another Bible school with his students. The revival in Houston was successful and spread all over Texas. From there, the Pentecostal message went to Los Angeles through one of his students and co-workers. As Parham travelled to Zion City, Illinois, where his preaching gained warm response and great following, new missionaries travelled from Zion City across the United States and to India, Africa, and other lands. At this time, Parham’s vision of influencing the world through evangelism seemed within reach.¹³¹

Parham had a successful ministry and saw thousands baptized in the Holy Spirit, including many who became ministers and missionaries. His leadership style, however, inhibited further influence. He later conferred himself with the title “Projector of the Apostolic Faith Movement.” Most Pentecostals rejected his notion that only those baptized with the Holy Spirit baptized would be taken in the Rapture.¹³²

It is worthwhile indicating that long before Topeka, Kansas outpour of Holy Spirit baptism, there were precedents of persons suddenly receiving the capacity to preach in other languages. A missionary sent to India in 1881, Miss C.M. Reade, testified that the Spirit

¹³⁰ McGee, “Tongues, the Bible Evidence,” 6.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid., 7.

gave her the ‘gift of speaking Hindustani’ to enable her to preach without a translator. Similar reports came from Jonathan Goforth, the famed Canadian Presbyterian missionary to China, as well as W.P. Buncombe, an Anglican serving in Japan.¹³³ Although many spoke in tongues long before Topeka, Kansas experience, it was Parham who pioneered the idea that the Bible evidence for the baptism of the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues, while Seymour popularized Parham’s views¹³⁴ that has become the basis of Pentecostal theology and experiences.¹³⁵

2.2.2 William James Seymour (1870-1922)

Seymour was a young African-American who enrolled in Parham’s Bible School in Houston at the time when glossolalia was being experienced as a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit. He was largely influenced by Parham’s teachings on repentance, justification by faith, sanctification, divine healing and imminent return of Christ.¹³⁶ Seymour received the tongues experience at a prayer meeting in Los Angeles, then later founded the Apostolic Faith Mission at Azusa Street. The meeting started in April 1906, and that was the beginning of Pentecostalism.¹³⁷

The congregation at Azusa comprised of black-white worshippers who spent hours swaying forth and back in a terrifying attitude of prayer and supplication. During one of such meetings, the Los Angeles Times reported under the title, “Weird Babel of Tongues.” But that did not prevent the peculiar zeal of the worshippers.¹³⁸ In October, 1906, Seymour invited Parham to hold a revival at the Azusa Street Mission. Parham was repelled to witness

¹³³ McGee, “Tongues, the Bible Evidence,” 7.

¹³⁴ Roberts Liardon, *God’s Generals: Why They Succeeded and Why Some Failed* (Kaduna: Evangel Publishers, 1998), 21-413.

¹³⁵ Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 22.

¹³⁶ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: The Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches of Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2002), 3-306.

¹³⁷ Dennis McBride, “A Survey of the History and Distinctives of Pentecostalism,” *Bethany Bible Ministries* (1993): 1.

¹³⁸ McBride, “A Survey of the History,” 3.

the wild uproar and spiritual pandemonium of the people during the service. Consequently, Seymour and Parham separated after Seymour failed to heed Parham's warnings about the dangerous excesses of his meetings. Notwithstanding the split, Azusa revival continued, and became a training ground for Pentecostal Missionaries who were sent throughout the world to spread their doctrinal views.¹³⁹

Cephas N. Omenyo affirmed that the days of Azusa Street was characterized by spontaneous preaching and Sermons, prayer for the sick, altar call for salvation, sanctification or baptism of the Holy Spirit evidence.¹⁴⁰ Many fell under the power of the Spirit with testimonies of healings, while others spoke in tongues. The event of Azusa Street, according to him, spread like wildfire, attracting great crowd and global attention.¹⁴¹ Pentecostal experience at Azusa also attracted waves of lay people from numerous traditions. He describes the phenomenon as second to none in terms of its scope and influence within and outside the United States. People swarmed into the mission like bees to a hive, then, convinced of the message, penetrated by the experience, and empowered by the Spirit, they dispersed; carrying the Pentecostal Gospel to the world.¹⁴²

In 1906, Seymour writes that Pentecost has surely come with it Bible evidences: many are converted, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in tongues as the apostolic community did on the Day of Pentecost. In similar vein, he specified that the baptism with the Holy Ghost is a gift of power upon the sanctified life.¹⁴³ Azusa Street members promoted the book of Acts and the Apostles experience as the standard for Pentecost. Frank Bartleman who chronicled various events of Azusa Street from 1906-1909 in an earlier article states:

¹³⁹ McBride, "A Survey of the History," 5.

¹⁴⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 89.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 22.

Pentecost has come to Los Angeles, the American Jerusalem. Every sect, creed, and doctrine under Heaven is found in Los Angeles, as well as every nation represented..... the revival with its unusual phenomena is the topic of the day. Persecution is strong, already the police have been appealed to break up the meetings.... we can do little but look on and pray... Next to old Jerusalem there is nothing like it in the world. All nations are represented as at Jerusalem. Thousands are here from all over the Union, and from many parts of the world, sent God for Pentecost. They will scatter the fire to ends of the earth... surely we are in the days of restoration, the "last days, wonderful days, glorious days... They are days of privilege and responsibility and peril."¹⁴⁴

Parham and Seymour were important figures in Pentecostalism. Parham gave the movement the doctrine of tongues as evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the view of the restoration of the apostolic faith in the latter times. Seymour, on the other hand, popularized Parham's views. As shown previously, the phenomenon of the Azusa Street was embraced by whites, African-Americans and Latinos. The pioneers who subscribed to Pentecostalism spread the doctrine worldwide. Among them were Thomas B. Barratt who spread the doctrine in Norway and America; E. N. Bell - Assemblies of God; Charles Harrison Mason - Church of God in Christ, Aimee Semple McPherson - International Church of the Foursquare Gospel; and Francisco Olazábal - Latin American Council of Christian Churches.¹⁴⁵

As the doctrine of Pentecostalism developed the forerunners realized the hermeneutical flaws their teachings. They began to address and to articulate new hermeneutical approaches in 1907, while making effort to sustain their experience and tradition. They recognized glossolalia as prayer in the Spirit and the source of spiritual empowerment.¹⁴⁶ They lay strong emphasis on miraculous manifestations, deliverance, prosperity, power and viewed themselves as spiritual catalysts in God's healing process.¹⁴⁷ Their doctrine of salvation

¹⁴⁴ Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 24-25.

¹⁴⁵ McGee, "Tongues, the Bible Evidence," 7.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ McBride, "A Survey of the History," 5

comprised of physical health and healing as an essential part of the believers' deliverance. By 1940 the central focus of revival meetings were miracles and power.¹⁴⁸

However, some church leaders of Assemblies of God were stunned and disgusted by the bizarre claims and 'personality cults' emerging from the new emphasis. These leaders also questioned the motives and methods of fundraising which had developed.¹⁴⁹ But the church continued to teach not only physical but financial healing. As McBride wrote, Pentecostalism became "powerful money raisers, stressing that faith is "power" or "force" with which Christians could evidently "move things" and the God of the universe."¹⁵⁰

Pentecostals continued to teach that they were the restored New Testament church intended by God since the days of the Apostles. In their opinion, speaking in tongues, miracles, healing, signs and wonders which were frequent with the early church, stop functioning during the 'apostasy'.¹⁵¹ However, since they represent the true church on earth, God has resurrected miracles, faith, and healing.¹⁵² According to Noel, Pentecostals defined the underlying principles of their beliefs in this mode.

The truth is that the marks of supernaturalism with which the Church was originally clothed were intended to abide with it, and to accredit its doctrine as Divine, just as Christ's own doctrine was accredited as Divine; because as already observed, the ministry of the church was to be a continuation of the ministry of Christ, and in his design, no doubt, was to be accompanied with the same phenomena of supernaturalism that verified his own ministry....The honest-hearted thinking men and women of this great movement, have made it their endeavour to return to the faith and practice of our brethren who serve God prior to the apostasy. They do not recognize a doctrine or custom as authoritative unless it can be traced to that primal source of the church instructions, the Lord and his apostles.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ McBride, "A Survey of the History," 5.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Renunciation of the Christian faith during the time of persecution.

¹⁵² Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 113.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 114.

Noel infers that for these Pentecostals their method and interpretation of Scripture was not only accurate, but they believed that their preaching was consistently witnessed by God himself. The “signs” that emerged supported their preaching of the Word; for that reason, they did not feel the need to discuss whether or not they interpreted Scriptures correctly.¹⁵⁴ Generally, they employ metanarrative, personal experiences plus testimonies of congregational members in their biblical hermeneutics. As a result, Pentecostals have been accused of biblical literalism or fundamental interpretation of Scriptures.¹⁵⁵

2.3 The Problem: ‘Fundamentalist’ Hermeneutics

Pentecostals approach to biblical hermeneutics has been accused to be a fundamentalism or biblical literalism, an interpretation that is embedded in a stern adherence to a set of basic principles or meaning of a text.¹⁵⁶ Fundamentalism insists on the divine inspiration of the Bible and the inerrancy of the word of God. They consider ‘historical’ every biblical narrative, failing to acknowledge the essential interpretation of the possibility of metaphoric meanings. The problem with fundamentalism, in Schneiders’s observation, is not that it fails to consider the distinctions and precisions of technical exegesis. Rather, it fails to consent to the faith context of the text: While seeking security in the words, as if the latter were not part of a living language tradition. She further noted that the problem of excessive liberalism is not that fundamentalism fails to adhere to the words of the text, but fails to interpret within the perimeters of the community's faith.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 116.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Heidi Hadsell and Christoph Stückelberger. Eds. *Overcoming Fundamentalism. Ethical Responses from Five Continents* (Geneva: Duta Wacana University Press, 2009), 17-224.

¹⁵⁷ Schneiders, “Faith, Hermeneutics,” 735. See also The Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 69-72. The document emphasized the risks connected to a fundamentalist approach and ends its analysis with the following statement: “The Fundamentalist approach is dangerous, for it is attractive to people who look to the Bible for ready answers to their problems of life. It can deceive by offering interpretations that are pious but illusory, creating the impression Bible has immediate solutions to all problems. Fundamentalism invites people to a kind of

Some examples of fundamentalist reading of the Bible are the following: Oral Roberts' interprets 3 John 2 in relation to a personal revelation that cured him, while Copeland explains Gal. 3:14 to imply Jesus redeemed us from curse so God's blessings of material wealth could be attained by his children. Osteen's reading of Rom. 4:17 to support the view that Christians' confession contains creative power because it is Scriptural. Interpreting Rom.4:17, Heward-Mills articulates that God called things that were not into existence. So, the onus is on believers to demand what they desire. This demand, in his view, 'brings into existence' what is declared and proclaimed in faith.¹⁵⁸

Pentecostal Hermeneutics of prosperity, health, faith and positive confession emerged from their personal understanding and experience of Scripture, instead of deriving the meaning from the Scripture. They understand Scripture from what is literally stated without sufficient knowledge of its cultural, allegorical or semantic contexts at the time of writing.

The researcher agrees with Noel that Pentecostals have flourished where other Christian denominations struggled, simply by addressing various spiritual needs of the world's most ordinary people.¹⁵⁹ Nonetheless, Pentecostals approach Scripture with fundamentalist lens. Their tool for interpreting Scripture and addressing basic needs of people is literal. For many of them, Scripture readings are 'clear' and the basic meanings and teachings can be understood by the average person without any process of interpretation.¹⁶⁰

Contributing to the discussion, Bartkowski states that the doctrine of clarity of Scripture, neither mean hermeneutical principles are not necessary, nor refute the gap between the

intellectual suicide, injects into life a false certitude, and unwittingly confuses the divine substance of the biblical message with what are in fact its human limitations."

¹⁵⁸ Dag Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it* (Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM, 2008), 63.

¹⁵⁹ Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 14.

¹⁶⁰ Bernard Gechiko Nyabwari and Dickson Nkonge Kagema, "Charismatic Pentecostal Churches in Kenya: Growth, Culture and Orality," *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education* 3 (2014): 27-33.

culture in which the Bible was written and the culture of a modern reader.¹⁶¹ Instead, exegetical and interpretative techniques are employed in the hermeneutical process in order to close the existing cultural gaps.¹⁶² Pentecostals concede that their interpretation of initial evidence is based on historical precedent as established in Acts 2, which for many distinguishes between didactic and historic portions of Scripture because the didactic portions have primary importance for the formation of Christian doctrine¹⁶³

In a different view, Atkinson expresses that whether one regards Pentecostal hermeneutics as ‘too’ literalist depends on the stance from which the person is evaluating it. In his view, many non-Pentecostals appreciate literal interpretation. The issue perhaps is a variety of Pentecostal handling of Scripture, from a highly literal approach to a more flexible one. A second comment, which relates to this subject, is that distinctive Pentecostal doctrines do not rest on a ‘too literal’ reading of certain texts. They simply do not accept a reductionist hermeneutic which prioritises grammatico-historical exegesis to the detriment of immediate ‘Spirit-enabled’ awareness of meaning.¹⁶⁴

For Fee, the hermeneutical problem with Pentecostals is the situation where the exegete insists that when there are comparable situations in our own time, then the word of God is precisely that which was spoken to the original recipients. Such interpretation widens the gap between the original recipients and the contemporary reader about ‘what the Scripture meant when it was written’ and “What does it mean today?” Fee states that Historical exegesis becomes a perpetrator for insisting that we go back to the then and there when the

¹⁶¹ Bartkowski, John. “Beyond Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy: Conservative Protestants and the Hermeneutic Interpretation of Scripture.” *Sociology of Religion* 3 (1996): 259. doi:10.2307/3712156.

¹⁶² Bartkowski, “Beyond Biblical Literalism,” 262.

¹⁶³ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 131.

¹⁶⁴ William Atkinson, “Pentecostal Hermeneutics - Worth a Second Look?” (2010): 1. <http://tffps.org/docs/Pentecostal%2520Hermeneutics.pdf>.

exegetes appeared less concerned with contemporary issues.¹⁶⁵ Rolland D. McCune argues that biblical inspiration was a confluence of God and the human writers in a unitary authorship that resulted in a miraculous, inerrant product with a divine and a human aspect. Copyists, translators, and revisers had no such ministry of the Spirit nor any promise made to them by God. As a result, mistranslation, miscopying, or misprinting has crept into every version and reproduction of the biblical text; however, regardless the magnitude or trivial the errors, interpreters of Scriptures must take cognizant of them.¹⁶⁶

Atkinson further proposes that lack of experience must not determine biblical exegesis, either. A lack of experience of contemporary miracles is no good reason for reading into Scripture a doctrine that were meant by God to die out with the apostles.¹⁶⁷ He suggests that personal experience should not set the limits for interpreting Scripture, and neither can it be ignored, because experience does colour the reading of Scripture.¹⁶⁸ The question here is, has personal experience aided or impeded Pentecostal interpretative approach to Scripture? Normal L. Geisler offers a tactful response. He states that the 'Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics Articles of Affirmation and Denial' declares that the Holy Spirit is not only the source of Scripture, but works to produce faith in Scripture. It is the Holy Spirit that inspires Scripture, and without his ministry, belief in the truth of Scripture would not occur.¹⁶⁹ The statement further states:

We affirm the necessity of interpreting the Bible according to its literal, or normal, sense. The literal sense is the grammatical-historical sense, that is, the meaning which the writer expressed. Interpretation according to the literal sense will take account of all figures of speech and literary forms found in the text. We deny the

¹⁶⁵ Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent: A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (1991): 1-143.

¹⁶⁶ McCune, "Doctrinal Non-Issues," 177.

¹⁶⁷ Atkinson, "Pentecostal Hermeneutics," 4.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Norman L. Geisler, "Explaining Hermeneutics: A Commentary on the Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics Articles of Affirmation and Denial," *In Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*, edited by Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preus, 890 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2010).

legitimacy of any approach to Scripture that attributes to it meaning which the literal sense does not support.¹⁷⁰

In consequence of the statement, Geisler suggests that since historicity and scientific accuracy of the early portions of the Bible have come under severe attack, it is important to apply the “literal” hermeneutic espoused by the Chicago statement.

2.4 The Starting Point of the Debate

As communicated earlier, Parham’s hermeneutics and theology became the guiding principles for Pentecostal Hermeneutics since the beginning of the experience in 1900. It allowed Pentecostals to rely heavily on exposition rather than investigative analysis.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, the pragmatic hermeneutics and practices by Pentecostals remained intact and indisputable until recently where scholars have expressed concerns about it. Beginning from the criticism about Pentecostal Hermeneutics, both from within and outside Pentecostalism, the major contributors to the debate are James D. G. Dunn,¹⁷² Gordon D. Fee,¹⁷³ William W. Menzies,¹⁷⁴ Roger Stronstad,¹⁷⁵ and Gordon Anderson.¹⁷⁶

2.4.1 James D. G. Dunn

In his PhD thesis entitled, “Baptism in the Holy Spirit,” published in the 1970s, James Dunn criticized Pentecostals for their sacramental interpretation of the gift of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. His argument was that for all NT writers the baptism and gift of the Spirit were part of the event of becoming a Christian.¹⁷⁷ He insists, “The high point in conversion-

¹⁷⁰ Geisler, “Explaining Hermeneutics,” 890.

¹⁷¹ Roger Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Stronstad. Baguio (Baguio: APTS Asia Pacific Theological Seminar Press, 1995), 14.

¹⁷² Mittelstadt, *Reading Luke-Acts*, 47.

¹⁷³ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 1-143.

¹⁷⁴ Ju Hur, “A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts,” *University of Sheffield* (1998): 1-257.

¹⁷⁵ Martin W. Mittelstadt, “Academic and Pentecostal: An Appreciation of Roger Stronstad,” *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 1 (2010): 31-60.

¹⁷⁶ Gordon Anderson, “Pentecostal hermeneutics Part 1 and 2.” *Enrichment Journal* (2010): 1-8. http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm

¹⁷⁷ Hur, “A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit,” 2.

initiation is the gift of the Spirit, and the beginning of the Christian life is to be reckoned from the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” For Dunn baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a second blessing given to people who are already Christians as well as distinct from their conversion-initiation.¹⁷⁸

In reference to Lukan writings, Dunn focuses on both the events of Jesus baptism at Jordan and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost in the light of salvation-history, that is, the period of Israel before Jesus baptism, the period from his Jordan baptism and the commencement of the Church from Pentecost to Jesus Parousia. He argues that Jesus experience of the Spirit at the Jordan marks his sense of Sonship and signals his initiation into ‘the beginning of a new epoch in salvation-history: The beginning of the end-time, the Messianic age, and the new covenant. Likewise, in Acts, Dunn articulates that Pentecost is presented as the beginning of the new covenant for the disciples in fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant promised in Gen. 17:7-10 and fulfilment of the promises in Ezek. 36:27 and Jer. 31:33.¹⁷⁹

He continues the argument, upholding that Jesus’ experience of the Spirit at Jordan should be seen as the model for both his disciples and Christian’s conversion-initiation. Referring to the Samaritans, Paul, Cornelius and the disciples at Ephesus, in the four occurrences of Acts 8, 9, 15 and 19, Dunn established that baptism of the Spirit is inseparable from the genuine faith of the recipient. In his view, the gift of the Spirit is the essence and epitome of the new covenant in Luke-Acts, as in other NT writings, especially, that of Paul and John which to him are the most important element in Christian conversion-initiation.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Hur, “A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit,” 2.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Writing as a member of the Pentecostal Movement, Fee admits that the narratives of the Samaritan's and Paul's conversions do indeed reflect the coming of the Spirit as subsequent to what appears to be the actual experience of conversion. But in the Samaritan case, for example, Luke actually says the Spirit does not come on them until the laying on of the apostles' hands. In a different view, Dunn connects it with Paul's statement in Romans 8, and argues that Luke does not consider them to be genuine believers before the experience.¹⁸¹ For Fee, Dunn's statement seems to run aground on the rest of linguistic evidences used to describe them prior to the laying on of hands, all of which is Lukan language for Christian conversion. Indeed, the resolution to this tension is most likely to be found at the linguistic level. One simply must not, according to Fee, press Luke's phenomenological use of Spirit language into service for theological precision. Although Luke says otherwise, we may assume the Samaritans and Paul to have become believers in the Pauline sense, that without the Spirit they are none of his. For Luke, however, the phenomenological expressions of the Spirit's presence are what he describes as the "coming of" or "filling with" the Spirit.¹⁸²

Responding to the Pentecostal scholars who criticized his views, Dunn says at least two of his criticisms have been acknowledged by his critics: First, the Spirit for Luke is indeed pre-eminently the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit that inspires speech and witnesses. Second, the import of Luke 1-2 suggests that it is dangerous to make sharp divisions among the three epochs in salvation-history in Luke-Acts.¹⁸³ He attempts to clarify his former views in critical dialogue with the Pentecostal scholars as well as reaffirmed his original assertion in 1970 work by stating that:

According to Lukan theology, the gift of the Spirit is the most fundamental *sine qua non* in the making of a Christian. Should we not conclude, then, that the pneumatology of Luke is essentially one with the pneumatology of Paul at this

¹⁸¹ Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent," 110.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Hur, "A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit," 4.

point, precisely because they reflect the dynamic character of the earliest Christian experience of conversion-initiation?¹⁸⁴

He still maintains that the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts is interconnected with what is found in the writings of John and Paul.

2.4.2 Gordon D. Fee

Gordon Fee observes that Pentecostals, regardless of some of their extremes, are frequently praised for recapturing for the church its joyful radiance, missionary enthusiasm, and life in the Spirit. Nonetheless, they are also characterized with hermeneutical flaws.¹⁸⁵ On the premises of the acceptance as indicated by Dunn, Fee postulates that those who differ with Pentecostals, usually contend in two related dispositions. In the first place, they argue that one must distinguish between *didactic* and *historical* portions of Scripture, and that for the formulation of Christian doctrine and experience one must refer primarily to the didactic portions, and then to the historical. Secondly, what is *descriptive history* of the primitive church must not be translated into *normative experience* for the ongoing church.¹⁸⁶

Pinnock and Osborne have combined these two arguments, stating: The ‘didactic portions’ of Scripture must have precedence over ‘historical passages’ in establishing doctrine, and the book of Acts does not establish a normative experience for believers today.”¹⁸⁷ Fee however suggests that two observations should be made about hermeneutics within the traditional Pentecostal movement: First, historically, Pentecostals have not engaged in rigorous scientific hermeneutics. They frequently applied what he calls “pragmatic hermeneutics” thus observing what they understand should be taken literally and then spiritualizing or allegorizing the rest. Next, their experience play a significant role in the

¹⁸⁴ Hur, “A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit,” 4.

¹⁸⁵ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 83.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

biblical interpretation. This is so because for Pentecostals, personal experience provides the framework for subsequent hermeneutical and exegetical treatment of the biblical text.¹⁸⁸

For Fee, Pentecostals understood dynamic, life-transforming quality in the lenses of the apostolic experience in Acts 2 and requested God for something parallel to the experience; and what happened after their conversion helped them to see the uniformity with Jesus, the apostles and the precedent in Samaria as detailed in Acts 8 and 9.¹⁸⁹ He admits that although other exegetical and theological variations are obvious, the crucial issue for Pentecostal hermeneutic lies at their very heart, specifically, with their ‘distinctives,’ thus the doctrine of subsequence – there is for Christians a baptism in the Spirit distinct from the subsequent to the experience of salvation.

