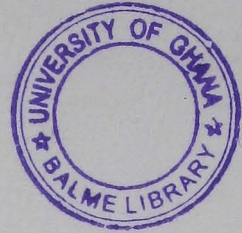


**THE ETHICAL DIMENSION OF PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC CHURCH
LEADERSHIP IN GHANA**



DELA QUAMPAH

**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE STUDY OF
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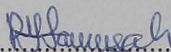
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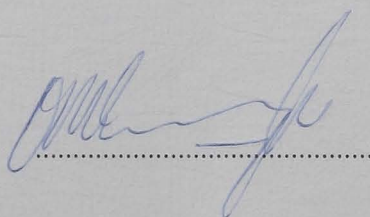
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Thesis was written by me from research undertaken under supervision.

I also declare that the Thesis has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree in or outside Ghana.

DEDICATION

To the memory of my parents, Jane Yawa and Harry Othniel Quampah

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I register my deepest appreciation to my initial supervisors, Dr Rebecca Ganusah and Rev Dr B. Y. Quarshie who have remarkably contributed to my scholarship. Their commitment to this project was a real source of motivation and encouragement to me, and I am perpetually grateful to them. Prof Chris Thomas who supervised my corrections has left his mark on the thesis. He provided much academic material at his own expense and paid me the highest compliment anyone doing corrections under supervision could receive: "You seem to be enjoying it". Thank you Prof; working with you was exciting academic adventure.

I am much obliged to Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah, Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, whose instrumentality helped me embark on this project. I am also thankful to Rev Dr E. Anim, my Dean of Faculty at Pentecost University College, for his support and invaluable suggestions and contribution to this Thesis. I am much indebted to Mr Francis Broni and Mr George Danquah, who offered inestimable assistance in data collection. I am also deeply thankful to Mrs Trish Waller for proofreading portions of this work for free. Madam Misonu Amu of African Studies Department, University of Ghana, deserves special mention for allowing me to use one of the songs of Dr Ephraim Amu.

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importantly, Connie, my wife, and our two boys, Sammy and John deserve special acknowledgement and gratitude for what they have sacrificed to make this project a reality.

ABSTRACT



The emergence of Pentecostalism in Ghana from early 1900 has registered a massive following with institutional structures that have significantly impacted Christian discourse and national life. The said Churches have produced prominent leaders, developed Christian education programmes and generated volumes of Christian literature that is unprecedented in Ghanaian Christianity. These accomplishments notwithstanding, public opinion often upbraids the leaders for unethical conduct. The functional evidence of ethical concepts in these ministries reveals a continuum between principles and utility, demonstrating a challenge of integrating traditional ethics with Christian moral values.

The prevailing church polity, administrative structures and ministerial ethical codes suggest an overriding concern for high moral standards. Nevertheless media reports on Pentecostal ministerial conduct, which sometimes borders on sensationalism and stereotyping, abound on promiscuity, power abuse, financial misappropriation, and superstition. Although congregation members and more perceptive observers appreciate the constructive moral impact of the Pentecostal ministers, available data reveals a gap between travesty and ideal in Pentecostal ministerial ethics. Ascribable factors to unethical ministerial conduct include inadequate training, poor accountability and a general low level of ethical reflection. One would suggest that a multi-dimensional approach of responsible reportage, emphatic moral education, adequate but sympathetic response to moral failure, and peer review accountability could help to approximate to appreciable standards in ministerial ethics.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Apostolic Church
ACI	Action Chapel International
AG	Assemblies of God
AIC	African Independent Churches
APP	Association of Pentecostal Pastors
ATR	African traditional religions
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
CAC	Christ Apostolic Church
CCG	Christian Council of Ghana
CFC	Centre for Inquiry
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CoP	Church of Pentecost
CPP	Convention People's Party
CUC	Central University College
ECWA	Evangelical Church of West Africa
EPC	Elim Pentecostal Churches
EPCG	Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
GEC	Global Evangelical Church
GILLBT	Ghana Institute of Language Linguistics and Bible Translation
GLIC	Gospel Light International Church
GPC	Ghana Pentecostal Council
GRM	Global Revival Ministry

GTV	Ghana Television
ICGC	International Central Gospel Church
IT	Information Technology
JCC	Jubilee Christian Centre
KICC	Kingsway International Christian Centre
KJV	King James Version (of the English Bible)
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
LCI	Lighthouse Chapel International
NACCC	National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	Non-Governmental Agencies
NIV	New International Version (of the Bible)
NPP	National Patriotic Party
PENTSOS	Pentecost Social Services
PCG	Presbyterian Church of Ghana
PUC	Pentecost University College
REC	Redeem Evangel Church
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
SWAA	Society for Women and AIDS in Africa
VBCI	Victory Bible Church International
WAEC	West African Examination Council
WMCI	Word Miracle Church International
WMOC	Western Mission Oriented Churches

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2. Inconsistency in the spelling of certain words is due to direct quotations from books written in American English.

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

The emergence of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches on the threshold of the twentieth century has marked a turning point in Ghanaian Christian discourse. Pentecostals can be regarded as the category of Christians who emphasise such ethos as sudden conversion, belief in speaking in tongues as evidence of Holy Spirit baptism, and a further demonstration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as prophecy and healing. Dovlo identifies the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches as revivalist movements “who hold their activities to be under the dynamic guidance of the Holy Spirit and use His gifts and fruits to ‘minister’ to themselves and the Church.”¹ A definition of Pentecostalism which hints at, what is believed to be, the Wesleyan Methodist holiness roots of the Movement is offered by Bassett who claims “Pentecostalism emphasises a post conversion experience of spiritual purification and empowering for Christian witness, entry into which is signalled by utterance in unknown tongues or glossolalia.”² The reference to “spiritual purification” is pertinent to this thesis as it signifies the Wesleyan Holiness teaching on sanctification; a theological category which deals mainly with character transformation.³

The Wesleyan tradition taught that apart from having a person’s sins pardoned through faith in Christ, one’s sinful nature can be removed through Christ’s atoning work, creating the possibility for a person to live without sinning. In his trans-generational famous sermon on

¹ Elom Dovlo, “A Comparative Overview of Independent Churches and Charismatic Ministries in Ghana” *Trinity Journal of Theology*, Vol 1 No. 2 (December 1992), 62.

² P. M. Bassett, “Pentecostalism” accessed at <http://mb-soft.com/believe/txc/pentecos.htm> (10/10/2005), 1.

³ Scholars who have attempted to depict the Wesleyan Methodist Holiness Movement as the immediate context for modern Pentecostalism include Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, (New Jersey: Hendrickson, 1996), Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal*, (Nashville: Thomas Nashville Publishers, 2001); Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). H. I. Lederle, *Treasures Old and New: Interpretations of “Spirit-Baptism” in the Charismatic Renewal Movement*, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 10.

Christian perfection, John Wesley claimed ; “It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from all evil thoughts and evil tempers.”⁴ As a result, sanctification was understood to be a sudden operation of heart purification which followed regeneration but preceded Spirit baptism. Many Pentecostal groups continue to affirm this view point. For example it is declared in The Church of God (CG, Cleveland Tennessee) statement of faith “we believe ...in sanctification subsequent to the new birth... and in the baptism of the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart”.⁵ The Church thus subscribes to the “entire sanctification” doctrine where, it was believed that one could attain sinless perfection as a pre-condition to baptism in the Holy Spirit. In such a context sanctification is regarded as a definite discernible crisis event that should occur after conversion, but before baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Dayton, in his *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*,⁶ endeavours to establish Wesleyan Methodist Holiness tradition as the matrix which cradled the Pentecostal Movement. Discourses on charismatic Christianity after the New Testament era trace its origin to the Montanist⁷ Movement which emerged in Phrygia around the year 175 and was known as “the New Prophecy”. In his *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, Omenyo has examined the trajectory of charismatic in the history of the church from the Montanist era to the Azusa Street Revival.⁸ Although many Pentecostals would see their tradition as a novelty that emerged from the Azusa Street Revival, one has to acknowledge that the revival was

⁴ John Wesley, *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, ed. E. H. Sugden; consisting of forty-four discourses, published in four volumes in 1746, 1748, 1750, and 1760. (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), 173.

⁵ <http://www.churchofgod.org/about/indexcfm> (accessed 11th Nov 2005)

⁶ D. W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. (Metuchen: New Jersey by Hendrickson, 1987).

⁷ Montanus was the leader of this Movement who claimed inspiration by the Holy Spirit to prophecy. He was joined by two women, Priscilla and Maximilla who shared his inspiration and attracted a sizable following. The Montanist Movement spread rapidly beyond Phrygia but was persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church until it fizzled out by the time of Augustine of Hippo.

⁸ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 78 – 90.

triggered by the prevailing religious climate in the United States of America.⁹ This revival was led by William Seymour, an African American minister who developed a spirituality that, in 1906, led to a revival in Los Angeles, which most Pentecostal historians believe to be the cradle of Pentecostalism.¹⁰ It is generally accepted that this revival was stimulated by the prevailing religious paradigm in America, to which Pentecostalism added a fresh dynamic. Dayton is convinced that in tracing the roots of Pentecostalism, one must begin with Methodism and “pick up the story in such a way as to demonstrate actual historical links and developments that will climax in Pentecostalism.”¹¹ Hollenweger also argues that Wesley mediated the doctrine of sinless perfection to the first generation American Pentecostals, whose context was considerably influenced by Methodism.¹²

It is however noteworthy that, not all Pentecostal Churches subscribe to the doctrine of sinless perfection. The Assemblies of God, (AG) which emerged from the Azusa Street revival (and also happens to be the first Pentecostal foreign mission in Ghana, arriving in 1931) views sanctification as both given in salvation and progressive throughout the Christian life.¹³ Other Churches that uphold this view on sanctification include the Elim Pentecostal Churches, and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

⁹ Synan, in his book *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, argues that The Holiness movement which emerged around 1830s, emphasised sanctification as a postconversion experience. The main area of doctrinal emphasis of this Movement was a return to holy living; and this movement gained currency in the first national Vineland Camp meeting held in 1867 in New Jersey. According to Synan, “The Vineland meeting was destined to change the face of American religion. Although it called for a return to holy living, the call was couched in Pentecostal terms. Those who came were invited to ‘realize together a Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost’ and ‘to make common supplication for the descent of the Spirit upon ourselves, the church, the nation and the world’” Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit*, 26.

¹⁰ See Dayton, 1996, Synan, 2001; Anderson, 2004; and W. J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments*. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997).

¹¹ Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 36.

¹² Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 145- 152.

¹³ M. Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*. (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1937), 252 -253.

In Ghana, the classical Pentecostals happen to be Churches with considerable input of Western missionary effort in their formation – although some of them such as Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) began as an indigenous initiative. They include the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church, Ghana (AC) and the Church of Pentecost (CoP). Their inception, starting from 1931, was signalled through the arrival of the first Assemblies of God missionaries to Ghana. Over the years, these Churches have developed sustainable institutional structures which guide them in their selection and training of leaders, which for the purpose of this thesis comprise ordained clergy.

Closely linked to the classical Pentecostals, but slightly divergent in outlook is a new strand of Pentecostal Churches which Ghanaians refer to as “Charismatic” Churches. These Churches emerged from the Evangelical revival of the late 1960s and 1970s, and were founded and are currently led by significant charismatic individuals such as Bishop Agyin Asare of Word Miracle Church International (WMCi), Rev Christopher Titriku’s Redeem Evangel Church (REC), Rev Dr Mensah Anamuah Otabil of the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), Rev Dr Dag Heward-Mills of Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), Archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams of Christian Action Faith Ministry (CAFm), Rev Nii Tackie Yarboi of Victory Bible Church International (VBCI), Rev Bob Hawkson of Jubilee Christian Centre (JCC), Rev Ampiah Kwofie of Global Revival Ministry (GRM), among others.¹⁴ A difficulty in classification is created by the fact that these Churches do not all belong to the same Church Association; whilst majority of them subscribe to the National

¹⁴ Some of the available Literature on the origins and development of these Churches include Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, Reprint 2006); E. Anim, “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” A Ph D Thesis submitted to All Nations Christian College 2003; Elom Dovlo, “The Proliferation of Churches: Its Impact on Established Churches in Ghana” *Maranatha Journal of Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 1 No.1 (June 2005), 65ff, J Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Renewal within African Christianity: A Study of some Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism”, Ph D Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2000, which has been published under the title *African: Charismatics*, in 2004 (see literature review section for full bibliography details).

Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC), a few, such as Christian Action Faith Ministry and Word Miracle International, identify with the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC).

In addition there is a category of autonomous Pentecostal/Charismatic ministries that do not associate or identify with either the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) or National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC). A good example is Emmanuel Ofosu-Akuamoah's Redemption Faith Ministry located at Kwashieman in Accra. The ministry which was founded by Ofosu-Akuamoah in 2001 had a membership of 150 as at 15th January 2008 and was led by four full-time ministers. In an interview, Ofosu-Akuamoah revealed that he had not joined any Pentecostal Association because he thought his Church was too young.¹⁵ A similar Pentecostal Church called Living Praise Sanctuary at Kwashiebu, Accra, was founded in 2005 by Pastor Francis Yeboah. By 17th July 2008, the Church had a total membership of 80, who were led by the founder and three associate pastors. Pastor Yeboah also claimed he was considering the possibility of joining the NACCC.

Out of concern for some of these autonomous Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, who need structural and organisational guidance, Apostle Waye Onyinah, founder of Christian Church Outreach Mission (C.C.O.M) located at Mallam, a suburb of Accra, has established a group called Association of Pentecostal Pastors (APP), whose objectives include "to help younger Pastors through training."¹⁶ The Association has so far registered thirty ministers from the entire country.

¹⁵ Interview, Accra, 15th January 2008.

¹⁶ Constitution of Association of Pentecostal Pastors, Section 2, Item ii.

Attempts at classification of Pentecostal Churches have to reckon with what, for lack of a better terminology, is often called African Independent Churches (AICs). The period between 1920 and 1930 gave birth to a number of AICs, which are called *sumsum sore* (Twi), *mumu sulemo* (Ga), which translates “spiritual churches”. The very early ones emerged from the missionary tours of the African indigenous prophets such as Wade Harris, whose converts John Nackaba and Grace Tani later formed the Twelve Apostles Church. The AICs were mainly founded by former members of the mainline churches who broke away from their mother churches, whilst others were introduced into Ghana by migrants from Nigeria. The major ones, in addition to the Twelve Apostles Church include The Musama Disco Christo Church, The Saviour Church (*Memene da Gyidifo*), The Apostle’s Revelation Society (*Apostolowo fe Dedeɔfia Haboɔ*) African Faith Tabernacle, the Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim Society, Church of the Lord (*Aladura*).

One of the early comprehensive scholarly works on this category of churches is Baeta’s *Prophetism in Ghana*.¹⁷ The AICs exhibit revivalist tendencies, and emphasise faith healing and other Pentecostal features. Although Asamoah-Gyadu thinks the AICs, excepting some abuses – are orthodox Pentecostals,¹⁸ he also admits that some of their practices are rejected by the major Pentecostal denominations. The *Sumsum sore* have come under attack from the new Pentecostal churches, because they are considered syncretic due to their reliance on certain rituals and objects which appear as a legacy of African traditional religions.

Another significant development in the Pentecostal/Charismatic domain is the influx of Nigerian missionaries who have established numerous branches of their home Churches in the country. Notable among them are Rev William Folorosu Kumuyi’s Deeper Bible Life

¹⁷ C. G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, Achimota: African Christian Press, 2004, 1962.

¹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, African Christian Press, 2004) 21.

Ministry (DBLM); House of God Prophetic Ministry (HGPM), led by Prophet Roland Odagwe; Winners' Chapel (WC) founded by Bishop David Oyedepo; Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) founded by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo and Pastor Chris Oyakilome's Christ Embassy. Some of these Churches have huge satellite equipment that receives the founder's sermon from their Nigeria base to the Ghana branches regularly during Church services. They have also established a significant electronic media ministry by screening their sermons on almost all the Ghanaian radio and television channels.

It is important to note that there is little doctrinal difference between the Classical Pentecostals and the Charismatic Churches. Some scholars, for instance Anim,¹⁹ think the disparity between the two categories emerges in their emphasis on certain theological concepts; for instance, the doctrines of sanctification, eternal life and eternal reward are stressed by the classical Pentecostals, whilst the Charismatic Churches turn to emphasise issues of prosperity and the development of the human potential for an accomplished life. Nevertheless one cannot ignore Gifford's insightful observation that the "two categories" of Churches are similar in many dimensions. According to him, Apostle Dr M. K. Ntumy's (Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, 1998 – 2008) view which regards prosperity as a direct reward from God for faithful service and generous financial support for the Church, seems almost indistinguishable from the conviction of the Charismatic Church leaders.²⁰ The affinity between the two Pentecostal streams is further enhanced by the use of the term Neo-Pentecostals for the "Charismatics" by scholars such as Omenyo and Larbi. And sometimes there is no attempt to differentiate between them as the following quotation from Larbi seems to suggest, "the evangelical/charismatic renewal in the 1960s and 1970s saw the development

¹⁹ Anim, "Who wants to be a Millionaire", 53-54.

²⁰ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy*. (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 40. Michael K. Ntumy's opinion on prosperity is expressed in his book *Financial Breakthrough: Discovering God's Secrets to Prosperity* (n.p: n.p 1993).

of new independent *Pentecostal churches*, some becoming huge Churches in less than a decade from their emergence”²¹ (emphasis added). In this thesis I will refer to both categories as Pentecostals and their practices as Pentecostalism; where necessary, they may be differentiated by terms such as, classical Pentecostals or Charismatic Churches.

The success of the Charismatic Churches comes partly through the reaction of some of the youth to the rigid ethical practices of the classical Pentecostals. The strict rules concerning dress code, the use of cosmetics, seating arrangement, dancing formation and general social conduct have caused many of the youthful classical Pentecostals to opt for the less legalistic and relaxed atmosphere prevailing in the Charismatic Churches. In some of the classical Pentecostal Churches, for instance, the Church of Pentecost and the Apostolic Church, Ghana, women are compelled to wear head gear to Church; but since many of the educated ladies prefer to sport stylish hair-do, such ladies opt for the Charismatic Churches, where there are no such restrictions. On certain occasions the exuberant self expression of the youth in singing and dancing becomes an issue in the classical Pentecostal Churches, unlike the Charismatic ministries, where no such regulations exist. Gerrie ter Haar has rightly observed that the Charismatic churches are in rivalry with the existing Pentecostal churches, which are often seen by the new ones as too legalistic and formal.²²

Although some of these Charismatic Church leaders developed their Christian foundation in the classical Pentecostal churches²³ their style of ministry has been appreciably influenced by American faith preachers such as Oral Roberts, Morris Cerullo, Kenneth Hagin, and T. L. Osborne. Whilst a significant number of Ghanaian Neo-Pentecostal leaders embarked on

²¹ E. Kinsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*. (Accra: SAPC, 2001), 295.

²² Gerrie ter Haar, “Standing Up for Jesus: A Survey of New Developments in Christianity in Ghana” *Exchange* Vol. 23.3 (December 1994), 227.

²³ Mensah Otabil was an Assemblies of God congregation member, and Charles Agyin-Asare, founder of the Word Miracle Church, as well as Nicholas Duncan Williams emerged from a CoP background.

ministry, without any level of theological training, a handful of them including Duncan Williams, Tackie Yarboi, and Charles Agyin Asare, trained at Benson Idhahosa's Bible School in Benin City, Nigeria. Many of those who were thus trained did not fit into existing Church structures, which resulted in the founding of their own denominations.

The validity and appeal of the ministry of Charismatic pastors seem to lie in the level of charisma and visionary leadership they can offer. Their captivating influence seems to depend on their giftedness and the capacity for effective communication, which attracts followers and consequently endorses their leadership. In such a context, it cannot be gainsaid that the moral vision of the individual leader, to a large extent, shapes the standards of right and wrong within the Church. The challenge posed by this approach to ministry is expressly captured by Marleen de Willie, "in Ghanaian charismatic Christianity, too, there is a constant tension between free spontaneous spiritual expressions and the disciplinary institutionalised 'format' that moulds people into 'good Christians'".²⁴

Apart from the personal moral vision of the leader, the Churches also have documents that spell out high ethical standards for their ministers. For instance, the largest oversight body of Charismatic churches in Ghana, the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC), had, by 5th May 2006, registered a total number of 119 member Churches. Prominent in their prerequisites for membership is this query: "Would you be faithful to ministry by upholding the highest standards of ministerial ethics, moral and financial rectitude, self-sacrifice, living a godly life and cherishing the call of God on your life?"²⁵

²⁴ Marleen de Willie, "Altar Media's *Living Word*: Televised Charismatic Christianity in Ghana" *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 33.2 (2003), 174.

²⁵ See National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches' membership application form for Churches and Ministries.

Similarly, the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), with 195 members in 2006, which is an umbrella body for many of the classical Pentecostals and some of the Charismatic Churches, focuses on the observance of high moral standards in ministry. The GPC Ethical Code Sections 1 and 2 condemn behaviour such as drug abuse, currency trafficking, polygamy, alcoholism, and other kinds of immorality among its ministers.²⁶ Furthermore the ministerial moral codes of specific denominations demand exemplary conduct of their ministers. For instance, the disciplinary code of the Church of Pentecost stipulates outright dismissal for certain infractions:

“The Chairman and an Area Head or the Executive Council may summarily dismiss a Minister who commits any of the following offences:

- (a) Theft
- (b) Fraud
- (c) Dishonesty
- (d) Immorality.”²⁷

Christine Leonard aptly observes that the Church is strict in dealing with matters of marital infidelity and even more so, when it occurs among Church elders or pastors.²⁸

The Assemblies of God, Ghana Constitution states, among others, the following, that can attract disciplinary action:

- (a) Any moral or ethical failure, including sexual misconduct;
- (b) A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly;
- (c) A contentious or non-co-operative spirit;

²⁶ The Ghana Pentecostal Council Code of Ethics (Unpublished document dated October 1986).

²⁷ The General Council, *The Church of Pentecost Constitution*, (Accra: The General Council CoP, 2005), 42.

²⁸ L. Christine, *A Giant in Ghana: 3000 Churches in 50 Years, The Story of James McKeown and the Church of Pentecost*, (Chichester, England: New Wine Press, 1989), 110.

(d) A declared open change in doctrinal views.²⁹

Nevertheless these Churches still grapple with ethical issues relating to their institutional policies on social responsibility, the position of women, the abuse of authority and power struggle, and other forms of misconduct of some functionaries.³⁰

Evidently, in almost all human institutions, what *is* does not often correspond to what *ought* to be; and Ghanaian Pentecostal Churches are no exception. Although Christians have high moral expectations from their leaders, the ability of such leaders to meet the demands has always been a cause of concern to the Church and the wider society. This observation is underscored by the numerous reports in the Ghanaian media of unethical conduct by some Pentecostal ministers. In a media research captured in *The Daily Dispatch*, the Centre for Media Analysis surveyed fifteen Ghanaian newspapers spanning July to September 2005, and discovered that 49% of the 1,748 news items on Charismatic/Pentecostal Churches were negative, 29% in neutral tone and 22% were positive.³¹ In the positive and neutral categories were items such as evangelism, social responsibility, the development of educational infrastructure, and pastoral roles. The negative items covered issues such as promiscuity, fraud and divorce.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The ethical dimension of Church leadership, which is referred to as Ministerial Ethics, seeks to address the principles and factors that influence a minister's personal conduct at home and in public. This study focuses on the clergy or ordained men and women who officially represent their denominational interests. Furthermore the ministerial ethical issues are

²⁹ Assemblies of God, Ghana Constitution, (Unpublished document), 40.

³⁰ An example is captured in *The Punch*, 2nd April 2007 on "Revolt at CAC [Christ Apostolic Church]".

³¹ Ben Ephson, "Research Reveals Negative Media on Charismatic Churches", *The Daily Dispatch*, (25th October 2005), 8.

considered from two perspectives; the first being the moral stipulations and how they are implemented within the administrative structures of the said churches. The second perspective examines the challenges individual ministers experience in ethical decision-making in relation to available institutional support.

The Pentecostal Church leaders in Ghana have experienced a considerable number of ethical problems, and public opinion often censures some of them for ostentatious life-styles which are thought to mirror commercialised ministries. For example in Justice Acquah's assessment, "They [the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches] are profit-making ventures, feeding on the ignorance and plight of the population."³² Sometimes the ministers are also accused of self-aggrandizement for appending many titles to their names. In certain instances, the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers are accused of promoting superstition as they tend to demonise people, events and objects indiscriminately. Another trend of immoral conduct often reported in the media about some of the ministers in question is their promiscuous behaviour.

These negative reports notwithstanding, it would be remiss of any objective observer of the church scene to overlook the significant and valuable contributions of many of these ministers to the progress of Ghanaian society, both morally and socio-economically. The philosophy of ministry, the innovative programmes, and the sermons of many of the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers are making an overall positive impact on society. For instance, Dovlo has aptly observed that the teaching ministry of Rev. Dr Mensah Otabil provides "spiritual and moral commentary and guidance for public life".³³

³² George Kinsley Acquah, Chief Justice of Ghana, quoted in Edmund Kofi Yeboah, "Churches Feeding on People's Ignorance" *Daily Graphic*, 29th July 2004.

³³ E. Dovlo, "The Proliferation of Churches: Its Impact on Established Churches in Ghana" *Maranatha Journal of Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 1 No.1 (June 2005), 65.

Reflecting upon this quandary of strengths and weaknesses prevailing in Ghanaian Pentecostalism, the main focus of this researcher is to discover how far Christian moral principles manifest in the institutional practices of the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches as well as in the personal choices of their ministers. This major quest is further supported by the following subsidiary questions:

- i) Should one appreciate ethical standards among Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders in Ghana as more positive than negative?
- ii) What moral principles emerge from Ghanaian traditional institutions that could influence Church leadership constructively or otherwise in contemporary times?
- iii) What level of awareness is demonstrated by the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders in their understanding of moral philosophy?
- iv) What ethical concepts do their ministerial ethical codes reflect, and how effective are they in regulating conduct in ministry?
- v) How trustworthy are media reports and public opinion on Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics? And how have the Church leaders themselves responded to these moral concerns among their fold?
- vi) How can the whole society contribute to approximate high standards in Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics?

1.3 Objectives of Research

The objectives of this study are to: -

- a) analyse some ethical theories and systems in order to understand their functional role in the practical moral choices Ghanaian Pentecostal Churches and their leaders make

- b) examine the ministerial codes of ethics of some Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in order to assess their impact on the moral standards of their ministers
- c) explore the institutional structures of some Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches to find out how they promote appreciable standards in ministerial ethics
- d) interrogate public opinion and media reports on the conduct of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers to establish their veracity and identify moral lessons that emerge from such narratives
- e) design a minister's evaluation form for pastors who want valuable feedback on their ethical standards from their congregation members, and
- f) finally, present a model ministerial ethical code of conduct that could serve as a reference point for the churches under discussion.

1.4 Scope of Study

Considering the sheer size and wide variety of the Pentecostal/Charismatic community in Ghana, any attempt to exhaustively examine every facet of its ministerial ethics would prove a daunting task. Consequently I have explored the background and historical development of selected Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches to identify the principles, significant functionaries, factors, and events that shape their ministerial ethics. The chosen ones are, The Church of Pentecost (of the classical tradition), which is the largest of Pentecostal Churches in terms of membership, and it is selected for its unique leadership structure that blends the hierarchical with the representative (presbytery) . The Assemblies of God Church, being the oldest of the classical tradition is chosen for its size and influence, as well as its peculiar semi-autonomous congregational leadership arrangement.

The two Churches identified for detailed study in the Charismatic category are Word Miracle Church International (WMCI) and Redeem Evangel Church. Bishop Agyin Asare's WMCI, headquartered in Accra, has been chosen for this study because it appears to be one of the fastest growing and influential among the Charismatic groups. Rev Christopher A. Titriku's Redeem Evangel Church (REC), headquartered in Ho, is one of the few Charismatic Churches whose headquarters is located in a provincial town, rather than a metropolis.

In this study, I have consciously avoided a comprehensive examination of historical trends in the Churches and have rather selected such events and personalities that could possibly influence their ministerial ethics for analysis. My sociological perspectives on the Churches do not necessarily engage with a general classification and evaluation of their social impact. Rather attempts at categorisation employ the responses of these Churches to concepts in Christian moral philosophy and their impact on the moral fibre of Ghanaian society.

It is necessary to state that the issues discussed are not strictly restricted to the selected churches only. To a certain extent, a broader context has been engaged with by evaluating certain reports from other Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches that are of national significance, such as Christian Action Faith Ministries International, Lighthouse Chapel International, and Christ Apostolic Church among others.

There is an inevitable limitation imposed on this research project that is attributable to the very nature of ethics and its practical application. Generally in Africa, issues of morality are so personal and sensitive that one has to observe considerable decorum when prying into the behaviour and attitudes of people, especially influential ones such as pastors. Access to information becomes limited, and some of those who offer information on other people's

conduct are unwilling to have their identity attached. These challenges notwithstanding, this researcher endeavoured with all circumspection to uncover certain critical issues related to Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial morality, whilst consciously avoiding the temptation of mudslinging.

1.5 Literature Review

1.5.1 Some Ethical Concepts

Undoubtedly, the prevailing ethical ideas in the socio-cultural context within which institutions operate would have some bearing on the moral standards maintained in such establishments. It is therefore necessary, in examining the ministerial ethics of Ghanaian Pentecostals, to engage with moral concepts in the social milieu to identify some areas of agreement and conflict with other value systems. One author who has systematically explored Christian ethics from an African perspective is Kunhiyop, an ordained minister of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) and Head of the Postgraduate School, South African Theological Seminary in his *African Christian Ethics*.³⁴ Kunhiyop, in appreciating the sources of African ethics, admits the problem of lack of written records, but this, according to him is overcome by reliance on “customs and the rich African oral tradition.”³⁵ He convincingly identifies with the school of thought which ascribes African moral values to a religious source rather than a humanistic source, insisting that to the African, ethical and religious values and beliefs are intimately related. Kunhiyop also engages with the perennial ethical debate of holding personal interest and communal considerations in equilibrium, and concludes that in traditional Africa, the communal good holds sway over individual good.

³⁴ Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*. Nairobi: World Alive, African Christian Textbooks: Bukuru: Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2008.

³⁵ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 8.

Demonstrating an awareness of the external influence of other value systems on African traditional values, Kunhiyop examines Western moral philosophy to reveal its impact on African ethics. The slight problem with his approach is that it fails to recognise common grounds between the two value systems; he rather sounds apologetic in preferring African religious ethics to the secular approach of the Westerners. As a result, the author is unable to appreciate the legacy of Western secular moral philosophy whose theories elucidate the concepts of utility, deontology, and virtue, providing useful reference points, even in examining religious ethics.

The central focus of the book, which is the author's attempt to develop a system of morality that is biblically grounded, theologically sound and relevant to the African context, is useful and laudable. Kunhiyop accomplishes this task by identifying and incorporating into his African Christian moral system those features of African ethics, which according to him are biblical and Christian. To accomplish this, Kunhiyop elaborately examines the crucial role of the community in the Christian redemption narrative and compellingly demonstrates its resonance with the African approach to religion and ethics. Nevertheless although he applies the comparative approach to Western ethics, and finds it deficient in many cases, he seems to be sympathetic with the African system to the extent of ignoring value judgement on certain unsavoury practices, as for instance, the following passage reveals: "Similarly, [to practising euthanasia] in some [African] societies, tradition has also laid down that twins are to be murdered because they bring bad luck, and babies with Down's syndrome or deformities are to be killed immediately after birth."³⁶

³⁶ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 9.

Another book that is of much relevance to this thesis is *Christian Social Ethics* by Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah. The co-authors offer one of the most useful approaches in understanding ethics by defining it “as a style of living which reflects the attitudes and values of that individual or of an identifiable group to which he belongs.”³⁷ Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah avoid the simplistic approach which views the ethical enterprise as a set of rules to be obeyed. Their method rather focuses on reflection and the personal responsibility of deliberation to ascertain and improve those abstract qualities of self-expression, which shape the value system of an individual or a group of people. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah further emphasise the three cardinal concerns of any worthwhile ethical endeavour, which are decision, action and evaluation; in their opinion, the ethical agent “must take decisions and act, and be able to evaluate his actions and those of others.”³⁸ And they do raise one of the most pertinent question in ethics; “What standards must be used?”³⁹

In their attempt to answer this rather knotty question, Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah explore some of the factors that influence our ethical standards or value systems as laws of nature, custom and tradition, societal norms, and social pressure.⁴⁰ The issue of societal norms, as stated above, is prominent in African traditional ethics, due to the prevalent strong sense of social bonding. According to the co-authors, these norms “may not always be morally justifiable when carefully considered, but they are generally accepted and enforced.”⁴¹ And Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah reveal certain implications of this communal ethics: “For instance, it is commonly assumed (though erroneously) that people who belong to certain professions, such as lawyers and doctors are rich; so it is expected that they should live in big

³⁷ Joshua Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*. (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2004), 1.

³⁸ Kudadjie and Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 1.

³⁹ Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*.1.

⁴⁰ Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 2 -3.

⁴¹ Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 1.

and luxurious houses and give big donations at weddings, funerals and in Church.”⁴² Consequently, one may want to investigate and establish the level of influence such Ghanaian social norms and attitudes have exerted on Pentecostal ministerial ethics.

The co-authors give a Christian grounding to their concepts by underscoring the separateness of Christians as a faith community, whose source of ethical standards is the Scriptures. Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah’s assertion is “the norms and standards of the ‘heavenly country’ to which Christians ultimately belong are found in the Bible.”⁴³ They lament some of the immoral practices that bedevil Ghanaian society, as captured in this excerpt: “it is a fairly common practice among businessmen to give bribes in order to procure contracts or scarce goods. Those who are determined to remain honest find it almost impossible to cope, since their businesses will collapse.”⁴⁴ It is within such a context that the Christian leader has been called to exemplify and project biblical ethical standards, and their very presence is supposed to be a check on immoral behaviour. One would therefore try to understand the pull of such moral trends in Ghanaian society on the conduct of Christian leaders.

1.5.2 Some Theological and Sociological Perspectives

Two significant works on Ghanaian Pentecostalism, with a degree of reflection on the ethical standards aspects of the movement, are Asamoah-Gyadu’s *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. and Paul Gifford’s *Ghana’s New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy*. Asamoah-Gyadu employs the historico-theological⁴⁵ method to evaluate current trends in Pentecostal

⁴²Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 3.

⁴³ Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 3.

⁴⁴ Kudadjie and Aboagye Mensah, *Christian Social Ethics*, 3.

⁴⁵Asamoah-Gyadu’s *African Charismatics*, 16. This approach, traces the trajectory of the movement by examining the socio-cultural, religious and historical factors that shape its theology and identity in Ghanaian Christian discourse.

groups in Ghana. He emphasises the influence of social context on religious movements by insisting that, the local versions of Pentecostal expression can be understood only within the context of the traditional cultural and religious environment in which they exist. Asamoah-Gyadu corroborates Larbi's⁴⁶ conviction which attributes the progress of Pentecostalism in Ghana to a receptive culture. In Asamoah-Gyadu's view, African Pentecostal theology extends beyond the Bible to engage cultural metaphors: "Although Pentecostals themselves unapologetically, appeal to the Bible for explanations of their experience, in the African context there is a significant measure of credibility in the perceived resonance between Pentecostal and African traditional/primal religiosity."⁴⁷

The author demonstrates the conviction that the primal worldview of the African comprises a consciousness of the reality of both benevolent and malevolent spiritual forces which influence human life arbitrarily. It is the capacity of Pentecostal theology to engage with and offer "convincing" responses to these perceptions that account for the success of the movement in Ghana. Bediako, an eminent Ghanaian theologian, also identifies this dynamic as a prerequisite for any impactful soteriological engagement with the African context.⁴⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu consequently argues that Pentecostals have creatively responded to the traditional worldview with scriptural validation in the exorcism narratives done by Jesus and Paul (Mt 17:14-20; Mk 7:25-30; Lk 9:38-43; Acts 16:16-18).

Furthermore, Asamoah-Gyadu explores some recurrent themes in Charismatic soteriology from theological, ethical and sociological perspectives; these include "Salvation as Transformation and Empowerment", "Salvation as Healing and Deliverance", and "Salvation

⁴⁶ See Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 31.

⁴⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 17.

⁴⁸ Kwame Bediako, *Jesus in Africa: The Christian Gospel in African History and Experience*. (Carlisle and Waynesboro: Editions Clé: and Regnum Africa, 2000), 22.

as Prosperity". Evidently Asamoah-Gyadu's work has the strength of exploring the benefits as well as the pitfalls inherent in the application of these theological categories. He is on target with his observation that the concept of salvation as transformation and empowerment is applied wholistically in Pentecostal hermeneutics. To them, Soteriology does not only secure spiritual benefits, it is also supposed to empower the Christian to pursue progress in terms of good health, success and prosperity.

The author rightly identifies the ethical aspect of salvation as liberation from sin, and proceeds to make it relevant to the African context by associating it with freedom from the oppression of evil spirits. In discussing the concept of empowerment, Asamoah-Gyadu further introduces the Pentecostal motif of anointing which endues the minister with power to facilitate healing and other miracles to bless people. He raises the perennially debatable issue of the relationship between morality and performance, and suggests that the impact of a minister's anointing is directly proportional to his or her moral standard; "the effectiveness of a person's anointing depends on moral uprightness and enhanced spirituality achieved through fasting, Bible study and prayer."⁴⁹ This assertion however demands further interrogation to determine whether the blessings ordained for God's people necessarily depend on the character quality of the functionary. Asamoah-Gyadu gives credit to the Charismatic Ministries for pursuing rigorous ethics, which emerges from their concept of renewal by the Holy Spirit who enables the believer to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). This, according to the author, provides an anchor and security against "the moral relativism and permissiveness of modern society."⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 155.

⁵⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 138.

Although Asamoah-Gyadu seems to suggest that the Charismatic practice of ascribing moral failure to demonic activity has some biblical basis as in Ephesians 2:1-2,⁵¹ he also points out that excessive emphasis on the demonic can create a sense of pervasive fear and spiritual insecurity among Christians.⁵² The theme of salvation as healing and deliverance, according to Asamoah-Gyadu is popular among Ghanaian Charismatics because it responds to the indigenous worldview which upholds the warding off of evil spirits as a target of religious rituals.⁵³ He identifies the underlying principle to the deliverance ministry as the firm belief in a "causal relationship between sin, the work of demons and sickness."⁵⁴ Therefore the moral benefit of deliverance is appreciated as freedom from "'bondage' to sin and Satan."⁵⁵ Nevertheless in evaluating Pentecostal demonology which ascribes almost all human problems to the activity of Satan and his agents, the author perceptively posits that sometimes the hermeneutics on which such teachings are based are either arbitrary or forced.⁵⁶ He insightfully concludes that it is the inability of deliverance ministers to develop an adequate pastoral response to the problem of theodicy which underlies this tendency of excessive demonic ascription.

Reflecting on the concept of salvation as prosperity, Asamoah-Gyadu discerns a direct relationship between this theological category and salvation as healing and deliverance. He thinks the Charismatics believe that, devoid of sin and demonic activity, there is no reason why the Christian should not live a fruitful life, which is normally considered in terms of health and economic success. In examining the biblical and ethical ramifications of the prosperity gospel, Asamoah-Gyadu initially affirms the scriptural basis for a Christian

⁵¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 136.

⁵² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 183.

⁵³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 166.

⁵⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 167.

⁵⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 167.

⁵⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 183.

soteriology which promotes the overall well-being of humanity. Nevertheless he identifies the problem of the selective hermeneutical method of proof-texting the prosperity message. This approach, according to Asamoah-Gyadu, produces “truncated, if not erroneous, views on theological issues.” The author is convinced that in modelling the prosperity message, the Charismatic leaders seem to trade off the Christian virtues of humility and service for fame and popularity: “The standard and model of leadership is not that of the humble Christ, identified with the poor and marginalised, but that of the powerful in modern society.”⁵⁷

Gifford⁵⁸, a keen observer of the African Pentecostal scene, has in his *Ghana's New Christianity* undertaken a comprehensive consideration of the institutional structures and major themes of Charismatic or Neo-Pentecostal ministries from historical and sociological perspectives. He incisively reviews the challenging prevailing socio-political conditions, from the time of independence, 1957, to contemporary times, which constitute the matrix of Ghanaian Pentecostalism. This informs his conviction that the Pentecostal theological discourse which engages with socio-economic deprivation is responsible for their appeal to a massive following. Focusing on the problem of governance, Gifford identifies neo-patrimonialism as one of the major factors that shape political culture in Ghana.⁵⁹ He captures the attitude of political leaders to wealth, as an indicator of societal attitude to possessions in this excerpt: “Yet the wealth is flaunted; indeed, if the money went into savings or investment, the point would be lost. Wealth and status go together; the former is the sign of the latter. Appearances matter and – and appearances, titles and the symbols of office often matter far more than doing a job well or delivering results.”⁶⁰ The resonance of this observation with the views of critics of Pentecostal leadership in Ghana is significant, and one

⁵⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 229.

⁵⁸ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004.

⁵⁹ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 7.

⁶⁰ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 13.



wonders if there is cross fertilisation of attitudes between the political and ecclesiastical establishments.

Gifford regards the emergence of Neo-Pentecostalism in Ghana as a paradigm shift in the church scene, justifying this observation by a comparison with the declining influence of the Western Mission Oriented Churches (WMOC). The main features of the Neo-Pentecostal phenomenon examined by Gifford include their theology, liturgy, and social impact, which diffuse through their remarkable media patronage. He also records his interaction with a segment of Ghanaian society which is not well disposed to the emergence of these Churches. And he specifically records the opinion of K. Gyasi,⁶¹ a columnist, who identifies one of three societal problems as the proliferation of churches full (of women), loud, and competing for the wealth of their “very often gullible congregations.”

The identification of the fluidity of Pentecostal phenomenon, which transcends church boundaries, is prominent in Gifford’s observation, appreciating its impact on other Christian denominations. Referring to it as the “charismatisation” of other churches, Gifford thinks it is an occurrence that is expected to stem the exodus of members who had been flocking to join the Pentecostal Churches.

Gifford attempts a comprehensive examination of what he calls “recurring emphases” of the Charismatic ministries. His approach has the benchmark of an impressive accumulation of copious primary data of sermons, prayers, testimonies, lyrics, slogans, documents and interviews, which largely authenticate the author’s perceptions of his subject matter. Most often he deliberately refuses to theorise his opinions and would instead present copious

⁶¹ K. Gyasi, *Spectator*, Jan, 20.

evidence to reveal a particular trend of thought or practice among the church groups being studied.

Gifford isolates one of the recurring emphases of the Charismatics as success, wealth and status. He thinks the new Ghanaian Christianity differs considerable from the Western missionary denominations, who are blamed by the charismatic leaders for not teaching them divine principles of prosperity. Gifford supports his conviction, which identifies American prosperity preachers as the main influence on the Ghanaian charismatic leaders with testimonies from the Ghanaian leaders themselves. Although he acknowledges that the traditional African religious orientation is conducive for the prosperity message to thrive, he insists that the way it is expressed, even in Ghana, reflects developments in the United States. Gifford identifies examples such as Russel Cornwell's sermon on "Acres of Diamond" and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* as the main sources of this theological construct. The author reflects on, or better still discerns the success theme in the context of Bishop David Oyedepo's Winner's Chapel branch in Accra. His presentation reveals that the leadership is extremely inclined towards the material success of the congregation members as the pronouncements he records seem to suggest: "success is our birthright (Feb, 18, 2001); "If you won't succeed, go to another Church" (Oct 1, 2000).⁶²

Gifford discerns a link between the practice of deliverance in Ghanaian Pentecostalism and traditional religious ideas. He perceives the basic idea of deliverance as a situation where a "Christian's progress and advance can be blocked by demons who maintain some power over him, despite his having come to Christ."⁶³ He further ascribes the proliferation of prayer camps to the desire of many Ghanaians to break loose of their demonic chains. In evaluating

⁶² Quoted in Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 57.