He was assertive that many non-Pentecostal Christians employ the argument of historical precedent in the defence of their doctrinal views. For instance, the mode of water baptism, the frequency of celebration of Eucharist, and Sunday Worship principally rely on diverse opinions from historical precedent. While this disagreement does not justify the Pentecostal use of historical precedent, hermeneutical integrity demands that criticism of methodology must be consistent.¹⁹⁰ He expressed that some hermeneutical disputes that confront the interpreter of narrative passages are present in the didactic portions. The epistles were not written as theological treatises but rather in response to particular needs and prevailing circumstances at the time of their composition. Hence, proper hermeneutics demands texts must be interpreted in light of the historical context and occasion of the letter.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 86.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁹¹ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 90.

Fee's primary contribution to the hermeneutical debate is the 'Genre Hermeneutics.' He believes that biblical hermeneutics should permit the interpreter to take cognizant to literary genre of the passage s/he is interpreting, along with the question of text, grammar, reason, and history.¹⁹² In regard to Acts, on which Pentecostal theology is grounded, it is not an epistle, nor a theological treatise. If one ignores its historical premise, the historical value for which the text was written would be completely repudiated.¹⁹³ Fee maintains that to fully appreciate the significance of Acts is to understand its arrangement within historical narrative. He insisted that in the hermeneutics of biblical history, the major task of the interpreter is to discover the author's intent in recording that history. He outlined three principles in connection to hermeneutics of historical narrative:

(1) The Word of God in Acts which may be regarded as normative for Christians is related primarily to what any given narrative was intended to teach.¹⁹⁴

(2) What is incidental to the primary intent of the narrative may indeed reflect an author's theology, or how he understood things, but it cannot have the same didactic value as what the narrative was intended to teach.

(3) Historical precedent - to have a normative value, it must be related to intent. That is, if it can be shown that the purpose of a given narrative is to establish precedent, then such precedent should be regarded as normative. For example, if it could be demonstrated on exegetical grounds that Luke's intent in Acts 1:15-26 was to give the church a precedent for selecting its leaders, then such a selective process should be followed by later Christians.

¹⁹² Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent," 86.

¹⁹³ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 19.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

But if the precedent was *not* the intent of the narrative, then its value as a precedent for later Christians should be treated according to the specific principles suggested in the text.¹⁹⁵

After discussing the hermeneutical use of historical narrative in general, Fee outlines three explicit principles for historical precedents. These are (1) Christian theology - what Christians believe. (2) Christian ethics - how Christians ought to behave. (3) Christian experience or practice - what Christians do in terms of religious practices. On the grounds of his guidelines for the use of historical precedent, he discusses the relationship between the Pentecostal distinctives and historical precedent. He asserts:¹⁹⁶

For Luke (and Paul) the gift of the Holy Spirit was not some sort of adjunct to Christian experience, nor was it some kind of second and more significant part of Christian experience. It was rather the chief element in the event or process of Christian conversion.¹⁹⁷

Fee concludes that since speaking in tongues was a frequent manifestation of the dynamic coming of the Holy Spirit, the contemporary Christians may expect it as part of their experience in the Spirit. Fee specified that if Pentecostals may not say “one must speak in tongues,” “he may definitely say,” “why not speak in tongues?” Because it does have biblical precedent. The precedence experience by Cornelius household in Acts 10:45-46, regardless the contradiction about the evidential value, it is important for the edification of the individual believer (1 Cor. 14:25) and with interpretation, for the edification of the church (1 Cor. 14:5, 26-28).¹⁹⁸ On the argument of subsequence and initial evidence, Fee states,

I do not throw out initial evidence, I throw out the language, because it is not biblical, and therefore irrelevant. From a reading of Luke and Paul I would expect people to speak in tongues when they are empowered by the Spirit. For most people this will be a subsequent experience, because they will have become Christians without realizing that this is for them.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 92.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 21-22.

¹⁹⁹ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 124.

Stronstad postulates that Fee's subsequent articles contributes new emphases to the discussions. For him, Fee's discussions do not extensively modify the consistency he espouses in his earlier articles.²⁰⁰ As one who approached the subject from classical Pentecostal angle, his discussion demands both respect and careful scrutiny. However, Stronstad thinks that some assertions of Fee are not consistent with his hermeneutic conception. For example, Fee observes that "hermeneutics has simply not been a Pentecostal thing." He also explains that Acts must be interpreted as historical narrative, and not as a theological treatise. He cautions Pentecostals not to elevate an incidental element in the narrative to a position of primary theological importance, and affirms that the intent of the author determines the normative value of the narrative.²⁰¹ Stronstad agrees with him on these points, but included that when discussing hermeneutical issues which confront Pentecostals, Fee writes with passion and conviction. That makes him a crusader and an iconoclast. In one instance, as a crusader Fee effectively champions a 'Genre' Hermeneutic. But he does not extend his 'Genre' Hermeneutic to its proper limits.²⁰² As an iconoclast, he dismantles the hermeneutical pillars upon which the structure of Pentecostal doctrine is built and objects to baptism of the Holy Spirit being different from conversion.

2.4.3 William W. Menzies

William Menzies is a third Pentecostal scholar who has significantly contributed to the discussion of Pentecostal hermeneutics. His present thinking on the subject has been captured in an article, "The Methodology of Pentecostal Theology: An Essay in Hermeneutics."²⁰³ In disparity with Fee who focuses upon the genre of Biblical literature, Menzies concentrates on theology. In his view, the existing charismatic theological issue is

²⁰⁰ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 22.

²⁰¹ Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent," 130.

²⁰² Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 22.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 27.

the connection between tongues and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For him, the core of the theological conflict is the bedrock issue of hermeneutics or methodology. Whereas Fee proposes a 'Genre Hermeneutic,' Menzies proposes a 'Holistic Hermeneutics' for interpreting the Biblical foundation for Pentecostal theology.²⁰⁴

He provides a three-step approach to the Holistic Hermeneutics: inductive; Deductive; and Verification levels. Menzies observed that if it can be proven that Luke did not intend to teach theology by what he narrated, then, there is no genuine basis for a Pentecostal theology. Unlike Fee who provides guidelines for historical precedent and normativeness, in Menzies' Holistic Hermeneutics the deductive level complements the inductive level. For instance, if the inductive level is exegesis, the deductive level is that of biblical theology. It incorporates dissimilar and occasionally disconnected passages into a meaningful whole. In respects to the peculiar theology of Acts, he indicates that the concepts of subsequence and a normative complementary sign of tongues is meaningful.²⁰⁵

He finalizes his 'Holistic Hermeneutics' with the 'Verification Level.' Menzies believes this level is the contemporary experience: if a biblical truth is to be promulgated, then it ought to be evident in life. Although experience does not establish theology, it does verify or validate theological truth.²⁰⁶ He continues that on the day of Pentecost, the apostles, led by the Spirit, instructed the disciples about the connection between revelation and experience as Peter declared in Acts 2:16. Applying the 'Holistic Hermeneutic' to the book of Acts, Menzies finds that it can reaffirm four aspects of Pentecostal hermeneutics and theology.²⁰⁷ First, Pentecost as a pattern; second, the theological normativeness of the pattern; third,

²⁰⁴ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 28.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

subsequence and fourth, the sign of tongues. Menzies concludes his survey on trends in Pentecostal Hermeneutics as follows.²⁰⁸

As the Pentecostal Movement has entered its tenth decade, and ultimately approaches its centenary, we remind ourselves that the “pragmatic” hermeneutic of our founding Fathers has served the Movement well in its preaching and teaching directed toward those who stood within the Movement. It is no longer adequate for apologetics directed to those outside classical Pentecostalism, whether they are charismatic or non-charismatic. For this reason, the decade’s long era of the analytical vacuum of the “pragmatic” hermeneutics of classical Pentecostalism has now been forever, and irreversibly, ended.²⁰⁹

Stronstad commended Menzies Holistic Hermeneutics by noting that the method incorporates analytical, synthetic, existential processes as well as exegetical and theological techniques for biblical interpretation.

2.4.4 Roger Stronstad

Stronstad provides a historical synopsis of interpretative trends by way of the following trajectory: The ‘Pragmatic’ approach of Charles Parham, the ‘Genre’ approach of Fee, and the ‘Holistic Hermeneutic’ approach by William Menzies.²¹⁰ He argues that Luke models his narrative to the historical narratives of the Old Testament. For Luke, he maintains, historical narrative can and does have a didactic purpose or instructional intentionality. Luke introduces key theological themes and then re-establishes, illustrates and re-enforces those themes through further historical episodes.²¹¹ For Stronstad, Luke’s understanding of Spirit-reception is devoid of the soteriological connotations as Dunn describes; in Luke’s view, the church is a charismatic community, called and empowered for mission through the Spirit.²¹²

He, however, concedes to some of the inherent concern directed toward certain Pentecostals for uncritical and emotional flaunting of experience. For example, in the introduction to his

²⁰⁸ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 28.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

²¹⁰ Mittelstadt, “Academic and Pentecostal,” 51.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 53.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 42.

book, “Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14,” Donald A. Carson writes:

The charismatics think, they have succumbed to the modern love of “experience,” even at the expense of truth. Charismatics are thought to be profoundly unbiblical, especially when they evaluate their experience of tongues to the level of theological and spiritual shibboleth. If they are growing, no small part of their strength can be ascribed to their raw triumphalism, their populist elitism, their promise of short cuts to holiness and power devoid of any real grasp of the Bible that goes beyond mere proof-texting.²¹³

Stronstad responded to Carson’s deprecation of Pentecostalism as “raw triumphalism,” and contends that Carson and certain Evangelical critics similarly exegete their ‘non-experience.’ He points out that many Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders remain committed to the teaching of pneumatological distinctiveness, yet, they struggle to find prove for their exegesis. He appeals to them to employ the complementary role of grammatico-historical exegesis and contemporary experience;²¹⁴ then to reconsider the doctrine and experience of the Spirit to validate the role of ‘charismatic experiential presuppositions’ and ‘experiential verification’ in the hermeneutical process. He suggests Pentecostals/Charismatics must remember that the gift of the Spirit is not just a spiritual blessing, it is a responsibility. Its meaning extends beyond the prayer room and the worship service to a world which needs to hear and experience the prophetic power of the Holy Spirit.

The most noticeable of Stronstad hermeneutical debate is his focus on readers. Whereas Charismatic Theology and Prophethood address primarily Evangelical interpretative presuppositions and conclusions, as represented by Dunn, his work focuses on Pentecostal readers and determines that hermeneutical questions remain critical to Pentecostal theology and praxis. His creative attention to biblical hermeneutics remains essential for the

²¹³ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 55.

²¹⁴ Mittelstadt, “Academic and Pentecostal,” 54.

development of Pentecostal theology and continuous to benefit the debate not only between Pentecostals and Evangelicals but also ongoing internal discussion.²¹⁵

2.4.5 Gerhard Maier and Peter Stuhlmacher

Gerhard Maier and Peter Stuhlmacher, who entered the debate on the side of Dunn on the validity of the historical critical method, call for the end of the debate. Maier argues that the statement, “we must inquire into a theological subject with methods independent of theology” is invalid and contradictory in itself. For him, the method is contrary to good historiography. Stuhlmacher also rejects historical criticism as practiced and instead appeals for a theology of consent, an approach that reveals an indebtedness to the new hermeneutic. Both of them reject the practice of historical criticism based on presuppositions that preclude transcendence and divine intervention.²¹⁶

To sum up, Dunn’s discussions on Pentecostal Hermeneutics has stimulated and introduced several controversial dialogue from Pentecostal scholars. Fee, Menzies, Stronstad have drawn attention to a number of issues regarding Pentecostal Hermeneutics. Fee speaks of distinctive genre of Luke-Acts as historical narrative. He discussed salient interpretative methods that are practiced by both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals in their interpretative approach, while Menzies demonstrated his thoughts on the subject by outlining three clear Holistic Hermeneutics’ to be considered for Pentecostal Hermeneutics. Stronstad was more critical on reader-centred approach in order to determine a balance biblical hermeneutics.

²¹⁵ Mittelstadt, “Academic and Pentecostal,” 54-55.

²¹⁶ Bruce K. Waltke, “Historical Grammatical Problems,” *In Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*, edited by Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2010), 71.

2.5 Is it Possible a Pentecostal Hermeneutics?

The current debate within the Pentecostal arena has been specifically on whether or not Pentecostals have the need of an explicit Pentecostal Hermeneutics. Considering the work of Dunn, Fee, Archer, Menzies and Stronstad, Pentecostal Hermeneutics will be significant for both Pentecostals and Evangelicals as effort is being made to move beyond the acceptance of the Historical Critical method.²¹⁷ The work of the above scholars have triggered thoughtful contributions and considerations for a thoroughgoing model Pentecostal Hermeneutics.²¹⁸ The academically trained Pentecostals who embraced Historical Criticism have now moved away from the early Pentecostals emphasis upon the text to a reader centre-focus.²¹⁹

Timothy B. Cargal has argued that not only is there a natural link between Pentecostalism and religions that place high value on the role of experience in worship and hermeneutics, but that the link also extends to the rejection of the grammatico-historical hermeneutics by both groups. He observes that Pentecostal scholars could guide ministers of the Gospel in their biblical interpretative level, essentially in attempt to make the text applicable as possible to audience. He believes Pentecostalism shares some common phenomenon with postmodern thought, and is naturally placed to engage postmodern culture on its own terms for appropriate interpretation of texts. He, however, rejects the modern perception that states, only what is historically and objectively true is meaningful.²²⁰ Cargal suggests Pentecostals should explore postmodern openness to truth outside of traditional modernist and Evangelical perspectives. He writes;

²¹⁷ There are groups or individuals who are interested in Pentecostal Hermeneutics. As the discussion develops, it will shape their thought and ideas for better hermeneutics.

²¹⁸ Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 194.

²¹⁹ Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutics for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (New York: T & T International, 2004), 1-196.

²²⁰ Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 249.

As a postmodern paradigm increasingly illuminates the thinking of our culture in general, any hermeneutic which does not account for its loci of meanings within that postmodern paradigm will become nonsensical and irrelevant. If for no other reason than that, we must ...explore the possibilities of a Pentecostal Hermeneutic in a postmodern age.²²¹

In his work, “Charismatic language of Luke-Acts,” Stronstad utilizes a critical methodology, which combines the best of Evangelical scholarship with experiential verification. He encourages Pentecostals to interpret those descriptive passages in their hermeneutics with greater clarity. So that those non-Pentecostals who had the experience could validate it from an appropriate perspective. Whereas Stronstad acknowledges the value of traditional Evangelical hermeneutics, he recognizes the importance of experience in the interpretive process; he thinks the best way forward is harmonizing experiential verification with Evangelical hermeneutics.²²² Archer shares Stronstad’s view, and proposes natural incompatibility of the wholesale acceptance of Evangelical Hermeneutics by Pentecostalism with their core values. For Archer, Luke must speak for Luke. The idea is meant to deemphasize the overwhelming attention given to authorial intent by Evangelical Hermeneutics, and promoting the reality that interpretation involves systematic discovery and creation of meaning for the present”.²²³

Directing his views in agreement with Archer and Stronstad, Amos Yong sketches two basic paths for a Pentecostal reconsideration of the relationship between Scripture and nature. First, we must recognize that the *ruah* of God hovered over the primeval chaos, and second, dynamically worked as the breath within the creatures of the world. He suggests Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals can posit a pneumatological theology of creation that understands the Spirit to be present and active over and within history and creation, while illuminating both

²²¹ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 249.

²²² *Ibid.*, 253.

²²³ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutics*, 194.

worlds to human minds.²²⁴ Such illumination, in Yong's opinion, is by nature theological, soteriological, and eschatological. It does provide a perspective on history's and nature's ends as intended by God. Second, what the history of 'Christian thought' called the interpretation of nature, Pentecostals call discernment.²²⁵ But whereas theologians or Biblicists will discern or exegete Scripture and nature theologically and soteriologically, others will discern or interpret the nature and history of the world from their respective disciplinary perspectives.

The theological discernments (readings) inevitably will go beyond the non-theological interpretations, but that neither delegitimizes the latter nor undermines the possibility for complementary perspectives to emerge.²²⁶ So then, if the Holy Spirit intended to terminate disparities by harmonizing various tongues on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2, it is possible for the same Holy Spirit to synchronise the many discursive practices of various theological, natural, and human sciences for the glory, power, and goodness of God today.²²⁷

To sum up, Dunn, Fee, Menzies and Stronstad have set the pace for discussing Pentecostal Hermeneutics and other scholars have equally joined. There are varied opinions, convictions, thought patterns and suggestions. But the predominant view is that Pentecostal Hermeneutics is not only possible but necessary. Pentecostals must cautiously consider, examine and reflect on various scholarly discussions in line with their beliefs systems and experiences to reshape or strengthen their Hermeneutics.

²²⁴ Amos Yong, "Reading Scripture and Nature: Pentecostal Hermeneutics and Their Implications for the Contemporary Evangelical Theology and Science Conversation," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 1 (2011): 3.

²²⁵ Yong, "Reading Scripture and Nature," 10.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

2.6 Characteristics of a Pentecostal Hermeneutics

Discussing the issue on the subject of Characteristics of Pentecostal Hermeneutics, Gordon Anderson argues that Pentecostals are noted for: (1) traditional and conservative hermeneutics (2) postmodern literary criticism - reader-centred approach (3) incorporating church history, personal experiences, and theological presumptions in their hermeneutics.²²⁸ From this analysis and discussion, Anderson advanced that Pentecostals do understand that they define and use the constituent elements in the hermeneutical structure different from others. However, the method they employ for interpreting Scripture addresses the same basic issues common to evangelical hermeneutics, but in a various emphases that are unique. Noel affirms that Pentecostals share many characteristics with today's postmodern thought, and that most critics' of Pentecostalism were devoted individuals that espoused to modern approach to Scripture.²²⁹ Noel claims that Pentecostal hermeneutic is reflective of current postmodern thought and faithful to the hermeneutical traditions of their forbearers. For him, Pentecostals are better placed to communicate the Gospel to the postmodern thinkers of current generation because they bear the traits of present postmodernity.²³⁰

Noel stresses that Pentecostals understood their existence in terms of the narrative. They were strongly attracted to the reading of the narratives in Acts, and from there founded their distinctive doctrines. They taught it with passion and supported it. For many years, Pentecostals were ridiculed by New Testament scholars and theologians, but today, biblical scholars have refrained from relying too much of their theology from narrative perspective, preferring to scour and apply the didactic portions of Scripture to the present situation.²³¹ In summary, he states, for Pentecostals, the opportunity has not been greater as it is today;

²²⁸ Anderson, "Pentecostal Hermeneutics," 1.

²²⁹ Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 24.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

Pentecostals are challenged by a generation of society desiring the existential approach to God that has been promulgated for almost a century.

Speaking in favour of the discussion, Tony Jones notes, “One of the most noteworthy characteristics of Pentecostalism and Postmodernism is the dramatic rise of spirituality.” Propositional truth is out and mysticism is in, people are not necessarily dismayed by a religion that does not make sense, they are more concerned with whether a religion can connect them physically with God.²³²

From a different observation, Ellington disputes that epistemologically, the difference in approaches to God has its basis in the fact that Fundamentalism in particular and conservative Evangelicalism generally are reactions to nineteenth-century liberalism and have opted to operate within the worldview to which they are reacting.²³³ In his opinion, Pentecostal scholars have in many cases been trained in conservative Evangelical institutions, working within a methodology that is, in some ways, fundamentally odds with a Pentecostal worldview and understanding of Scripture. Pentecostals have been educated in settings that emphasize a rationalistic worldview and that often locate biblical truth in questions of historicity.²³⁴

Timothy Cargal has articulated that the alliance of Pentecostal and Evangelical scholarship, together with a strong grass-roots anti-intellectualism and a general suspicion of higher education among many Pentecostal pastors and lay people, has led to “a growing divergence in the practice of biblical interpretation between Pentecostals primarily working in the parish and those primarily working within the academy.”²³⁵ Once more Ellington was expressive

²³² Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 193.

²³³ Ellington, “History, Story, and Testimony,” 249

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Timothy B Cargal, "Beyond the Fundamental-Modernist Controversy Pentecostals and Hermeneutics in a Postmodern Age," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 2 (1993): 170.

that because the divergence between Pentecostals and other conservative Christians is often epistemological, involving different ways in which they know and receive revelation from God, Pentecostals often fail to adequately appreciate how their adopted methodologies directly oppose or hinder the results of their hermeneutics.²³⁶ French Arrington adds:

While biblical infallibility is an assumption on which Pentecostals build their hermeneutic, they recognize that they have neither the ability nor the responsibility to demonstrate this infallibility because the Bible is inspired by an infallible God, and it is infallible. No further demonstration of its infallibility is either necessary or possible.²³⁷

Arrington develops his point by noting that due to such dissimilar epistemological approach, Pentecostals view knowledge not as a cognitive or set of precepts but as a relationship with the one who has established the precepts by which they live. Although a valuable foundation for Pentecostal hermeneutics, it is limited by its methodology.²³⁸ The question is, to what extent can Pentecostalism articulate its understanding of Scripture from a worldview, using exegetical methods so odds to its own? Karkkainen states that between Postmodernism and Pentecostalism there is such a wide gap in terms of presuppositions that one is wise not to exaggerate apparent similarities.²³⁹ Of all the similarities and disparities presented by Karkkainen, Cargal, Ellington and Arrington; Anderson stridently argues there are similarities among Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals.

In two famous essays, Anderson pointed out “what a Pentecostal Hermeneutics ‘is not’ in order to introduce the intents and purpose of Pentecostal Hermeneutics.” He was uncompromising that at the level of exegetical praxis, Pentecostals use similar basic

²³⁶ Cargal, “Beyond the Fundamental-Modernist,” 170.

²³⁷ Arrington, French L. “Hermeneutics, Historical Perspectives on Pentecostal and Charismatic.” in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B McGee, 382-391 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988).

²³⁸ Arrington, “Hermeneutics,” 382.

²³⁹ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, “Pentecostal Hermeneutics in the Making on the Way from Fundamentalism to Postmodernism,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 18 (1998): 76.

principles of historical-grammatical methods as other conservative Evangelical interpreters. Then he unravels six strong reasons to reinforce his assertion.²⁴⁰ He expresses that (1) Pentecostal hermeneutic is *not* a new interpretative method: all exegetical processes unearth intended meaning of the text through a cautious reading of the language, culture, history, and world history is identical to other interpreters. (2) Pentecostals do *not* claim any different insight unavailable to non-Pentecostals; but strongly affirm to the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of interpretation.²⁴¹ (3) Pentecostal Hermeneutic is *not* a measly model structure captured on historical narratives; rather, Pentecostal hermeneutic takes cognizant of existing situation and uses more narratives than other evangelicals; nonetheless, they employ the methods so tactfully from both narrative and didactic perspective.²⁴² (4) Employing experience in exegesis of a text is *not* a simple method; and Pentecostals do use personal experience in their hermeneutical process. (5) Pentecostals do *not* subordinate the Bible to supposedly historical testimony when the Bible is explicit on that. Pentecostal Hermeneutic distinguishes between unsubstantiated testimonies and verifiable fact in their exegesis. (6) Pentecostal hermeneutic is *not* the importation of inessential inferences; and like other interpreters introduce presuppositions and theological concepts to texts, Pentecostals employ presupposition in their interpretation, but with the alertness that they exist, and are subservient to the texts.²⁴³

In conclusion, Pentecostal Hermeneutics is a huge issue that keeps attracting different perspective on the discussion. As the debate on similarities or disparities progresses, divergence views from both divide become obvious, depending on their unique emphasis. For Anderson and Noel, Pentecostals method of interpretation is similar to non-Pentecostals.