⁶³ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 86.

the role of the prophetic churches as agents of moral challenge, Gifford observes that due to their preoccupation with spiritual agents, they seem to lack interest in moral or ethical issues. And since spiritual forces are blamed for all misfortunes, the moral failure of people are also, in certain cases, attributed to demonic activity, thus considerably diminishing people's sense of responsibility: "In Ghana it is not uncommon for those accused of crimes before the courts to attribute their deeds to evil spirits."⁶⁴

Gifford's objectivity emerges as he examines Rev Mensah Otabil's (founder of ICGC) approach to ministry, which according to him is devoid of the extreme faith motif and spiritualisation that is prominent in many constituencies of the Charismatic fraternity. The author rightly recognises that Otabil avoids the anointing oil practice, demonization, preoccupation with witchcraft and the excessive stress on the prophetic and miraculous.

Hollenweger, a doyen of Pentecostal studies, in his book, *The Pentecostals*,⁶⁵ has written considerably about the roots and development of Pentecostalism around the globe. He goes beyond the mere description of the manifestation of Pentecostal spirituality to examine some of the doctrines and practices that characterise the movement. Of direct relevance to this study is the section which analyses Pentecostal ethics. Considering the date of the book, 1972, a few of the perspectives expressed on some ethical issues have now become redundant, as this quotation, for example, elucidates, "But Pentecostals consider that fashionable clothes are not for Christians, women's hair should not be waved; powder and make-up should be left to the world."⁶⁶ This observation is largely out-of-date now, as some Pentecostal Church members and their leaders have currently developed a taste for trendy

⁶⁴ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 110.

⁶⁵ W. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, (London: SCM, 1972).

⁶⁶ Hollenweger, *Pentecostals*, 403

fashion and elaborate hair styles to the extent of attracting criticism in the media.⁶⁷ Nevertheless many of the ethical concepts identified in the book are still applicable in Pentecostal Churches today. The panoramic view Hollenweger takes of the attitudes of Pentecostals towards issues such as tithing, the observance of Sunday as a day of rest, military service, taboos on pleasure and food, sex taboos, marriage and women in ministry, reveals ethical principles that remain relevant and sometimes controversial in contemporary Pentecostal communities.

Hollenweger suggests that the two main factors that shape Pentecostal morality are ethical prescription and cultural nuances.⁶⁸ He contends thus, “if we look for the origins of Pentecostal ethics, we find on the one hand a constant basic pattern of ethical prescriptions, and on the other hand powerful influences from the national background of each particular group.”⁶⁹ A subtle hermeneutical error in some practices of Pentecostal ethics is aptly captured by Hollenweger when he observes; “But the belief is always held that these distinctive national features have been derived from the Bible.”⁷⁰ For instance in Ghana, some of the classical Pentecostal Churches such as the Church of Pentecost, and the Apostolic Church, Ghana, strictly practise head-covering by women in Church, which they defend with scriptural passages like 1Corinthians 11:1-16. This scriptural provision notwithstanding, one cannot rule out the influence of Ghanaian traditional dress code on this practice.

⁶⁷ One reporter’s complaint about Pentecostal leaders is, “Under the guise of serving the Living God, they sport well sewn three-piece suits (coat) and fix a clerical on their necks.” Ebenezer Ato Sam, “Why Apostle Nimo was Rejected” (2) in *The New Punch*, 1st July 2007.

⁶⁸ Hollenweger, *Pentecostals*, 407.

⁶⁹ Hollenweger, *Pentecostals*, 407.

⁷⁰ Hollenweger, *Pentecostals*, 407.

Obviously, Hollenweger, Gifford, and Asamoah-Gyadu offer perceptive theological reflections on some doctrines and practices of the Pentecostals and have engaged with some important moral issues such as sources of ethical concepts, demonization, the judicious application of economic resources and dress code, among others. However, guided by their methodology, their focus is not to undertake a systematic examination of ministerial ethics among the groups they have studied, which is the task this researcher applies himself to.

1.5.3 Ministerial Ethics

Ministerial ethics is a universal discipline with general concepts that submit to specific applications in diverse social contexts. Therefore although Trull and Carter's⁷¹ co-authored book, *Ministerial Ethics: Being a Good Minister in a Not-so-Good World*, is set in the United States of America, it reveals principles and ideas that are universally applicable, and resonate appreciably with the Ghanaian situation. Trull and Carter think of the core issue in ministerial ethics is, "... the moral ideal for the minister is integrity, a life of ethical wholeness, and moral maturity."⁷² To help approximate this standard, the co-authors discerningly identify one major causal factor of ministerial moral malaise as the assumption that morality comes involuntarily to those who preach the gospel, insisting that "ministerial ethics is neither simple nor automatic."⁷³ They reinforce this position by rightly observing that "minsters can only develop moral sensitivity through education and experience."⁷⁴

Trull and Carter argue that a fundamental requirement for an ethical ministry is a clear understanding of a minister's calling. To elucidate this point, they explore the concept of vocation in the Christian ministry by describing the minister as a person who is set apart and

⁷¹ Joe E. Trull & James E. Carter, *Ministerial Ethics: Being a Good Minister in a Not-so-Good World*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman 1993.

⁷² Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 19.

⁷³ Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 20.

⁷⁴ Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 43.

commissioned by God to accomplish a divine mission. The co-authors, pondering some ideas expressed by Bayles⁷⁵ in his *Professional Ethics*, suggest that the concept of professionalism derives from the Christian doctrines of vocation and covenant, which create a community where believers serve the purposes of God by serving others. Trull and Carter however lament the secularisation of these concepts in the modern world into career and contract, a development, they claim, poses a threat to the full reclaim of the traditional virtues of professionalism. In isolating these virtues, they highlight Edmund Pellegrino's concern that "the central idea of a profession, altruistic service and effacement of personal reward, are today downgraded."⁷⁶

The co-authors bring into focus the dynamic relationship between one's devotion to God and the call to serve humanity by asserting that the minister's devotion to God cannot obliterate their obligation to pastoral duties. In their view, "Ministry involves both privilege and responsibility. The minister's calling always must be fleshed out in some kind of community, usually a local congregation. Trull and Carter rightly claim, "one cannot serve Christ without serving people, for to serve people is to serve Christ (Matt. 25:31-46)."⁷⁷

The co-authors make the revealing and relevant observation that, as evangelicals depend on the Bible for moral authority, there is the need to recognise that the entire Bible contains diverse approaches to moral reasoning. In their opinion, biblical ethics is not limited to a single category; rather it variously espouses the concepts of virtue, principle and consequence in diverse degrees. They emphasise the role of character or virtue in moral education by advocating, "Character is basic to all ethical decisions. Who you are determines what you

⁷⁵ Michael Bayles, *Professional Ethics: Second Edition*. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1989) ix, cited in Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics* 30.

⁷⁶ Edmund Pellegrino, cited in Trull & Carter, 30.

⁷⁷ Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 22.

do.”⁷⁸ Trull and Carter, refer to Wilmon’s definition of character, as the “basic moral orientation that gives unity, definition, and direction to our lives by forming our habits and intentions into meaningful predictable patterns that have been determined by our dominant convictions”.⁷⁹ Reflecting on this definition, the co-authors suggest that the Christian minister needs to internalise both the obligations and boundaries of their vocation in order to reflexively behave ethically most of the time.

The prominent role of character in moral formation notwithstanding, Trull and Carter, agree with the standard observation in moral philosophy that virtue alone is inadequate in ethical maturity. They therefore proceed to examine the ethics of conduct, arguing that:

Acting ethically always involves more than just having a sterling moral character. That is certainly basic, but the moral life is more than simply being a good person. Along with a healthy, wholeness of *being*, must be added conduct and its values – the perspectives, obligations, and aspirations that guide the Christian minister in making right choices.⁸⁰

Trull and Carter seem to endorse the universal notion that clergy misconduct majors on sex, money and power.⁸¹ To develop an adequate moral response to these three cardinal areas of ministerial temptation, the co-authors suggest a consistent approach to moral value cultivation. Furthermore, they think the Bible reveals “the theological perspectives that ground us, the obligations that bind us, the norms that guide us and the goals that motivate.”⁸² This opinion lays a foundation for their discussion of the concepts of obligation and consequence in ethics. Firstly reference is made to Kant’s categorical imperative which provides the framework for examination the concept of obligation in ministry. Trull and Carter convincingly posit that the Bible is fraught with deontological duties, hence they stress the

⁷⁸ Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 46.

⁷⁹ William Willimon, *The Service of God* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983) 28-29, cited in Trull & Carter, 47.

⁸⁰ Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 51.

⁸¹ Admittedly these areas of moral susceptibility are universal rather than peculiar to Christian ministers; however they are the most frequently reported issues relevant to ministerial scandals.

⁸² Trull & Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 53.

need for the minister to engage with biblical norms, church codes and governmental edicts. Nevertheless, in taking a comprehensive view of the ethics of duty, the co-authors caution against its potential extreme of legalism.

Secondly Trull and Carter reveal that biblical ethics has a dimension of teleology or the ethics of aspiration. They link this to John Stuart Mill's idea of utilitarianism, whose focus is to bring the greatest good to the greatest number. Serving as a bulwark against legalism, teleological ethics is discernible in both the Old and New Testaments (in the story the Hebrew midwives and Pharaoh, Ex 1:15-20; Jesus' Sabbath controversy with the religious leaders Mk 2: 23-27). The co-authors however do not mention the danger of the slippery slope of relativity that could emerge from teleological ethics.

Thirdly Trull and Carter suggest that another extremely important aspect to any worthwhile endeavour in ministerial ethics is the ethics of integrity or what they call "moral vision", describing it as "a Mount Everest on which every minister hopes to stand."⁸³ They summarise the three critical concepts in moral formation thus: "Our contention is that the morally mature minister experiences concomitant growth in three vital areas: character, conduct and moral vision... these three elements interface to produce a morally complete person. Each is necessary, and none is complete without the other two."⁸⁴

Based upon these moral precepts, Trull and Carter offer practical counsel on the minister's personal and family life, relationship with congregation, interaction with colleagues, and engaging with the wider society; counsels which are biblically grounded and ethically sound and realistic. As stated above, the co-authors write from an American background,

⁸³ Trull and Carter. *Ministerial Ethics*, 59.

⁸⁴ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 59.

consequently they cannot engage with moral issues which are peculiar to the African context, such as witch hunting and demonization, the impact of the prosperity gospel in a third world economy, and the ethical implications of the administrative challenges that confront Pentecostal ministers in Ghana. And this research is designed to respond to some of these issues.

To reiterate, only a few books have been authored by Ghanaian Pentecostal leaders on ministerial ethics, and even the handful available are written more from practical ministry and motivational perspectives rather than an academic one. That notwithstanding, I have selected Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare's *Pastoral Protocol: A Guide to Ministerial Ethics*,⁸⁵ for this review because it is very relevant to the Ghanaian context. In this book Agyin-Asare insists that the minister's relation with his family, Church, finances, denomination, community, the opposite sex, and colleagues are all guided by well-laid down standards; this suggests a principled-based approach to ministerial ethics. The author however does not engage with the concern of authority and sources of these standards. Furthermore does not respond to factors such as motive, aspiration and external influence, which to a large extent determine the moral choices ministers make.

Agyin-Asare begins his book on an apologetic note, where he attempts to defend the ministry against some of the unreasonable demands society makes of pastors. He captures some of these demands under the heading the "Pastor's Dilemma":

If he [the pastor] drives an old car, he shames his congregation; if he buys a new one, he is setting his affection on earthly things.

If he [the pastor] preaches all the time, the congregation gets tired of hearing just one man; if he invites guest ministers, he is shirking his responsibility.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ C. Agyin-Asare, *Pastoral Protocol: A Guide to Ministerial Ethics*, (Hoomaar: His Printing, 2003).

⁸⁶ Agyin-Asare, *Pastoral Protocol*, 26.

The rest of the book covers a variety of issues ranging from personal manners of the minister to his relationship with his vocational establishment.

Agyin-Asare poignantly brings to our awareness the tension between the personal standards of conduct of pastors and the pressure of society to conform to certain expectations. This researcher has explored this concern further to reveal how the desires of such ministers and the demands of society on them could be held in creative tension, for effective ministry. In addition some of the relevant issues such as the principles and sources that inform Christian ethics, and for that matter ministerial ethics, which Agyin-Asare's book seems to overlook, are examined in this thesis.

Other works of relevance are reviewed as we proceed with the later chapters.

1.6 Methodology

1.6.1 Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Apart from their spiritual focus, religious movements occur with socio-cultural, economic, political and philosophical ramifications. Hence a thorough study of ethical issues in Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leadership in Ghana demands a multi-disciplinary approach in order to reach comprehensive and informed conclusions. Philosophy and morality have a symbiotic relationship, with the former providing the tools and methods necessary for any worthwhile ethical endeavour. Geisler and Feinberg are convinced that the most famous area of philosophy is the study of ethics⁸⁷ which is not only concerned with right action, but focuses on the principle that justifies a particular course of action; purporting that such

⁸⁷ N. Geisler and P. D. Feinberg, *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 24.a

principles should “be universally, or at least generally, applicable in similar situations.”⁸⁸ It is therefore necessary to undertake a logical reflection on the institutional structures of Pentecostal ministries as well as the conduct of some of individual ministers in order to identify trends that promote constructive ministerial ethics.

Nevertheless the parameters of logic sometimes become inadequate in examining mystery in religion. And O’Meara has rightly observed “*kingdom, Spirit or grace* are words denoting a special divine presence (beyond the universe studied by physics and biology).”⁸⁹ Consequently, the existentialist approach to truth discovery had also provided an essential missing link in this endeavour. Existentialism is a reaction to rationalism, which, although does accept objective scientific fact, holds subjective truth to be important in ontology (matters related to being or existence).⁹⁰ Reflecting on Kierkegaard’s concept of existentialism, Wyatt suggests the individual means everything to the existentialist as the person is revealed a series of possibilities and every decision made redefines that individual. This idea was further developed by Jean- Paul Satre in terms of “I” defining the “self”, where each human being creates a “self”, who is “independent from all other knowledge and ‘truths’ defined by other individuals.”⁹¹ Wyatt sums up Kierkegaard’s view of religion as something illogical, claiming, “paradox was at the centre of his faith”.⁹² By implication, the fact that some of the decisions and actions of Ghanaian Pentecostal Church leaders may fail the test of logic and empirical analysis may not necessarily devalue their validity. However, one still has to be cautious to avoid the temptation of using the existentialist approach as a camouflage to accept every erratic decision or act as “genuine” subjective religious experience. The overall

⁸⁸. Geisler and Feinberg, 24.

⁸⁹ Thomas F. O’Meara, *Theology of Ministry*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 35.

⁹⁰E. C. Osuala, *Introduction for Social Research*. (Onitsha: Africana First Publishers, 1982), 46.

⁹¹ Cited in C. S. Wyatt, “Soren Kierkegaard: The Original Leap of Faith”.

<http://www.tameri.com/exist/kierkegaard.shtml> (accessed 22nd September 2011 6.30 pm), 14.

⁹² Cited in C. S. Wyatt, “Soren Kierkegaard: The Original Leap of Faith”, 14.

positive or negative impact of such decisions would largely help to determine their value to society. As Jesus put it in concrete terms, "By their fruit you will recognise them." (Matt 7:16)

The historical approach, which focuses on trends in the development of Pentecostalism as both a universal and Ghanaian phenomenon, would go beyond the mere identification of significant events and personalities, to uncover some of the historical factors and concepts that fashioned the value system(s) of the movement.

According to Odum and Jocher, social survey offers an objective, "qualitative approach to the study of social processes";⁹³ and this affords an invaluable method for the evaluation of the impact of Pentecostal Church leadership on individual lives, families, institutions and communities. This researcher has therefore sampled the views of selected segments of Ghanaian society to help approximate their perceptions about Pentecostal ministers through questionnaire, participant observation and interviews.

I largely employed the qualitative approach because increasingly scholars are appreciating the important role of the human element as a determining factor in epistemology. In Osuala's estimation, "Qualitative research places stress on the validity of multiple meaning, structures, and holistic analysis."⁹⁴ By implication, the human interpretation of truth and understanding of facts is recognised as perspectival; and these perspectives are largely determined by people's experiential encounter of the world. The task I have undertaken as a qualitative methodologist was to record what people say and do, in relation to my subject matter, and interpret the data as logically and objectively as possible.

⁹³ H. Odum & K. Jocher, *Introduction to Social Research*. (New York: Hall & Co, 1929), 250.

⁹⁴ Osuala, *Introduction for Social Research*, 170.

1.6.2 The Interview

The interview method, which is described as the most important, most effective, as well as the most widely used of the methods of data collection on social phenomenon⁹⁵ becomes indispensable in navigating the ethical philosophy and conduct of Pentecostal Church leaders.

I have personally interviewed, thirty-seven Church leaders, comprising the top hierarchy, such as chairmen, presidents, or founders and general overseers or general secretaries of the selected denomination, due to their level of influence and their supervisory roles on denominational ministerial conduct. A second category of Pentecostal ministers were selected relevant to their involvement in the specific ethical issues that I have examined. The third set of ministers who were chosen from the rank and file of their denominations was selected at random for interview sessions that were not really structured, providing the advantage of spontaneity of answers. Other interviewees comprise academics, whose fields of study have a bearing on the issues explored, and some journalists with relevant reports on Pentecostal ministerial ethics. I also have indiscriminately selected some lay leaders and congregation members who have been influenced or affected by the ministries of Pentecostal leaders to discover the impressions they carry of such leaders.

1.6.3 The Participant Observer

In addition to the interviews, this writer has also gathered primary information through participant observation in some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. In Kumekpor's view, the participant observer is "socially, personally and spatially integrated into the group."⁹⁶ I undertook participant observation by sitting through some Pentecostal Church services and taking sermon notes, as well as listening to their testimonies, prayers and songs.

I went further to study their administrative structures and investigate how some of their

⁹⁵ K. B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods & Techniques of Social Research: Sections 1 – 3*. (Accra: SonLife Press & Services: 2002), 119.

⁹⁶ Kumekpor, *Research Methods*, 74.

ministerial ethical codes are applied. This approach of direct interaction has equipped this researcher to arrive at conclusions derived from experience, affording some advantages over the external observer's a priori stance. This method has enabled me to watch and note events from within the context in which they occur and it has accorded me access to details that might, as Kumekpor put it, "elude a casual observer."⁹⁷

It is also necessary at this point to mention that my twelve years' experience as a minister of The Church of Pentecost, coupled with four years' work as a lecturer in Christian Ethics at Pentecost University College (PUC) have afforded me peculiar insights that may not be necessarily available to the one observing Pentecostal phenomenon as an outsider. These perspectives however face the criticism of subjectivity, as it becomes extremely difficult to extricate one's personal sentiments and denominational sympathies from one's work. Kumekpor rightly observes; "the probability of bias, improper comprehension of a situation and implicit moral judgement may be high, especially where the study touches matters or issues on which the observer has strong feelings or to which he may be implicitly hostile."⁹⁸ I found these insights offered by Kumekpor useful and they have increased my awareness on some of the potential pitfalls of participant observation. They have helped me considerably as I consciously endeavoured to balance objectivity with a "healthy" quantum of the subjective.

1.6.4 The Questionnaire

Although my methodology was mainly qualitative, it became necessary to collect some quantities to help sample views of congregation members on the ministers under discussion, in order to determine the popularity or otherwise of certain notions held by the public about such leaders. Accordingly I gave out 200 copies of the questionnaire and received 177 back.

⁹⁷ Kumekpor, *Research Methods*, 75.

⁹⁸ Kumekpor, *Research Methods*, 79.

The distribution of respondents was an indiscriminate selection of 108 members from the chosen churches, namely the Church of Pentecost, Assemblies of God, and Redeem Evangel. There was a random selection of 57 people from other Pentecostal churches and 11 from the Historic Western Mission churches who had encountered Pentecostal ministers. The questionnaire (see Appendix 5) consisted of both closed and open-ended items to elicit the appropriate responses. I used the simple majority approach to analyse the data and identify trends of the impressions and factual information such respondents offered on the conduct of the Pentecostal ministers they have encountered.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The progress and expansion of Pentecostalism has made a remarkable impact on Christianity, as the already high global membership statistics keep on rising. Barrett avers that Pentecostals have become a worldwide movement with an estimated 450 million across the world.⁹⁹ The impact of Pentecostalism on Ghanaian Christianity and other facets of national life is overwhelming. According to the Ghana Statistical Survey Census of 2000, Christians comprise 68% of the total population; and their denominational distribution is captured in the table below:

⁹⁹ D. B. Barrett, & T. M. Johnson, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1999", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 23 (January 1999), 24.

Table 1: Christian Denominational Demography

Persuasion	Percentage
Catholic	15.1 %
Protestant (Mainline)	18.6 %
Pentecostal	24.1 %
Other Christian	11 %
TOTAL	68. 8%

In a total population of 18, 912, 079 Christians comprise 13, 914,779, out of which the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement forms a bulk of 24.1%.

The membership registers of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) recorded 195 different Churches in January 2006. The second group, the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (N.A.C.C.C.), consisting mainly of Neo-Pentecostal Churches, had 119 member Churches in May 2006. These impressive statistics indicate that the Pentecostal strand of the Christian faith is a prominent phenomenon in Ghanaian society. Consequently the ethical example of their leaders would be a significant contributory factor in determining the whole society's moral gauge.