²⁴⁰ Anderson, "Pentecostal Hermeneutics," 6-7.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

While Ellington, Karikkainen and Cargal articulate otherwise. Since the Luke-Act is the starting point of the debate, Pentecostal/Charismatic advocates must adopt a holistic approach to the reading of Luke-Act to educate both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals about their hermeneutics of subsequence and the experiential component of the Holy Spirit in their community.

2.7 Outcome of the Debate

The contrasting opinions of scholars on how historical narrative should be applied in the process of hermeneutics, and to contemporary Christian experience to demonstrates that the debate is not only academic or theological, is rooted in the hermeneutics of Luke-Act which is the core foundation and validation of Pentecostal Hermeneutics.

Fee explicitly suggested authorial intent as the way forward for Pentecostals to construct their theologies in adherence to the text. He continued to explain that in theology not all apparently conflicting data can be resolved or harmonized: Sometimes the data can stand side by side in healthy tension.²⁴⁴ It is a form of unity that reveals “the many-splendored glory of God.” Furthermore, authorial intentionality will guide Pentecostal-Evangelicals through some of the more conflicted areas where they are divided in terms of the application of texts.²⁴⁵ Fee details why authorial intent is such a crucial issue, though it is problematic. The reason is, dealing with Pentecostal distinctives generates tension among Evangelicals. He however, notes that an insistence on determining authorial intent will provide these benefits: (a) serve as a corrective measure, limiting the possible meanings a text might be given (b) offers ways forward to construct Pentecostal theologies in a truly biblical fashion

²⁴⁴ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 43.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

(c) teach Pentecostals that apparent contradictions in the text need not always be resolved or harmonized, but may stand together in a healthy tension.²⁴⁶

Kenneth Archer contributes his ideas to Pentecostal hermeneutics through a definition of Pentecostalism. He defines Pentecostalism as “Paramodern,” referring to a movement that emerged out of modernity, but lives on some ideas of modernity. Although the movement rejects modernity in terms of epistemology and sociology, it employs modern technology, language and inductive reasoning to advance its cause.²⁴⁷ Archer suggest that Pentecostal proponents should consider the discussion in an eschatological lense to provide the urgency and immediacy needed for interpretation of Scripture in terms of experience with God through his Word. He summarized the existing Pentecostal debate on three questions. First, will Pentecostals continue to use a modified version of traditional Evangelical historical-critical methods of interpretation? Second, do Pentecostals view themselves as an authentic movement whose distinctiveness cannot be ‘submerged’ into Evangelicalism and requires its own identifiable hermeneutical approach? Third, should Pentecostals embrace Pentecostal Story that derives meaning from a ‘dialectical’ process based on an interdependent ‘dialogical’ relationship between Scripture, Spirit, and community?²⁴⁸

He advances his contribution by indicating that the role of the Spirit in the inspiration and preservation of Scripture is widely accepted, but there is no well-founded understanding in the wider Christian world about the role of the Spirit in hermeneutics. For that purpose, Pentecostals must develop an appropriate pnematological approach to hermeneutics, since that will demonstrate the role of the Spirit in hermeneutics is essential to accurate interpretation of the Word of God. Principally because without the operation of the Spirit in

²⁴⁶ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 128.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

the hearts and minds of readers, none can gain a truly spiritual understanding of Scripture.²⁴⁹

In his final observation, he proposes that since Pentecostals believe in the working and moving of the Holy Spirit, they can reach out to Generation X with the Gospel, because they are more open to the ‘supernatural’ and ‘spiritual’ than the generations of Enlightenment.²⁵⁰

2.8 Conclusion

Having thoroughly explored divergent scholarly thoughts on Pentecostal Hermeneutics, it is clear that the debate will continue to attract more views with speckles of emphasis. It is also indubitable that Parham’s experience of the Holy Spirit in the 1900, coupled with Seymour’s Pentecostal stir at Azusa, is what has triggered the Pentecostal debate. Dunn equated baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts to that of the Corinthians, and disagreed with the normative theology for the Pentecostal ‘doctrine of subsequence’ (i.e. receiving the Holy Spirit as a second blessing after conversion) and its consistent teaching of initial evidence through speaking in tongues. His direction of argument is that, there is no biblical evidences that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is what constitute the Christians in Corinth.

Dunn’s position attracted a number of responses from leading Pentecostal scholars. Among them were Fee, Stronstad, Menzies Anderson, and Archer. In reference to Acts on which the debate is frequently referenced, Fee explains the author did not set out to write an epistle, or a theological treatise, they were written to address prevailing predicaments. So, interpreters who disregard authorial intents and historical values for which the text emerged ignore important aspect of the texts. In further support of Pentecostal Hermeneutics, he offered three synopses for authorial intents, thus, Christian theology; Christian ethics; and Christian experience which distinguishes Pentecostals from non-Pentecostals.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Noel, “Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics,” 128.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁵¹ Fee, “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent,” 92.

Roger Stronstad situates his focus on five specific components: charismatic experiential presuppositions; pneumatic; genre; exegesis, experience plus verification. He used the five approach to strongly argue that Pentecostal Hermeneutics is holistic, unique and rational.²⁵² Menzies, on the other hand, thinks the deep-rooted problem of Pentecostal Hermeneutics is doctrinal. He presents three integral guidelines: inductive, deductive and verification as the way out for Pentecostal Hermeneutic.

Archer was of the view that Pentecostals must preserve their hermeneutical emphasis upon the three tenets of Postmodernity he discussed. That is, if Pentecostals wish to continue to interpret Scripture in a manner that bonds them readily with the newest generation.²⁵³ Anderson acknowledges the different models offered by other scholars and set forth to clarify and define a more expanded model of Pentecostal hermeneutics that in his view is discernible, distinctive, and authentic. His contribution was that historic precedent, narratives and theological presuppositions are much identical with many interpreters as with Pentecostal Hermeneutics, but practicably, Pentecostals do not permit them to counter the intended meaning of texts.

Overall, the process of interpretation is a difficult task. Many interpreters bring bias presupposition and theological constructs to the text, which disallows true meaning of the text. When that happens it makes hermeneutics a slave of an ideology where the meaning of the text is obliterated by the solitary opinion of the interpreter. In the researcher's opinion, Pentecostals should reconsider and adopt new method of interpretation that incorporates some of the legitimate concerns raised. In that way, Pentecostal hermeneutics will be

²⁵² Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 77.

²⁵³ Noel, "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics," 40.

meaningful to both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals. The next chapter presents general background information on LCI and historical life of the founder.



CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL

3.1 Introduction

Discussion of Pentecostalism in previous chapters revealed that different churches like Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, American Council of Christian Churches and many others were formed out of the Azusa Street's experience. These churches spread the message of Pentecostalism across the globe, and in 1932, Pentecostalism reached Ghana through Peter Newman Anim and his ministry, Faith Tabernacle Church.²⁵⁴

Then, in 1956, a British missionary to Ghana, Nigel Sylvester, pioneered Bible Clubs, which is widely known as Scripture Union (SU) in many of the secondary schools nationwide. At the time of his departure in 1967, most students have adopted the 'Ministry of Evangelism' and 'Bible Reading Promotion' in secondary schools. As a result, SU became popular in the 1970s in most secondary schools. Students from SU were engaged by Pentecostal churches to promulgate the Gospel, promote Pentecostal doctrine and launch their presence in the country. Characteristics of these movement were 'Born Again' 'Holiness' 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit' and 'Evangelism.' They mobilized students who have already been converted into Christianity in their schools via Bible Reading Promotion or SU for camp meetings, community evangelism in the nearby villages and towns. By the late 1970s Pentecostalism has permeated schools, forming into smaller denominations in classrooms, football parks, and homes. They visited hospitals, prisons, school, towns, villages as well as market arenas to share the love of Christ with people. On one of such visits to Korle-Bu teaching hospital, Nicholas Duncan Williams surrendered to Christ. In his desire to know and serve God better,

²⁵⁴ Gary B. McGee, "Tongues, the Bible Evidence," 7.

he enrolled into a Bible school in Nigeria for theological training. He returned to Ghana upon completion to work with the Church of Pentecost, but the church could not accept him because he lacks pastoral training.²⁵⁵

Subsequent encouragements from Benson Idahosa motivated Duncan-Williams to begin Christian Action Faith Chapel in 1979, now called Action Chapel International (ACI). The young generations were attracted to ACI due to its style of worship and teachings on miracles, healings, faith and Holy Spirit baptism. Duncan Williams trained a number of young Christians who also became ministers of the Gospel. Notable among them were Roberts Ampiah Kwofie of Global Revival Ministries, George Abeka Johnson formerly of International Central Gospel Church and Dag Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International who is the prime focus of the research.

3.2 Historical Development of Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI)

This section provides a brief description of the founder and background information of LCI. It is followed by a discussion of the church's social ministry to deprived communities, as well as the present pastoral structure underpinning its quantitative growth.

3.2.1 The 'Founder's History

Dag Heward-Mills was born on the 14th of May, 1963 to a Swiss mother, Elizabeth and a Ghanaian Lawyer, Nathaniel Heward-Mills in the United Kingdom.²⁵⁶ He had his secondary education at Achimota School in Accra. While in secondary school, he became a 'born again

²⁵⁵ Kojok, "The Birth and Effects of Charismaticism," *GhanaWeb* accessed March, 2015.

²⁵⁶ There is no a full account of Dag Heward-Mills' life, so interview with respondents of LCI were the sources consulted for discussion about Heward-Mills and LCI. These individuals spoke under anonymity as respondents "A" "B" "C" "D." "E." The reason for choosing such individuals is that they have served LCI for a minimum of 12 years and maximum of 20 years and are part of the pastoral, executive and leadership board of LCI.

Christian' and joined the music ministry of Calvary Road Incorporated (CRI).²⁵⁷ He started SU meetings at Achimota School and became the prayer leader for the group. Through reading of the Bible and books of Pentecostal/Charismatic Preachers like Kenneth Hagin, Fred Price, E. W. Kenyon, he developed interest for ministry. After his secondary education he gained admission to University of Ghana Medical School in October 1982 and graduated in March 10, 1989 as a trained Medical Doctor.²⁵⁸ When Heward-Mills completed his medical training he decided to become a minister. His father, who was a committed Catholic at the time, advised him to attain a formal theological training. His refusal to attend Trinity Theological Seminary created a conflict between him and his father. He married Adelaide Baiden in 1989, they have four children.²⁵⁹

3.2.2 Foundation: Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI)

When Dag Heward-Mills enrolled into University of Ghana Medical School in October 1982, he began a fellowship which later became a branch of Calvary Road Incorporated (CRI), currently Harvest Chapel International.²⁶⁰ It was a contemporary music and drama group within secondary and tertiary campuses in the 1980s. The group consists of young Christians whose ultimate goal was to evangelize the world through the power of Music and Drama.²⁶¹ His talent of music landed him in Christian Action Faith Ministry, where he joined the music ministry and played the keyboard for the church during vacations.²⁶² Due to the inspiring nature of music and drama, most students' joined the fellowship (CRI). E.A.T.

²⁵⁷ Prince Eric Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP) of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) as a Model for the Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) in its Quest for Mission to Muslims in Ghana" (master's thesis, TTS, 2015), 1.

²⁵⁸ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 76.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Louisa Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle in the Teaching of Dag Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International" (master's thesis, TTS, 2008), 1.

²⁶¹ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 77.

²⁶² Ibid.

Sackey and Eddy Addy, co-founders of LCI, were pioneers of the campus fellowship. The ministry transformed lives and increased numerically until December 1982.²⁶³

In 1982, the political situation and the struggle for economic recovery in Ghana triggered students' unrest at the tertiary levels. As consequence, in December 1982, the government shutdown universities.²⁶⁴ Due to the closure, Heward-Mills travelled to London. Nonetheless, when the government re-opened schools in September 1983, he returned to Ghana to revive CRI meetings on campus.²⁶⁵ In September 1985, medical students were transferred from Legon campus to Korle-Bu Medical School for further training. While there, Heward-Mills started the fellowship, but this time named it Korle-Bu Christian Centre (KCC).²⁶⁶ They converged at 10pm each night at the Korle-Gonno beach for prayers. However, the meetings were abruptly terminated due to physical attack on members by drug addicts. The meetings continued at Indadfa Park but came to a halt due to a similar attack by armed men. A dawn broadcast was initiated to avoid further encounter with bandits, but disturbances from medical students folded it up.²⁶⁷

Considering the persistent interruptions by gangsters and medical students, Heward-Mills and KCC directed their focus on students of Nursing Training College (NTC). In 1986, a dawn broadcast was initiated at the NTC. A number of students responded and got involved in KCC weekly activities. As T. Odoi-Mills suggests, KCC became a place of worship for most medical and nursing training students. When attendants increased beyond 200, Heward-Mills secured the Medical School Auditorium for Sunday worship, while subsequent services were held at the school of Hygiene Lecture theatre. This arrangement

²⁶³ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 77.

²⁶⁴ Anaman, "Policy Analysis," 1.

²⁶⁵ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 78.

²⁶⁶ Faustina Aba Wiba Cofie, "Public Relations Practice in the Lighthouse Chapel International and the International Central Gospel Church" (master's thesis, University of Ghana, 2013), 1.

²⁶⁷ Albert Toss Mills-Odoi, "The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse Chapel International" (master's thesis, TTS, 2008), 1.

was short-lived because the Head of Anatomy Department prevented church meetings at the auditorium.²⁶⁸

In the New Year of 1987, Heward-Mills disclosed to the executives of KCC his intention for full-time ministry as well as transforming KCC into a church. The leadership of CRI felt betrayed by his action and officially dissociated from him.²⁶⁹ He renamed KCC 'The Lighthouse Chapel International' in December 23, 1989. He claimed it was revealed to him in a vision that the church is meant to be a lighthouse to the lost. He combined secular work with pastoring until 1990 where he was ordained into ministry at the Victory Church, London.²⁷⁰ He has since trained more than 1,870 pastors and 4783 lay ministers worldwide, and sent over 485 missionaries into other towns and cities within Africa, Europe, and Asia.²⁷¹ Through his efforts, LCI has built over 400 church premises worldwide. Presently, he serves on the board of Directors of Church Growth International and the Pentecostal World Fellowship. He is the founder of the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches and served as a Chairman until August 2003, when Steve Mensah of Christian Evangelistic Ministry (CEM) was elected Chairman for a two-year term as his successor.²⁷²

3.3.3 Development of LCI

The church established its first and international branch at Geneva in 1992, then a local branch in Kumasi and London in 1993.²⁷³ It further intensified its evangelistic strategies and from 1994 established branches in some suburbs in Greater Accra (Achimota, Mataheko, Labone and Abeka), and other regional capitals: Cape Coast, Tamale, Koforidua, and Ho), following other international branches in 1995.²⁷⁴ LCI has gained national significance and

²⁶⁸ T. Mills-Odoi, "The Doctrine of Salvation," 141.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 142.

²⁷⁰ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 78.

²⁷¹ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 93.

²⁷² T. Mills-Odoi, "The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse," 99.

²⁷³ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle, 93.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

is considered one of the successful and fastest growing Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic church in Ghana.²⁷⁵

As the church embark on intensive evangelism, the membership gradually outgrown the meeting place at the medical school canteen. In April 1993, the church acquired a new building at Korle-Gonno, a suburb of Accra. The location served as the first cathedral and headquarters for LCI nationally and transnationally. The founder, Dag Heward-Mills, pastored the congregation at Korle-Gonno until December 2005 when the church moved to its new headquarters at Qodesh, North Kaneshie. The church has since developed ways to reach out to the communities through evangelism in order to increase its membership and mission. It uses three main languages for communication: English, Akan and French.²⁷⁶

Currently, LCI has undertaken series of infrastructural development within and outside the city of Accra. Aside the first cathedral at Korle-Gonno, it owns a radio and television channels; schools in Accra and Eastern Regions; bookshops, a Hospital and an orphanage. At the moment, Qodesh is one of the largest and modern facilities of the church in Ghana. One of the Bible training campuses of the church, situated at Mampong, in the Eastern region of Ghana has the largest hall with over 10,000 sits.²⁷⁷ The church has multiple church building projects, embracing the vision of 25,000 churches in 150 countries worldwide with the ulterior intention of evangelizing the world for Christ.²⁷⁸ It has over 100 infrastructural projects in Africa: Ghana, Malawi, Botswana, Ethiopia, Gambia; Europe and Asia.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁵ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 36.

²⁷⁶ Information disclosed through an interview with respondent "A" 15/15/2013.

²⁷⁷ Researcher's visit to the Orphanage and Mampong campus, January 15, 2016.

²⁷⁸ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 6.

²⁷⁹ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 135.

Reaching over 1,550 church branches in 66 countries in 2013,²⁸⁰ the church, in 2015, has 1,710 branches within 70 countries.²⁸¹ A number of 1,132 branches in Ghana, 256 branches in Africa, and 322 branches outside the continent of Africa. There are a total of 1,804 pastors and more than 4,781 shepherds globally; 433 deacons, and 38 bishops worldwide.²⁸² The church had its worldwide lay-pastors and shepherds conference from the 3rd to the 6th November 2015 and recorded over 10,000 participants from Africa and beyond.²⁸³ LCI has a structural format for church growth for all branches globally. This is done to afford effective, maximum care and attention as membership increases. At Qodesh, where thousands of individuals walk in and out all week through, there is a layout worship structure for all ages.²⁸⁴

A participation in LCI worship service at Qodesh, North Kaneshie revealed that the name of the central church at the headquarters is 'Jesus Cathedral.' It holds more than 3000 seats and runs three-services on Sunday. Fredrick Price Chapel and Yonggi Cho Chapel run two services respectively in Akan and French, commencing 7:00am and 1:00pm each Sunday.²⁸⁵ The church has exclusive worship services for all age groups, comprising: a day old - 3 years- Infant Church; kid 4-8 years – Kid Church; Junior Church - 9-13 years and Youth Church 14-18 years. One of the buildings on the premises is called 'Celebration Chapel,' it is a demarcated place for birthday celebrants,²⁸⁶ while 'Adelaide Chapel,' named after the founder's wife, is a meeting place for new converts.²⁸⁷ It is also a refreshing room for first-time visitors and prayer area for people who express desire for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

²⁸⁰ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 6.

²⁸¹ Respondent "B", interview granted the researcher, October 21, 2015.

²⁸² Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 93.

²⁸³ Respondent "A" indicated. A personal witness of the event at Mampong where the pastors met and Qodesh where the shepherds had their conference. Also affirmed by a participant of the shepherd conference.

²⁸⁴ Participant observation, Sunday, 18th October 2015.

²⁸⁵ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 171.

²⁸⁶ Respondent "C" Adelaide and Celebration Chapel, 18/10/2015. Organised every last Sunday of the month for birthday celebrants.

²⁸⁷ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 85.

The final among the buildings is the ‘tithe’ office. It is designated to deal with issues pertaining to ‘First and Best’ (tithes). Members of the church contact the office to resolve or discuss issues related to their tithes. The researcher discovered that even pastors not belonging to LCI but allegiance to Heward-Mills pay their ‘First and Best’ there.²⁸⁸

The church has attracted a number of people due to its philanthropic deeds to society, style of worship, belief in baptism of the Holy Spirit, prosperity and health Gospel and exorcism.²⁸⁹ Besides the usual annual celebrations, such as Easter or Christmas, LCI has series of events that occur within the calendar year. The major ones are ‘Iron Sharpens Iron’ conference which often takes place in July. It is an international and all-inclusive training programme specifically for Christian leaders within and outside LCI. The second major event comes of in November each year, thus ‘Homecoming.’ It is designed for LCI members in Ghana and abroad, to interact, share and interconnect. It attracts over 9,000 or 10,000 members across the continents.²⁹⁰ The international Sunday – first Sunday in September, is a period where members portray their cultural heritage through their regalia. ‘Founder’s Day’ is 14th May, but the whole month, in some branches is dedicated to celebrate Dag Heward-Mills. During the period, members are encouraged to offer gifts in kind and cash to support and motivate his work. They are also encouraged to evangelize and ‘bring souls’ to church in his honour.

The first Sunday in October is ‘Galatian 6:6 Day’, in other words called ‘Pastor’s Appreciation Day.’ It is a period where members of LCI acknowledge the good work of their pastors. However, in 2015, it was exclusively done in favour of Dag Heward-Mills. All cash,

²⁸⁸ Interaction, Tithe, 18th October, 2015. Researcher asked sources 1 and 3, whether the infants, kids and junior chapels also pay tithe? Their reply was yes, but added it is not compulsory. Parents who understand tithing give on behalf or give money to the children to pay. Others who have less insight about it do not. 18/10/2015 – 4:30pm

²⁸⁹ Cofie, “Public Relations Practice,” 31.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

gifts, and donations by members globally were given to him.²⁹¹ The whole month of July is ‘Feeding 5:27.’ Although LCI is noted for evangelism, the month of July is the church’s official outreach. Members converge at the church premises, then move to nearby communities to speak to individual about Jesus. Those who receive the message are brought to the church the same day or the subsequent week. First Sunday of August is Mission Sunday. Furthermore, LCI has introduced special programmes in Senior High and tertiary schools for its members: at the tertiary level is called ‘First Love’ and ‘Leadership International’ (LI) for the SHS. ‘Shomcom’ is an annual camping meeting for both JHS and SHS, usually organized in August. The church also recognizes social events like ‘Mother’s’ ‘Father’s’ and ‘Valentine’s’ Day for its members.

3.3 Present Structure of LCI

Since its foundation, LCI has developed series of structures to facilitate its ministry. Through the pastoral structure the church responds to the socio-economic, physical and spiritual needs of its members. For efficient leadership, conflict resolution, loyalty to the work of God, the church has integrated four distinct areas with multinational functions.²⁹²

3.3.1 Pastoral Structure

The pastoral structure of LCI comprises of the entire ministerial or priesthood body. It involves consecrated bishops, ordained and appointed ministers with their various descriptive positions. These leaders seek to advance the wellbeing and spiritual life of individuals in the church, create awareness, teach, develop and equip members with leadership skills. They also provide them with elements of efficient management that could be applied to their obligations in the church and secular work.²⁹³ The Presiding Bishop, Dag

²⁹¹ Participant Observation, “Galatians 6:6 or Pastors Appreciation, Sundays, 4th and 18th October, 2015, at both Madina and Qodesh (Fredrick Price Church)

²⁹² Respondent A confirmed in an Interview 27/11/2015.

²⁹³ Ibid.

Heward-Mills serves as the President, Chief Pastor and senior member of the Bishop Council. He has the executive responsibility and oversight for all programmes within the body of LCI. He initiates and develops church policies and strategies, preaches the word of God as well as declares ‘the intention of God’ to the global body of LCI.

He chairs the worldwide LCI, provides training for bishops, full-time pastors, lay-pastors, shepherds, church leaders and its executive committees. Additionally, Heward-Mills provides leadership, guidance and care for the bishops, pastors and members of LCI globally. He is highly revered and seen as the pivot of the church.²⁹⁴ Currently there is no specific number of years for his term of office, since he is the ‘founding father’ of the church.

There are however specified obligations and roles for each recognized body within the hierarchy. These are bishop council, lay-pastors etc.

3.3.2 Bishop Council

The bishop council consist of selected few, totalling 31 people worldwide, who oversee the activities of the LCI. The bishop council represents the church in matters related to policy, decision-making, security, intervention as well as issues beyond diocesan ministers. They are tasked with the responsibility to deal with matters pertaining to leadership, marriage, vision, mission, ideas, development, and spiritual, physical needs of the members. Members of the council should be persons that are spiritually inclined, served as heads of dioceses for a minimum period of 10 years and contributed to the growth of the church, in terms of finance, leadership and evangelism. They should be financially liberal and loyal to Heward-Mills. Designated bishops must be people who have sound doctrine regarding the interpretation of the Bible and holders of degree, masters or its equivalent. Likewise, they

²⁹⁴ Respondent C indicates that his vision for infrastructure has harnessed LCI buildings across the world.

should have served in the church for over 20 years, pioneered and pastored at least five or more different LCI Churches within dioceses and have passion for evangelism.²⁹⁵

People are nominated bishops when they have demonstrated acceptance to the key beliefs of the church and trained as LCI pastors. Inclusive of the characteristics are attitude for shepherding members within a domain, with good biblical exemplary lifestyle in the community where the church is located, and have good judgment over issues pertaining to members and authorities of the church.

When pastors are designated for the position of bishops, they are thoroughly examined under the specification mentioned before meeting the hierarchy of the bishop council for another exhaustive interview to pledge their commitment for the position. After the processes had been fulfilled a date is set for consecration, where they are openly anointed and introduced to the community of faith.

3.3.3 Lay Pastor(s)

Within the fraternity of LCI, lay pastors are either self-employed, or employees in secular organizationS, while serving as pastors in the church. They provide care, counselling and leadership to the congregation and are entrusted with the growth, expansion, supervision and mission of the church within the community.²⁹⁶ These pastors are appointed on the grounds that they have served and worked under ordained or senior ministers for a minimum of 5 to maximum of 10 years. They must be conversant with the church's doctrine, beliefs, rules and regulations, and proven to be loyal to LCI teachings. They are further required to be conversant with the church's constitution, procedures and conduct expected of lay pastors. They are obligated to have knowledge of most of Dag Heward-Mills books, especially

²⁹⁵ Respondent 'A,' interview granted the researcher, November 27, 2015.

²⁹⁶ Respondent 'A,' interview granted the researcher, October 18, 2015.

‘Loyalty and Disloyalty’ (the seven volume series) to show their preparedness to work.²⁹⁷ In accordance to LCI conventions, lay pastors must espouse to the vision, standards, strategies and mission of the church.²⁹⁸

Lay pastors are obliged to be of good conduct and portray an exemplary attitude towards members. Emmanuel Louis Nterful, the Bishop of Korle-Gonno Cathedral is the person in-charge of the appointment, examination of lay pastors and Anagkazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre. The church has over 10 examination centres across the regional capitals where people recommended for priesthood take their examinations. The director, Nterful liaises with the regional administrations and their diocesan bishops or senior pastors for organization, supervision of both oral and written examinations.²⁹⁹

For the oral exams they have to familiarize with the ‘Must-Know Scriptures,’ a collection of Scriptures compiled by Heward-Mills for all LCI members, particularly ministers. Lay pastors must be able to reference Scriptures for precise themes in the recommended book. For instance, Forgiveness, Tithe, Prosperity, Health, or Evangelism.³⁰⁰ They are also expected to be committed in the following areas: leading a Bible study group, participation in all church programmes, visiting, interacting and praying with members.

Finally, it is important to note that lay pastors are not paid by the church. They offer their services free of charge. Students with JHS or SHS certificates who complete their three-year

²⁹⁷ Respondent ‘A,’ interview granted the researcher, October 18, 2015. Respondent ‘A,’ discloses that the book, ‘Loyalty and Disloyalty’ is currently the cardinal principle for all in LCI. Respondent ‘B,’ confirmed, saying, presently bishops and pastors of LCI are measured by their loyalty or disloyalty to the ideals and philosophy of the Presiding Bishop.

²⁹⁸ Respondent ‘A,’ training of lay pastors,” September 17, 2015. Lay pastors must read books of Heward-Mills on church growth and leadership for oral and written exams. Some of the recommended books are “Mega-church” “Lay People and the Ministry” “The Art of Shepherding” “Loyalty and Disloyalty.”

²⁹⁹ The minimum pass-mark is strictly 50, without which ones candidature will be annulled.

³⁰⁰ Respondent ‘A,’ interview granted the researcher, September 17, 2015.

training with ABMTC, are sent to the field as lay pastors without financial support. They are obliged to secure themselves jobs to support their families and the ministry.³⁰¹

3.3.4 Area Fellowship (Bussell)

Bussell is a 'coined' catchphrase among members of LCI. Its original meaning is derived from 'bus the cell group' to the place of worship. The term designates small Bible discussion group constitute by a maximum of 10 members. Their meetings are held on weekends for a period of one hour, then on Sunday they are "bus-cell" to church. The intents of bussell is to engage, maintain, and develop the faith of new converts, establish cordiality among members of the church as well as evangelize the community. It allows the church to efficiently deal with problems. If members in a bussell exceeds 10, the group is separated into two and a new bussell begins within the neighbourhood. The usual days of meeting is Saturday evenings, but depending on the group it could be held in any of the days within the week. Their facilitators are called 'bussell shepherds;' offerings from bussells are for renting of buses that convey members from the neighbourhood to and from church on Sundays.³⁰² The bussell ministry, which is part of the church structure is an immediate point of call for members of LCI. In the event of any problem, bussells shepherds arbitrate, if they are unable to deal with the issue, the zonal pastor does it. If the zonal pastor cannot, the pastor who heads that zone is consulted on the issue; it runs through systematically until it reaches the diocesan bishop.³⁰³

3.3.5 In-house Support System

LCI has a comprehensive communicative structured system that deals with the information among members: from management, ministerial through staff to members of the church.

³⁰¹ A recent direction from the church hierarchy reveals that there will be no full-time jobs for the class of 2016. The church will recruit them as lay pastors after school. They must accept secular jobs to sustain them.

³⁰² Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 62.

³⁰³ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 86.

They also have the Human Resource (HR) and pastoral care department which facilitate internal communiqué in the church. Any information to pastors and staff are channelled through the pastoral internet portal called *lcigoodshepherd.org*.³⁰⁴ Only recognized pastors of the church can access it with a coded password. Members are excluded from this platform: Information are disseminated through their mobile phones.³⁰⁵ For imminent programmes, announcements are made on Sundays and mid-week services, and through an e-mails or the social platforms. The same procedures are used to help the unemployed in the church. For example, job opportunities are given to members before they are advertise in the national papers. This is done to provide comfort, and lessen the financial burden on the church and pastors.³⁰⁶

3.4 Social Ministry

The church has various forms of evangelism strategies it employs to share Christ with the communities. Through its social ministry the church provides infrastructural development, education, vocation, and health services to community folks.

3.4.1 Compassion Ministry

The ministry of Compassion is the social commitment of LCI aimed directly towards the under privileged in society. The church focuses on fundamental issues that affect children, elderly, poor and the vulnerable in remote communities in Ghana and Africa at large. In Ghana, the church reaches out to prisoners, orphans, squatters, the aged, sick people, while

³⁰⁴ Coffie, "Public Relations Practice," 65. Respondent "A" affirmed it.

³⁰⁵ Respondent "C," interviewed granted the researcher, December 12, 2015.

³⁰⁶ Coffie affirm that in 2013 announcement was made about a gentleman who owns a factory and needed three drivers and some marketing personnel. She called the number that was given, and the guy promised to fix her. Similar announcement of vacancy," Sunday July 12, 2015. An information was given at the Madina LCI. There was an announcement Ghana Aviation was looking for a Human Resource Personal, interested person should submit his/her application to a given name. A number and address were given. Members were given two weeks to submit their application. Having fellowshipped with the branch for over seven-months, a guy approached me on one of the Sundays after church, proposing to bring my CV in his work place because there was a vacancy for a lady HR personnel.

in other African countries it concerns itself with the cost of medical bills of the poor and healing ministry through ‘Healing Jesus Medical Missions Outreach.’ It provides food, clothing in parts of the content here such things are inadequate or non-existent. It caters for 300 impairment individuals who are constantly supported in kind or cash every month.³⁰⁷

3.4.2 Health Ministry

The ‘Healing Jesus Medical Missions Outreach’ is committed to spreading the love of Christ by offering free healthcare to rural communities in Ghana and surrounding regions of Africa. It was established in 2007 and has since been supporting deprived communities.³⁰⁸ The ministry supports people in remote towns and villages who cannot afford or access medical care due to either extreme shortage of medical professionals, healthcare facilities or non-existence of drugs.³⁰⁹ In such precarious situation and circumstances, the Healing Jesus Medical Missions Outreach of LCI volunteers’ healthcare professionals. They fill all the prescriptions forms free of charge and provide the much needed medication in places where healthcare is viewed as a luxury. The supplies are made possible through Lighthouse Mission Hospital, individual and some companies.

LCI delivers healthcare services to the general public through its healthcare facility situated at Nork Kaneshie in Accra. Upon the inspiration of Matt. 25:31-40, the church decided to set up healthcare centre to help members and deprived communities. It was set up in 2006 with general wards, semi-private and private rooms for patients. It has 40 beds, 4 medical doctors, 9 nurses, and 5 paramedics. The hospital provides surgical, pre-natal, post-natal and general care services to the public³¹⁰. It also has a fertility clinic, radiology department, eye

³⁰⁷ Opare, “A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme,” 82. It is confirmed by participant observation, October 18, 2015.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 84.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 82.

³¹⁰ Mills-Odoi, “The Concept of Miracle,” 100.

clinic, a laboratory plus an inbuilt pharmacy shop. As part of LCI social commitment to the community, the church sometimes pays the cost of medical bills for patients unable to afford their bills. Some full-time pastors and staff of the hospital receive free medicals care,³¹¹ while the church regularly educates its members on health matters to avoid infections. For instance, during the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in 2014 the church told its members to stop handshakes and hugs at meetings.³¹²

3.4.3 Ministry to the blind

The church regularly supplies the Akropong Junior and Secondary High School for the Blind and Deaf with learning tools. In 2013, LCI donated 895 braille textbooks for the school and paid off the cost of medical bills for students unable to afford their medical treatments. Children born with cataracts or glaucoma are given free treatment and medication.³¹³

LCI has a support system call 'Remember the Poor' (RTP), it is a ministry that seeks to meet physical, spiritual needs of church members and it surrounding communities. RTP pays school fees for individuals in dire needs and engage school dropouts in handcrafting, such as hairdressing, dressmaking and tailoring. They sometimes provide drugs to the elderly who are out of work or on retirement.³¹⁴ In 2016, Heward-Mills remarked that more attention should be given to the visually impaired. According to researcher 'A' it is likely by the close of 2016, he may organize something for them.³¹⁵

3.4.4 Street Beggars Outreach

Challenged by a survey conducted in 2012 that 43% of beggars spent their nights on the streets; 25.6 % lived in kiosks, a little above 3% were blind, and majority were crippled with

³¹¹ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 100.

³¹² Respondents 'A' and 'B' - Ebola outbreak, November 11, 2015.

³¹³ Mills-Odoi, "The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse," 134.

³¹⁴ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 60.

³¹⁵ Respondent 'A,' interview granted the researcher, December 15, 2015.

severely restricted mobility, LCI responded by reaching out to beggars on the streets. As part of its religious and social commitment to the public, particularly to the physically impaired who are unable to find suitable jobs, the church registered them in order to offer some financial support.³¹⁶ The mission and purpose of ‘Beggars Outreach’ is to share Christ with people who needed to be fed and nourished by God on a daily basis. It is an outreach that puts smiles on the faces of those struggling to have three square meals daily to better their economic lives and maintain their love for God.³¹⁷ To those unable to work due to their conditions, the church gives monthly token, while the physically fit among them receive career training. The outreach also provides brand new wheel chairs to those who cannot afford them to enhance their mobility and independence.

In December 2014, the first ever Christmas party for all beggars was organized at Qodesh. 180 people were present; each was given an extra take-home food pack, drinks, T-shirt and some souvenirs.³¹⁸ After the Christmas party, LCI paraded the streets of Accra: from circle through CMB, Okaishie, Nima, then to Abbosey Okai Zongo. The intent was to inform the beggars about New Year’s Sunday Service in 2015. On the stipulated date, LCI went to those vicinities with their buses to convey the beggars and their friends to church. They were carried to their various destinations after the service. According to one of the leaders of the programme, the growing response by these beggars have been phenomenal since the first Sunday of 2015.³¹⁹

3.4.5 Prison Outreach

Another important commitment by the church to the public is the prisons outreach. The church provides food items, renovate some cells to improve and ease the overcrowding

³¹⁶ T. Mills-Odoi, “The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse,” 145.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Opare, “A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme,” 82.

³¹⁹ www.lighthousechapel.org/ accessed on 16/7/2015

conditions of inmates. Since May 2012, over 10 cells within Greater Accra Region have benefited from LCI refurbishment programmes, these are: Central Police Station; Mamprobi Police Station - February 2013; Chorkor Police Station - February 2013; Odorkor Police Station - March 2013; Kaneshie Police Station - February 2013; Korle-Bu Police Station - September 2013; Agbogbloshie Police Station - March 2014 and Darkuman Police Station - June 2014.

Besides the renovations and preaching, the food outreach teams of LCI offered lunch and soft drinks for inmates. Some of the meals were sent to Nima, Tesano, Odorkor, Kaneshie, Korle-Bu, Accra Central, Mamprobi, Airport and Chorkor police cells.³²⁰

3.4.6 Lighthouse Mission Schools and Orphanage

The Lighthouse Orphanage is located at Aburi in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It was founded in 2006 with four boys and fifteen girls, ages ranging from new-borns to eleven years old. The children were sent to the home by the Social Welfare of Ghana. Presently, the home has a resident lady pastor, five caregivers and 21 children.³²¹ The youngest is 3 months and the oldest is 18 years old. She attends Akyem Abuakwa Senior High at Kibi, in the Eastern Regions. The rest attends primary school nearby. The home has a car that conveys them to school and back. During a personal visit to the home on January 15, 2016, the administrator, Gloria Kwarteng disclosed that the three months old baby was brought in by the Social Welfare along with the mother at two weeks old. The baby's mother, a teenager, claims she cannot care for the child and wanted the home to help. The mother was allowed some weeks to lactate the baby, after which she gave the baby for adoption. The lactated mother had to leave because they do not have shelter for mothers. On Sundays, the children fellowship at the Adenta branch of LCI. This is done to expose them to the surrounding

³²⁰ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 84.

³²¹ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 97.

communities, interconnect with others and explore the beautiful things around them. The administrator stated they operate through the monthly support from LCI, donations from individuals and some organizations.³²²

The church's nursery school, Lighthouse Christian Mission, is situated at Dansoman. It started with 2 children in 1998 and has now more than 160 pupils. The Junior High School, founded in the same year is located at Weijah-Kasoa road, it is a two storey building constructed on a 200 x 150 metres stretch of land with an administration. At the time of visit, it has a population of 364, an administrator, administrative assistant with 49 teaching and non-teaching staff. There is a church building on the compound which serves as a worship centre for the community and the school.³²³

3.4.7 Anagkazo Bible School

The Anagkazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre (ABMTC) is a ministerial training school for pastors of LCI. An individual of the church who desires to become a pastor, regardless her/his academic status, must receive a 2-3-year training in any of the branches of Anagkazo to comprehend the beliefs and philosophy of LCI.³²⁴ The Bible School has two campuses: Korle-Gonno in Greater Accra and Mampong in the Eastern Region.

The Accra campus began in 1996 to train pastors for ministry. It started with an initial students' body of 542, mainly drawn from LCI branches. It admits LCI and non-LCI members, including local and international students. Since its commencement, over 10,000 students from 25 different countries worldwide have been trained.³²⁵ According to Louisa

³²² The Administrator, Lighthouse Orphanage, interview granted the researcher, January 15, 2016.

³²³ The administrative Assistant, Lighthouse Mission School. Interview granted the researcher, December 2, 2015.

³²⁴ Respondent 'A' and 'D,' interview granted the researcher, November 27, 2015.

³²⁵ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 93.

Mills-Odoi, the church provides students with free tuition, feeding, accommodation and supports students with economic problems.³²⁶

The programme is strictly residential. Until 2015, no fee was requested. At the present food and allowances are no more given, and a fee of Ghc150 has been introduced. Now, the total number of students at Korle-Gonno campus is 492, including 154 international students from Gambia, Conakry, Switzerland, Ukraine, Swaziland, Trinidad, South Africa, and Togo. To instill good conduct in students, Korle-Gonno campus has seven permanent and one adjunct lecturers with a President and Three deans.

The Mampong campus was started in October 2015 with more than 300 Students from Africa, Asia, Europe and America. It occupies a large units of land, approximately 48,415.42 square metres. It has unbroken expanse of buildings, comprising of administrative blocks and lecture theatres, conference and assembly halls, hostels and a vast land for outdoor programmes that can accommodate more than 15,000 occupants.³²⁷ Between the forecourts, towards the hostels, a 9 feet tall plaque of five partitions has been constructed at the centre of the passageway. On the plaques are inscribed citations of ‘Great Thinkers,’ ‘The Message of the Great Commission’ etc. however the one of interest to the research is the ‘purpose’ for which Anagkazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre was established. The inscription reads:

The founders of Anagkazo Bible Ministry and Training Centre believes in the whole Bible and believes that many are called and believe that many have the ministry of a shepherd. The founders believe in the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual gifts of ministry, miracles, signs and wonders, speaking in tongues, casting out of devils, sending out of missionaries, the art of leadership, the art of following, the art of hearing, the art of ministry, power evangelism, soul winning, sacrifice,

³²⁶ Respondent ‘D’ and ‘E,’ AMBTC, January 15, 2016.

³²⁷ Researcher’s observation, ABMTC, January 15, 2016. Interview with some sstudents’ revealed the forecourt is used for both academic and social events by student body.

church growth, mega church, church planting, teaching on loyalty and disloyalty, faith, prayer and the art of being led by the Holy Spirit.

This campus greatly respects the secular education that is taught in universities, but has consciously and intentionally decided not to teach secular subjects on this campus.

This campus was not built for the purpose of advancing secular education. This campus was not intended to be a secular university. This campus was not built for the propagation and study of theology that is traditionally taught in secular universities and other accredited institution. This campus was not intended to become a centre to analyse and question the authenticity of God's Word. This campus was not built to analyse, discuss, question or even receive the two hundred or more other opinions and theories about God, that the great theologians of our world have. This campus was not built to teach or present various schools of thoughts about ministry exist today. This school was not built to satisfy the requirements of a secular or tertiary educational institution. This campus was not built to acquire approval or accreditation from secular accrediting authorities. This campus was not built to help men to question their faith in God. This campus was not built to quench the fire and the zeal of God in men.³²⁸

The provost of Mampong campus stated the school does not accept or engage in dialogue with persons who visit the campus for secular academic purposes. According to him, secular education questions the integrity of God, and in that sense make its findings and inquisition ambiguous and illusory. For him their theology is not what is being taught at the universities and other acclaimed Bible training schools. When asked how over three hundred students on campus could be gainfully employed or integrated into the society after school, the provost replied, churches and various pastors who sent their members to the school, in collaboration with LCI, will send them out as missionaries to the field. He was emphatic that LCI tradition and training in the school is different from other established institutions: Anagkazo is 'God-based' and they do not engage in Old and New Testament studies which questions basic biblical truths and individuals' faith in God.

Anagkazo awards three certificates: (1) General Certificate (2) Diploma (3) Programme One. Each of the certificates are awarded to students upon their fulfilment of a two year

³²⁸ Researcher's observation, ABMTC, January 15, 2016.

studies within the Bible school. The entry requirements are certificate – Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE); Diploma – West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and Programme One - Bachelor Degree. Those offering Programme One are students from the universities: they do not attend ABMTC but they receive training and work directly under Heward-Mills. Students who graduate with Certificate or Diploma become full-time pastors of the church. But depending on the situation post-graduate students of Programme One are employed as full-time or lay pastors.³²⁹

There are about 12-14 courses that are undertaken each academic year, to mention few, leadership, evangelism, counselling, church growth. The recommended books for the courses are all written by Dag Heward-Mills, with the exceptional of the Bible and “God’s General.” The table beneath exhibits the courses and proposed books.

Table 1: Courses and their Specific Books

Course	Book
1. Principles and Practice of Pastoral Ministry	Transform your Pastoral Ministry - By Dag Heward-Mills
2. Essential Doctrine of Loyalty and Disloyalty	Loyalty and Disloyalty; Those who accuse you; Those who Forget; and Leaders and Loyalty - By Dag Heward-Mills
3. Core Techniques in the Work of the Ministry	Many are called; Rules of full-time Ministry; Rules of Church Work; and Lakios (Lay-Pastors) - By Dag Heward-Mills
4. Current Principles of Leadership	Art of Leadership - By Dag Heward-Mills
5. Theory and Practice of Operating in the Anointing	Catch the Anointing; Amplify your Ministry - By Dag Heward-Mills

³²⁹ Interaction with one of the foreign students at Mampong campus affirmed that he was admitted into the school in October 2015, he is not going back until completion. A Ghanaian student who completed this year indicated he has been in school the past three years. They were only allowed to see their families during Easter or Christmas festivities.

6. Fundamentals of Evangelism and Missions	Tell them - By Dag Heward-Mills
7. Practical Approaches to Church Growth	Mega Church; and Church Planting – By Dag Heward-Mills
8. Illustrated Principles of Marriage Counselling	Model Marriage - By Dag Heward-Mills
9. Principles of Financial Management in Ministry	Why Non-Tithing Christians become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich - By Dag Heward-Mills – By Dag Heward-Mills
10. Basic Charismatic Theology	Quiet-Time; Spiritual Dangers; Formula for Humility; How to Pray; Greater Love; and Backsliding - By Dag Heward-Mills
11. Church History	God's Generals – Robert Liardon
12. Bibliography	Bible

Unlike Korle-Gonno campus where students are paying Ghc150 annually, Mampong campus is on full scholarship, although students have to buy their own food. The curricula of Anagkazo is structured such that students are allowed a period of one year to acquaint with practical related matters of pastoral proceeding on the field. The first quarter of the year is 'Rural Rotation,' where, students are given permission to work with LCI churches across the nation. The intents for the rural rotation is to afford students opportunities to encounter the real-world nature of ministerial challenges on the field. They are given the opportunity to preach, evangelize and partake in the church's programmes. After their rotational training students go through a system call 'Bible Memorization and Character Development' programme for another three months. Under this programme, students may be reshuffled or still at their various posts, performs manual jobs in the church. They do sweeping, cleaning of chairs or benches, setting up the equipment and ensure the church is set for service.