Furthermore, the influence of Pentecostal ethos has traversed the borders of the Movement to impact the practices of other Christian traditions. The adoption of full blown Pentecostalism in some sections of the Catholic and mainline Protestant Churches is a widespread phenomenon that has been considerably explored by Cephas Omenyo in his *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*. Many of the conservative mainline Churches now encourage erstwhile forbidden Pentecostal ethos such as drumming and dancing to the tune of Ghanaian

choruses, organising revival meetings and tithing. According to Asamoah-Gyadu, a leading scholar on Ghanaian Pentecostalism,

Pentecostalism at the moment represents the most cogent, powerful and visible evidence of religious renewal and influence in Ghana. I would argue that even the new lease of life being experienced by some of the older churches in Ghana is explicable in terms of their, albeit recent, tolerant and open attitude towards Pentecostal phenomena and renewal movements in their midst.¹⁰⁰

Another scholar who holds a similar opinion is Dovlo, who avers that the influence of Pentecostalism on the mainline Churches has far reaching implications for religion, liturgy, social norms and the economy as a whole.¹⁰¹

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches have also established a formidable presence in the electronic media, where their sermons frequently feature on almost all the radio and television channels in the country. Mensah Otabil's "Living Word", as at the time of writing, occurs on TV3 on Sundays at 6.00 pm, Agyin Asare's "Miracle Encounter" is also featured on Saturdays at 5:30 pm on TV3, and Matthew Ashimolowo's "Winning Ways" is telecast by Ghana Television at 8.00 am on Saturdays. The Church of Pentecost sponsors "Pentecost Hour", which features some of their key leaders on Ghana Television at 5.30 am on Thursdays, and on TV3 at 5:30 pm on Wednesdays. David Oyedepo of Winners' Chapel is on Metro TV at 11:30am on Sundays and Stephen Amoaning, Chairman of Christ Apostolic Church features regularly on "The Apostolic Voice" on Ghana Television on Sundays at 8.00am, while Duncan William's "Voice of Inspiration" can be viewed on Ghana Television on Sundays at 7.30am. According to Asamoah-Gyadu, the Pentecostal Movement has become very visible in terms of the number of followers and high profile leadership. He

¹⁰⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 14.

¹⁰¹ E. Dovlo, "The Proliferation of Churches: Its Impact on Established Churches in Ghana" *Maranatha Journal of Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 1 No.1 (June 2005).

therefore acknowledges that if a stream of Christianity becomes so popular, there is no way it would escape the attention of scholars.¹⁰²

Evidently it is not Pentecostal songs and dance forms alone that will seep through into other Christian traditions and the wider society, their doctrines, as well as their ethical principles would invariably filter through. Nevertheless there seem to be little evidence of any significant academic investigation into Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics in Ghana. Most of the available literature on Ghanaian Pentecostalism explores mainly the historical, theological or social dimensions of the Movement. Some of the notable ones have been produced by J. Asamoah-Gyadu,¹⁰³ Abamfo O. Atiemo,¹⁰⁴ Gerrie ter Haar,¹⁰⁵ P. Gifford,¹⁰⁶ R. I. J. Hackett,¹⁰⁷ B. Meyer,¹⁰⁸ Cephas Omenyo,¹⁰⁹ R. A. Van Dijk,¹¹⁰ K. A. Opoku¹¹¹ and Elom Dovlo.¹¹²

¹⁰² Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

¹⁰³ J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, "Salvation in African Independent Churches and Charismatic Ministries in Ghana", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* 2, (December 1992), and "The Church in the African State: The Pentecostal Charismatic Experience in Ghana" *Journal of African Christian Thought* 1:2 (1998), 63 – 81.

¹⁰⁴ A. O. Atiemo, "Deliverance in the Charismatic Churches in Ghana", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. IV December – January 1994 -95.

¹⁰⁵ Gerrie ter Haar, "Standing Up for Jesus" *Exchange*, Vol 23:3, (December, 1994), 221 - 240.

¹⁰⁶ P. Gifford, "Ghana's Charismatic Churches", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 24: No. 3, (1994a), 241 – 265.

¹⁰⁷ R. I. J. Hackett, "Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XXXVIII, 1998.

¹⁰⁸ Birgit Meyer, "A Complete Break with the Past" in *Memory and Post Colony* ed. Webner, R & P., Accra: 1998 and "Delivered from the Powers of Darkness: Confessions of Satanic Riches in Christian Ghana", *Africa* 65 (2), (1995), 236 - 255.; "Commodities and Power of Prayer: Pentecostals Attitudes Toward Consumption in contemporary Ghana," *Development and Change*, 29 (1998), 751 -776.

¹⁰⁹ C. Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana", *PNEUMA*, Vol. 16 No. 2. and *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*. Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, Zoetermeer, 2002.

¹¹⁰ R. A Van Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment: Discourse of Transsubjectivity in the Ghanaian Pentecostal Diaspora", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XXXVII, (1997), 135 – 160.

¹¹¹ K. A. Opoku, "Traditional Religious Beliefs and Spiritual Churches in Ghana: a Preliminary Statement" *Research Review* 4 (2) (1968), 47 – 60.

¹¹² E. Dovlo, "A Comparative Overview of Independent Churches and Charismatic Ministries in Ghana", *Trinity Journal of Church & Theology* 2, 2(1992), 55 – 73.

Some other significant works on Ghanaian Pentecostalism include Birgit Meyer's *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity Among the Ewe in Ghana*,¹¹³ Abamfo O. Atiemo, *The Rise of the Charismatic Movement in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*,¹¹⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu's "Renewal within African Christianity: A Study of Some Current Historical and Theological Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana",¹¹⁵ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*,¹¹⁶ Opoku Onyinah, "Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost",¹¹⁷ and E. K. Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*.¹¹⁸

Although a handful of authors such as Paul Gifford,¹¹⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu¹²⁰ and Emmanuel Anim¹²¹ offer some criticism on the ethical implications of deliverance and the prosperity gospel, hardly do any of them directly engage with general standards in ministerial ethics in the Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement. The low level of research work on the ethical aspect of Pentecostalism is not limited to the Ghanaian context. It has been observed even on the international front that Pentecostal theology has not produced an appreciably compelling and clearly articulated moral theory.¹²² Currently, only two notable books have been published by Pentecostal ministers in Ghana on ministerial ethics, which are Charles Agyin Asare's *Pastoral Protocol*, and Dag Heward-Mills' *Ministerial Ethics*. It is just a few of the numerous Pentecostal Churches that have produced comprehensive ethical codes for their ministers, although they do hold the ministers accountable for unethical behaviour.

¹¹³ Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.

¹¹⁴ Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1993.

¹¹⁵ J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu, Ph D Thesis, University of Birmingham, March 2000.

¹¹⁶ Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004.

¹¹⁷ Ph D Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2000.

¹¹⁸ Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001.

¹¹⁹ See Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 140 – 160.

¹²⁰ Asamoah Gyadu, *Charismatics*, 222 - 232

¹²¹ E. Anim, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

¹²² M. Palmer, "Ethics in the Classical Pentecostal Tradition" in Stanley M. Burgess et al (ed) *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 605.

Obviously the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches have become a force to reckon with in the religious, social, economic, and even the political discourse of Ghana. This brings into focus the need to explore the moral theories and standards of conduct that characterise the institutional structures of such ministries and the conduct of their individual ministers.

CHAPTER 2

GHANAIAN TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP MILIEU AND THE CONTEXTUALISATION OF CHRISTIANITY

2.1 Introduction

Although the central factor of religious experience is intangible, mysterious and sometimes unexplainable, its concomitant revelation or message is always communicated through the observable material cultural context within which the encounter occurs. Contextualisation, from the Christian perspective, is regarded as the various processes by which a local church assimilates the universal Gospel message with its local culture.¹²³ In this regard Bosch¹²⁴ thinks the indigenisation model is effective as an attempt in translating the message into the idioms and metaphors of the host community. And Pentecostals seem to be successful in Africa because they have responded creatively to the socio-cultural and religious heritage of the communities. The scriptural relevance of this kind of engagement is supported by Bediako, who suggests that understanding Christian soteriology through the African worldview is as biblical and convincing as any other theological perspective.¹²⁵

It can therefore be postulated that traditional Ghanaian institutions and the values they spawn still have a significant influence on contemporary Ghanaian institutions, including Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. This informs Gyekye's assertion that, "most of the traditional ideas and values have generally speaking, not relaxed their grip on modern African life and thought."¹²⁶ These values and thought forms are considered in the inculturation

¹²³ Louis J. Lusbetak, *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*. (New York: Orbis, 1988), 69.

¹²⁴ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission*. (New York: Orbis Books, 1991, 2008) 421.

¹²⁵ Bediako, *Jesus in Africa*, 22.

¹²⁶ Kwame Gyekye, *The Unexamined Life: Philosophy and the African Experience*. 3rd edition (Legon: Sankofa Publishers, 2004), 69.

process as convenient vehicles for the communication and deposit of truth.¹²⁷

This chapter therefore explores some traditional institutions and leadership structures, which constitute the social matrix for the 20th century Pentecostal revival in Ghana. The family, being the basic unit of society is analysed to isolate ethical principles that guide individuals in their communal interaction. Furthermore, traditional political and religious leadership trends are examined to discover how some of their value systems relate to contemporary Pentecostal leadership.

2.2 Traditional Ghanaian Family

The role of the family in value formation and ethical education in any society is paramount. Since the family provides the initial grid through which a person views the world, the experiences and values imbibed within that context have an enduring and defining impact on the individual's life and personality. Social anthropologists often emphasise the impartation of moral values to a child; and in many cultures a large proportion of this responsibility falls on the family.¹²⁸

Students of the Ghanaian family structure readily distinguish between the nuclear and the extended family systems. The extended family comprises parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents. The nuclear family however comprises only husband, wife and child or children. Max Assimeng offers a functional definition of the nuclear family as "a group of sexually interacting adults and their children who occupy statuses, perform roles and are responsible for the economic, social and emotional welfare of one another, especially the

¹²⁷ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*. (New York: Orbis, 2008), 37.

¹²⁸ S.A. Grunlan and M. K. Mayers, *Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 145, and G. K. Nukunya, *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2003), 51.

children.”¹²⁹ This functional definition provides an adequate framework for the analysis of the basic ethical principles that manifest in the family structure. The specific issues which come into focus in connection with traditional family values include status, responsibility, and the use of titles. Since the extended family receives more emphasis in Africa than the nuclear one,¹³⁰ I find it worthwhile to examine these ethical ideas by making them relevant to the extended family structure.

2.2.1 The Extended Family Structure

In Ghana, marriage is considered more as a contract between four clans rather than just two individuals, as the extended family embraces grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins, nephews and so on and so forth. In Ganasah’s view, “The two [prospective couple] are being married not just onto themselves as a couple, but into four families of the man’s father and mother, as well as those of the woman’s father and mother.”¹³¹ The extended family system has its leadership structure, which defines the rights, duties and responsibilities of the individual to the lineage. The Akans refer to the lineage or extended family as *abusua*, the Ewes call it *fome*, whilst the Gas designate it as *weku*. The central figure in *abusua*, among the Akans is *Abusua Panyin* or head of the lineage, who is normally a man, even in a matrilineal context.¹³²

Positively, the lineage ensures the mutual support and cooperation of its members. It also regulates behaviour by insisting on conformity to social norms, with its inherent ability to punish and reward accordingly. Members depends on the lineage for their identity (normally

¹²⁹ M. Assimeng, *Understanding Society: An Introduction to Sociology for African Students*. (Accra: Woeli Publishing Service, 2006), 27. 31.

¹³⁰ This has been demonstrated by Rebecca Ganasah in her article, Community versus Individual Rights in Africa: A Viewpoint” *Legon Journal of Humanities*, Volume 15 (2004), 1 – 21.

¹³¹ Ganasah, “Community versus Individual Rights in Africa”, 3.

¹³² K. Nkansah-Kyeremateng, *Akan Heritage*. (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 1999), 67.

revealed in their surnames), appreciation, and moral support in the normal pursuits in life – be it developing a career, marriage, child birth and training, or travelling abroad. In tragic times such as bereavement, protracted illness or accidents and loss of property, the whole lineage rallies around the individual to offer help in the recovery and restoration process.

Nevertheless this positive practice of socialisation in the lineage can generate tensions that cause adverse social reverberations. Sarpong, for instance, has observed that “The African family may have wonderful values but the same African family may have counter-values that are causing problems in Africa – ethnocentrism, tribalism, excessive particularism.”¹³³

Financial obligations, such as caring for underprivileged relatives, sometimes make unrealistic demands on the individual. Furthermore, one expects almost the whole lineage to attend social functions such as weddings and funerals, where the cost of reception could become a drain on the host’s resources. In addition, lineage affiliation leads to nepotism, where a person of influence is expected to please his or her kith and kin by favouring them with appointments and contracts, even though there may be more qualified applicants.

2.2.2 The Status and Role of Women in Traditional Ghanaian Society

Traditionally the position of married women in the various Ghanaian ethnic groups is not an enviable one. The very structure of traditional marriage subordinates the status of women to that of men. A study of family values demands the identification of the two family systems of marriage, namely the monogamous and polygamous. Whilst many Ghanaian cultures are tolerant of polygyny (where a man marries more than one wife), polyandry (where a woman marries more than one husband) is unheard of among any Ghanaian ethnic group. The opinion of Kenyan Parliamentarians captured by a Christian feminist ethicist poignantly

¹³³ Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, 80.

reflects the position of African women, even in the 21st Century. On the issue of polygamy (one person marrying a number of spouses concurrently), when a Bill was presented targeted at proscribing polygamy, the male Parliamentarians argued strenuously against it. Prominent among their reasons was the conviction that African marriages were potentially polygamous, and that man is supreme in marriage since he is the one who swears to take the wife. The first wife therefore has no right to object when her husband decides to marry another wife.¹³⁴

This male-dominant factor and the attendant abuse of women in the African family unit are not limited to the polygamous marriage context. The cultural practice of taking a bride price¹³⁵ from suitors seems to reduce women to the status of property and exposes them to every kind of imaginable domestic maltreatment. Nkansah-Kyeremateng, a social commentator on Akan culture, is convinced that by paying the bride price, a woman effectually becomes part of her husband's estate.¹³⁶

Traditional philosophy expressed in an Akan maxim further highlights the low status of women in the society:

ɔbaa tɔ etuo a etwere ɔbarima ɔdan mu.

This translates, "if a woman acquires a gun, she keeps it in a man's chamber." This maxim, originating from a matrilineal society, does not only project the idea that a woman's achievement is transferred to her husband or sometimes to her male sibling, but it also betrays

¹³⁴ Nyambura J. Njoroge, *Kiama Kia Ngo: An African Christian Feminist Ethic of Resistance and Transformation*, Ecclesial Studies 2. (Accra, Legon Theological Studies Series, and Asempa Publishers, 2000), 81.

¹³⁵ According to Nukunya, the bride price, for instance among the Ewes comprise twelve bottles of assorted drinks, and cash, as well as kente cloth, and wax printed cloth. See Nukunya, 43.

¹³⁶ K. Nkansah-Kyeremateng, *Akan Heritage*. (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 1999), 118. Kwasi Sarpong in his *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* 3rd edition. (Accra-Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), page 83, however, argues that the bride price is not equivalent to the commercial value of the woman, but it is rather a symbolic "gift" of appreciation and compensation for the loss of a female helping hand in the family. However since there is no documentation on the whole practice, one can fairly conclude that the practice is subject to various interpretations, and each view point could be equally valid.

the fact that women could not own real estate in the traditional setting.¹³⁷ And this is not peculiar to the Akans, for instance, even among the Ewe's who inherit paternally, a woman virtually has no property rights.

It is noteworthy that some modern institutions such as industry, politics and academia have provided the necessary leverage for Ghanaian women to attain national and international fame. It was the industrial sector that projected the late Dr Esther Nkulenu Ocloo to international recognition when she co-won (with General Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria) the African Leadership prize for Sustainable End of Hunger award in 1990. Another remarkable example of a Ghanaian woman achiever, who was enabled by academia, is Professor Abena Dolphyne who rose to the high office of Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana from 1996-1998 and has also served as President of West African Linguistic Society. The gender neutrality of the academy has been further enhanced by the appointment of the first Ghanaian lady Vice Chancellor of University of Cape Coast, Professor Jane Naana Opoku Agyeman in 2008. Yet the Church in Ghana, although a few denominations are ordaining women, has still not produced a woman Church leader of national or international acclaim.

2.2.3 The Status and Role of Children in Traditional Ghanaian Society

Most sociologists agree that Africans place much value on child bearing, and barrenness or sterility could be a cause for either divorce or polygyny. A large family size is popular in Africa for reasons such as a person's reputation, and the desire to be remembered after death. In addition, children become an important factor in determining one's economic progress, as

¹³⁷ It is noteworthy that Kwame Gyekye ignores the issue of women's rights, in his much acclaimed book, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*, 3rd Reprint (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Co, 2003); whilst G. K. Nukunya seems to support the status quo in his *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2003).

they provided the labour needed in traditional agriculture. Ultimately children serve also as social security in old age. The ethical question that is generated by these attitudes to child bearing is whether one should consider the offspring as a means to an end or should value them as ends in themselves?

From a constructive perspective, child training in the traditional Ghanaian context inculcates in them respect for elders. Children are encouraged to obey their parents and to respect their elders in order to enjoy their favour and appreciation. Nevertheless, it could be taken to the extreme in certain cases, where respect is often demanded rather than earned. Although respect between adults and children is supposed to be reciprocal, most often, children are compelled to be obedient and dutiful, no matter how they are treated.

These underlying traditional principles to child upbringing are, to some extent, responsible for institutional neglect and sometimes gross abuse of children, even in contemporary Ghanaian society. Although Ghana prides itself on being the first nation to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children's Act 560, the protection of the rights of children in the country is lamentable, even in official circles. In 2007, the year marking the fiftieth anniversary of Ghana's independence, the Executive Director of Children's Rights International, Ghana, a non-governmental agency working in the interest of children, wrote a rather scathing news commentary against the partial attitude of the judiciary to child abuse cases. Here is an excerpt:

The child who seeks justice is also perceived as truant in the context of tradition. About 90% of children in Ghana never get the opportunity to be heard in the traditional justice administration....

The reality is that children whose cases are in court do not receive due attention and prompt judgment. In Ghana, 80% of cases involving children are

withdrawn and settled under the traditional justice system. Twenty percent take between one and three years before justice is delivered.¹³⁸

2.2.4 The Status and Role of Men in Traditional Ghanaian Society

Traditional Ghanaian society is largely patriarchal, with men dominating the social institutions and regulating almost every facet of family and communal life. This situation is attributable to two reasons, namely the military factor, and the strenuous demands of manual work. The military factor became relevant as ancient Ghanaian communities were exposed to frequent attacks from other tribes. The need to mobilise members of the community to ward off such provocations became paramount; and as in many cultures women are insulated from military service, traditional communities in Africa hardly allowed women to become combatants.¹³⁹ As a result, those who defended the communities became opinion leaders and regulators of political, economic and social life within society.

Secondly the traditional modes of economic sustenance comprised vocations that were physically exacting, such as the manual cultivation of land to raise crops, fishing, hunting and trading with far off communities without the convenience of modern means of transport. Obviously many economic ventures became too taxing and hazardous for females to undertake. As men dominated major economic activities in the traditional setting, their influence extended with economic empowerment, whilst those of women declined with financial deprivation.

¹³⁸ The Executive Director, Children's Rights International; "Ghana and the Dawn of 50: The Language of Judiciary in Children's Rights" in a Ghana Broadcasting News Commentary of 23rd January 2007 @ http://www.gbghana.com/pages/news_detail.phpnewsid=2261&s=14#

¹³⁹ An exception to this norm occurred among the Asante's when Yaa Asantewa, the queenmother of Ejisu, led men to battle to fight against the British in 1900.

Consequently, almost all the leadership positions in traditional institutions became a kind of male preserve among many ethnic groups in Ghana. The chieftaincy institution, for instance, is controlled by men who succeed from generation to generation, making them the communal potentate.

2.2.5 Titles and Status in Traditional Family

The functional role of personal titles is an integral part of family, and for that matter, community life in Ghana, as people are more readily identified by their titles rather than names. These titles help to identify position and relationship between people to facilitate their social intercourse. For example among the Ewes, the title *enyru* does not only depict a man as an uncle but it specifically points to a maternal uncle. Similarly, *nɔde* does not only identify a maternal aunt, but it inherently reveals that the person is my mother's younger sister, whilst *nɔgã* or *nanagã* suggests she is senior to my mother. *Tɔde* is a paternal uncle younger than my father and *tɔgã* stands for a paternal uncle older than my father. The use of *efo* suggests the one being addressed is a senior brother, whilst *daa/davi* refers to a sister or any woman who is my senior in age. Hence titles are crucial in the family, communal, and institutional lives of the traditional African, and they remain relevant today, even in the church.