The third quarter of the year is dedicated for the 'Must-Know Scripture,' students are required to study and familiarize themselves with at least 700 verses, out of which 200 is

compulsory. In the final quarter of the year, student go through ‘Administrative Rotation.’ They are exposed to the financial state of the church: income and expenditure of the church, procedures for appointing bishops, full-time and lay pastors, shepherds or church leaders. In addition to the above, students are given extensive training in the area of ‘Information Communication Technology’ (ICT). The church educates students on how to logon to Dag Heward-Mills programmes worldwide: those who own laptops or similar devices receive information. Soft-copies of his books. Furthermore, during the field work practices, students are conveyed in rented buses of the church to participate in ‘Jesus Healing Crusades’ around the country, and within West and East Africa respectively.³³⁰

3.4.8 Radio and Television of LCI

In her thesis, “Public Relations Practice in the Lighthouse Chapel International and the International Central Gospel Church,” Faustina Aba Wiba Cofie reveals that LCI does not engage the media for their church events. They neither have any cordial dialogue nor allow the media to participate or cover their programmes. The reason is that LCI does not trust the media to offer an about accurate reportage of their events.³³¹ She observes that although LCI does not advertise on billboards, banners, and pull-ups for its major events, they announce them on their various platforms - ‘Sweet Melodies 94.3 FM,’ ‘internet portal’ and TV channel. All their programmes: book launch, periodicals, conferences local and international summits are all captured on these network and during church meetings.³³²

3.5 LCI Statement of Faith

The church website states that LCI believes that God Almighty is the one and only true God. That He is three-in-one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and Creator of all nature. That Jesus

³³⁰ Respondent ‘C’ ABMTC, November 27, 2015.

³³¹ Cofie, “Public Relations Practice,” 63.

³³² Ibid.

Christ, born of the Virgin Mary is the only begotten son of the Father. That He is God who manifested and dwelt among men. That all men have sinned and need redemption from their sins in order to have everlasting life in Heaven as opposed to eternal death in Hell. That Jesus Christ died for the sins of all mankind on the cross and that salvation is available through Him alone. That a Christian is someone who has consciously and willingly accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. That all activities in the lives of believers must be guided and directed by the Word of God which is the Bible. That the ministry and gifts of the Holy Spirit to believers, as experienced by the early Church, is for us today. That in accordance with the Scriptures, Jesus Christ will come again to reign on Earth and at the final judgement will judge each man individually for what he has believed, done, said and thought. Finally, it affirms the church's primary role of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ by any means which are not contrary to the laws of the country where the church is located.³³³

3.5.1 Mission Statement of LCI

LCI's mission statement is to build 25,000 churches in 150 countries, fight fiercely and relentlessly in all battles for the advancement of the churches and the Gospel. Also, to produce radical Christians who will set themselves apart for God's work and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus in their communities and equally abide by the laws of the country where the church is situated.³³⁴

3.6 Main Beliefs of LCI

These are foundational beliefs and conventions of LCI. They are the principal tenets that guides the church's visions, mission, worship, and identifies members who belong to the church. Individuals who express interest to belong to the church, and most importantly

³³³ www.lighthousechapel.org/ accessed on 16/7/2015

³³⁴ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 6.

pastoral body, are required to understand these beliefs, guiding principles, expectations, and the likely consequences should they behave incompatibly.

3.6.1 Baptism of the Holy Spirit

LCI believes it is the Holy Spirit that illuminates the believer to understand Scripture. So, the reader of Scriptures cannot comprehend the meaning unless the Holy Spirit mediates understanding. Furthermore, salvation of an individual is equally important as acceptance of the believer into the body of Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. After confessing Jesus as Lord and Saviour, the person is accepted as a believer in Christ and part of God's saints. LCI believes that the seal or the evidence of the newness of life is the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. It is essential and commands that the convert is taught the purpose of the Spirit after which s/he is prayed for to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For LCI, the Holy Spirit is not just 'resident' in the disciple of Christ. The Holy Spirit endows the believer to pray long hours, surmount immoralities and live a holy life for God. When a person expresses the desire for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the church has trained shepherds that assist the person with teachings and prayers to experience it.³³⁵

3.6.2 Water Baptism

Baptism by immersion is a precondition for all new converts in LCI. It is an outward symbol that demonstrate to the rest of the church or the community of faith that the person in Christ has truly decided to abandon the old life and accept the privileges and opportunities offers by Christ. However, a believer who has been baptised in a different church before joining LCI, does not require a second baptism.³³⁶ The church confers baptism by immersion because it fulfils Scripture, secures the person from death to life; from curse to blessing;

³³⁵ www.lighthousechapel.org/ accessed on 16/7/2015; confirmed by respondent 'A' 'B' and 'D.' 18/10/2016.

³³⁶ Cconfirmed by respondent 'A' 'B' and 'D,' October 18, 2015.

from failure to success; from poverty to prosperity. The rite is preceded by eight weeks of teachings followed by an interview to ascertain the maturity of the candidate ahead of the baptism. Many churches have baptisteries in their premises. However, branches that do not have, use the beach or lakeside. Bishops or ordained pastors perform the ceremony by immersion.

3.6.3 Divine Healing

LCI believes that in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles, divine healing was an essential element to the proclamation of the gospel. For them healing demonstrates the divinity of Christ, endorses Jesus as the revelation of the Father and the promised Messiah. It also reveals him as the Saviour from whom forgiveness flows to all humanity. His power to heal demonstrated his authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:5 –12). LCI holds the view that evangelists testified that Jesus' healing and miracles paralleled his preaching of the gospel (Matthew 4:23; 9:35-36 and John 9:3-4). The above biblical passages and that of Markan commission (16:15-20) are used by the church for 'Healing Jesus Crusade' and supernatural miracles.

In her dissertation, "The Concept of Miracle in the Teaching of Dag Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International," Louisa Mills-Odoi posits that Heward-Mills' faith in Divine Healing is vividly demonstrated in his 'Healing Jesus Campaign.'³³⁷

Dag Heward-Mills commenced Healing Jesus Campaign in 2004 to reach out to the deprived communities with the Gospel of Jesus and Divine Healing. He is still touching countless lives and has brought joy to the poor. He travels and operates as an evangelist with the sole purpose of spreading the Gospel of Jesus to other nations and cultures. His crusades notably target the farthest and unreached parts of the world, usually poverty stricken and isolated

³³⁷ Mills-Odoi, "The Concept of Miracle," 106.

communities.³³⁸ Notable at these crusades are many Divine Healing; people with all manner of physical diseases, and health challenges are cured by God. A recorded DVD, radio programmes and books record the miracles of blinds seeing, deafs hearing, dumbs speaking and disables walking.³³⁹

The Healing Jesus Campaign also caters for the physical well-being of the towns and cities it visits through the provision of medical care and basic needs for daily survival. The purpose of the crusade, as stated by Heward-Mills in his early ministry, was to take the gospel of salvation, hope and joy in Christ to all people in the remotest world. Today, salvation through Healing Jesus Campaign is the action-packed programmes that has attracted great following into LCI. It has transformed lives from the time it was started in 2003 as community outdoor programme around Korle-Gonno, Mamprobi, a suburb of Accra, and is the most effective tool for drawing beyond 1,000 people to the crusade grounds and LCI.³⁴⁰

Over 100 crusades have been organized in 60 towns and villages around Africa. Some of the countries are Ivory Coast, Lome, Ekiti State, Nigeria, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Benin. There is also Healing Jesus Medical Missions Outreach as stated before which had been integrated into Healing Campaign since 2006 to provide medical care for towns and villages. About 27 towns and villages have benefited from the campaign at the cost of US \$15,000 per the exercise.³⁴¹

3.7 Conclusion

Following Azusa Street's Pentecostalism in connection with Ghana's experience, Lighthouse Chapel International has grounded its philosophy and beliefs in the Pentecostal

³³⁸ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 81.

³³⁹ Campaign team member, 'Healing Jesus Crusade,' September, 2015.

³⁴⁰ Opare, "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme," 81.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

doctrine. The prominent features of Pentecostalism; the Holy Spirit, evangelism, divine healing, faith, miracles and divine empowerment are reminiscent to the practices found in LCI. Communal duties by the church are intended to improve the economic and social status of people, expand membership, while retaining their spiritual devotion to God. They are deeply engrossed in missionary work and have several strategic programmes like schools, healthcare facilities, radio, television and support system for evangelizing and bringing people into the church. Worldwide membership is more than 15,000 and one of the fastest growing Pentecostal churches in Ghana.

The researcher has observed that a number of social and healthcare commitments to the public by LCI have relieved individuals' whose appalling financial position could have denied them access to healthcare. But then, whereas a great number of people are benefitting from the church's communal programmes, simultaneously, some programmes and pursuits of the church are obliterating brains of future leaders of the community. For instance, the prescribed books for a three-year education that are exclusively the founder's publications demonstrate indoctrination from education and biblical truth. Furthermore, the researcher's interaction has shown that ABMTC of LCI, is inculcating, ingraining or forcing ideas and opinions on students who are not permitted to critically interrogate and question the doctrine. This in itself, introduces students to one-sided set of views, values and understanding, where they become intolerant to different beliefs and ideas. The practice is validated by the hermeneutical approach to Scriptures by LCI.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL (LCI)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the general approach to interpretation of Scripture by LCI in response to the second research question. The analysis in the previous chapter discloses that LCI is an independent Pentecostal/Charismatic church that places special emphasis on direct personal experience with God through the baptism of the Holy Spirit as the worldwide Pentecostalism. They stress on personal encounter with the Holy Spirit because of his multiple roles in the life of the believer and the church. This discussion situates hermeneutics and authority of Scripture within LCI approach to Scripture and different ways it employs to promulgate its hermeneutics: preaching; publication; ‘bussell’ meetings; loyalty and disloyalty conferences.

4.2 Hermeneutics and the Authority of Scripture

Different methods and approaches to the interpretation of Scripture has been developed. For example, authors like Tate and Brown³⁴² speak about multiple techniques, processes and approaches to Biblical hermeneutics which indicate awareness of different ‘gaps’ between the world behind the text and the world in front of the text: geographical, socio-economic, axioms, tradition and linguistic. To exegete a text, the contemporary hermeneutics employ an integrated approach by looking at the historical approach (author centred); literary approach (text centred) and contextual approach (reader centred) in order to reach an informed understanding.

³⁴² J. K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication. Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) and W. R. Tate, *Biblical Interpretation. An Integrated Approach* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008).

Still, there is an approach that ignores the three *loci* of meaning (author, text, and reader), usually referred to as the fundamentalist approach or Biblical literalist. Bartkowski has pointed out that among Christians, Evangelicals view the Bible as inspired and authoritative but are also able to allow for metaphorical interpretation. Yet, Fundamentalist insist that the Bible is infallible and literally true.³⁴³ Since hermeneutic provides a source of information regarding reading and understanding of a text, the researcher discovered that the hermeneutical approach by LCI to Scripture has considerable effect on members. The section below delves into LCI loci of interpretation.

4.3 ‘Loci’ of Interpretation

This section surveys the different contexts in which interpretation of the Scripture is done in LCI.

4.3.1 Preaching

In LCI, there are selected individuals who have been trained to lead worship and are authorized to preach sermons on Sundays. Consecrated bishops and ordained pastors have the sole responsibility to deliver sermons on Sundays and midweek services. Unlike other Pentecostal/Charismatic denominations where pastors are invited from different churches, LCI exchanges pastors and lay ministers within its branches in order to promote in-house preaching style. Praises, prayers, offerings and song ministrations are significant elements in worship and precede preaching.

Pastors are frequently ushered to the pulpit by a standing ovation after brief introduction about them by the MC, and depending on the occasion, offerings are either taken before or after the sermon. However, in most cases the offerings are taken both prior to the sermon

³⁴³ Carter J. Haynes, “A Case for Flexible Epistemology and Meta-methodology in Religious Fundamentalism Research,” *Integral Review* 3 (2010): 3-54.

and afterwards, followed by a third offering called ‘boosters.’ LCI believes God is interested in the coins of the people, so after the two main offerings, members are allowed to offer their special appreciation to God by giving out their coins.

Announcement is the last on the list of activities on Sunday, according to respondent “A” years ago, sermon comes ahead of announcements. But they have recently been informed to give announcements before the sermon. The reason for such changes is to allow members to go home with the sermon on their hearts in order to influence other lives. LCI pastors usually organize their sermons into four sections: (a) introduction (b) content (c) summary (d) ‘altar call.’ This approach is compulsory and all LCI pastors are required to conform to it in their respective branches.³⁴⁴

A. Introduction

Generally, in most of the LCI branches, inspirational melodies precede preaching in order to prepare the hearts of the congregants for the sermon. Sometimes the theme of the sermon is made known in advance to the whole congregation so they could read the texts before church service. Songs are carefully chosen so the words can inspire and focus the attention of members on the sermon. Soon after the song, the church stands in ovation to receive the pastor. Unlike main line churches where strict liturgical procedures are followed, LCI has its own style of worship, but predominately it claims to operate under directives of the Holy Spirit. The occurrence may determine what the pastors do. For instance, pastors are expected to preach when they are introduced to give the sermon. But they could lead the congregation in a 10-minute prayer for the nation before proclaiming the sermons.

³⁴⁴ All the respondents affirmed that is the style of LCI. The practice was obvious in the branches the researcher visited

In order to illustrate LCI hermeneutical style, a number of examples from Dag Heward-Mills preaching and Isaac Quarcoo, the senior pastor of Madina branch, have been collated.

Dag Heward-Mills introduces his sermon using catchphrase commonly known to the church members to attract high-pitched grating sound or screaming. Words such as ‘forgive’, ‘mercy’ and ‘atonement’ are slogans among LCI members. These are part of some messages preached in his early ministry. He indicated Christians should learn to forgive and demonstrate mercy towards their offenders, as Christ purges them from their daily offences.³⁴⁵ For instance, if he is narrating the story of the ‘prodigal son’ who approached his father to bequeath his portion of the inheritance, either Heward-Mills or the church will shout ‘mercy,’ simply denoting the action of the son was inappropriate. They could shout ‘forgive’ to mean the son should be forgiven by his father or God for his bizarre action. The very latest one is ‘what a shock’ or ‘eyegbeye waa.’ It is an expression of surprise, often use to signify displeasure or amazement over an issue.

For instance, during his radio broadcast on marriage in November 2015 on Sweet Melodies 94.3 FM from 4pm to 5pm, Heward-Mills said, upon all the elegant appearance of women they turn out like boys when they are home without their make-ups, Brazilian hair, lip-gloss, and their adorning cosmetics. Such remarks from him spontaneously generated feed-backs from his members, ‘what a shock’ or ‘eyegbeye waa,’ and frequent shouts across the auditorium. Certainly in this situation the term ‘what a shock’ will have more than one meaning, depending on who agreed or disagreed with the statement. Sometimes, he begins his sermons with hilarious illustrations, drawing lessons from present and past experiences from Scriptures and contemporary lifestyle to substantiate his points. He normally speaks English but intertwines it with vernaculars.

³⁴⁵ Responded ‘A,’ sermon, January 25, 2016. These verses are memorized by members.

Heward-Mills approach to preaching and worship is imitated by LCI pastors. They either begin the sermon with a narrative or positive declarations, and other times the declarations are proclaimed subsequent to the delivery of sermon.

For example, in October 25 2015, Rev. Isaac Quarcoo was introduced to proclaim the sermon. Prior to that he made these pronouncements: ‘once you are alive, you are a winner;’ ‘in spite of challenges you are a conqueror;’ ‘problems will be many but God will fight for you;’ ‘you may be down but not out.’ Most members were on their feet, hands raised, accompanied with jumping, screaming and claiming every word the pastor uttered. After 20 minutes of declaration, Quarcoo finally announced the title of the sermon: ‘You are a Winner.’ It must be stressed that besides the usual style of preaching, the approach may differ from pastor to pastor depending on what the Holy Spirit direct at a given time.

B. Content

Although LCI has a prescribe procedure for their worship, they claim to depend on the Holy Spirit for what they do in the church in a given time. Dag Heward-Mills, being the leader of LCI, reserves the privilege to himself to perform as and when he pleases or as directed by the Holy Spirit. For example, when he mounts the pulpit, the theme precedes the texts or comes after a succinct narrative. He reads and quotes Scriptures, then develops an opening sentence that enthral the audience. If they are inspired, they respond with a shouts, repeating LCI traditional slogans ‘forgive,’ ‘what a shock,’ or ‘eyegbeye.’ The day’s event may demand systematic development of a proposition with divisions, and subdivision of thoughts connected to the subject. The proposition is also expounded through the use of Scriptures: Historical, cultural and personal experiences play a major role in his preaching.

Once a doctor by profession, he looks at the emotional and psychological contexts, together with different effects, then offers further explanation or significant argument surrounding

the theme to reinforce the message. One of such instances is found in his sermon and book “Bearing Fruit: After Your Own Kind,” he explains that bearing fruit means telling others about the Lord Jesus, and the most effective way is Christians telling their peers about Christ (Gen. 1:24-25; I Cor. 4:15).³⁴⁶

Narrating his own experience, he speaks that he was unable to convince his father into ‘Christianity’³⁴⁷ because he was young and not his father’s equal. Advancing further, Heward-Mills states that he could not persuade his father to become ‘born again’ as the father’s friends influenced him into freemason.³⁴⁸ Drawing analysis from his experience, he emboldens Christians to evangelize their friends, since they relate and share common views, terms, and gestures together.

He posits that even though one bears fruits for excitement, it involves pain. Equating bearing fruit to women at labour ward, Heward-Mills states that women go through painful and embarrassing ordeals at birth. They expose themselves to strangers and excruciating conditions due to pelvic bones that have to be opened to allow passage of the baby.³⁴⁹ He stresses that when the occasion demands the woman should be expurgated for smooth delivery, her scream describes her pain and suffering. He adds that he was traumatized about the level of anguish women go through during birth, but stunned about their expectation for more children. He was positive that regardless the pain, there is a deep joy and great satisfaction when the baby arrives. In conclusion, Heward-Mills affirms it is difficult to tell people about Christ, but there is joy when that someone becomes a Christian through an individual’s hard work and suffering.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶ Dag Heward-Mills, *Bearing Fruit: After Your Own Kind* (Accra: Parchment House, 2007), 1-38.

³⁴⁷ By the LCI standard, a true Christian is someone who has converted into Christianity through Christ.

³⁴⁸ Heward-Mills, *Bearing Fruit*, 2.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

In Quarcoo's preaching, title of sermon precedes Scriptures. In the sermon entitled 'You are a Winner,' Lam. 3:22, Exod. 14:1; Jer. 30:17 were read. He explained that Christians are winners because God is on their side. When Christians are faced with difficulties they must first consult the Lord to know what they must do. He explicated that in Exodus, God intentionally trapped the Israelites between the sea and the Egyptians in order to portray his potency over the Egyptians army. If Moses had acted on his human mind, fear of the Egyptians would have allowed them to surrender and they would have been enslaved again. But while Israel was 'chiding,' Moses cried out to God for solution. God displayed his love for Israel by allowing them to go through the sea unhurt but overthrew the chariots of Egypt and their riders. In the same vein, Christians must not complain when they are confronted with calamity, they should pray in faith to be helped by God.

The message was concluded with declarations like, the 'Lord will restore your health' 'He will heal your wounds' 'He will fight your battles because of his great love' and 'satisfy you with 3 John 2.' He often communicates to the congregation in English and occasionally intermingled it with the local dialect.³⁵¹ Quarcoo also indicated to the church that most of his messages were taken from the books of Dag Heward-Mills. For example, some titles of sermons preached during the researcher's participation on Sunday Worship, were taken from the following books: 'Name it, Claim it, Take it' 'Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich' 'Many are Called' 'Catch the Anointing' 'Loyalty and Disloyalty.'³⁵²

³⁵¹ Isaac Quarcoo, sermon, October 25, 2015.

³⁵² Quarcoo, Sunday Sermon, November 1-15, 2015. On the 6th of March the theme for the sermon was love from Heward-Mills publication "Greater Love." This is the practice in LCI.

C. Summary

It is the tradition of all LCI pastors to conclude sermons with calls to commitment. Different choruses and hymns are sung, while portions of sermon are repeated during ‘altar calls’ so members could reflect and respond. Those who respond to the ‘altar call’ are prayed for and ushered to a separate place for further interactions. In the case where no one responds, pastors pray rippling effect of the sermon in the lives of the people. Sometimes pastors tell members the Holy Spirit is giving a specific direction about somebody among the congregation: perhaps a sick person, someone traveling, looking for a life partner, or jobless. The respondents are requested to step forward in order to be anointed and prayed for. Besides the instruction by the Holy Spirit, most LCI pastors invite people to make personal decisions to serve the Lord, then invoke divine blessing, favour, health, and protection on the people before their departure.³⁵³

As narrated from the above examples, the standard for preaching and interpreting Scriptures in LCI is derived from Heward-Mills publications and understanding of Scriptures.

4.3.2 Publications

Another technique that LCI uses to broadcast its faith, evangelizing communities and the general public is the diffusion of Heward-Mills’ books. The publications, although for the consumption of LCI members, target a number of people outside LCI.³⁵⁴ Heward-Mills has written over 40 books on different themes, with unsophisticated English that are within the reading ability of members. Some of his books includes “The Art of Leadership” “The Art of Ministry” “The art of Hearing” and “Loyalty and Disloyalty” (a chain of seven volume

³⁵³ This is confirmed by Dag Heward-Mills preaching and branches the researcher visited.

³⁵⁴ Cofie, “Public Relations Practice,” 59.

work). Others are “Model Marriage” “The Mega church” “Name it, Claim it, Take it” and “Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich.”

At present, his writings are available in 27 languages including French, Russian, Portuguese, Korean, Chinese and Spanish.³⁵⁵ The books are frequently purchased by LCI church leaders and other non-LCI denominations. The most popular of the books so far has been ‘Loyalty and Disloyalty,’ which received the Grand Award from the Ghana Christian Book Awards body in 2007.

There is an ‘extended arm’ of LCI identified as Dag Heward Mills Literature Crusade (DLC). They are tasked with the reading, discussion and sales of his books in LCI churches around the world.³⁵⁶ Cofie states that the practice has increased the awareness and spread of Heward-Mills books across the globe. Likewise, LCI churches worldwide are obligated to frequently buy, study and teach from the books at their annual celebrations. Examples of these celebrations are ‘Founder’s Day’ ‘Galatians 6:6’ or ‘Feeding 5:27.’ During the period, books are highly subsidized so members can purchase them. For example, if a book cost Ghc50, it may be sold at a reduced price of Ghc20 to enable every member to secure a copy for the period of the event. They are also given out without cost to first-time visitors.

It must be underscored that during the church’s event, the book replaces the Bible on Sunday(s) and mid-week services. The pastor and members together bring along their books, the pastor will mention the page or pages he is preaching from, so congregation could follow through with him. Since the church has several prearranged programmes within the year, recommended books from Heward-Mills publications are used during the occasion. For instance, effective 1st May through 5th June 2016, ‘The Art of Ministry’ has been

³⁵⁵ www.daghewardmills.org/ accessed on 17/02/2016.

³⁵⁶ Cofie, “Public Relations Practice,” 59.

recommended for teaching. LCI pastors are required to purchase and use it for the teaching of the community.³⁵⁷ Cofie indicates that during church events, especially if intended to engage the community, Heward-Mills recommends some of the books at a discount so people could afford the price. He does so because he believes they are useful for the target audience and carries information about how to become intimate with God through Christ.³⁵⁸

4.4 Hermeneutical Approach to Scripture by LCI

It is impossible to find an explicit hermeneutic reflection because LCI disregards a scientific interpretation to Scriptures and encourages members to follow only the infallible teachings of the Spirit. In reality, as demonstrated in the preceding chapters, their interpretation is largely based on the founder's interpretation of the Bible. Quoting from the interview with the provost, and information on the plaque located at the entrance of ABMTC at Mampong: LCI does not teach theology, but teaches Bible according to the beliefs and principles of Heward-Mills. The statement contradicts LCI acceptance of Scripture as true 'authority,' because it reads the Bible through the hermeneutical lenses offered by Heward-Mills. As consequence, his personality, his doctrine is the ultimate voice often superior to Scriptures. To better comprehend the church's hermeneutical approach to Scripture, the researcher examined two of the most popular books of Heward-Mills: 'Name it, Claim it, Take it' and 'Loyalty and Disloyalty.'