2.3 Relevance of Traditional Sense of Community to the Church

Kinship ties in Africa produce communal bonding and the sense of belongingness is such a prominent feature of African communities that every social institution has to reckon with it. Theologians such as Mwaura see a biblical reflection in this sense of community and suggest that it does not only approximate the tribal ties of the Old Testament, it also reflects the

concept of *koinonia*, which characterised the early Church.¹⁴⁰ This sense of community resonates well with Pentecostalism, which Johns claims, transforms the affections of the individual, making them relational in character: "Thus the model of godly affections is community, the *koinonia* of the saints, and orthopraxy is always shared orthopraxy".¹⁴¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, in exploring the success story of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), observes that communal bonds, and "welfare system of support for members is key to their ability to attract and hold members."¹⁴² Ganusah examines the rights of the individual in the African communal setting and suggests that the response of Charismatic Churches to the traditional concepts of communal life reflects a paradox of rejection of traditional bonds and a re-creation of a new community. She avers,

So that the Christian Faith, in a seemingly paradoxical way, is contributing to the decline in the traditional communal spirit of partaking in every communal practice, while at the same time it is helping to enhance some communal expectations in the society like rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn.¹⁴³

Dr John Kpikpi, a New Frontiers minister, who was formerly a lecturer at the University of Ghana, has developed an approach to contextualisation which makes the concept of tribal affiliation relevant to Christianity by regarding the Christian community as a kind of tribe. In his book, *God's New Tribe*, he suggests that, in Ghana, "the effects of tribal identities can be seen in the very structure of marriage and family life, business, politics, national life and

¹⁴⁰ Philomena N. Mwaura, "New Religious Movements: A Challenge to Doing Theology in Africa" *Trinity Journal of Theology* Vol. XIII (July 2003), 10. It is however noteworthy that the initial attempts in the Book of Acts to establish an authentic Christian community revealed imperfections which led to the death of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 – 11), and discrimination against the widows from the Jewish Diaspora in the distribution of material support (Acts 1:1 – 6).

¹⁴¹ Jackie David Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit: the Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis" in *The Globalisation of Pentecostalism*, Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, Gouglas Peterson (eds.). (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999), 77.

¹⁴² J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience: The Case of Ghana's 'Church of Pentecost'" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*. Vol. XII, July/December 2002), 44.

¹⁴³ Ganusah, "Community versus Individual Rights in Africa: A Viewpoint", *Legon Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 15, (2004) 16.

religion.”¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, he insists that taken to the extreme, tribalism could be destructive, hence he promotes the concept of God’s “new tribe”, a community which upholds biblical values that do not particularise tribal identity. A similar perspective is revealed by Agyeman Nkansah in suggesting that since traditional life is communal and the church is also a community, the church in Africa can emphasise this to enhance its indigenous identity.¹⁴⁵

In such a context, the implications of communal affinity for moral value formation becomes, obvious, as the interest and values of society are projected above those of the individual. In an article which explores the concept of values and the development of a humane society, Asante demonstrates that it is communities that give legitimacy to values, and the self-esteem of the individual depends on the recognition they receive as members of a community. In a similar vein, Gyekye argues that social life, which is a robust feature of the African communitarian society, mandates a morality which emphasises duty to others and to the community.¹⁴⁶ Gyekye however comprehensively examines the concept of personhood in another article, where he takes issue with any ethical system that diminishes the moral autonomy of the individual, subjecting them to, as he put it, “the activities, values, projects, practices and ends of the community”.¹⁴⁷

The challenge in such a context is how the rights of the individual are recognised in personal value formation and held in equilibrium with communal interest. Consequently the Ghanaian

¹⁴⁴ John Kpikpi, *God's New Tribe*. (Accra: Hill City Publishing, 2004), 11.

¹⁴⁵ Kwabena Agyeman-Nkansah, “Deeping the Roots of Christianity in the African Culture through Increased Awareness if the African Identity and Self-Perception”, *Maranatha Journal of Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 1 No. 1 (June 2005), 32 – 42.

¹⁴⁶ Kwame Gyekye, “African Ethics” <http://platostanford.edu>. (accessed on July 21, 2011).

¹⁴⁷ Kwame Gyekye, “Person and Community in African Thought”, in *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies I, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change Series II. Africa*, Vol 1, George F. McLean (ed.) (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992), 102.

Christian leader is challenged to respect social norms, without necessarily trampling the rights and interests of the individual.

2.4 Ghanaian Traditional Political Leadership

Attempts at the contextualisation of the Christian Gospel by the application of traditional Ghanaian political leadership imagery and nuances have yielded some stimulating results. For instance the familiarity of Ghanaians with their royal establishments produces imagery and accolades that are readily transferable to Christ to project his royal status, as revealed in a praise song by a Ghanaian Pentecostal lady, Afua Kuma:

[Christ] Chief of young women:
They have strung a necklace of gold nuggets and beads, and hung it around
your neck.
So we go before you,
Shouting our praises, "Ose, Ose!"
Chief of young men:
They are covered with precious beads
And gold pendants worn by princes
They follow you, playing musical instruments.¹⁴⁸

The position of a traditional ruler is believed to be invested with a sacred capacity that makes the chief a representative of the deities and ancestors of the community. According to Waruta "in African society, leadership was never purely political or mere civil authority. It always carried with it a religious aspect in which the leaders of the people exerted ritual and religious authority as well."¹⁴⁹ Hence it is easy for the Ghanaian to accord human leaders supernatural attributes, as they are regarded as the physical representatives of the benevolent supernatural forces that resource and preserve the community.

¹⁴⁸ Afua Kuma, *Jesus of the Deep Forest: Prayers and Praises of Afua Kuma*, tr. Jon Kirbi. (Accra: Asempa, 2006), 23.

¹⁴⁹ Douglas, W. Wurata, "Who is Jesus Christ for Africans Today? Prophet, Priest, Potentate", *Faces of Jesus in Africa*. R. J. Schreita (ed.). (New York: Orbis Books, 1991) 60.

The origin of the chieftaincy institution in many Ghanaian communities is rather hazy, however in certain cases it is ascribed to the founding fathers or families (who become the royals) of the settlements.¹⁵⁰ Some contemporary scholars who have analysed the chieftaincy institution seem to have done some disservice to the set up by using Western democracy as their yardstick. Researchers such as Oseadeeyo Addo Dankwa III¹⁵¹ and Frempong¹⁵² argue that the selection and administrative structure of the chieftaincy institution, for example that of the Akans, is comparable to democratic establishments anywhere. This is revealed in Frempong's suggestion that "the absence of the ballot box in African villages did not necessarily imply that Africans were ignorant of democracy."¹⁵³ To appreciate the institution of chieftaincy better, I think it would be preferable to consider it on its own merit, rather than pitting it against modern Western democracy. The rationale is that the Ghanaian context and experiences which gave shape to the institution are unique and are very different from, for example, the Greek setting that moulded Athenian democracy. The strength of the Ghanaian system lies in the fact that, unlike other contexts where succession devolves to the first born of the predecessor, the Ghanaian establishment normally comprises a couple of clans with potential candidates, out of which the kingmakers select the most resourceful person.¹⁵⁴

The Ghanaian chieftaincy institution provided the essential unifying pivot for vulnerable and scattered settlements before the European scramble and partitioning of Africa. In addition, the chiefs became a source of identity and ethnic pride, affording protection from external aggression, providing internal stability, whilst serving as custodians of the values and

¹⁵⁰ Oseadeeyo Addo Dankwa III, *The Institution of Chieftaincy in Ghana – The Future*. (Accra: Gold Type, 2004), 11.

¹⁵¹ Oseadeeyo Dankwa III, *Chieftaincy*, 16.

¹⁵² Alexander K. Frempong, "Chieftaincy, Democracy and Human Rights in Pre-Colonial Africa: The Case of the Akan System" in Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba ed., *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 380.

¹⁵³ Frempong, "Chieftaincy, Democracy and Human Rights..." 380.

¹⁵⁴ Frempong, 383. Ayitey George, "Why Democracy is Important for African Development", @ <http://www.responduganda.org/respondugandaSpeech.htm> (3rd August 2005), 3.

principles that sustained vital social institutions. Besides, the chieftaincy establishment preserved the intellectual property, the aesthetic valuables and the creative accomplishments of the community. More importantly, the chief was expected to be the moral icon of the community, exemplifying and safeguarding their value system. In his article on religion and traditional leadership, Akrong avers that the numerous taboos attached to chieftaincy are instituted to set a high ethical standard which the chief is expected to observe as a moral model to the community.¹⁵⁵

As stated above, titles are crucial to social interaction in Africa, and they become even more important in the socio-political establishment. De Graft Johnson explores the meaning of some of the chieftaincy titles that obtain among the Akans by capturing the specific roles and functions of the title holders: the *Omanhin* is the supreme leader of the community; the *Adontenhin* is the next in line; the *Gyasihin* is the one in charge of the domestic arrangements of the *Omanhin*, the *Ankobeahin* is leader of the *Omanhin's* personal body guards. Besides these functional titles Ghanaian chiefs are sometimes designated by attributes such as *Oseadeayo* (the one who keeps his word), *Otumfuɔ* (the mighty one), *Osabarima* (the mighty warrior), *Odenehu* (the independent one), *Osagyefo* (the deliverer), *Okasapraku* (once he makes a declaration, his word goes unchallenged). Such attributes convey the traditional philosophy of leadership, where as the prominent representatives of the community, the chiefs are expected to manifest these attributes in order to reveal, as it were, the "spirit" of the community.

The significance of the iconic role of the traditional ruler in exhibiting the moral values of society has attracted some academic attention. Nukunya emphasises the moral duty of the

¹⁵⁵ Abraham Akrong, "Religion and Traditional Leadership in Ghana" in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, 200.

chief to maintain law and order in society, and insists that he symbolises the moral and ritual purity of his people. Nukunya further argues that this responsibility of moral and spiritual leadership places serious taboos on the chief to enable him maintain his ritual purity.¹⁵⁶ Akrong is also convinced that the chief, as a *de jure* ancestor is bound to demonstrate the moral qualities of the ancestors and emerge as the moral paragon of the society. Akrong further identifies the function of taboos as the regulatory factor on the social and moral life of the chief, which empowers him to “articulate the values and ideals of the society”.¹⁵⁷

Thus in both the traditional setting and some contemporary institutions, the challenge of moral excellence is regarded as a benchmark of those in leadership. However the ability of the occupants of the stools and skins to live up to these moral standards has often been called to question. Some of the concerns raised on the less attractive aspects of traditional leadership comprise the institutionalisation of polygamy, autocratic use of power, human rights abuse, misapplication of communal resources and chieftaincy disputes.¹⁵⁸

2.5 Traditional Religious Leadership

Turner conceives of religion as something “existing in the interplay between revelation of the transcendent and the response of the human, both set always, of course in a particular milieu”.¹⁵⁹ This concept identifies the three crucial factors of deity, individual, and community, whose interplay generate and sustain any significant religious narrative. Turner’s opinion is instructive in studying religious functionaries and their social impact within the

¹⁵⁶ Nukunya, *Tradition and Change*, 70.

¹⁵⁷ Akrong, “Religion and Tradition”, 200.

¹⁵⁸ Some of these criticisms are captured, for instance in Akosua Perbi, “Servitude and Chieftaincy in Ghana: the Historical Evidence” in Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba ed., *Chieftaincy in Ghana* 353 – 378; G. P. Hagan, “Epilogue: The Way Forward – New Wines and Broken Bottles” Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba ed., *Chieftaincy in Ghana*, 663 – 673.

¹⁵⁹ Harold W. Turner, “The Way Forward in the Religious Study of African Primal Religions” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XII, 1 (1981), (1- 15), 13.

traditional African setting as “a particular milieu.” The African worldview, which is keenly aware of the constant dynamic interaction between the spiritual and physical realms, makes traditional religion pervasive, influencing almost all aspects of personal and communal life.

Idowu regards African traditional religion as one of reciprocal relationship, where humankind relies on Deity for the fulfilment of personal, basic needs, which are both material and spiritual.¹⁶⁰ This practicality and pervasiveness of religion in Africa is further enhanced by the idea of mystical causality, where occurrences in the physical realm are believed to be predetermined and influenced by supernatural forces, be they benevolent ones such as deities, ancestral spirits, or malevolent ones such as witches. This widespread religious inclination makes priests and other sacerdotal functionaries indispensable in the traditional setting, as they play intermediary roles between deities and communities.¹⁶¹ In the Ghanaian traditional setting, priests and priestesses, diviners, mediums, medicine-men, magicians and herbalists comprise the set of religious functionaries, whose roles in certain cases do overlap and do not respond readily to Christian categories. However, for the purpose of this thesis I would like to give attention to the office of priests and priestesses, whose functions, in certain dimensions, seem to be reflected in aspects of Pentecostal ministry.

Mbiti, in examining the traditional priesthood, appreciates the functionaries as those who embody what is the best in the religion, as they become living symbols of the presence of God, the beliefs as well as the moral values of the people.¹⁶² He further suggests that as repository of the religious heritage of their communities, they are “wise, intelligent and talented people often with outstanding abilities and personalities.”¹⁶³ This suggests that

¹⁶⁰ E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*. (London: SCM: 1973), 190.

¹⁶¹ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*. (Oxford: Heinemann, 1990), 162- 184.

¹⁶² John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*. (Oxford Heinemann, 1991), 153.

¹⁶³ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 153.

traditional religious leaders are charismatic and resourceful individuals who protect and project the religious ideas and practices of their communities; and these are qualifications which are not alien to Christian leadership.

2.5.1 The Calling and Training of Priests

The calling of traditional priests is delineated by Busia in his seminal work on Asante society, where the candidate for the priesthood is chosen directly by the spirit of the *bosom*, deity through special revelation.¹⁶⁴ Ekem, who has extensively explored the status and roles of *akɔmfɔ* (plural: *akɔmfɔ*), the traditional priest, to identify parallels in Christian nomenclature, also argues that the call to the priesthood is the prerogative of the deity.¹⁶⁵ Principal among the criteria of a genuine call to the priesthood is possession by the spirit of a particular *bosom*. But this has to be attested by more experienced *akɔmfɔ*.¹⁶⁶ Thereafter the candidate is sent to a shrine for training. The training period varies from about six months to four years¹⁶⁷ and it can be rigorous and exacting, sometimes demanding extreme self-discipline in dietary and sexual matters. The training process is quite elaborate, with candidates being instructed, according to Opoku, in “the laws, taboos, dances, songs and idiosyncrasies of the gods, as well as general priestly duties.”¹⁶⁸ The moral dimension of their training is further enhanced by the instructions the trainees receive when they graduate which according to Mbiti, comprise such injunctions as “not to kill, not to steal, not to deceive, not to be proud, to obey parents and elders, to be discreet and not to quarrel even when provoked.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁴ K. A. Busia, “The Ashanti” in *African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples*, Daryll Forde, (ed.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 193-194.

¹⁶⁵ John D. K. Ekem, *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother-Tongue Biblical Interpretation*. (Accra: SonLife Press, 2009), 48.

¹⁶⁶ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, 48

¹⁶⁷ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, 49.

¹⁶⁸ Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft”, 56 - 57.

¹⁶⁹ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 171.

2.5.2 Functions and Roles of the Priest

The interpretation of scholars such as Green, which suggests that, Africans may not necessarily engage in religious activities unless calamities cause them to seek explanations in terms of their understandable spiritual and moral framework,¹⁷⁰ seems to limit the social impact of traditional religion and its functionaries. To reiterate, religion permeates every facet of life, and shrines are regularly consulted for protection and prosperity, not only in the hereafter, but more importantly in the present age. According to Gyekye, "emphasis on the pursuit and attainment of human well-being is unrelenting. Indeed, religion is considered essentially as a means of attaining the needs, interests and happiness of human beings in this life."¹⁷¹ This issue is discussed later in connection with the "prosperity gospel". This pervasive religious attitude underscores the indispensability of shrines and their functionaries in observing ceremonies, rituals, and *rites du passage* of traditional communities.

Beyond the performance of rituals on behalf of the community, groups and individuals, the priests play an important intermediary role between the deities and their devotees. The priests plead with the gods on behalf of the petitioner, and in turn reveal the will of the former to the latter, especially in terms of pacification requirements, which the acolytes help the worshiper to carry out after the prescribed objects have been provided. Onyinah describes the process of consultation, where the spirit of the deity of a particular *bosom*, is invited to possess the *ɔkɔmfo*. The *ɔkɔmfo* receives esoteric messages from the *bosom*, which are deciphered by an interpreter to the clients.¹⁷² The content of these messages according to Onyinah, include "the type of treatment of a disease, or causes of mishaps, such as barrenness, an accident, a sudden

¹⁷⁰ Ronald M. Green, "Religion and Morality in the African Traditional Setting" in *Journal of Religion in Africa* XIV, 1 (1983). 6.

¹⁷¹ Gyekye, *Values*, 14. In addition, see Larbi, E. Kinsley *Pentecostalism*, 50.

¹⁷² Onyinah "Akan Witchcraft", 56- 57.

death or origin of conflicts in marriage.”¹⁷³ Another important function of the priest is that of prophecy, as he or she is supposed to predict the future or speak forth the will of his or her deity under inspiration.

Normally, a high standard of ethical behaviour is expected of priests, because of the prominent role they play in society. Such behaviour may include self-discipline in sexual expression and the observance of other personal and social taboos.

2.5.3 Moral Influence of Religious Functionaries

Linking traditional African morality to religion has generated polarised debate among scholars. Mbiti,¹⁷⁴ Ganusah,¹⁷⁵ Akoto¹⁷⁶ argue for a religious basis for traditional morality, whilst Gyekye¹⁷⁷ and Wiredu,¹⁷⁸ for instance, insist on a non-religious traditional value system. Considering the pervasiveness of religious ideas and the rejection of dichotomy between the sacred and the secular in the traditional African context, this researcher supports a religious foundation for traditional ethics, consequently locating religious functionaries at the centre of morality for the community.

The traditional religious establishment often provides the context for rewards and sanctions relevant to moral choices in the community. Abotchie undertakes an elaborate exploration of the various mechanisms for social control among the southern Eves by isolating the relevant factors of lineage identity, rites of passage, traditional leadership, and what he calls, the

¹⁷³ Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft”, 57.

¹⁷⁴ Mbiti. *Introduction to African Religion*, 174-179.

¹⁷⁵ Rebecca Y. Ganusah, “The Impact of Religion on Morality in West Africa” in J. N. Kudadjie et al (ed.) *Religion, Morality and West African Society* (Accra: Wesley Printing Press, 2002), 69-82.

¹⁷⁶ Dorothy Akoto, “Religion, Morality and West African Society: A General Overview with a Backdrop in African Traditional Religion” in Kudadjie et al (ed.), 83-99.

¹⁷⁷ Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. (Accra: Sankofa Publishing, 2003), 56-57.

¹⁷⁸ Wiredu, Kwasi “The Moral Foundations of an African Culture”. K. Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye (eds.) *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies I*, Washington: CIPSH/UUNESCO The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992.

magico-religious mechanism. His magico-religious category emphasises how the Eves hold crime as acts offensive to the gods who, as a result, engage supernatural forces to regulate human behaviour in the community.¹⁷⁹ Abotchie postulates that the Eves consider sickness and tragic occurrences as aberrations that are ascribable to spiritual forces. Their occurrence therefore calls for causal identification, which requires of the priests and diviners to consult the deities, pronounce the cause, and prescribe the appropriate remedy.¹⁸⁰ Some of the popular causes are the breaking of a taboo for which the diviner may recommend animal sacrifice to appease the aggrieved forces. Other magical methods of crime control, in Abotchie's view, include, *nukaka*, oracle consultation, *akadodo*, trial by ordeal, and *ame dede tr̄ me*, hexing.¹⁸¹

The subject of witchcraft features prominently in any discussions on African traditional religions. The reality or otherwise of the phenomenon is however beyond the scope of this thesis.¹⁸² Generally witches are branded as evil people, especially old ladies, who use psychic powers to harm others or destroy their possessions. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prove that someone has witchcraft. Nevertheless witchcraft accusations are frequent features of traditional religion, where some priests and shrines specialise in witchcraft detection and subsequent exorcism. The one who is identified by a priest or diviner as the witch responsible for someone else's calamity, is exposed to all kinds of humiliating treatment and is sometimes ostracised from the community, or even killed surreptitiously. The emergence of this tendency in contemporary society and the response of Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders to the phenomenon are discussed below (Section 6.4.4).

¹⁷⁹ Chris Abotchie, *Social Control in Traditional Southern Eweland of Ghana*. (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2002), 4.

¹⁸⁰ Abotchie, *Social Control*, 63.

¹⁸¹ Abotchie, *Social Control*, 75-85.

For a detailed discussion of the subject, see Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 43 – 47; Nukunya, *Tradition and Social Change*, 59 -60.

Reflecting on the function of religious leaders in determining the moral gauge of society, one would expect them to exemplify the morality they mediate. As stated above the acolytes in training observe some moral prohibitions and taboos, which they are requested to uphold, sometimes even after graduation. The emphatic moral slant of the Christian Gospel with its subsequent demand on the practitioners as moral icons seems to synchronise with these qualifications for traditional religious leaders. Hence the public and media outcry against unethical conduct among Pentecostal ministers appears to be an extension of traditional attitudes towards religious leaders.

2.6 Inherent Challenges in Traditional to Leadership

The positive influence of traditional political and religious leadership notwithstanding, concerns are often expressed about how the veneration of such leaders could result in the abuse of followers and available resources. Such abuses, which could characterise contemporary Christian leadership, are succinctly expressed by Wurata:

Some priests and bishops have definitely exploited this African cultural heritage of reverence to their spiritual leaders for their own personal glory and enrichment. Even in political circles, leaders tend toward personality cult which they know will easily develop in the context of the African cultural respect for their leaders. This tendency may explain why in the African church and state people in authority do not easily relinquish power. Authority in Africa is held as a sacred rather than as a public trust ... Taken by fallen human beings, the African reverence for authority can become a source of great abuses and sufferings.¹⁸³

2.7 Conclusion

Contextualisation of the Christian Gospel is experiencing a fresh dynamic among Pentecostal Churches, where significant strides in the indigenisation of doctrine, ritual and ecclesiastical structure have been accomplished. In some instances, traditional ideas seem to resonate well

¹⁸³ Wurata, "Who is Jesus Christ for Africans Today?" 63.

with Christian concepts and practices which reflect African sense of community, a sharp awareness of spiritual reality, and submission to leadership. The examination of Ghanaian traditional institutions, namely family, chieftaincy and religion has revealed, variously, ethical issues, such as women and children's rights, holding communal and personal interest in equilibrium, and the influence and responsible application of political and religious authority. Obviously, these concerns still manifest in contemporary institutions, not least Pentecostal/Charismatic churches.