4.4.1 Name it, Claim it, Take it

In his book, "Name it, Claim it, Take it," Heward-Mills introduces a modality of reading the Scripture, focus on the concept of 'faith.' He argues that believers can exercise faith to

³⁵⁷ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 59. The researcher witnessed it in the following branches of LCI: Adogono 2001, Tema Community 8 2012 and Madina Sunday 19/07/2015. It was July, a month of evangelism, the books sold were "Many are Called."

³⁵⁸ Cofie, "Public Relations Practice," 59.

receive spiritual, physical, financial and material breakthroughs. For him, faith is the reason for prosperity, miracles, victories and answers to prayers. Quoting from Heb. 10:38, he explains that God is not interested in Christians who do not walk in faith. Many people, according to him read patience, gentleness, holiness into Heb. 10:38, and ignores the faith aspect.³⁵⁹ He admits that patience plays a vital role in the life of believers. However, the faith component which is equally important should not be ignored. Narrating the concept of faith from the human physique, he states that although in reality, the heart is significant to the body, it does not imply the kidneys are not relevant, they are indispensable with distinct roles in the physical body.³⁶⁰

In his submission, the ability to 'claim' or 'possess' requires faith: without faith Christians cannot receive anything from God. Abraham was considered the righteous man due to his faith in God. When natural circumstances indicated otherwise, Abraham believed El' Shaddai is capable of giving him a child, even in his ripened age. Abraham had human limitations, weaknesses or faults: he lied about his wife and surrendered her on two occasions to unbelieving kings for their pleasures. Nonetheless, God chose Abraham because of his faith in him. By human standards, Abraham was disqualified, but his faith in God, made him the greatest.³⁶¹ Heward-Mills proposes three hermeneutical steps believers could follow to access wealth, success, health and progress.

A. 'Name it'

The author elaborates that whatever believers need from God, it must be verbally mentioned and will be received. People blame God for permitting negative natural occurrences like earthquake, tsunami, hurricane, volcano on earth. He argues that if God is the creator of the

³⁵⁹ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 2.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

universe and his wonderful deeds are revealed in creation, why then, should people attribute evil things like shipwreck, famine, epidemic etc. to him and not the devil?³⁶² The question that arises is what does the devil use his time for? God told Abraham he is El Shaddai: implying he has within his capacity to counteract physical and metaphysical forces that may attempt to inhibit his purposes and provide Abraham with a child, even when he was infertile. In the same vein God unbridles long-life, success, protection, promotion and affluence on Christian who request them by faith. God sent Christ as a propitiation, which signifies God's good intentions for his children (Christians). It also suggests that God never wants Christians to suffer frustration, intimidation, death, or failures, but rather enjoy perpetual life and prosperity.³⁶³

Satan, according Heward-Mills is the one who sets limitations and prevents Christians from being inundated with fortune. Satan often instigates barriers against Christians, essentially against their wellbeing and socio-economic advancement. Yet, Christians can confidently name, claim, take what belong to them through faith. Unfortunately, Christians have been tutored to believe commitment is all about holiness, righteousness, faithfulness to God and humanity, it does not involve richness or wellbeing. This conception is unbiblical, since God has bountifully reserved numerous blessing for all those who entrust their faith in him.³⁶⁴ Holy, sanctification and righteous living are important but faith transcends them and Christians who desire visible manifestation of God in their lives must first exercise their faith.

³⁶² Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 21.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

B. 'Claim it'

Claim denotes making declarations. The believer who needs something from God must declare or confess it by faith in order to attain it physically. Heward-Mills presented four level of confession through which the believer could have what s/he prays for. First, confession to the Father; thus the believer's admission on daily basis to the Heavenly Father for sins committed. Second, confession of faults to friends: Besides the Father, one must speak to a colleague about issues of offense for resolution.³⁶⁵ Third, confession in Christ for salvation: Genuine repentance from sin that brings salvation in Christ. Fourth, confession of faith. Heward-Mills indicates this word is derived from the Greek origin *ὁμολογίαν*.³⁶⁶ The usage of the word in Heb. 10:23, symbolizes confession that speaks of faith in Christ. It expresses the authority Christians possess through faith. Thus Christ died and resurrected, it is a confession of faith that empowers believers to name, claim as well as bring into reality whatever has been declared or mentioned through faith.³⁶⁷

For Heward-Mills, Scripture instructs Christians about what can and cannot be claimed in life. So, it is the responsibility of Christians to name, claim and grab things that are 'claimable' in consonant with Scriptures. He explains that what Christians receive after praying is in direct consequence of the magnitude of faith they express. This is because great faith, brings forth great declarations, and great declarations produce great prosperity. Believers are required to claim their place of prosperity in God, and the only mandatory way for that is to decree in faith, while anticipating that their desire will be granted. The issue here is, can Christians have whatever is spoken? According to Heward-Mills, yes, Christians are examples of what they have confessed. He emphasized that Mark 11:23-24 operates

³⁶⁵ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 27-28.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 31

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

directly by what Christians pronounce. Hence, Christians who operate within the realm of name and claim can command, destroy and terminate both visible and invisible mountains by words.³⁶⁸

C. 'Take it'

Acting on God's word by faith in order to possess what you have declared and claimed is 'take it.' This aspect of faith demands real strength and courage. Using Josh. 1:8, the writer argues that God instructed Joshua to be strong, courageous and meditate on his word.³⁶⁹ Meditation and obedience to God's word enabled Joshua to 'name' 'claim' and 'possess' the Promised Land. Due to this fact, believers who have named and claimed must be obedient to the word of God that instructs them to 'tithes' before any taken could be effected. This is because, without tithing, offering, and giving, the confession of prosperity cannot be operative.³⁷⁰ Furthering his principles, he asserts that after naming, claiming: Fortunes, health, properties, God must guarantee the faith level of these believers in relation to tithing in order to effectuate his promises.

Another alternative way that precipitate God to respond to the naming, claiming prayers of believers is the 'seed' (tithes) principle. When the seed is not sown, then it presupposes nothing has been planted and God cannot supernaturally release his favour on believers. He elucidates that when a farmer plants, the rains allows it to grow and yield more fruits. When believers refuse to tithe, the rains that God brings will not produce the required fruits of prosperity because seeds have not been cultivated.³⁷¹

Beneath are some examples to the 'Name it, Claim it, Take it' attitude.

³⁶⁸ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 38-42.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 55.

As you confessing for a happy marriage, then be courageous and obey the biblical instruction of marriage. If the bible says submit to your husband, be strong and submit, then you will receive many blessing because of your submission. Husband, decide to love your wife practically. It is not enough to confess that you have a happy marriage it time to take a happy marriage by obeying the Word of God courageously.³⁷²

Jesus is the Lord and Master of my business. God will reward me with success and breakthroughs. God will reward me this week with victories and answers.³⁷³

From now, God uses me to help the work of God financially. I have decided that I will contribute millions to the work of God. I confess boldly that one of my goals is to support the work of God. All of my investments are safe and secure.³⁷⁴

My bank account is full. My bank account is bursting. This is because I pay my tithes regularly. In spite difficult economic conditions, I experience abundance.³⁷⁵

I am reaping a hundredfold, enjoying abundance. It is happening practically in my life. The future is bright and clear, I have good plans for the future, my feet are blessed to possess my possession through Christ, I am a victor and not loser.³⁷⁶

From now, God uses me to help the work of God financially. I declare that I contribute millions to the work of God. I confess boldly that one of my goals is to support the work of God. I am not trying to control the church because I donate large amount of money. I am not trying to be noticed because I donate large amount of money. I donate large amounts of money to the church because I want to be a blessing to God's kingdom.³⁷⁷

He is insistent that these confessions are effective as long as believers obey Scriptures or sacrifice 'their Isaac' (give their all). In his view, when Abraham endeavoured to sacrifice Isaac, God reckoned him as the man of faith in human history. His act of obedience honoured God and entitled Abraham (father of nations), instead of his original name Abram, because he operated in faith. When believers act in faith, whatever they name and claim, can be taken.³⁷⁸

Dag Heward-Mills concluded his book with the story of a 'Tightrope Walker.' A man tied a rope across a waterfall, and walked on it. Many tourists around cheered him. After several

³⁷² Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 58.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 96

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

skills had been displayed he asked the crowd if they believed he could carry someone on his back across the other end of the rope. With over hundred feet above the waterfall, the crowd yelled back, yes, you can! He then requested one of them to volunteer, but none did. For him, when Christians fail to substantiate their confession, claims with positive action it means their faith is lifeless and useless item, worthy of rubbish dump.³⁷⁹

The systematic procedure to ‘Name it, Claim it, Take it, reveals the level of LCI understanding and interpretation to Scriptures. According to the researcher, it neither reflect the true meaning of God’s manifold blessings to humanity, nor conform to appropriate hermeneutics. It instils in Christians the pride to claim from God what is duly them. The teaching rejects the sovereignty of God, as it seeks to present the Scripture as a powerful tool for wealth, material assets and prospects. Furthermore, the stern adherent to tithe which is interpreted as an attraction of God’s favour suggest that people are poor because they are not tithing or sowing-seeds. This in the researcher’s view, is incongruous to Scripture.

4.4.2 Prosperity Preaching

Dag Heward-Mills has faith in the immediacy of the Holy Spirit and his ability to make things work once the believer adheres to the word of God. The act of obedience, for him, is what activates and motivates the Lord to unleash believers with abundant wealth, prosperity, material success and good health. Among the various verses used in Prosperity Preaching, LCI foundational verse for “physical” and “spiritual” wellbeing, is Matt. 6:33. It is enshrined in their constitution; pastors, shepherd, church workers are preview to it, and are constantly reminded during their conferences. Heward-Mills quotes numerous passages of Scripture, then uses them as ‘proof-text’ to support his belief of prosperity. As discussed in chapter three, even though members of LCI are noted for their extemporaneous quotes of Scriptures

³⁷⁹ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 23.

and own a booklet, the ‘must-know Scriptures’ that all LCI pastors are required to read, these are selected Scriptures with precise titles. They are repetitive and determined to promote personal interest. In his reading of Matt. 6:33, Christians who fulfil their obligations; tithing, offering, care for the destitute and vigorously involves in God’s service, will enjoy a successful life. A possible enjoyment of God’s blessings of health, and wealth through austere compliance with tithing and offerings.³⁸⁰

An excerpt from his work, “Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich,”³⁸¹ Heward-Mills explains that tithing embodies the principles of wealth creation and miracle of prosperity. He was insistent that comparing the concepts and practices of tithing by contemporary Christians and Jewish community, Jews have augmented their wealth beyond the ordinary person in all communities around the world, because of their approach to tithing. Christians will flourish in wealth when they become habitual tithers.³⁸² He narrates that prosperity constitutes an act of ‘sowing a seed’ and ‘harvesting’ the returns in the future. Refusal from paying tithes exempts Christians from basic principles of sowing and reaping. Christians’ inability to pay tithes harm their finances, When they avoid tithing they extricated themselves from the foundational and functional principles of success and divine blessings.³⁸³ Heward-Mills underlines that tithing attracts assorted blessings, favours, opportunities because it is Scriptural.

“The days of man is few and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). From this verse, although not categorize the exact predicaments or cure for the many troubles mentioned, Heward-Mills infers that problems and difficulties are inevitable, but can be surmounted when attitude

³⁸⁰ Heward-Mills, *Name it, Claim it, Take it*, 57.

³⁸¹ Dag Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich* (Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM, 2010), 1-173. www.daghewardmill.org

³⁸² Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor*, 99-105.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 1.

towards giving is positive. Consequently, if believers exclude themselves from tithing, there will certainly not be any means to counter such curses when it is determined to occur on non-tithe payers. Tithers are and become abundantly rich, because God does not permit sorrow to intermingle their blessing. He holds the view that if believers will align with the Jewish concept of giving, that is ‘people are creators and not consumers’ ‘givers and not takers,’ Christians will give to increase their income and become great investors.³⁸⁴ He was explicit that God instructed him to write on tithes and offerings, so anyone who acts in obedience to God’s word by loyally paying tithes and offerings will become productive and successful.³⁸⁵

The narratives have exposed LCI sceptical purpose towards appropriate hermeneutics, while postulating its own set of methodologies for interpreting Scriptures. Asamoah-Gyandu affirms that the hermeneutical problem with Prosperity Preachers is the selectivity interpretation of Scripture, they deny the context and superimpose their meaning into the text.³⁸⁶ They read the Scripture through the ‘lenses’ of prosperity attainments, as portions and verses from the Scripture are used to create fear in members (i.e. curse, sickness, setback, if you do not pay tithe), using a non-biblical image of God to induce members to pay tithes in an exchange of economic enrichment.

4.4.3 Tithing

According to Heward-Mills ‘tithe’ has mistakenly been conceived to be Jewish custom. People shun away from it because it is an Old Testament practice and should not be complied with by the present church. For him, tithings is interchangeably used with the word ‘first-

³⁸⁴ Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor*, 103. There is no biblical support to this statement.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 173.

³⁸⁶ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyandu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspective on Pentecostal and Renewal in Africa* (Akropong: Regnum Africa, 2015), 1-181.

fruit,' which is more familiar with the New Testament language. Narrating the story of the rich man and the tax collector who prayed in the temple (Luke 18:9-14), He explains that what Jesus sought to demonstrate was that Christians who do not pay tithe are likely to violate other weightier laws of God. Jesus affirmed to Christians that regardless of their commitment to other salient matters, payment of tithe is essential and must not be ignored. He further describes that tithes have multiple-dimensional blessings and Christians who devotedly heed to tithing unlock different blessings from God.³⁸⁷

“Give, and it will be given to you, a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38). This is one of the most quoted verse to supports LCI hermeneutics on giving. It is construed that Christians will not experience disappointment for offering their moneys and possessions to God. Giving is Scriptural, conditional and a promise, those who offer their substance to God will be reciprocated. It is a form of investment or security, those who generously engage in giving provide enough materials for building God’s house. They will be endowed with favour to cumulate wealth to build their own houses.³⁸⁸

In addition, Heward-Mills observed that “farmers are best noted for their insight in planting and harvesting,” Christians can visibly experience prosperity by activating the laws of seed-sowing. When these laws are violated they become ineffective. God created a seed in living things, and giving contains the mysterious power to reproduce. By divine intelligence, it is impossible to reap when nothing has been planted, because the ability to yield is inherent in the seed. So, Christians who give tithes activates the power of multiple-dimensional blessings of God to reproduce material possessions. Tithing Christians fulfil the laws of sowing and reaping that leads to wealth creation. For him, consistent payment of tithe means

³⁸⁷ Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians*, 71, 78 and 89.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 128.

planting of seed, and likely to harvest financially due to obedience to the laws of ‘seed-sowing.’³⁸⁹

The researcher shares Asamoah-Gyadu’s opinion about the manner payment of tithe has become the definitive avenue for financial advancement in Ghanaian Christianity. While in many cases, it is the ‘manipulation of Scripture, and church members’ for the prosperity of leaders, tithe has become a contentious subject. Preachers use a number of Scriptures from both the Old and New Testaments to persuade members to give in exchange of promised peace, fertility and economic gains. He further elaborates that equating tithe to prosperity makes theology “methodical,” but that is not the Christian life.³⁹⁰ Advancing his view, he asserts there are both poor and wealthy Christians, and the Christian life is associated with challenges that can only be tolerated and surmounted by the grace of God. Additionally, the gospel of Christ must have something to offer both the rich and the poor, the winner and the loser; the champion and the defeated; the successful and the struggling as well as those celebrating and for those mourning.

Although Christians do experience both successes and failures, Heward-Mills preaches otherwise. For him, tithe is what initiates or triggers ‘divine’ blessings. Tithe, offering and giving are frequently emphasized than means to develop individuals’ skills and abilities. Tithe is seen as the pivot of all blessings, and social advancement. And since pastors are required to preach from Heward-Mills publications, they also echo his words and spread his ideas of tithes to members across the world.

As per the interviews conducted by the researcher, it is clear that pastors of LCI have to conform to the teachings of the founder in order to gain his approval. For example, on

³⁸⁹ Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians*, 115, 116 and 118.

³⁹⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit*, 174.

Sunday 18th October, 2015, the researcher worshipped at LCI headquarters at the North Kaneshie, Qodesh. The title for the sermon was ‘tithe.’ The preacher, Pastor Doris Nyarko told the church tithing is an order from God, Christians are obliged to tithe to authenticate their success in business, marriage, etc but those who blatantly ignore the commands of tithing go through misery. In the same vein, God dispenses abundant favour and prosperity on Christians who give to their leaders, and they will not encounter mishaps in life.

When you fail to honour God with your tithe as a Christian, there will be no peace in your family or life. Instead of peace there will be calamity, the money you did not give to God will be used for hospital expenses. When a Christian squanders God’s money on personal belongings or for any good reasons, that person is bound to suffer because the money is for God and not for personal usage. It is a big shame when Christians honour their leaders with Ghc1. When a Christian decline to pay tithe, his/her moneys will be mismanaged. God will punch holes in the pockets and purses of these Christians and their moneys will be wasted. Every Christian who do not pay his/her tithe is a thief, disloyal and wicked in the sight of God.³⁹¹

She read Mal. 3:9-12 to substantiate her teaching on success. She explains that successful Christians are truthful tithe payers. But Christians who invade tithes incur curses, sickness, pains upon them because they are intentionally robbing God. In her view, tithes are reminiscent to the food provided at the temple in days of Aaron. In contemporary times tithes must be given regularly so ministers will have enough to prevent them from distress. She encouraged the church to do their best to tithe in order to receive God’s promises of blessing for tithe payers. She expressed displeasure for those who have not demonstrated faithfulness in tithing. She ended the sermon with prayer of forgiveness for those who had ‘robbed God,’ or refraining from tithing. She also prayed that the Lord will flood the homes of all faithful tithers with peace, love, success and prevent the devil from harming them, and beseeched the Lord to bless the congregants.³⁹²

³⁹¹ Doris Nyarko, Sunday Sermon, October 18, 2015.

³⁹² Ibid.

During the researcher interaction with local leaders of LCI, it appeared clearly that the teaching of the founder has a strong impact on them. The researcher interviewed 5 leaders (pastors and lay ministers) of LCI to determine their interpretation on some biblical passages plus their thoughts on tithe, offering or giving which plays a centre stage during worship at LCI. Pastors 'A' and 'B' asserted that they became 'born again' in 1995 through the ministry of Heward-Mill and have since been members of LCI. They stated that they never had any experience with Classical Pentecostal or Mainline churches. For them, Heward-Mills and his ministry has been a great help in several ways: transformed, restructured and sharpened their lifestyles, ideals, worldview, and persona.

They further disclosed that they used to profligate their salaries each end of month. Sometimes friends had to help them financially to survive for another month. However, they stopped a wasteful life when Heward-Mills preached to them about the prodigal son.³⁹³ They had since been frugal with their moneys, living in a better condition and preaching to save others from similar ordeal. Pastors 'C,' 'D' and 'E' discussed that they were non-tithe payers 'cheating the Lord.' As they started practicing Heward-Mills teaching on tithe and material success that accompanies tithe-payers, their businesses have transformed. One of them, who was unemployed at the time of the interview was sure that for his faithfulness in tithing, he will soon secure a job.

Pastor 'D' communicated that a trader approached him about the collapse of her business. Through discussions he noticed the trader had not been regular with her tithe. So he posed a question to the trader; how often do you pay your tithe? Her reply was sometimes when profit margin was encouraging. Pastor 'D' then advised her to change her attitude and become a regular tither, as well as identify people with needs and help them. In three months,

³⁹³ Leaders, interaction with researcher, July 6, 2015.

according to pastor 'D' the trader returned with a testimony that her business was thriving. Occurrence of losses had stopped, and her business was running smoothly. Pastor 'D' remarked that the positive change in business could be attributed to the trader's modified attitude towards tithing. Pointing out that Christians who do not pay tithe are 'thieves,' they provoke God's anger for stealing his property. In fact, God allows calamities to invade their life so they can quit stealing and destroying his property.³⁹⁴

Notwithstanding the wealth, power and economic gains of tithe-payers, there were discussions which unveiled that sometimes tithe-payers also struggle or suffer difficulties as non-tithe payers. Pastor 'C' and 'D' lamented lay pastors and shepherds perform most of the church work but are not catered for, stating that whenever the church organizes a conference for lay-pastors and shepherds they are required to register to the tune of Ghc100 or more, and provide their own meals and toiletries. Although the church does not support them financially, they are the major contributors in terms of numerical growth and financial blessings of the church.

In summary, the discussion sought to discern the views of pastors and lay minister on different verses presented to them. They demonstrated their zeal and strong defence about the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible. Their discourse, analysis, views, however, were consistent with that of Heward-Mills. They interpreted Scripture in the same line of thought with the founder. It can firmly be stated, the pastors are embedded in the belief that God's blessings, protection, and healing can only be received through compliance to tithing, which is a clear replication of Heward-Mills understanding, teachings, faith model and interpretation.

³⁹⁴ Group Interview, View on Scriptures, November 8, 2015.

4.4.4 Loyalty and Disloyalty

During the 10-month field study, the researcher noticed that there are two leading teachings in LCI: 'Tithing' and 'Loyalty and Disloyalty.' In the introduction of his seven volume books on 'loyalty and disloyalty,' the author asserts that the Lord directed him to write on the subject because it is biblical.³⁹⁵ The researcher would like to point out that although the book is entitled loyalty and disloyalty, greater portions of the book speaks about 'disloyalty,' which depicts a thoughtful attempt to expose and curb every forms of dissention among pastors and members, as the following overview of the book demonstrates.

'Loyalty and disloyalty' is a well-thought out work intended to caution, restructure, instigate loyalty in church leaders and increase stability among LCI pastors and members worldwide. The book is a seven volume work, comprising of different topics such as "Those Who Accuse You" "Those Who are Dangerous Sons" "Those Who are Ignorant" "Those Who Forget You." The author mentions that loyalty and disloyalty has great impact on churches and ministries. He specifies that the honest and loyal people in the church are most qualified for leadership.³⁹⁶ They are people whose efforts are determined towards the growth of the church, and persevere until the church increases unimaginably. Such people are divinely entitled to God's special favour and opportunities because they are loyal to the authority, support the vision, mission and they are actively involved in the growth of the church.³⁹⁷

Heward-Mills adds that even if a member is devoted in 'giving' or 'tithing' but 'disloyalty to the leadership, s/he is an 'Absalom' and must be 'kicked out' of the church, even though the decision could lead to numerical and financial loss. He recounted a story of a clandestine army general and his troops that attempted to undermine a nation's solidarity by any means

³⁹⁵ Dag Heward-Mills, *Loyalty and Disloyalty* (Michigan: Parchment House, 2011), 1-138.