CHAPTER 3

SELECTED ETHICAL THEORIES AND SYSTEMS

3.1 Introduction

The structure of society compels Christian ethics to interact¹⁸⁴ with other ethical systems; therefore no comprehensive discussion of the former can be done without an appreciable reference to the latter. Consequently this chapter focuses on some general ethical theories and systems to identify parallel principles and the dynamics of the interrelatedness of Christian ethics to secular moral philosophy. Selected ethical theories which are relevant to this thesis are closely examined to help discern their possible manifestation in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics. In addition, the formulation of traditional Ghanaian ethical philosophy is also explored to detect its influence on the moral standards of Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders.

Various definitions have been offered for ethics. And, depending on the orientation of the ethicist, they may either emphasise principle over consequence, or promote the interest of society over that of the individual. For instance Feinberg and Feinberg define ethics as “the branch of philosophy that reflects on such issues as the source of moral norms and how to justify one’s rules for governing action in moral matters.”¹⁸⁵ The occurrence of “norms” and “rules” in this short definition insinuates an approach to ethics which is more inclined towards duty and principles than consequence.¹⁸⁶ Let us also consider this definition from Wiredu, who claims ethics, is “simply the observance of rules for the harmonious adjustment

¹⁸⁴ Since Christians do not live in isolation of people of other faiths and ideologies, the cross-fertilisation of moral concepts between them becomes inevitable. This interaction could be beneficial or detrimental, contingent to the Christian community’s response. A constructive comparative approach could identify parallels on the one hand, and areas of conflict on the other hand, thereby facilitating the necessary reflection that would resource the Christian to appreciate his or her ethical convictions from a better informed position.

¹⁸⁵ John S. Feinberg and Paul D. Feinberg, *Ethics for a Brave New World*. (Wheaton Ill: Crossway Books, 1993), 18.

¹⁸⁶ The co-authors actually declare that their focus is “more on matters of obligation than on matters of value” (Feinberg and Feinberg, 18).

of the interests of the individual to those of others in society.”¹⁸⁷ This definition, apart from its inclination towards obligation, also, coming from an African (cf. Section 2.7), seems to subject the interest of the individual to that of society. Applied to ministerial ethics, the pertinent issues generated include whether ministers’ conduct should be principle-based or consequence driven; and whether they should be guided by conscience to define their own moral standards, or rather, to conform to the expectations of society. For the purpose of this thesis, ethics is defined as a discipline that focuses on the rectitude of human behaviour by examining motives, principles and consequences of a particular act or general conduct. I have attempted an inclusive definition, which recognises the place of rules as well as outcome in the ethical debate, without necessarily projecting the interest of society over that of the individual, or vice versa. This sense of balance is what I would try to maintain in exploring the ministerial ethics of Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers.

3.2 Deontological Theories

Deontological (from Greek *deon*, duty; *logos*, word) ethical theories are those defined by principles of duty and obligations; such ethical systems do not necessarily consider the outcome or result of particular a choice in establishing ethical norms. They are normally based on principles and laws that regulate human interaction with nature, and the dynamics of human relationships which constitute the structure of society. By observing nature and the structure of society, deontological ethicists identify certain unconditional norms that are crucial for the stability and survival of humanity. Many Christian ethicists have a bias towards this deontological approach in doing ethics, insisting that Scripture is full of divine commandments that one is obliged to obey, without due consideration of the consequences.

The main examples of Christian ethical systems in this category include Karl Barth’s ethical

¹⁸⁷ Kwasi Wiredu, “The Moral Foundations of an African Culture”. Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye (Eds) *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies I*, (Washington: CIPSH/UNESCO The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992), 191.

absolutism, which holds up biblical ethics as inviolable.¹⁸⁸ The secular deontological approach is referred to as *ethical rationalism*, which happens to be an ethical system based on human reason. The most prominent proponent of this system is Immanuel Kant, whose theory is examined in the next section.

Trull and Carter, in applying the ethics of obligation to Christian ministry seem to suggest that the observance of rules, be they scriptural, ecclesiastical codes, or governmental edicts cannot be ignored by the Christian leader.¹⁸⁹ It is therefore significant to observe that the oldest book on ministerial ethics, *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, is replete with moral obligations, as for instance, his first step in humility insinuates “The first step of humility is unhesitating obedience, which comes naturally to those who cherish Christ above all.”¹⁹⁰

3.2.1 Kantianism

3.2.1.1 Kant's Moral Theology

Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) has developed arguments for the existence of God that is predicated on morality by insisting that reason cannot prove nor disprove the existence of God.¹⁹¹ In Scutt's view, the traditional interpretation of Kant's moral theology is the establishment of “the truth of the existence of God based on distinctively moral considerations.”¹⁹² According to Kant, “Even the Holy One of the gospel must first be compared with our ideal of moral perfection before he is recognized as such.”¹⁹³ Scutt's interpretation of Kant's moral theology reveals that pure reason serves as an authority which

¹⁸⁸ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics VI, The Doctrine of the Word of God*, Second Half-Volume eds. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956), 793.

¹⁸⁹ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 55.

¹⁹⁰ Benedict (c.480-547), *The Rule of Benedict*, Timothy Fry, ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 29.

¹⁹¹ Max Charlesworth, *Philosophy and Religion: From Plato to Postmodernism*. (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002), 100.

¹⁹² Marie Zermatt Scutt, “Kant's Moral Theology”, *British Journal of Philosophy* 18(4) 2010: (611-633), 611.

¹⁹³ Immanuel Kant, *Ethical Philosophy: Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. James W. Ellington, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 21.

legislates moral law as an absolute principle binding on all rational beings in the natural world. Furthermore, the object of the moral law is identified as the highest good, which is impossible in the natural world. Therefore the possibility of the highest good can only be realised with the purposive unity between nature and morality, which presupposes God as the moral author of nature.¹⁹⁴ Austin is also convinced that Kant has indirectly contributed to the Divine Command Theory by claiming that morality requires faith in a God, who can help humans meet the demands of morality.¹⁹⁵ Although Brown endorses Kant's perception of God "as a principle of unity of all things," he rejects the latter's idea that one has to necessarily acknowledge God in order to acquire a moral sense, which is an insightful limitation of Kant's moral theology.¹⁹⁶ Kant thus emphasises morality as something contingent to the acknowledgement of God, which, to some extent reinforces the position that demands high moral standards of people in religious vocation.

3.2.1.2 The Goodwill

Kant's approach to duty-based ethics has a lot in common with the Christian ethical concept of divine command theory, which is popular with the Pentecostal Holiness movement (their tradition and ideas are discussed in the next chapter). The key principles of Kant's ethical system relevant to this thesis are the *good will*, *human dignity*, and the *categorical imperative* (CI) or the realisation of an absolute moral law. Kant based his moral philosophy on the concept of *good will*; the only quality, which according to him, has intrinsic value. And this approximates what the Christian would refer to as good character. He argues that only one thing can be called good without any qualification, and that is *good will*,

¹⁹⁴ Scutt, "Kant's Moral Theology", 619.

¹⁹⁵ Michael W. Austin, "Divine Command Theory" *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.ieputm.edu/category/m-and-e/religion/> accessed 13th November 2011.

¹⁹⁶ Montague Brown, *Restoration of Reason: the Eclipse and Recovery of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 157.

There is no possibility of thinking of anything at all in the world, or even out of it which can be regarded as good without qualification, except a *good will*. Intelligence, wit, judgement, and whatever talents of the mind one might want to name are doubtless in many respects good and desirable, as are such qualities of temperament as courage, resolution and perseverance. But they can also become extremely bad and harmful if the will, which is to make use of these gifts of nature and which in its special constitution is called character, is not good.¹⁹⁷

Bailey has observed that all the virtues identified by Kant in this quotation could become evil, unless they are applied in a context of good will; consequently the good will is the only virtue which is good, irrespective of other conditions, and which also, conterminously, provides the context for the goodness of every other virtue.¹⁹⁸ Evidently the thought of possessing and maintaining one's moral rectitude is the very condition under which anything else is worth having or pursuing.¹⁹⁹ And this has called into question the worth of qualities such as courage, which when applied without good will could be destructive.²⁰⁰ Bailey, reflecting on Kant's concept of duty avers, "to act 'from duty' is to act precisely because the action is morally good, irrespective of whether or not the action also coincides with the satisfaction of inclination."²⁰¹ And duty may sometimes oppose inclination; "The obligation we impose on ourselves override all other calls for action, and frequently run counter to our desires. We nonetheless always have a sufficient motive to act as we ought."²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Ethical Philosophy: Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. James W. Ellington, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 7.

¹⁹⁸ Tom Bailey, "Analysing the Good Will: Kant's Argument in the First Section of the *Groundwork*" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 18(4) 2010, (635-662), 638.

¹⁹⁹ Robert Johnson, "Kant's Moral Philosophy" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/info.html#c> (accessed on 19th October 2011), 5-6.

²⁰⁰ Allen W. Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 22.

²⁰¹ Bailey, "Analysing the Good Will," 640.

²⁰² J. B. Schneewind, "Autonomy, Obligation and Virtue: An Overview of Kant's Moral Philosophy" in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*, Paul Guyer (ed.), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 309. (309 – 341)

3.2.1.3 Human Dignity

Kant's second maxim, which is extremely relevant to contemporary times and especially useful in dealing with minority groups and the underprivileged in society, is his concept of human dignity. The Kantian formula for human dignity is "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."²⁰³ Kant is convinced that only rational agents or persons can be ends in themselves, as they alone can have an unconditioned and absolute value. He insists that it would be morally wrong to sacrifice human beings with absolute value as a means of realising an end, whose value is only relative. Reflecting on this concept, Hill contends that no human being thinks his/her self worth depends entirely on class, popularity or utility to society; rather everyone is convinced that a person has worth simply as a human being.²⁰⁴ Kant further insists, "Every man has a rightful claim of respect from his fellow men, and he is also bound to show respect to every other man in return. Humanity itself is a dignity, for man can be used by no one (neither by others nor even by himself) merely as a means, but must always be used at the same time as an end."²⁰⁵

3.2.1.4 The Categorical Imperative

Kant's categorical imperative considers duty as an unconditional factor in a moral act. It is what a person identifies as the reasonable moral duty in a particular situation, which could be appreciated as such by all rational beings and replicated in similar situations universally. By this Kant declares: "Act according to that maxim which can at the same time make itself a

²⁰³ Immanuel Kant, *The Moral Law*. Trans, H. J. Paton, (London: Hutchinson's University Library, n.a), 33.

²⁰⁴ Thomas Hill Jr. cited in an interview with Hinman in Lawrence M. Hinman, *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*. (Belmont C. A.: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2003), 191.

²⁰⁵ Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, 127. The practice of using people as a human shield in a conflict situation to protect, as it were, others who are "more important" provides an example of using human beings as a means to an end. In addition, certain institutions sacrifice the interest and rights of individuals, when personal resources of employees have been used to further institutional interest without the consent of the individuals. Practices such as widowhood rites and witchcraft accusations which dehumanise the victims also provide occasion for using human beings as a means to an end.



universal law.”²⁰⁶ He argues that if one cannot will something as a universal rule, then the person should never do it. In Schneewind’s opinion, what stands out in Kant’s moral vision is that, to the autonomous adult who has the freewill to choose, it becomes obvious that there are some actions we simply have to do.²⁰⁷ Thus the idea of moral obligation stems from unconditional necessity based on the very structure of society and the demands of human interaction, which needs no external factors for validation.

3.2.1.5 Relevance for Ministerial Ethics

To reiterate, the moral theology of Kant, where he insists that the existence of God is contingent on morality acknowledges ethical principles as a dominant component of the Christian faith. And this position almost equates Christianity to morality. In addition, Kant’s idea of the good will being unconditionally good, and also providing the context that lends value to other virtues resonates with Paul’s hymn on love in 1Cor 13, where the exercise of charismatic gifts without love is regarded as vain and valueless. Obviously, Kant’s moral philosophy ascribes intrinsic value to moral obligations and this runs parallel to the Christian approach of classifying moral injunctions in Scripture as doctrine. Popkin and Stroll have rightly observed that Kant’s concept of morality is not simply a matter of inclination or of desire, or preference, but it is something objective.²⁰⁸ It cannot be gainsaid that Christian moral philosophy is enriched by some of these Kantian concepts. Moreover, they can also be extended to ministerial ethics to help practitioners appreciate the value of ecclesiastical moral codes as objective principles that define and sustain institutional structures.

Nevertheless, the Kantian position does not adequately respond to conflicting values, where it becomes necessary to break one moral one moral law in order to uphold the other.

²⁰⁶ Kant, *Ethical Philosophy*, 42.

²⁰⁷ Schneewind, “Autonomy, Obligation, and Virtue ...” 320.

²⁰⁸ Richard H. Popkin and Avrum Stroll, *Philosophy*. (Oxford: Made Simple Books, 1999, Third edition), 48.

Furthermore, limiting Christianity to an ethical code is too asphyxiating for the dynamic influence and empowering capacity of the Holy Spirit. O'Meara for instance objects to a position that regards Christ merely as an ethical teacher. To him, locating "Jesus within the kingdom of God need not reduce Jesus to an ethical teacher; for he presents himself not only as the incarnation of the presence of God but as the sender of God's Spirit now and in the future."²⁰⁹ Beyond moral obligations, Christianity responds to moral failure in terms of forgiveness, and the Faith also accomplishes empowerment to imitate the life of Christ. Again, the liberty, wide expanse and variety of Christian encounter is perceptively captured by O'Meara, "God was experienced in a vastness, freedom and goodness flowing through a world of diversity, movement, and order, while Christ appeared in a more human way, filled with a personal love, redemptive and empowering."²¹⁰ In this regard, Kant's view of moral objectivity may appear somewhat restrictive;²¹¹ a moderate view of moral objectivism would insist that moral rules are supposed to be interpreted; and strong absolute claims are not always applicable in real life and ministry situations. This observation therefore creates room for teleological theories which receive attention in the next section.

3.3 Teleological Theories

Teleological (Greek *telos*, "end"; *logos* word) ethical theories use the value of the end result of an action to determine the rule or obligation that regulates that action; "it derives duty or moral obligation from what is good or desirable as an end to be achieved."²¹² According to the teleological viewpoint, it is the outcome of an action that determines its rectitude;

²⁰⁹ O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 36.

²¹⁰ O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 30-31.

²¹¹ One wonders whether Kant's idea of "a rational being" can embrace all human beings, and whether all "rational" beings can possibly approximate the one objective standard of morality, given different conditions. In this regard, Fletcher's counsel to avoid absolute claims such as "always", "never", "perfect" etc, may provide the moderating factor.

²¹² "Teleological Ethics", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Britannica Online, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-9071587> (accessed on 20th October 2011).

therefore no action is by its very nature right or wrong. Trull and Carter aver that “consequentialism is present in the Bible, and it has the value of compelling the moral actor to consider every factor, especially the end result, before implementing a decision.”²¹³ The most prominent example of secular teleological theories is Jeremy Bentham’s and John Stuart Mill’s Utilitarianism, which is discussed in the next section.

3.3.1 Utilitarianism

3.3.1.2 Bentham: The Greater Pleasure Principle

I have selected the works of two prominent Utilitarian philosophers, Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) for discussion. The Utilitarians argue from the premise that human life is governed by two sovereign masters, namely pain and pleasure.²¹⁴ And the principle that is acclaimed by utility, is, according to Bentham, the one “which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question.”²¹⁵ Bentham did not only use pain and pleasure to explain the motivation for human action; to him they also provide the very basis for defining what is good and moral. And he has attempted to demonstrate in his book, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, this pleasure and pain concept provides the basis and framework for social, legal and moral transformation of society. Weirich, appreciates the utilitarian position as one that attempts to maximise utility “every reason for an act is a reason to prefer it to alternative acts and so a reason to increase its utility relative to the utilities of alternative acts.”²¹⁶

²¹³ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 57.

²¹⁴ Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. J. H. Burns and H. L. A. Hart (eds.), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 11.

²¹⁵ Bentham, *Principles*, 12.

²¹⁶ Paul Weirich, “Utility Maximization Generalized” *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 5(2008), 283-284.

In order to calculate the quantum of pleasure that justifies the morality of an act, Bentham developed a pleasure calculus; a nebulous one rather, in his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*.²¹⁷ Bentham and Mill were concerned with legal and social reform, and this has sustained the relevance of their concepts even in contemporary times. Driver suggests that what constituted a bad law, to Bentham, was its lack of utility, and its tendency to “lead to unhappiness and misery without any compensating happiness. If a law or an action doesn’t *do* any good, then it *isn’t* any good.”²¹⁸

The intense focus of Bentham’s Utilitarianism on pleasures and enjoyment seems to promote a tendency of hedonism, which drew much criticism. It was targeted by critics mainly because it seems to divorce morality from divine revelation and from natural law. Secondly, Utilitarianism has been regarded as “pigs’ philosophy”, because it appears to lay emphasis on sensual bodily pleasure.²¹⁹

3.3.1.3 Mill: The Greater Happiness Principle

John Stuart Mill developed Utilitarian philosophy further by responding to some of the criticism levelled against Bentham. Mill preferred to define utility in terms of happiness rather than pleasure, where the greatest happiness principle “holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness.”²²⁰ Mill departs from Bentham’s hedonism by grading pleasures in terms of quality, and by preferring intellectual pleasures to mere sensational or emotional ones,

²¹⁷ Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles*, 38 – 39.

²¹⁸ Julia Driver, “The History of Utilitarianism” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/utilitarianism.history> (accessed 11th Nov 2011) 6

²¹⁹ Lawrence M. Hinman, *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*. (Belmont, C A: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2003.), 137.

²²⁰ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, (ed) Samuel Gorovitz. (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co, 1971), 18.

arguing that utilitarians “have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasure”.²²¹ Sinnott-Armstrong thinks Mill “distinguished higher and lower qualities of pleasure according to the preferences of people who have experienced both kinds.”²²²

The Utilitarian position is, however, not one of lawlessness. Mill acknowledges the fact that since one cannot always accurately calculate the result of one’s actions, rules and norms are necessary to guide behaviour. Utilitarians acknowledge the role of moral principles and beliefs, but they argue that such principles are not universal or absolutes, and there are exceptions to the rule. Any of these rules could be broken to serve the principle of utility, especially if the purpose of the greater good would be served.

3.3.1.4 Relevance for Ministerial Ethics

Utilitarianism has gained much currency in the West, emerging as a basic philosophy which guides legislation on many ethical issues.²²³ Even in Christian moral philosophy, one cannot rule out the consideration of consequence in ethical decision-making. This implies that Christian ethics is dynamic and any attempts made to limit it to one kind – normally deontology – can be frustrating. O’Meara thinks Jesus challenged absolute religious claims, as the Saviour “broke through sacral caste to welcome all as he questioned religious rules as divinely guaranteed absolutes and flared up in anger more at religious hypocrisy than at ethical sin.”²²⁴ Trull and Carter have also identified some instances of utilitarianism in biblical ethics:

Wisdom literature seldom takes the imperative form, but usually gives practical advice about how to achieve the good life (Prov 9:10). Hebrew midwives who “feared God” made their decision to deceive Pharaoh on the basis of the consequence: to save the male babies, God apparently approved of their decision (Exodus 1:15-20). ... In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ

²²¹ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 18.

²²² Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, “Consequentialism” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequentialism/> (accessed 11th Nov 2011), 5.

²²³ See Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics..* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 92.

²²⁴ O’Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 39.

stressed motives, noting that good deeds may be corrupted by wrong reasons. The Apostle Paul often evaluated consequences before making a final decision.²²⁵

Utilitarian considerations may become relevant, for instance, concerning how much of the truth a minister should disclose of confessions made by a congregation member, which could lead to a breakdown in family relationships. In a hypothetical case of consequential morality, Green in his philosophical novel, *The Power and the Glory* set in Mexico, presents us with a case of a priest who committed fornication and fathered a daughter as a result. During a period of persecution of Roman Catholic clergy in Mexico, it took the daughter's identification of the priest as her father to save his life – he was spared because it was assumed that Roman Catholic priests did not have children.²²⁶ From a utilitarian perspective, the priest's promiscuity may appear justifiable because it saved his life.

However, Utilitarianism is an ethical system which focuses mostly on results and may not have any objective standards for moral assessment. Moreover, the value of the so-called good consequence is relative; from various perspectives the outcome could be judged as good or evil.

3.4 Virtue/Character Ethics

So far the ethical systems we have discussed seem to focus on the evaluation of either the method of the moral act or its end results, overlooking the moral agent, that is, the human initiator of the act. However the state of mind and condition of the moral agent in any decision-making process cannot be ignored; this concept which is much appreciated in Christian ethics is referred to as character development or sanctification.

²²⁵ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 57.

²²⁶ Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory*, (London: Vintage Books, 1940, 2004), 73.

3.4.1 The Character Factor

Virtue theorists think morality exceeds just doing one's duty to involve the whole character and disposition of the moral agent. Central to this position of determining the uprightness of behaviour is the agent rather than the act performed – so a person's character becomes the key issue. Rae, in his evaluation of ethical theories, has identified some of the main differences between virtue ethics and act-oriented ethics. He observes that whilst act-oriented ethics emphasises doing, virtue-oriented ethics stresses being. Secondly, act-oriented ethics focuses on following rules or probing results, as opposed to virtue ethics which points to people who have demonstrated a consistent outstanding moral character for emulation. Rae further observes that virtue theory places emphasis on a person's motive rather than the approach of act-oriented theories which focus more on the act itself.²²⁷

To appreciate the full impact of character ethics, the first step is to develop a concept of the ideal person or the standard that fulfils the purpose for one's existence. That is what Plato refers to as determining "how life may be passed by each one of us to the greatest advantage",²²⁸ that is both for the benefit of the individual and society. In Aristotle's view it is when a person performs the essential purpose for which he or she was created that he or she leads the ideal life.²²⁹ Secondly, the character theorist has to develop a list of virtues necessary for realising the person's proper purpose, which the ancient Greeks identified as courage, humility, loyalty, respect, and justice among others. Thirdly, the theory has to show how these virtues can be developed, whether by divine grace, training, discipline, emulation, education or a combination of all these. For instance, in Aristotle's view, virtues are

²²⁷ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 92.

²²⁸ Plato, *The Republic*. Trans Benjamin Jowett; <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.2.i.html>, (Accessed on 3rd March 2007 at 11am), 26.

²²⁹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. David Ross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 13.

depends on his character.”²³¹ In Reeck’s view character concerns enable leaders to express calmness in making the right choice and the boldness to resist wrong.²³²

3.5 Ghanaian Traditional Ethics

As stated above (see Section 2.1), Ghanaian traditional ideas still have a hold on contemporary institutions, including Pentecostal churches. It is therefore important, in examining their ministerial ethics, to appreciate the interaction of tradition moral philosophy with Pentecostal ethics. Studies in African traditional ethics face the challenge of lack of documentation and the absence of significant moral theorists.²³³ To overcome the challenge of little documentation, contemporary scholars have scanned folklore for proverbs, witty sayings and axioms, songs and artefacts, among others, to help preserve traditional ethical concepts.²³⁴

3.5.1 Concepts and Nomenclature

There is a perennial intellectual debate underway about the classification of major ethical concepts in Africa, and for that matter Ghana. Various scholars, depending on their orientation think traditional African ethics is either deontological, teleological or virtue based. Coetzee’s conviction that African moral philosophy is perspective driven, resulting in

²³¹ Nolan Harmon, *Ministerial Ethics & Etiquette: Revised Edition*. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 34.

²³² Darell Reeck, *Ethics for the Christian Professions: A Christian Perspective*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982) 47.

²³³ In an interview with Rev Professor Joshua N. Kudadjie, a Ghanaian ethicist in Accra on 11th June 2007, he ascribed this situation to the fact that African traditional ethics is a young discipline in the academy.

²³⁴ Some of the contemporary philosophers who employ this methodology include, C. A. Ackah, *Akan Ethics*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1988; Kwasi Wiredu, “Moral Foundations of an African Culture” Eds. Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, I*. Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change Series II. Africa Vol. 1. Washington DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992; N. K. Dzobo, “Values in a Changing Society Man, Ancestors and God.” Eds. Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, I*. Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change Series II. Africa Vol. 1. Washington DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1992;

pluralistic and heterogeneous ethical contours is therefore relevant.²³⁵ Kudadjie, for instance thinks both teleological and deontological elements manifest in African traditional ethics.²³⁶ Scholars such as Akoto,²³⁷ Gyekye,²³⁸ and Wiredu²³⁹ insist that traditional African ethics is teleological. Akoto for instance thinks, "Actions are judged right or wrong depending on how positively or negatively they affect a person's relationship to the Supreme Being, lesser gods and members of the society both living and dead."²⁴⁰ In Wiredu's view, both religion and ethics in the Akan context have a utilitarian purpose. He thinks a separation of moral values from religions is useful, as nothing is intrinsically good unless it promotes human interest.²⁴¹

Among those who argue for a deontological basis of Africa ethics are Danquah, Mibiti and Idowu. Danquah's understanding of deontology in Akan moral philosophy reflects something of the strict principle-based ethics of Kant. According to Danquah, Akan ethics expresses,

The justice and necessity which will make a universal appeal, at least to all lovers of good who, without knowing or asking the reason why, feel that goodness in itself is preferable to wickedness, even if the way of the wicked looks like leading a pleasurable hedonistic existence, an existence which, however felicitous, is empty of true contentment or genuine and abiding satisfaction.²⁴²

Danquah thus reveals a duty-based approach which insists on the intrinsic value of morality rather than wagering on the consequence of individual moral acts. He is convinced that

²³⁵ Pieter H. Coetzee, "Morality in African Thought: Particularity in Morality and Its Relation to Community" in *The African Philosophy Reader*, P. H. Coetzee et al (ed.). (London: Routledge, 2002), 273.

²³⁶ Interview, Accra, 11th June 2007.

²³⁷ Dorothy Akoto, "Religion, Morality and West African Society: A General Overview with a Backdrop in Traditional Religion", Joshua N. Kudadjie, et al, *Religion, Morality and West African Society*, Accra: West African Association of Theological Institutions, 2002), 90.

²³⁸ Kwame Gyekye, "Foundations of Ethics", Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, (eds.), *Person and Community*, 132.

²³⁹ Wiredu, "Moral Foundations," 194.

²⁴⁰ Akoto, "Religion, Morality", 90.

²⁴¹ Wiredu, "Moral Foundations," 194.

²⁴² J. B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God: A Fragment of Gold Coast Ethics and Religion*. (n/p...Frank Cass, 1968.), 92.

pursuing justice for justice sake, irrespective of the outcome, is preferable to the one who compromises on moral principles in order to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of life. Similarly, Mibiti's perspective is parallel to the divine command approach: "It is believed in many African societies that their morals were given to them by God from the beginning. This provides an unchallenged authority for the morals."²⁴³

There is a third school of thought, represented by Kunhiyop, who avers that African traditional ethics reflects the virtue approach.²⁴⁴ This position is supported by Gyekye, who also thinks that "Good character is the essence of the African moral system, the lynchpin of the moral wheel. The justification for a character-based ethics is not far to seek."²⁴⁵

3.5.2 Communal and Individualistic Ethics

The strong kinship ties that characterise traditional African communities lend support to a preference of communal over individualistic ethics. Coetzee defines the social structure of African ethics as a system where "an individual's choice of way of life is a choice constrained by the community's pursuit of shared ends."²⁴⁶ Examining the moral foundation of Akans, Wiredu suggests that communal morality demands of the individual to conform to the requirements of society for harmony, even it calls for the "abridgement of one's own interests".²⁴⁷ Furthermore, Wiredu thinks Akan society is a type in which the greatest value is attached to communal belonging.²⁴⁸ Gyekye is also convinced that the sole criterion of

²⁴³ Mibiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 174.

²⁴⁴ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 41- 42.

²⁴⁵ Kwame Gyekye, "African Ethics" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/african> (accessed on 29th September 2011), 6.

²⁴⁶ Coetzee, "Morality in African Thought", 275.

²⁴⁷ Kwasi Wiredu, "The Moral Foundations of an African Society", in *The African Philosophy Reader*, P. H. Coetzee et al (ed.). (London: Routledge, 2002), 287.

²⁴⁸ Wiredu, "The Moral Foundations" 291.

goodness in Akan moral philosophy is the welfare or well-being of the community.²⁴⁹ This excessive focus on communal ethics is however censured for attempting to obliterate the moral sense of the individual by regarding his or her personal values as a mass product of a social ethical system.

3.5.3 Religious Source of Traditional Ethics

In direct contrast to the non-religious approach to traditional African ethics are those who contend that since religion pervades every facet of traditional society, the moral foundation of their ethics cannot be ascribed to any other sources apart from religion. Awolalu and Dopamu reject the notion of regarding morality as human inventions, arguing that conscience is a witness to God's law, which gives man the capacity to discern God's commandments.²⁵⁰

Opoku, also argues for a religious foundation for traditional African morality:

Generally, morality originates from religious considerations, and so pervasive is religion in African culture that the two cannot be separated from each other. Thus, we find that what constitutes the moral code of any particular African society – the laws, taboos, customs and set forms of behaviour – all derive their compelling power from religion. Thus morality flows out of religion...²⁵¹

One cannot deny the availability of the welter of evidence that Ghanaian traditional ethics derives from their religions. This position is supported by much empirical evidence which underpins their sense of justice, and principles that guide social relationships. Aside from the fact that religious consciousness permeates every facet of traditional life, their ideas of morality reflect a deep religious consideration. For instance, an Eve person who has been wronged and does not desire to litigate, will simply submit his or her cause to God by saying *Edrɔla li*, (this idiom is difficult to translate, since it is not just a statement but also an

²⁴⁹ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 132.

²⁵⁰ J. Omosade Awolalu and P. Adelumo Dopamu, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Ibadan: Onibonjo Press and Books Industry, 1979), 212.

²⁵¹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Accra: FEP International Private Limited: 1978), 152.

invocation); literally it means, the “One who will judge my cause abides”. Idiomatically it implies the aggrieved party is invoking divine justice upon the case.

3.6 Conclusion

We have examined some pertinent ethical theories and systems because we know Christian value systems do not exist in isolation of the value systems in the receptor communities. The significance of principles and utility in the development and application of ethical systems have also been evaluated in the Western secular and traditional African contexts, to identify their relevance for Pentecostal ministerial ethics. I have discovered that although Kantian ethics could provide a rational and objective grounding for ministerial ethics, it can also result in a legalism that is not realistic to life and ministry. The utilitarian system which could provide a balance to this ethical rigidity is also susceptible to extreme relativity which provides no standards for moral assessment. The virtue approach could also not stand alone without appealing to act-oriented systems for validation. Furthermore I have assessed the available evidence on the sources of traditional Ghanaian ethics and concluded that evidence for a religious source is overwhelming. The next chapter explores some of the Christian ethical philosophies that are supposed to define moral standards for Christians in general, and Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers in particular.

CHAPTER 4

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

4.1 Introduction

The Judeo-Christian religion is a highly ethical one which teaches that one's commitment to God should reflect in one's obedience to God and behaviour towards one's neighbour. From the creation story through the historical narratives, wisdom literature and prophetic pronouncements of the Old Testament, the themes of holiness, righteousness, sanctity of life, fairness, justice, self-control, compassion for the vulnerable and faithfulness, among others, are prominently projected. Israel's response to these ethical stipulations defined the quality of their relationship with Yahweh and with one another within the covenant community. The New Testament, in recounting the life and ministry of Jesus and the apostles, upholds these same moral concerns by emphasising motives and personal responsibility, as well as the empowering activity of the Holy Spirit in moral transformation. Needless to say, this extensive heritage of biblical morality provides the primary source of information and motivation for those in Christian leadership, not least ordained ministers. Consequently this chapter examines the wider contours of biblical values and approaches to moral formation expounded in the Bible. That notwithstanding, since Christian ethics blends moral philosophy with theology, selected ethical theories developed within a Christian framework are explored for their relevance to clergy conduct.

4.2 Biblical Basis of Morality

The issue of moral responsibility is prominent in the creation narrative in Genesis where, due to mankind's disobedience their relationship with God and with one another became distorted. Adam shifted blame to Eve, and ultimately to God as the cause of his moral failure; and Eve also blamed the serpent as the cause of her disobedience (Genesis 3:1- 19). Harris,

reflecting on this passage in his commentary on Leviticus has observed “To err is human; to deny responsibility is as old as our first parents”²⁵² (Gen 3:1-19). Humanity’s moral degeneration reached a climax in the fratricide of Cain who killed his brother Abel. When Cain was plotting the murder God warned him saying, “If you do right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.” (Genesis 4:7). This reveals that even before the law of God was directly given to Israel at Sinai (Exodus 20), humankind was aware of sinful acts such as murder. Wenham asserts that, compressed into this Cain and Abel narrative is a “whole theology whose principles inform much of the criminal and cultic law of Israel.”²⁵³

God’s progressive revelation was taken a step further when he covenanted with Israel by the mediation of Moses. This covenant, which was ratified at Sinai, with the delivery of the Ten Commandments, is universally acclaimed as a most remarkable ethical code. This set of laws forbids disrespect to parents, murder, adultery, theft, falsehood and covetousness, among others (see Exodus 20:1-17). Küng suggests that God’s covenant relationship and the revelation of the Decalogue provide the theological motivation for ethical behaviour inspired by gratitude, love, the prospect of long life and the gift of liberty.²⁵⁴ The import of the Ten Commandments is also appreciated by Durham as a set of principles regulating the individual’s relationship with Yahweh and with mankind, as well as what that relationship demands from the community of Israel.²⁵⁵ Obviously the first four commandments of the Decalogue deal with man’s duties toward God, and the rest six with man’s duties toward

²⁵² R Laird Harris, “Leviticus” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, F. E. Gæbelein (ed.) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 522.

²⁵³ Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary: Genesis 1-5, Vol 1*, David A. Hubbard et al (ed.). (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 107.

²⁵⁴ Hans. Küng, “The Criterion for Deciding What is Christian” in *Introduction to Christian Ethics: A Reader*, Ronald P. Hamel, et al (ed.). (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 122.

²⁵⁵ John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary: Genesis 1-5, Vol 1*, David A. Hubbard et al (ed.). (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 284.

man. Von Rad appreciates the principles behind the social focus of the second segment of the Decalogue thus, "At the head of this latter section stands the command to honour parents, which is followed by ordinances safeguarding the life, property, and honour of one's neighbour."²⁵⁶

An insightful observation on the Torah, by Brueggemann suggests that the Torah does not only issue instructions on obedience to God, but it also offers sacramental and spiritual energy to the community to meet the stringent ethical demands of Yahweh.²⁵⁷ To his mind, "Whereas Torah as command is focussed on the ethical dimension of existence, Torah as instruction, guidance, and nurture is preoccupied with the aesthetic and artistic, a realm that comes to be expressed as the mystical and sacramental. That is, *Torah is as much concerned with the inscrutable mystery of presence as it is with the nonnegotiability of neighbourly obedience.*"²⁵⁸ This implies that the cultic establishment constituted a symbolic representation of a transcendental Being, which provided the inspiration to meet the demands of the law. Leviticus, to a considerable extent emerges as the ministerial manual and ethical code for the priests in Judaism. Harris, in analysing the contents of Leviticus intimates that the book reveals God's laws for the conduct of the people that were administered by the priest, not only in sacerdotal matters but also in civil issues such as incest and adultery.²⁵⁹ Harris further asserts that Lev 17-26 is referred to as "the holiness code", because it emphasises God's moral standard for the community.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol I: The Theology of Israel's Historical Tradition*, D. M. G. Stalker, (tr.). (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 191.

²⁵⁷ Walter Brueggman, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 582.

²⁵⁸ Brueggman, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 582.

²⁵⁹ Harris, "Leviticus", 502.

²⁶⁰ Harris, "Leviticus", 502.

It is notable that the Bible presents Israel's history from a theological perspective, where a holy and just God constantly required that both King and subject strictly observed the stipulations of the covenant law. The King's role in upholding the moral heritage of the community in relation to Yahweh is emphasised by Von Rad: "In what the Old Testament has to say about righteousness, focal points came to be occupied by the king and the monarchy: this again is not surprising, for as head of the people the king was regarded as the guarantor and protector of everything in the land making for faithfulness in community relationships."²⁶¹ When Ahab, king of the Northern Kingdom, took possession of Naboth's vineyard after his wife had conspired and killed Naboth, God's messenger, Elijah, pronounced this harsh sentence on the King, "I am going to bring disaster on you... because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin" (see 1Kings 21).

Another segment of the Old Testament which records extremely valuable moral teachings is the prophetic books, whose discourses were grounded in the covenant relationship of Yahweh, which demanded obedience to God, as well as ethical neighbourliness. Furthermore the prophets were often inspired to pronounce impending judgement upon Israel for transgressing the covenant laws. The approach of the prophets, according to Freyne is a "repeated appeal to apodeictic laws like those in the Decalogue in order to confront Israel with her moral failures."²⁶² According to Kaiser, "it was the writing of the prophets who gave some of the severest rebukes in Scripture against exploiting the poor;"²⁶³ For instance, Amos declares:

For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the head of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the

²⁶¹ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology Vol 1: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, D. M. G. Stalker (tr.) Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005)

²⁶² Séan Freyne, "The Bible and Christian Morality" in *Introducing Christian Ethics: A Reader*, Ronald P. Hamel, et al (ed.), 13.

²⁶³ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr, *Toward Old Testament Ethics*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 160.

oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name (Amos 2:6-7).

In Laney's view, the prophets were ethical reformers: "The prophets of Israel were greatly concerned with social issues, both moral and religious. In fact, for the prophets social and moral concerns lay at the heart of religion. Repeatedly, they rebuke idolatry, formalistic worship, failure to support temple worship, oppression of the poor, murder, usury, and dissipation."²⁶⁴

Wisdom Literature²⁶⁵ constitutes a special segment of the Hebrew Bible where, to drive home their moral lessons, the sages of Israel refrain from issuing commands, but they summon us to think and infer.²⁶⁶ Waltke and Diewert argue that wisdom does appeal to the mind, but it issues more from a loving heart, which is the core of the individual's both physical and "emotional-intellectual-moral activities, than from a cold intellect."²⁶⁷ Because Wisdom literature hardly invokes Israel's covenant relationship with Yahweh, some critics turn to equate its approach to natural theology. Waltke and Diewert however refute this by insisting that Wisdom literature has its distinctive inspiration, where the sages viewed creation and social order "through the lens of Israel's covenant faith" to deduce timeless moral principles. Responding to W. McKane's claim that wisdom literature was utilitarian and eudaemonistic, Wlatke and Diewert insist that "wisdom literature corpus qualifies eudaemonism in the same way the rest of the Old Testament does (cf. Lev 26; Deut 27-28)".²⁶⁸ Robinson defines Israel's wisdom as "the discipline whereby was taught the application of prophetic truth to

²⁶⁴ J. Carl Laney, "The Prophets and Social Concern", in *Vital Old Testament Issues*, Roy B. Zuck (ed.). (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 109.

²⁶⁵ These comprise Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastics and Song of Songs.

²⁶⁶ D. Kidner, *An Introduction to Wisdom Literature: The Wisdom of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes*. (Leicester: IVP, 1985), 11.

²⁶⁷ Bruce K. Wlatke and David Diewert, "Wisdom Literature", in *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches*, D. W. Baker et al (ed.). (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 300.

²⁶⁸ Wlatke and Diewert, "Wisdom Literature", 298.

the individual in the light of experience.”²⁶⁹ Barnette, expresses a similar opinion by arguing that Wisdom literature has a profound theological basis, which is expressed in practical rather than speculative terms.²⁷⁰ For instance in Proverbs 24:30-34, the sage engages the sluggard’s field as his laboratory, and upon observation, coins the proverb²⁷¹ “A little sleep ... and poverty will come on you as a bandit and scarcity like an armed man” (vv33-34).

There appears to be a linkage between Old Testament and New Testament morality, as Jesus’ ethical concepts are presented within a framework of Jewish moral heritage. Jones confirms this by arguing that, the ethical teaching of Jesus was similar to that of the Jewish tradition.²⁷² And Davies finds the fulfilment of the ethical monotheism of Judaism in Jesus’ ministry and teaching, insisting that the ethical aspirations of the Law and prophets are fully accomplished rather than abolished in Jesus’ moral discourse.²⁷³ The ethical teaching of Jesus therefore testifies to the inception of the kingdom of God promised in the Old Testament, as Jesus’ moral standard and discourse demonstrate an “overwhelming conviction that the kingdom of God was ‘at hand’”.²⁷⁴

Central to the concept of kingdom ethics is the virtue of grace. This informs Davies position that “because the rule of God is an expression of grace, the moral demands of Jesus are the counterpart of God’s grace.”²⁷⁵ This grace is made manifest not only in healings and exorcisms but also in forgiveness and the moral transformation of the believing individual

²⁶⁹ H. W. Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 241.

²⁷⁰ Henlee H. Barnette, *Introducing Christian Ethics*. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1961), 35.

²⁷¹ Wlatke and Diewert, , “Wisdom Literature”, 301.

²⁷² Richard G. Jones, *Groundwork of Christian Ethics*. (London: Epworth, 1984), 27.

²⁷³ W. D. Davies, “Ethics in the New Testament” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, G. A. Buttrick et al (ed.) (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 168.

²⁷⁴ Davies, “Ethics in the New Testament”, 168.

²⁷⁵ Davies, “Ethics in the New Testament”, 168.

and the faith community. The Beatitudes (Matt 5:1-12), therefore constitute the expression of God's grace, which precede the moral requirements of the Sermon on the Mount.²⁷⁶

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), according to Barnette, is "a systematic statement of the main elements of the Christian ethic."²⁷⁷ The sermon stresses inner attitudes such as humility, compassion, purity of heart, and the willingness to sacrifice one's rights and endure suffering in order to identify with Christ as a true disciple. In these teachings of kingdom ethics, a more challenging code of conduct than the external righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law was established.²⁷⁸ According to Hays, the Sermon on the Mount reveals the sketch rather than legislation of the character of the Christian community.²⁷⁹ The motivation for morality, for the Christian, unlike the Jew, was love issuing out of a grateful response to the redeeming love of God: "The Jew aimed to satisfy the *law* of God; and to the demands of law there is always a limit. The Christian aims to show his gratitude for the *love* of God; and to the claims of love there is no limit."²⁸⁰ Grenz also emphasises the relational dynamics of Christian ethics over a mere legalistic response to commands: "Jesus knew that inward piety and not outward conformity to the law marks true obedience to God, because God's intent focussed on establishing relationships."²⁸¹

However, restricting Jesus' ethical message to the didactic passages is to present a limited view of the extensive scope of his moral concerns. The moral focus of some of the parables present us with such poignant ethical assessment that no didactic genre could lend more force to; an example of this kind is Jesus' concealed attack on racism in the parable of the Good

²⁷⁶ Davies, "Ethics in the New Testament", 168.

²⁷⁷ Barnette, *Introducing Christian Ethics*, 50-51.

²⁷⁸ T. Burton Pierce, *Ministerial Ethics*. (Springfield: Logion Press, 1996), 68.

²⁷⁹ Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 96.

²⁸⁰ William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Matthew, Vol 1*. (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1997), 133.

²⁸¹ Stanley Grenz, *The Moral Quest: Foundations for Christian Ethics*. (Downers Grove: IVP, 1997), 109..