³⁹⁶ Heward-Mills, *Loyalty and Disloyalty*, 137-138.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 44-45.

at their disposal. The story is credited to Emilio Mola Vidal, a Nationalist general during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). As four of his army columns moved on Madrid, the general referred to his militant supporters within the capital as his ‘fifth-column.’ The intent of the general was to undermine the loyalist government from within. When a friend asked the general how he intended to attack the fortified city, the general replied, the cardinal technique of the fifth column will assist them to enter the city. The friend retorted, “I know of fourth columns what about the fifth-column?” The general told his friend they are strategically placed into positions of policy decision and national defence within the city, from such key posts, the fifth-column activists will exploit the fears of the people by spreading rumours, misinformation, as well as employing more standard techniques of espionage and sabotage against the government.³⁹⁸

Heward-Mills reiterated that the ‘fifth-column’ comes from within, it comprises of the disloyal, double-faced, double-tongued and discontented people within every ministry. If these people, according to him are in church or ministry, they will bring about instability, confusion and wreak the church. For him, such persons should be dismissed from the church because they are the ‘fifth-column’ within the church who becomes subservient for others to attack ministries. He adds that people identified as fifth-column are disloyal, pretenders, and law-breakers who despise and create instability in the church.

In order to maintain stability, sanity and avert ‘fifth-column’ in the church, pragmatic mechanisms are introduced to check the level of loyal/disloyal among leaders. Among them are the ‘Shuffling Conference’ ‘Titus in Crete’ and the now prevalent ‘loyalty and disloyalty’

³⁹⁸ Heward-Mills, *Loyalty and Disloyalty*, 2.

conferences. The first-two are no more operative but the writer presents them to describe the level of control and to help realize the leadership style in LCI.³⁹⁹

A. Shuffling Conference

The Shuffling conference was an international seminar meant to evaluate the performance, growth, commitment and loyalty of pastors within LCI. It used to be held once in a year but have been suspended 5 years ago and replaced with ‘loyalty and disloyalty’ seminars. It was basically intended to identify pastors who are acquainted and obedient to preach from Dag Heward-Mills books and advocate the church’s guiding principles.

When the conference commenced, a five panel of bishops were positioned around a 7 feet-long table of about 5 feet height with a chair on their extreme right (usually called ‘red chair’ because of its hot colour). When a pastor was reported as not preaching from Heward-Mills books or of ‘anti-loyalty’ preaching, s/he was invited to sit on the ‘hot chair’ to respond to questions from the panel of bishops and colleague pastors. Furthermore, during the Shuffling conference, pastors whose membership had fallen, was stagnant or recorded frequent fluctuation were called to the ‘hot chair’ to provide reasons for stagnation or variability. The pastor was also questioned about the number of Heward-Mills books read, the chapter or book that challenged her/him, plus observations and objections. The pastor who performed poorly, was instructed to take-over a different church. According to respondent ‘A’ the practice created both ‘fear’ and ‘arrogance’ among some ministers. Those who preached from Heward-Mills books were seen as ‘sons’, while those who did otherwise were viewed as indisciplined children. Also, some pastors deliberately did not attend the conference to avoid humiliation and ridicule from other perceived ‘righteous sons’ and ministers of Dag

³⁹⁹ Heward-Mills, *Loyalty and Disloyalty*, 3-5.

Heward-Mills. Shuffling conference thrived to the extent that its equivalent “Titus in Crete” was introduced at the local level.

A. Titus in Crete

While Shuffling conference was at the international level, ‘Titus in Crete’ was organized within the local level with similar intent. Pastors or leaders found culpable or performing below requirement were either reprimanded, motivated or counselled. The bishop or the head of the dioceses was required to have regular consultation with pastors within the jurisdiction to substantiate their commitment and growth level.

Although the ‘Shuffling conference’ and ‘Titus in Crete’ are no more organized, teachings on loyalty and disloyalty is strongly emphasized and been used to control dissention. For the respondents, loyalty and disloyalty has become a de facto rule for LCI. It is now enacted into various reforms of the church and seen as the cardinal teaching: it predominates all sermons, seminars and conferences. Those who obey the bishops and leaders are the ‘loyal sons.’ Any actions and thoughts that contradict the opinions of Heward-Mills are interpreted as disloyalty. A diagram of LCI pastoral structure as presented in chapter three of the work portrays lay ministers at the bottom, while bishops at the top in ascending order. That means, the perceived disloyal pastors or lay ministers are cautioned, but when their inaptness persist, they may not be promoted and in a more extreme situation, they may be dismissed from the church.

Analysing the views presented above, Heward-Mills beliefs, and understanding of Scripture are widely spread in his prosperity preaching, publications, sermons and conferences instead of the Scripture itself. Furthermore, sample of leaders’ thoughts on Scripture plus the contributions and understanding expressed by focus groups demonstrate greater portion of

loyalty to Heward-Mills and his views than God and the inerrant Scripture they profess. Such interpretation of Scripture lacks independent opinion, and encourages autarchy.

4.5 Effect of LCI Hermeneutical Approach on Members

In every establishment, leaders who inspire their followers by providing them with meaning and understanding to achieve their intended goals are respected, trusted and admired. In some cases, followers of these individuals identify and want to emulate them.⁴⁰⁰ Such leaders become role models that shape the thoughts, lifestyles, and behaviours of their followers.⁴⁰¹

Since LCI is growing exponentially, the greatest effects on members will result from the interpretation of Scripture. In that regard, the researcher draws together sermons from the branches visited, group discussion plus interviews with members to understand how the Scripture is interpreted and its effect on LCI members.

On Sunday April 19, the minister, Rev. Isaac Quarcoo introduced the title of the sermon: 'Unbeatable Prosperity.' He heralded his preaching with prophetic pronouncement: 'I see you riding your own car, living in a mansion' 'God has given us everything that pertains to life' 'so confess it, claim it and it shall be yours forever.' Quoting Prov. 18:21, he explained that the tongue contains power of life and death, whatever believers' decree will happen. He urged believers to practice the habit of confessing positive things about their lives: marriage, family, business, education and they will have them performed accordingly. In his opinion, God never adds sorrow to his blessings, hence any prosperity that can last and overcome challenges of life is the kind of prosperity obtainable through God. God's prosperity survives geographical boundaries, economic crunch as well as political upheavals. Quoting Gen. 26,

⁴⁰⁰ John C. Maxwell. *Five Levels of Leadership* (Nashville: Centre Street), 11-252.

⁴⁰¹ Sabine Boerner, Silke Astrid Eisenbeiss, and Daniel Griesser, "Follower Behaviour and Organizational Performance: The Impact of Transformational Leaders" *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 3 (2007): 1.

the pastor concluded that when God blesses, no one can reverse it, when God is on the side of believers they will obtain abundance in everything.

He further noted that when God instructed Isaac to stay at Gerar at the time of severe famine, Isaac heeded. Upon his act of obedience God made him successful in wealth, cattle, and flock. He was assertive that believers who walk in obedience will be prosperous, and no one can fight or challenge their wealth acquisition. People who love and give to God have their prosperity extended and flourished. He finalized the sermon with the statement that when life endeavours get tightened up, obedience to God should be the ultimate goal like Isaac was said to have done during the period of famine. For Quarcoo, challenges may come to test believers, but there is the need to remain firm, because dependence on God brings promotions, prosperity, victory and continuity⁴⁰²

He directed the topic will be developed for a couple of weeks. The programme was suspended by the Founder's Day celebration. The Founder's Day is celebrated every 14th May. For this reason, teachings about the ministry and life of the founder covered the later part of April and the whole month of May.

The theme for the occasion was 'Honouring your Father.' Scripture readings were Exod. 20:2; Mal. 1:6; Eph. 6:1-2. In his introduction to the sermon on Sunday 26th April, Quarcoo stated inheritance are not for servants but children. The Bishop or Papa (Dag Heward-Mills), as he is usually called, has established LCI, and all members within are his children, so he prays for them (the church) each day. It is incumbent on the children to honour him as he marked additional year to his life. Quarcoo stressed that anyone who honours Heward-Mills prolongs her/his life. Explaining his points further, he quoted Eph. 6:1-2 - if you honour your father and mother it may go well with you and you will also enjoy long life. That means you

⁴⁰² Quarcoo, Sunday sermon, April 19, 2015.

have the right of power to decide your length of days on earth by honouring or dishonouring your father. Once more, it is a son who honours, respects, reverence his father, not a servant. If the church honours its father, they will lengthen their years of living on earth, they will prosper in business and inherit wealth. They will also have joy, peace and prosperity in all aspect of life.

Members are encouraged to offer contributions in various forms: money, property and gifts to the founder. Envelops were given for people to offer their ‘widows mite.’ In addition, ‘the father of the house,’ Isaac Quarcoo, inspired people to give in cash to support the work of Heward-Mills. If someone fails to recognize his authority and honour him as a father, according to Quarcoo, could experience curses. Similarly, if Heward-Mills is hurt by someone’s action and says something evil, that person could have tragedy, sickness, agony, decline of business, or bizarre life experiences. The pastor also narrated the story of a young man whose life is completely shambolic because the father of that young man cursed him. He urged members to contribute incalculably to support the ministry and life of Heward-Mills, especially for his radio, television and continental programmes.

Quarcoo assured that just as Christ was depicted in John 1:11-14, Dag Heward-Mills has the right to own and disown those who honour or dishonour him. In fact, whatever Heward-Mills says about any member because of his position as a father and anointed man of God, will take effect. Quarcoo concludes that he had been provoked numerous times to curse members of the church who usurp his authority but restrained himself. People who dishonour their parent will be rejected as stipulated in John 1:12.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ Quarcoo, Sunday Sermon, April 26, 2015.

Additional examples of Quarcoo sermons that indicate a replication of Heward-Mills' hermeneutic approach: Content, expressions, beliefs and meanings have been captured.

On the 11th October 2015, Isaac Quarcoo preached on the topic 'Provoking God's Graciousness.' In his outline he defined graciousness to be compassionate, understanding, merciful, kind, lenient. Developing his message, he taught that when Christians pay their tithe, God showers his graces and mercies upon them and helps them in varied ways. He states that in Haggai 1:4-6, those who do not pay tithe are deficient of God's blessings, they will not be gratified with joy, their monthly salaries will be inefficient due to their refusal to provide food (tithe) to the house of God. Non-tithe payers, according to Quarcoo will be attacked by strange diseases and the moneys they denied God with will be used for clinical expenditures. Those who do not pay their tithe are often attacked by strange diseases, when they seek medical attention, the scan they will be required to undertake will reduce them to poverty. God is merciful and will never disappoint Christians who acknowledge him with their tithes. The graciousness of God is revealed in Christians so the world will know how great and loving he is. However, his graciousness can be provoked through the believer's tithe, because it is an act of total obedience to him and his word.⁴⁰⁴

The series of sermons in November 1, 8 and 15, 2015 were entitled 'Others.' Quarcoo states that Christians should develop good relationship and be interested in other people, instead of their own. Phil. 2:4 and Lam. 3:37 were supportive verses for the theme. According to him, these verses instruct Christians to cater for the needs of others. It is also a warning from God to Christians to be each other's keeper. He encouraged the church to be mindful of others: parents, siblings, friends, community and the nation at large. He speaks that when Christians isolate themselves when they become rich, others in their community may turn

⁴⁰⁴ Isaac Quarcoo, Sunday Sermon, October 11, 2015.

into arm robbers and destabilize the community. These bandits could attack their wealth or make their lives miserable. Caring for others also means sharing the love of God with them to repent from their sin. Quarcoo emphasized that in John 10:16 Jesus underscores he has other flock that are not in the sheepfold, but they must also be won into it. He thinks Christians have been tasked with that responsibility by Christ to evangelize the world. His conclusion was that God blesses, prospers and protects Christians who demonstrate interest in the affairs of others.

The insistence on tithe payment and its relationship with divine blessings, health, and success affirms the effect of Heward-Mills preaching on members. Overview of themes and contents clearly establish the concepts proposed in the sermons are Heward-Mill's ideas: Pastors preached from his books: "Many are Called," and "Name it, Claim, Take it" etc. eulogizes his ministry and work around the world. During the church's celebrations the use of his books replaces the Bible on Sundays and mid-week services. Majority of pastors preach from his books, they invite the congregation to follow the preaching while making references from the pages of the books mentioned. This practice shows Heward-Mills influence over LCI members and interpretation to Scripture.⁴⁰⁵

In addition to recording sermons, the researcher organized focus group discussions involving two different sets: Group 'A' and 'B' in two distinct areas. Each group consisted of individuals with over 10 – 20 years' experience with LCI. They were trained leaders who had oversight of smaller groups in the church. Some started with the fellowship at the Medical School within Korle-Bu in the late 1980s, while others with the church's first cathedral at Korle Gonno. They were chosen because they have great familiarity with LCI ideologies, beliefs and lifestyle. The following verses - Matt. 6:33; John 10:10; 2 Cor. 8:9;

⁴⁰⁵ Respondent 'A,' interview granted the researcher, December 17, 2015.

Gal. 3:14; James 4:2 and 3John 2 - were selected for discussion because they are frequently quoted in sermons, teachings and publications of Heward-Mills. The researcher asked each group to discuss four of the verses.

In reference to John 10:10, group 'A' maintained that through the death of Christ believers have both spiritual and physical abundant blessing promised by God. It insisted God has made available abundance blessings for his work, so Christians could do it without difficulties. Particularly, the servants of God who have completely dedicated their lives for God's work may have material blessing to cater for their families and afford them soundest of mind to do the service of God.

Emphatic about Christ redemption, the group discussed that 2 Cor. 8:9 portrays redemption from poverty through the death of Christ. Group "A" went on to say the grace of God through Christ death has redeemed mankind from pain, misfortune, sin, and poverty. Christ was inflicted for our sakes, punished and killed for our liberty, so Christians must not suffer. He became poor so his children (Christians) will be made rich by him. Christ material lack produced economic prosperity for those who believe in his death and obey his word. The gospel of redemption does not only liberate mankind from spiritual shackles, it rescues people from poverty, shame, and lack into success. Also, since human life is composed of economic, emotional, mental, spiritual needs, Christ death covers all of them.⁴⁰⁶

Group 'B' understands Gal 3:14 as an assurance that contemporary Christians are spiritually associated to Abrahamic covenant, so spiritually, physically, economically they are entitled to God's promises of blessings. Subsequently, Christians are Abraham's spiritual children, as heirs to the blessings of faith they have access to financial blessings and material prosperity God established with Abraham. God's covenant with Abraham mandates

⁴⁰⁶ Group A, Bible Discussion, September 17, 2015.

believers to possess wealth, and through the death of Christ, Christians have passed from sin, sickness, disease, sorrow, grief, and poverty to success, health, promotion, peace and joy.

Explaining James 4:2, the group “B” said God knows our heart desires and has already designed and provided what Christians needed. Christians need to ‘claim’ by faith what belongs to them. Faith is important because it expresses believe that Christians already have what they ‘named’ and ‘claimed.’ This will motivate God to make available what they requested. Faith for them unlocks blessings from the bosom of God, even when the doors and windows are shut; by faith doors of heaven are and can be opened. For Group “B” Abraham walked with God by faith just as Noah and the patriarchs. Faith possesses great potential to perform extraordinary things and when children of God (Christians) walk in faith, absolutely nothing shall be impossible.⁴⁰⁷

The researcher verified that majority of ideas expressed by both groups are found in the founder’s books: ‘Name it, Claim it, Take it’ and “Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich.” This further confirms the teachings of Heward-Mills are the ultimate authority and superior to Scripture among members of LCI. Both pastors and members read Scriptures through the focus of the founder to be considered ‘loyal.’ The fact that all the people interviewed asked for anonymity, exhibit their fear to present a personal and critical view, or complains about some form of exploitation of their work from the leadership. This situation, in the writer’s opinion is a consequence of the constant preaching on ‘Loyalty and disloyalty.’ It imposes an unexcitable restriction to what members can think and do. The teaching on loyalty and disloyalty shut people in, contain their courage and restrain them from speaking their minds.

⁴⁰⁷ Group ‘B,’ ‘Bible Discussion,’ September 26, 2015.

4.6 Conclusion

A critical reflection on LCI hermeneutics reveals a dichotomy between the belief in ‘infallibility of Scripture’ and the literally application of what the Bible reveals, and a pastoral praxis when the interpretation of Scripture is within the scope of the founder. The influence of the founder is extended over the choice of verses and their interpretation, the focus is on prosperity.

Moreover, the Shuffling Conference, Titus in Crete plus in-house sermons can be interpreted as thoughtful attempt to control the minds of members. The researcher’s interaction with leaders and members manifested a great success of an organized leadership. Both ministers and members showed their reverence to the authorities and commitment to the rule of LCI. But what was more striking was the fear they expressed. They cannot articulate their independent views or think outside the opinions of the founder. Ideas, suggestions and actions that are not in compliance with the founder’s beliefs are considered manifestation of ‘disloyalty.’

Likewise, LCI neither believe in theology, nor accepts certificate from others theological establishments. It openly discourages members from attending theological and religious training of secular universities. Pastors, shepherds, and church leaders are required to attend only LCI Bible Schools. The three-year formation period is organized around the books of Heward-Mills. When the researcher met with the provost of Mampong Anagkazo, Kwame Ampofo, he stressed that LCI does not believe in theology. He forcefully stated that Dag Heward-Mills believes in some principle and that is what they work with. He was defensive and irritated about questions on the academic work of Anagkazo and repeatedly affirmed they do not believe in accreditation, human views and all sort of Old and New Testament surveys as some theological and academic universities teach. As claimed by the provost, LCI

has developed its views, principles and interpretation of Scripture which operates within the purview of the founder. This assertion is validated by the 1998 publication of Heward-Mills on 'loyalty and disloyalty.'

The book, 'Loyalty and Disloyalty' which was first published in 1998 has gradually become one of the cardinal teachings of LCI. It is now the tool for scrutinizing the faithfulness and commitment levels of pastors, shepherd, and church leaders. People are compelled to content to the opinions of their leaders even when they have different views. The teaching on loyalty and disloyalty has created fears, uncertainty, and insecurity among some leaders. People are unable to express their views about issues; they are scared of being labelled as 'disloyal sons' of Dag Heward-Mills and dismissed. The messages preached by Isaac Quarcoo at Madina branch of LCI, Doris Nyarko at Qodesh, and the views of focus group expressed, were reproduction of Heward-Mills thinking and style of preaching.

Furthermore, almost every sermon, no matter how it begins, ends in monetary transaction with God. Tithing is the major concern of these pastors, church member cannot approach pastors for their personally deep-seated problems because the first question will be on tithing. Since they view themselves already guilty for not being a regular tither, they assume God has abandoned them.

The opinions of members are enforced by the compulsory reading of the book: 'Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and Tithing Christians Can Become Rich,' where Heward-Mills explained that non-tithing Christians are ungrateful, suspicious and ignorant. Furthermore, non-tithers are immature and destroyers of God's property, because they doubt the Bible, possess the spirit of procrastination and have little love for God. On the other hand, tithing Christians are victors: their lives are preserved by God, have fruitful ministries, businesses, and God's grace is accessible for them to own houses and live prosperous

lives.⁴⁰⁸ From the observation of the researcher's, this praxis constitute 'brainwashing' that create fear and passive obedience in members, and enforce a sort of 'personality cult' of the founder.



⁴⁰⁸ Heward-Mills, *Why Non-Tithing Christians*, 175.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the research is organized into three sections. First, the summary of the work. Second, general conclusions constructed on the major findings of research and third, a recommendation for both academic and pastoral levels.

5.2 Summary

The purposes of the research were to study the hermeneutical approach of LCI, and to address the following research question: (a) How does LCI read the Scripture, and which kind of ‘hermeneutic lenses’ are employed in the interpretative process? (b) In what way does LCI interpretation of Scripture affects the lifestyle of members? The researcher employed both primary and secondary sources for the study: Semi-structured interview, focus group discussions, document analysis and a ten (10) month participant observation. The researcher visited LCI Bible school and orphanage in the Eastern Region, and both nursery and Junior High Schools in the Greater Accra Region.

Chapter Two presented the debate about Pentecostal/Charismatic Hermeneutics. It showed how Pentecostals/Charismatics employ Act 2 narrative, as the subsequence and initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and as a standard for their hermeneutics. Data related to the fundamentalist approach to interpretation by Pentecostal/Charismatic preachers were accessed to substantiate or disprove the accusation. Their characteristics were analysed to draw implications for contemporary Pentecostal interpretative approach to Scripture. The focus of the chapter is on the internal debate, starting from the reaction to Dunn’s PhD thesis. As these authors debated whether or not a distinctive Lukan pneumatology exists, what was common among them was the belief that ‘meaning’ is placed

within a text by its author. This focus, however, seriously challenges the traditional Pentecostal practice of relying on perceived patterns in Luke's narratives.

While Anderson stated that a "Pentecostal hermeneutic is not special insight unavailable to others." Menzies sought to harmonize the tension between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal by providing a three-step to Pentecostal Hermeneutics: 'Inductive' 'Deductive' and 'Verification.' Inductive is employing reasoning, modern technology and language to interpret a text. Deductive helps to discover the patterns and theological motifs that emerged, but not stated specifically in Scripture, in order to understand the nuances of the text. Verification helps to develop a holistic theology and hermeneutics. For Menzies, when Pentecostals adopt these steps, it will bring Scriptural teachings to reality in the lives of believers.

All the authors emphasized that Pentecostals have much to offer traditional hermeneutics in the areas of pre-understanding the experiential verification and the experience of the Holy Spirit. None of the scholars in the debate proposed a distinctively Pentecostal approach to the hermeneutical issues. The debate is ongoing; it is anticipated scholars from Africa join to contribute their thoughts from African perspective.

Chapter three analysed the beliefs, pastoral structure and social responsibilities of LCI to the surrounding communities. It shown how the poor and the needy in some communities have been supported by LCI. It further indicated that the church extends its social services through health care to some patients who are unable to afford their medical bills. The medical, compassion and outreach team of LCI visit communities and prisons to supports and improve their physical conditions.

Chapter four examined the general approach to interpretation of Scripture in LCI through analyses of the 'authority of Scripture,' loci of interpretation (Publications, Bussells, Bible

Training Schools); hermeneutical approach to Scripture (name it, claim it and grab it, prosperity preaching, tithing, loyalty and disloyalty) and the effect of LCI hermeneutics on members. The research elaborated that LCI ‘hermeneutic lenses’ manifest in ‘prosperity’ ‘tithing’ and ‘loyalty and disloyalty’ preaching.’ To sum up, LCI teaches members that the biblical text is literally unerring, and cannot be subjected to criticism. However, the teachings and interpretation of Heward-Mills seems to be the hermeneutic key behind the church’s preaching, and often superior to the Scriptures itself.

5.3 Conclusion

A number of issues were discussed regarding the use of Scripture in Prosperity Preaching by LCI. The study established that to reach an informed understanding of Scriptures is significant in biblical hermeneutics, and demands that an interpreter of a text employs appropriate methods to allow the text to be contextualized in the life of the people, and within their respective situation. A further observation was, irrespective of the on-going debate, the Pentecostal/Charismatic community in Ghana has not yet entered the “critical” hermeneutic arena. As a result, inconsistent appropriation of Scripture persists among many Pentecostal/Charismatic churches.

The following were some findings from the study.

The study discovered that Pentecostalism in Ghana traces its root to the global Pentecostal experience at Azusa Street in the 1900s. LCI, being a Pentecostal/Charismatic Church, follows the traditional beliefs: miracles, healings, signs and wonders, which are the pivotal reasons for its Healing Jesus Campaign in Africa and other parts of the world. The social ministry of LCI was found to be a good incentive for most communities. To some extent, has reduced poverty situation and improved the lives of underprivileged in some communities in the Northern, Eastern and Southern parts of the country. Students who

dropped out of school plus those unable to access education by virtue of financial difficulties are back in the classrooms. The church gives regular assistance to the aged, retired, and provides helping devices for the physically impaired to aid their mobility. Additionally, Healing Jesus Medical Outreach of the church has been a great source of help to people in the rural areas. They extend their medical facilities, foods, clothes to deprived communities in Africa, where cost of living and medications are exorbitant.

The church is one of the fastest growing Pentecostal/Charismatic churches on the continent and beyond, due to its passion for evangelicalism. Besides the Founder's Day where majority of LCI members worldwide embark on community evangelism, the church has specially designed programmes for evangelism in August - 'feeding 5, 2, 7' (catchword for evangelism in LCI), July, and during Easter celebrations. It has an effective leadership structure for implementing its doctrine, ideas, beliefs, principles and for addressing congregational needs.

The Holy Spirit is considered by LCI as the author, inspirer of Scriptures and the sanctifier who leads the church to obey the word of God. With the operative role of the Holy Spirit, preachers understand and deliver sermons with clarity, and individuals' problems are discerned and resolved. The church believes in divine healing, fortunes, numerical growth and deliverance through the work of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, LCI believes the Holy Spirit does not only assist in salvific work, but it also empowers and manifest in physical prosperity, success, wealth creation and wellbeing of its members.

'Name it, claim it, grab it,' summarized the prosperity preaching of the church. It teaches that members who are faithful in tithing could 'name, claim and grab' abundance, good health, wealth, and live affluence life. Scriptures are frequently engaged in matters of healing, creation of wealth, and how individuals could experience and increase in divine favour in order to enjoy a better social and economic life through the principles of tithing.

The church views a Christian as someone who has accepted Jesus as his/her personal saviour and have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Thus, being ‘born again,’ speaking in tongues, and baptism by immersion are basic requirement for becoming a member of the church. The church thinks it is practically impossible for believers to experience poverty or anything untoward. It is enshrined in the church’s constitution that giving, tithing and services to God bring blessings. God prospers and bestows fortunes on believers who practice and obey Matt. 6:33. In addition to this Scripture, attitude towards payment of tithes and care for the poor is frequently proclaimed as a means to blessings.

The research further unearthed that LCI understands tithe to be a ‘foundational law’ ‘rule’ or ‘principle’ to which members must conform. Those who pay tithes are legitimately mandated ‘to unlock the impossibility’ into their lives. Tithe plays a major role in LCI teachings, because it is regarded as a physical, but persuasive offering that compels God to bequeath his wealth on believers. LCI believes it is impossible for Christians to thrive economically, socially, physically without being a positive habitual tither. The tithe, in the church’s opinion, is what generates blessings and allows ‘divine favour’ on Christians. Beliefs and faith of LCI members are deeply entrenched in the doctrine of tithe that unpleasant events: divorce, business failure, childlessness, joblessness, disasters are attributed to inconsistencies in tithing.

The study demonstrated myriad ways fundamentalism underscores the reading of Scriptures in LCI. Many of LCI bishops and pastors are doctors, engineers, architects, but majority of them have little or no formal theological training, which account for their fundamentalist reading of the Bible. The same untrained leaders are the lecturers in the church’s Bible training centres and coordinate appointments of pastors and ministers. Its teachings frequently consist of personal anecdotes interspersed with few favourite proof texts and

repetitious of the founder's interpretation about the Scripture. Most of the followers consider themselves biblical students and delighted when their preachers mock and ridicule other institutionalized churches or academic establishments.

The study also identified the problem of 'idolization' of the founder. Many church leaders and members accord excessive reverence to the founder. One of the leaders remarked that if Jesus ever had any 'brother' on earth, it would have been Heward-Mills. During Bible discussions, group leaders emphasize phrases in his publications to substantiate the word of God to the church, since they claim he writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, the research affirmed that LCI structures are well-organized to restrict or prohibit members from usurping authority or engaging in acts of disloyalty. Bishops, pastors and members of LCI who are assertive, insistent, discordant to views of the leadership are branded anti-Heward-Mills or 'disloyal' characters and even evicted from the church.

5.4 Recommendation

The twenty-first century Christianity is confronted with the challenge of Prosperity Gospel, a practice that chants, promotes, and justifies material procurement. A number of selective texts are employed by preachers of prosperity as proof-text for the practice. The hermeneutical approach to Scripture by these proponents is literal, often illogical and incoherent.

On the grounds of the findings presented, the study makes the following proposals on both academic and pastoral levels.

- a) More academic contributions to the subject should be explored, considering traditional hermeneutical approach to Scripture in order to forestall fundamentalist reading of the Bible.

- b) Further Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic churches should be considered for a research in relation to interpretative approach to Scripture to unravel the real problem of fundamentalism in the reading of Scripture.
- c) The study recommends for the Ghanaian Charismatic community, a comprehensive Bible study that will educate Christians to recant the interpretation that faith, positive speech, tithes and donations to Christian ministries, increases one's financial status.
- d) It suggests a research to address the popular perception that people who attain hierarchical positions, especially pastors, are 'untouchable' and 'controlling' in order to prevent these leaders from misleading the lives of adherents with teaching that are contradictory to the spirit of the Scripture.
- e) The study again suggests that the youth within the Ghanaian Charismatic community should be frequently engaged in biblical, social, academic or communal workshop. This will not only encourage them to be expressive, critically minded, assertive, but develop their acumen to prevent fundamentalist approach to Scripture, which usually generates intolerant and hostility towards people of other beliefs.
- f) The research recommends a relevant and responsible theological education among Ghanaian charismatic preachers for a thoughtful interpretation of texts.
- g) It proposes that the Christian Council of Ghana, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council and National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC) should engage communities in Bible discussions to educate people about appropriate use of Scripture.
- h) The researcher advises LCI to take courageous steps to integrate different courses in its programmes to exhibit receptiveness to new ideas and arguments. It is obvious that globally and locally, the rate of information technology has enthused and exposed people to diverse thinking and behaviours that may be insubordinate to

religious practices. However, exposure to teachings that ensure diversity will increase and encourage innovative, creative thinking for positive decisions.

- i) Students of ABMTC should be given the platform to encounter different view, experiences and critics. They should be driven to engage in dialectical discussions to enhance their receptiveness as well as build their intellectual judgment. Motivating them to participate in symposia, inaugural lectures will help construct a positive view about their identity.
- j) ABMTC should integrate new courses and books parallel to formal academic standards, adopt ways to increase in diversity and encourage students to experience new ideas in order to make changes in previous ways of thinking. This action by ABMTC and LCI will not only determine their courage to help students and communities to experience global events and happenings, but will afford students, staff, and members together to tolerate and dialogue with different religions.
- k) Furthermore, LCI should embrace the thought of other scholars, encourage its members to seek responsible theological training to better their understanding of Scripture.
- l) The researcher calls for an integrative, flexible and inclusive approach to interpretation of Scripture by Pentecostal/Charismatic Preachers. A flexibility that takes into accounts historical, cultural, and sociological happenings behind the text.
- m) The study submits that using scientific methods to discern the meaning of a text, does not subjugate the role of the Holy Spirit in the interpretative process. It rather helps to untangle the intents for which the original text was written, and its meaning to the contemporary reader.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adomako-Mensah, Paul. "The Growth of the Christ Apostolic Church International (CACI), Ghana from 1980 to 2008." Master's Thesis, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology*, 2010. 1-128.
- Ageboyin, D. "A rethinking of prosperity teaching in the new Pentecostal churches in Nigeria." *Black Theology* 1 (2006): 70-86.
- Anaman, Kwabena A. "Policy Analysis: What Factors Have Influenced Economic Growth in Ghana?" *Institute of Economic Affairs* 2 (2006):1-13.
- Anderson, Allan H. *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century*. Trenton: African World Press, 2001.
- Anderson, Gordon L. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics." *Drinking from our own Wells: Defining a Pentecostal-Charismatic Spirituality*. Conference Papers 2. Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Missouri, 12-14, 1992.
- . "Pentecostal Hermeneutics Part I." *Paraclete* 28.1 (1994): 1-11.
- . "Pentecostal Hermeneutics Part II." *Paraclete* 28.2 (1994): 13-22.
- . "Pentecostal hermeneutics Part 1." *Enrichment Journal* (2010): 1-8. http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm
- . "Pentecostal hermeneutics Part 2." *Enrichment Journal* (2010): 1-8. http://www.enrichmentjournal.ag.org/top/holyspirit_articledisplay.cfm
- Anim, Emmanuel K. "The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination." *Pentvars Business Journal* 2 (2010): 66-73.
- Archer, Kenneth J. "Pentecostal Story: The Hermeneutical Filter for the Making of Meaning." *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 1 (2004): 36-59.
- Archer, Kenneth J. "A Pentecostal Way of Doing Theology: Method and Manner." *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 3 (2007): 301-314. doi:10.1111/J.1468-2400.2006.00244.X
- . *A Pentecostal Hermeneutics for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community*. New York: T & T International, 2004.
- Arrington, French L. "Hermeneutics, Historical Perspectives on Pentecostal and Charismatic." in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B McGee, 382-391. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- Aryeetey, E. "Supply and Demand for Finance of Small Enterprises in Ghana: World Bank Discussion Paper." *Africa Technical Department* 251 (1994): 8-57.
- Asamoah, Moses Kumi. "Penteco/Charismatic Worldview of Prosperity Theology." *African Educational Research Journal* 1 (2013): 198-207.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena. "Did Jesus Wear Designer Robes?" *Christianity Today International* (2009): 1-7.
- . "Born of Water and the Spirit": Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa." *University of Pretoria Library* (2013): 387-407.

- . *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context*. Oxford: Regnum Boks International, 2013.
- . *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspective on Pentecostal and Renewal in Africa*. Akropong: Regnum Africa, 2015.
- Atkinson, W. "Pentecostal Responses to Dunn's 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit': Luke-Acts." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 6 (1995): 87-131.
- . "Pentecostal Hermeneutics - Worth a Second Look?" (2010): 1-9. <http://tffps.org/docs/Pentecostal%2520Hermeneutics.pdf>.
- Baeta, Christian G. *Prophetism in Ghana*. Accra: African Christian Press, 2004.
- Bakialoge, Samuel Nsiah. "The Contribution of Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) to the Church of Pentecost." B.Th. University of Ghana, 2012.
- Bartkowski, John. "Beyond Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy: Conservative Protestants and the Hermeneutic Interpretation of Scripture." *Sociology of Religion* 3 (1996): 259–272. doi:10.2307/3712156.
- Bird, Thomas. "Experience over Scripture in Charismatic Exegesis." *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 2 (1981): 5-10.
- Boerner, Sabine, Silke Astrid Eisenbeiss, and Daniel Griesser. "Follower Behaviour and Organizational Performance: The Impact of Transformational Leaders." *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 3 (2007): 1-12.
- Boff, Clodovis. "Hermeneutics: Constitution of Theology Pertinency." In *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, edited by R. S. Sugirtharajah, 9-35. London: SPCK, 1991.
- Bosch, Anton. "The True Origins of the Prosperity Gospel." *Christian Witness Ministries* 257 (2014): 1-8.
- Bosman, John-Eduard. "Reinterpreting the Spiritual Relationships of Gay Men in Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches." University Of South Africa (2006): 1-119.
- Botchwe, K. "The recovery 'involved a major reorientation of economic and financial policies' in Ghana," *The Courier Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-European Community* 111 (1988): 7-15.
- Botha, Eugene. "The New Reformation: The Amazing Rise Of The Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement In The 20th Century." University Of South Africa (2006):1-17
- Bowler, Catherine. "Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel. PhD Thesis, Duke University, 2010.
- Bozung, Douglas C. "The Pentecostal Doctrine of Initial Evidence: A Study in Hermeneutical Method." *The Journal of Ministry & Theology* (2004): 89-108.
- Brown, J.K., *Scripture as Communication. Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Burgess, Stanley M. and Gary B. McGee, *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- Campbell, Ted A. "The 'Wesleyan Quadrilateral': The Story of a Modern Methodist Myth." *Methodist History* 2 (1991): 87-95.
- Capps, Charles. *The Tongue: A Creative Force*. Oklahoma: Harrison House, 1976.

- Cargal, Timothy B. "Beyond the Fundamental-Modernist Controversy Pentecostals and Hermeneutics in a Postmodern Age." *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 2 (1993): 170.
- Carroll, Robert P. "The Spectre at the Feast: Fundamentalism and Biblical Hermeneutics (Part I)." *Religion and Theology* (2003): 5-12. doi: 10.3828/MB.44.2.5.
- Cawelti, John G. *Apostles of the Self-Made Man*. Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1965.
- Cofie, Faustina Aba Wiba. "Public Relations Practice in the Lighthouse Chapel International and the International Central Gospel Church." Master's Thesis, University of Ghana, 2013.
- Coleman, Simon. *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Copeland, Kenneth. "How to Receive from God." *Believer's Voice of Victory* 8 (1985): 3-10.
- . "The Whole Gospel." *Believer's Voice of Victory* 4 (1985): 2-8.
- . "How You Can Solve the Prosperity Puzzle." *Believers Voice of Victory* 4 (1986): 4-7.
- Crawley, Ashon T. "Let's Get It On! Performance Theory and Black Pentecostalism." *Black Theology* 3 (2008): 308-328. doi:10.1558/blth2008v6i3.308
- Davis, Sharon Ellis. "Prosperity Preaching From the Ears and Eyes of a Victim-Survivor." *Faith Trust Institute* (2010): 1-2. www.faithtrustinstitute.org
- Dunn, James D. G. *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970.
- . "Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 3-27.
- . *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008.
- Elbert, Paul. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics: A Review Article." *Ashland Theological Journal* (2006): 111-115.
- Ellington, Scott A. "History, Story, and Testimony: Locating Truth in A Pentecostal Hermeneutic." *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 2 (2001): 245-263.
- Enns, Paul. *The Moody Handbook of Theology: Revised and Expanded*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008.
- Ewusi, K. *Structural Adjustment and Stabilization Policies in Developing Countries: A Case Study of Ghana's Experience in 1983-1986*. Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1987.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991.
- . *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994.

- . “Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent: A Major Problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics.” *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (2009): 1-143.
- Flew, Anthony. “Fogelin on Hume on Miracles.” *Hume Studies* 2 (1990): 141-144.
- Gadamer, H.-G. *Truth and Method*. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- Geisler, Norman L. “Explaining Hermeneutics: A Commentary on the Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics Articles of Affirmation and Denial.” In *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*, edited by Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preus, 889-904. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2010.
- Gbote, Eric Z.M. “Prosperity Gospel: A Missiological Assessment.” *HTS Theological Studies* 1 (2014): 1-10.
- Goliama, Liz Castor Michael, “The Gospel of Prosperity in African Pentecostalism: A Theological and Pastoral Challenge to the Catholic Church.” Dr. Theol., University of Wien, 2013.
- Griffin, David Ray. “The Generic Concept of God.” *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* (2001): 165-166.
- Hadsell, Heidi and Christoph Stückelberger. Eds. *Overcoming Fundamentalism. Ethical Responses from Five Continents*. Geneva: Duta Wacana University Press, 2009.
- Haynes, Carter J. “A Case for Flexible Epistemology and Metamethodology in Religious Fundamentalism Research.” *Integral Review* 3 (2010): 3-54.
- Hellstern, Mark. The “Me Gospel”: An Examination of the Historical Roots of the Prosperity Emphasis within Current Charismatic Theology.” *Fides et Historia* 3 (1989): 73-90.
- Hendricks, Carl. “Money Raining From Heaven? An Appraisal of the Prosperity Gospel in a Missiological Framework.” Master’s Thesis, University Of South Africa, 2014.
- Heward-Mills, Dag. *Name it, Claim it, Take it*. Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM, 2008.
- . *Why Non-Tithing Christians Become Poor and How Tithing Christians Can Become Rich*. Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM, 2010.
- . *Bearing Fruit: After Your Own Kind*. Accra: Parchment House, 2007.
- . *Loyalty and Disloyalty*. Michigan: Parchment House, 2011.
- Hunter, Harold D. “Theological Stream of Brighton ’91.” *IPHC Archives & Research Centre* (1994): 1-4.
- Hur, Ju. “A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts.” PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1998.
- Hyatt, Eddie L. *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 21st Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective*. Florid: Charisma House, 2002.
- Innes, David C. “Cutting It Straight: Biblical Hermeneutics for Tough Issues.” *FrontLine* 1 (2013): 3-40.
- Jaichandran, Rebecca & Madhav B. D. Pentecostal Spirituality in a Postmodern World. *Asian journal of Pentecostal studies* 1 (2003): 39-61.
- Jon Kirby, S. V. D. *Jesus of the Deep Forest: Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma*. Accra: Asempra Publishers, 2006.

- Kahl, Werner. "Prosperity-Preaching in West-Africa: An Evaluation of a Contemporary Ideology from a New Testament Perspective." *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 2 (2012): 21-42.
- Karkkainen, Veli-Matti. "Pentecostal Hermeneutics in the Making on the Way from Fundamentalism to Postmodernism." *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 18 (1998): 76-115.
- Kasera, Basilius M. "The Biblical and Theological Examination of Prosperity Theology and Its Impact among the Poor in Namibia." *South African Theological Seminary* 4 (2012):1-142.
- Klein, William W. Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.
- Koch, Bradley A. "Who Are the Prosperity Gospel Adherents?" *Journal of Ideology* 36 (2014): 2-46.
- . "The Prosperity Gospel and Economic Prosperity: Race, Class, Giving, and Voting." PhD Thesis, Indiana University, 2009.
- . "Who Are the Prosperity Gospel Adherents?" *Journal of Ideology*, 36 (2014): 14-23.
- Kojok, Justin. "The Birth and Effects of Charismaticism in Ghana." *GhanaWeb* 116593 (2007): www.ghanaweb.com/.../The-Birth-and-Effects-of-Charismaticism-in-Ghana-i-116593
- Koning, Juliette, "Understanding the rapid rise of Charismatic Christianity in Southeast Asia." *Singapore Management University* 5 (2010): 1-3. <http://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/ksmu/242>.
- Kuma, Afua. *Jesus of the Deep Forest: Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma*. Accra: Asempa Publishers.
- Larbi, E. Kingsley. *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*. Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 1993.
- Liardon, Roberts. *God's Generals: Why They Succeeded and Why Some Failed*. Kaduna: Evangel Publishers, 1998.
- Mayhue, Richard L. "The Authority of Scripture." *TMSJ* 2 (2004): 227-236.
- Maxwell, C. John. *Five Levels of Leadership*. Nashville: Centre Street.
- McBride, Dennis. "A Survey of the History and Distinctives of Pentecostalism." *Bethany Bible Ministries* (1993): 1-17.
- McCune, Rolland D. "Doctrinal Non-Issues in Historic Fundamentalism." *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 1 (1996): 171-185.
- McGee, Gary B. "Tongues, the Bible Evidence: The Revival Legacy of Charles F. Parham." *Assemblies of God Theological Seminary* (1999): 1-9.
- McLean, Mark D. "Toward a Pentecostal Hermeneutics." *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 2 (1984): 35-55.
- Merrick, J. and Stephen M. "Garrett Introduction: On Debating Inerrancy." *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*." (2013): 9-45.

- Menzies, William W. "The Methodology of Pentecostal Theology: An Essay on Hermeneutics." *Essays on Apostolic Themes*, edited by Paul Elbert. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1985.
- . and S.M. Horton. *Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1993.
- Mills-Odoi, Louisa. "The Concept of Miracle in the Teaching of Dag Heward-Mills of the Lighthouse Chapel International." Master's Thesis, Trinity Theological Seminary, 2008. 1-147.
- Mills-Odoi, Albert Toss. "The Doctrine of Salvation in the Lighthouse Chapel International." Master's Thesis, Trinity Theological Seminary, 2008. 1-154.
- Mittelstadt, Martin William. *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition*. Cleveland: CPT Press, 2010.
- . "Academic and Pentecostal: An Appreciation of Roger Stronstad." *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 1 (2010): 31-64.
- Mohler, R. Albert. "When the Bible Speaks, God Speaks: The Classic Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy." *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy* (2013): 29-45.
- Noel, Bradley Truman. "Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics: Comparisons and Contemporary Impact." PhD Thesis, University Of South Africa. 2007.
- Nelson, Alissa Jones. *Power and Responsibility in Biblical Interpretation: Reading the Book of Job with Edward Said*. Sheffield: RBL, 2012.
- . "The Lord Has Given and the Lord Has Taken Away:" The Prosperity Gospel, the Book of Job, and the Latin American Context." *DOC* (2015): 1-23.
- Nyabwari, Bernard Gechiko and Dickson Nkonge Kagema. "Charismatic Pentecostal Churches in Kenya: Growth, Culture and Orality." *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)* 3 (2014): 27-33.
- Omenyo, Cephas N. *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: The Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches of Ghana*. Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2002.
- Opape, Prince Eric. "A Study of the Northern Outreach Programme (NOP) of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) as a Model for the Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI) in its Quest for Mission to Muslims in Ghana." Master's Thesis, Trinity Theological Seminary, 2015. 1-189.
- Opoku, Asare Kofi. *West African Traditional Religion*. Accra: Fep International Private Limited, 1978.
- Osborn, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012.
- Roberts, Clint. "Fundamentalism – Why it's Not the Real Problem." *Credo House* 1 (2014): 1-7.
- Savelle, Jerry. *Living in Divine Prosperity*. Oklahoma: Harrison House, 1982.
- Schneiders, Sandra M. "Faith, Hermeneutics, and the Literal Sense of Scripture." *Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley* (1978): 712-736.

- Scotland, Nigel. "Charismatic Christianity and the Appeal of Celtic Pneumatology." *ANVIL* 3 (2006): 179-190.
- Stibbe, Mark. "This is That: Some Thoughts Concerning Charismatic Hermeneutics." *ANVIL* 3 (1998): 181-193.
- Stronstad, Roger. "Pentecostal Experience and Hermeneutics." *Paraclete* 1 (Winter 1992): 14-30.
- . *Spirit, Scripture and Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective* Stronstad. Baguio. Baguio: APTS Asia Pacific Theological Seminar Press, 1995.
- Tate, W.R., *Biblical Interpretation. An Integrated Approach*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008.
- Tenobi, David T. *A Historical Glimpse of the Holy Spirit Revival of the church from 1900*. Suhum: DanChrist Printing Works, 2010.
- Thomas, Robert L. "The Hermeneutics of Noncessationism." *The Master's Seminary Journal* 2 (2003): 287-310.
- Torr, Stephen Charles. "A Dramatic Pentecostal/Charismatic Anti-Theodicy: Improvising on a Divine Performance of Lament." PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2012.
- Waltke, Bruce K. "Historical Grammatical Problems." In *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*, edited by Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preus, 71-125. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2010.
- Xexemeku, Eric. "Appraisal of Prayer-Meetings in Charismatic Churches within Accra: A Study of 'Jericho Hour' and 'Solution Centre.'" Master's Thesis, University of Cape Coast, 2012. 1-11.
- Yong, Amos. "Reading Scripture and Nature: Pentecostal Hermeneutics and Their Implications for the Contemporary Evangelical Theology and Science Conversation." *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 1 (2011): 3-15.
- Young Peter R. "Prosperity Teaching in an African Context." *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* 15(1996): 3-15.