Samaritan (Luke 10: 30-37). In Hays' estimation, "stories form our values and moral sensibilities in more indirect and complex ways, teaching us how to see the world, what to fear, and what to hope for; stories offer us nuanced models of behaviour both wise and foolish, courageous and cowardly, faithful and faithless."²⁸² This position finds support in Wilder's remark that the route to moral judgement is by way of the imagination.²⁸³ Hays takes a comprehensive view of Jesus' ethical heritage by intimating that the total moral significance of his life and ministry should not be gleaned only from his pronouncements and parables, but from the complete Jesus narrative of the incarnation, ministry and selfless service, passion, crucifixion and resurrection as presented by the individual evangelists.²⁸⁴

For lack of space, in discussion ethical principles in the Epistles, I would like to limit myself to Paul's books, as he has bequeathed to humanity such a welter of information for ethical reflection, even if it occurs sporadically in response to specific events in individual churches. In pondering Pauline ethics, Grenz suggests that the teaching of Jesus provided the source and inspiration for Paul who contextualised the gospel in first century Graeco-Roman world.²⁸⁵ Grenz further intimates that Paul's ethics issues from the soteriological activity of the sovereign God, who acted definitively to rescue man from moral failure and sinful depravity. This redemption purpose is revealed in the incarnation with a singular focus on the crucifixion as the pivotal event which facilitates the present activity of the Holy Spirit in moral transformation among Christians. In Paul's view, this has an eschatological bearing, as the behaviour of believers reveals the new life that God has graciously given them and which one day will be theirs in its fullness.²⁸⁶

²⁸² Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 73.

²⁸³ Amos Wilder, *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel*. (Cambridge M.A: Harvard University Press, 1971), 60.

²⁸⁴ Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 74.

²⁸⁵ Grenz, *The Moral Quest*, 119.

²⁸⁶ Grenz, *The Moral Quest*, 119.

As stated above, Paul does not formulate an ethical code but rather responds ad hoc to the pressing pastoral problems that arise in his churches.²⁸⁷ As a result scholars such as Dibelius²⁸⁸ argue that there is little connection between Paul's ethical prescriptions and his theological convictions. Hays however refutes such arguments and develops a theological framework for Pauline ethics based on the concept of new creation which generates his eschatological ethics. In stating Paul's position, Hays avers, "the death and resurrection of Jesus was an apocalyptic event that signalled the end of the old age and portended the beginning of the new. Paul's moral vision is intelligible only when his apocalyptic perspective is kept clearly in mind."²⁸⁹

This panoramic review of biblical ethics reveals it as a unique category, where God does not only issue out a moral code to be obeyed but he also empowers the Christian to meet the demands of the divine edicts. This is accomplished through the ministry of the Holy Spirit; as Rae suggests, "[the Spirit] provides an internal source that assists in decision making and enables one to mature spiritually."²⁹⁰ This emphatic and significant ethical focus of the Bible reflects high moral standards which no one in Christian ministry can afford to ignore. Hence in developing his concepts of character and calling in the ordained ministry, Willimon appeals to Hay's three focal biblical images, of, community, cross, and new creation".²⁹¹ In

²⁸⁷ Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 17.

²⁸⁸ Martin Dibelius, *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature*. (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1936), 143-144, 217-220. This view is supported by Betz, who also insists, for instance, that Paul does not provide the Galatians with a specifically Christian ethics. Betz thinks Paul's ethics is a reflection of the moral precepts of his educated Hellenistic context. See also, Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians. Hermeneia Commentary*. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 292.

²⁸⁹ Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 19.

²⁹⁰ Scott B. Rae *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 31.

²⁹¹ William Willimon, *Character and Calling: Virtues of the Ordained Life*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 52. Hays applies these biblical concepts to ethics by arguing that the church is a counter-cultural community, constituting the primary addressee of God's imperatives; secondly he regards the cross as the paradigm of faithfulness to believers; thirdly Hays views the church as the organism which embodies the power of the resurrection in a not-yet-redeemed world. (Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 196-200).

the same vein, Gula's theological foundations of ministerial ethics comprise biblical concepts of covenant, image of God, and discipleship.²⁹² Consequently, it appears any clergy whose calling and ministry would remain relevant would have to acquire an appreciable knowledge of biblical ethical concepts and model them as an example to the community of faith.

4.3 Selected Christian Ethical Theories

Christian ethics appears to be dynamic, defying any attempts to cast it in a rigid mould. To various degrees Christian moral philosophy shows trends in deontology, teleology as well as virtue-ethics. This variegated nature of Christian ethics has generated various systems and theories which are relevant to life and ministry. The theory selected for discussion in the deontological category is the Divine Command Theory, and the approach chosen under teleology, whose Christian value could be objectionable to some ethicists, is Fletcher's Situationism. The Christian concept of sanctification is also examined as an approach in virtue ethics.

4.3.1 The Divine Command Theory

The Divine Command Theory somehow centres on God, insisting that obedience to moral obligation conditions our relationship with God's commands. By implication, since moral obligations are grounded in the immutable character of God, they are perpetual and cannot be violated. This informs Gula's conviction that "God is the ultimate center of value, the fixed point of reference for the morally right and wrong, the source and goal of all moral striving."²⁹³ The ultimate foundation for morality therefore is the revealed will of God, or the commands of God found in Scripture. This approach in Christian moral theory is reflective of Kant's categorical imperative, where one has to perform moral acts as duties irrespective of

²⁹² Richard M. Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 14-30.

²⁹³ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*. 9.

contingencies. Hughes, also gives a deontological qualification to Christian Ethics, claiming it is "prescriptive, not simply descriptive, its domain is that of duty and obligation, and it seeks to define the distinction between right and wrong, between justice and injustice, and between responsibility and irresponsibility."²⁹⁴

This linkage of theology to ethics demands the assessment of the role of religion in society as well as the nature of moral deliberation. The pertinent problem therefore is how to maintain a balanced relationship between reason and religion in ethics. Reflecting on this question, Hinman has identified three positions, namely, supremacy of religion, compatibilist theories and supremacy of reason. The supremacy of religion position insists that all morality is based on divine commands; compatibilist theories consider reason and religion as identical; the supremacy of reason position, arguing from atheistic or agnostic stance, derives its ethics solely from reason.²⁹⁵ The main justification for a religious ethics is the metaphysical grounding for justice, where it is believed that God rewards morally upright people in the afterlife, and subjects the morally deficient to eternal punishment. This resonates with Kant's idea of moral theology discussed in the previous chapter.

The litmus test applied to the absolutist position is a response to the question posed by Plato in *Euthyphro* as to whether things are good because God commands them or God commands them because they are good.²⁹⁶ If one argues that things are good because God commands them, then one would have to respond to the issue of what if he orders something evil, for

²⁹⁴ Phillips Egdcombe Hughes, *Christian Ethics in Secular Society*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books House, 1983), 11.

²⁹⁵ Lawrence, M. Hinman, *Ethics: A Pluralistic Approach to Moral Theory*. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2003), 83-84.

²⁹⁶ R. E. Allen, *Plato's 'Euthyphro' and the Earlier Forms*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 29-30.

instance torture, or infanticide. However if God wills something because it is good, then the standard of goodness is located outside of God.

One school of thought suggests that God ordains Christian moral values because they are good. Rabbinic Judaism and the Roman Catholic tradition hold that God is not free to command anything he so desires, as he is bound by his moral attributes to only order what is good. This implies God will only act in a way consistent with his character. From this perspective, morality is not ultimately grounded in God's commands, but in his character, which expresses itself in his commands.²⁹⁷ This position insists that the very moral values discernible in natural order must agree with the commandments of God; "Not only must his commands be consistent with, his character, they must also be consistent with the values he has revealed in general revelation."²⁹⁸

The Divine Command theory in ethics has stimulated intriguing responses from scholars. Thomas, for instance has extensively examined the moral deterministic position, which would not brook any philosophical reflection on "God's goodness" in his article "The Supernaturalistic Fallacy Revisited". He convincingly argues against the trivialisation position which assumes God's goodness and therefore insists that attempts at evaluating the rectitude of God's choices are inconsequential. To Thomas' mind, "This amounts to the claim that there are no qualities over and above the will of God to which the word "good" can be applied. Perhaps the term ethics might be replaced by the term 'theodics'?"²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 32.

²⁹⁸ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 32.

²⁹⁹ J. C. Thomas, "The Supernaturalistic Fallacy Revisited" *Sophia: A Journal for Discussion in Philosophical Theology*, Vol 25 No. 2 (July 1986), 21.

Anscombe also argues that moral terminology such as “should” and “ought” acquired legalistic nuances due to Christianity’s extensive influence and legalistic approach to ethics. In her view, the use of such legalistic expressions seems to reveal a verdict on an action, which presupposes the existence of a judge, the divine law giver. To her mind, since society has given up the existence of God, approaches in moral philosophy which are based on a theistic worldview should be abandoned.³⁰⁰ Furthermore the Divine command Theory is criticised for failing to provide a universal interpretation to ethical stipulations in Scripture. The challenge of deriving moral absolutes from the Bible is emphasised by Fuchs, who argues that identifying specific moral absolutes from the Scripture is subject to interpretation: “Thus we are inevitably faced not only with the question as to which moral imperatives are actually to be found in Holy Scripture, but also with the question by which hermeneutic rules they are to be understood and evaluated.”³⁰¹

A relatively strong position against the Divine Command Theory is that “there is something inadequate about punishment and reward orientation of moral motivation.”³⁰² Morality, it is suggested has to be self-validating, possessing intrinsic unconditional value; as Kant argues, it should be an end in itself rather than a means to an end. And Austin’s presentation reinforces the point: “... if the motive for being moral on Divine Command Theory is to avoid punishment and perhaps gain eternal bliss, then this is less than ideal as an account of moral motivation, because it smacks of moral immaturity.”³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Elizabeth Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy” *Philosophy*, 33 (1958), 1-19.

³⁰¹ Josef Fuchs, SJ, “The Moral Absoluteness of Behavioral Norms” in *Introduction to Christian Ethics: A Reader*, R. P. Hamel et al (ed.). (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 489.

³⁰² Michael W. Austin, “Divine Command Theory” *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. www.ied.utm.edu/divine.c/ (Accessed, 1st November 2011), 3.

³⁰³ Austin, “Divine Command Theory”, 3.

In spite of such revealing objections to the Divine Command Theory, it has also been defended for providing an “objective” metaphysical foundation for morality.³⁰⁴ Austin is convinced that any commitment to the existence of objective moral truths can only be sustained in a theistic framework: “That is, if the origin of the universe is a personal moral being, then the existence of objective moral truths are at home, so to speak, in the universe.”³⁰⁵ This resonates with Kant’s moral theology (see Section 3.2), where it is suggested that the logicity and validity of any concepts of moral perfection can only be predicated on the existence of a divine moral authority. Austin therefore argues that rejecting a personal moral mind behind creation can only lead to the conclusion that out of the non-moral, nothing moral can emerge.³⁰⁶

In addition, the Divine Command Theory seems to provide an adequate reason for human morality. The theistic framework of morality which holds humanity accountable for our actions, rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked suggests that ultimately good will triumph over evil; and justice will win out.³⁰⁷ Austin raises this perceptive argument that the motivation to act in ways that oppose one’s self interest finds a “deep significance and merit within a theistic framework.”³⁰⁸ To Austin’s mind, “On Divine Command Theory it is therefore rational to sacrifice my own well-being for the well-being of my children, my friends and even complete strangers, because God approves of and even commands such acts of self-sacrifice.”³⁰⁹

³⁰⁴ Austin, “Divine Command Theory” 3.

³⁰⁵ Austin, “Divine Command Theory” 3.

³⁰⁶ Austin, “Divine Command Theory”, 3.

³⁰⁷ Austin, “Divine Command Theory”, 3.

³⁰⁸ Austin, “Divine Command Theory”, 3.

³⁰⁹ Austin, “Divine Command Theory”, 3.

4.3.1.2 Relevance for Ministerial Ethics

Applying the Divine Command approach to ministerial ethics, Gilkey has observed that since Scripture comprises the law and gospel, the clergy are expected to become authorities who interpret the divine law and in turn regulate the proper morals of the community.³¹⁰ According to him, the Reformed tradition, in for instance Calvinist and Methodist Churches emphasised the guiding role of divine law for the community, which compelled the clergy to “become moral legislators and executive implementers of the moral rules governing the community.”³¹¹ Consequently, the minister was expected to model the divine law; “In a sense, now, the holy abides not only in Word (and sacraments) but also in the holy community and especially in and through the *holy person*”³¹² (emphasis added).

Anderson suggests that the vestiges of Methodism manifest in the literal approach of Pentecostals to the interpretation and application of Scripture, which fosters legalism; “This extreme literalism is quite consistent with Pentecostalism’s roots in the Holiness and healing movements, where there tended to be the same literalistic, legalistic approach.”³¹³ Gula avers that in life and ministry, we need to respond to God as the ultimate centre of value, further insisting that, “His [God’s] way of acting and his words, his deeds, and his command are the moral rule of the Christian life.”³¹⁴ Although Gula appreciates the contribution of social conventions and professional codes to the concept of ethical responsibility in ministry, speaking from a theological perspective, he insists it is God alone who legitimates morality.³¹⁵

³¹⁰ Langdon Gilkey, “Forgotten Traditions in the Clergy’s Self-Understanding” in *Clergy Ethics in a Changing Society: Mapping the Terrain*, James P. Wind et al (ed.), (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1991), 47.

³¹¹ Gilkey, “Forgotten Traditions”, 47.

³¹² Gilkey, “Forgotten Traditions”, 47.

³¹³ Alan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 226.

³¹⁴ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 25.

³¹⁵ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 9.

Miles has also demonstrated the conviction that rule ethics is prevalent in conservative churches, where they give strict attention to, what she calls, "arbitrary assortment of rules."³¹⁶ She is receptive to the thought that rules define clear boundaries about right and wrong, serving as guideposts in moral crises.³¹⁷ Nevertheless, Miles also underscores the less constructive aspects of rule ethic; the propensity to legalism and rigidity. She further suggests that those unable to observe the rules could become paralysed with guilt, and the righteous could become arrogant in their judgemental attitude.³¹⁸ Trull and Carter also express a similar conviction: "legalism almost always hinders moral maturity and stimulates egoistic pride. Ethical bed-babies and the self-righteous are undocumented aliens in God's kingdom."³¹⁹ And O'Meara's reflection on Jesus' response to the priestly application of absolute religious norms is rather revealing: "Jesus faced opposition from the priests of his people; for Jesus broke through sacral caste to welcome all as he questioned religious rules as divinely guaranteed absolutes and flared up in anger more at religious hypocrisy than at ethical sin."³²⁰

Trull and Carter, reflecting on Karen Lebacqz's opinion, acknowledge that a system of strict obligation can manifest in ministry, where it is suggested that clergy should uphold absolutes such a promise keeping, truth telling, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.³²¹ They also expand the scope of moral absolutes which could be applied to cover church codes and governmental edicts.³²²

³¹⁶ Rebekah L. Miles, *The Pastor as Moral Guide*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 23.

³¹⁷ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 22.

³¹⁸ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 22.

³¹⁹ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 56.

³²⁰ O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 39.

³²¹ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics* 55.

³²² Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 55.

4.3.2 Fletchers' Situationism

Fuchs offers a convincing opinion on the response of some Christians to rigid normative ethics such as the Divine Command Theory:

No small number of convinced Christians are allergic to "absolute" norms – not, indeed, to the possibility of "right", "objective", and therefore "absolutely" binding judgement in concrete instances, and consequently the possibility of moral imperatives too, but to "universally binding" and in *this* sense absolute norms of moral action.³²³

This observation seems to provide adequate justification for a Christian ethical system which is flexible enough to respond to the moral complexities of contemporary society. I have decided to make a brief exposition here on "Situationism", regarded, according to the main proponent, Joseph Fletcher (1905–1991), as an aspect of Christian Ethics – even though some Christians would not recognise it as such.

According to Fletcher, there are three approaches to moral philosophy. The first one is legalistic, which comprises the methods used by the Jews, the Catholics and Protestants. The Jews, under the post-exilic Maccabeans and Pharisaic leadership lived by the Law (Torah) and its oral tradition (halakah), constituting a law code or 613 precepts.³²⁴ Fletcher contends that the Catholics have developed a system of legalistic *reason* based on nature or Natural Law. He also accuses Protestants, who claim their ethics is based on the Bible, of initiating a method of legalistic *revelation*³²⁵ by developing inflexible moral codes that have culminated in *ethical absolutism*. Similarly, Fletcher regards Pentecostal morality, with its emphasis on holiness, as another legalistic system of ethics: "The Moral Re-Armament ethic is of the kind one would find in the Holiness and Pentecostal movements, and yet, in spite of their self-

³²³ Joseph Fuchs, "The Moral Absoluteness of Behavioral Norms", in *Introduction to Christian Ethics: A Reader*, R. P. Hanel et al eds.). (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 487.

³²⁴ Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality*. (Louisville & London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1966), 18.

³²⁵ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 21.

styled pneumatic character, they are for the most part quite legalistic morally..."³²⁶ By implication, one would think that the spiritual-consciousness and experiential emphasis of Pentecostalism would allow for a flexible approach in morality; but Fletcher thinks they also have a rigid and unyielding approach to ethics.

Reflecting on these concepts, Thomas has aptly observed that "Fletcher regards any set of rules which prescribes what is right and wrong as legalistic ethics."³²⁷ Obviously, in rejecting principle-based ethical systems Fletcher seems to be engaging in over simplification and stereotyping, since it is impossible to do ethics without any reference to morally defensible positions.

In direct contrast to the legalists, according to Fletcher, are the antinomians who have no laws. He regards them as living in a condition of moral chaos, with no method of differentiating right from wrong.³²⁸ Antinomian moral decisions are in Fletcher's view, "random, unpredictable, erratic, quite anomalous."³²⁹ Whilst the legalist enters a moral decision-making process armed with guidelines, the antinomian has "no principles or maxims whatsoever, to say nothing of *rules*."³³⁰

Fletcher offers Situationism as the third alternative, which is the median between legalistic and antinomian ethics. For the situationist, only the command to love is unconditionally good. As far as moral rules are concerned, they are helpful but not unbreakable. In making an ethical decision, the situationist engages with the ethical principles of his community and

³²⁶ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 24.

³²⁷ J. C. Thomas, "What is Situation Ethics?" *The Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (December 1972), 26.

³²⁸ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 27-28.

³²⁹ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 23.

³³⁰ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 22.

its heritage, treating them with respect as they help to understand the problem at stake. Nevertheless he or she is allowed in any situation to compromise them or set them aside if love is better served by doing so.³³¹

Christian situation ethics has only one norm or principle...that is binding and unexceptionable, always good and right regardless of the circumstances. That is "love" – the *agape* of the summary commandment to love God and the neighbour. Everything else without exception, all laws and rules and principles and ideals and norms, are only *contingent*, only valid if they happen to serve love in any situation.³³²

Fletcher derives his single norm concept of love from Bible passages such as Matthew 5:43-48, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy'" But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"; Galatians 5:14, "The entire law is summed up in a single commandment: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'"; Mark 12:28-34, "...The most important one [commandment],' 'answered Jesus is this, 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Fletcher's supposedly flawless single norm ethical system, according to Thomas, fails to ascribe intrinsic value to moral acts and principles: "Any action Fletcher thinks is only right as a means to an end. An action which produces the greatest possible degree of love in a situation is morally right; and an action which fails to produce the greatest degree of love in a situation is morally wrong."³³³ Thomas thus discerns a subtle link between Fletcher's position and that of Rule Utilitarianism (see Section 2.2.2.1 above), which respects traditional moral principles and employs them only when they produce the greatest happiness for the greatest

³³¹ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 26.

³³² Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 30.

³³³ Thomas, "What is Situation Ethics?" 28.

number.³³⁴ It is noteworthy that Fletcher actually admits his reliance on Utilitarianism for social policy formulation: "As the love ethic searches seriously for a social policy it must form a coalition with Utilitarianism. It takes over from Bentham and Mill the strategic principle of the greatest good of the greatest number."³³⁵

Thomas perceptively identifies a contrived introduction of Kantian concepts into Fletcher's Utilitarian arguments, which is evident in Fletcher's idea of *personalism*. Fletcher's *personalism*, as Thomas has aptly revealed is a modification of Kant's second maxim which insists that people should never be treated as a means to an end (see 3.2.1 above). According to Thomas,

This simple theory is complicated however because Fletcher introduces elements of Kant's ethical philosophy at several points in his arguments. For Situation Ethics puts people at the centre or concern, not things. A person is ultimately valuable and must be treated as an end in himself, and never as a means to an end.³³⁶

Fletcher's arguments therefore become obfuscated as he almost identifies the human personality with agape. Thomas reveals this obfuscation further: "He [Fletcher] provides no arguments to show that either agape or persons are good in themselves under all circumstances. He seems to expect his readers to accept his intuitions about what is ultimately valuable."³³⁷ Reflecting on Situationism, Cook has also observed that a person is right to be suspicious of a moral system built on exceptional life situations.³³⁸

Grenz, seems to demonstrate an appreciative disposition to Situationism. Grenz apologetically suggests that opponents to the Situationism appear, to misunderstand Fletcher

³³⁴ Thomas, "What is Situation Ethics?", 29.

³³⁵ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 95.

³³⁶ Thomas, "What is Situation Ethics?", 29.

³³⁷ Thomas, "What is Situation Ethics?" 30.

³³⁸ David Cook, *The Moral Maze: A Way of Exploring Christian Ethics*. (London: SPCK, 1997), 73.

or to be overreacting to some of some of his radical statements on human sexuality.³³⁹ Jones is also convinced that lack of understanding is responsible for the branding of Situationism as permissive ethics.³⁴⁰ According to Jones, “the love which he [Fletcher] advocates is a most demanding requirement, involving immense capacity for self-sacrifice and a very high view of the value of other human beings.³⁴¹ Generally, Situationism is acclaimed for its emphasis on love and the value of persons.

Nevertheless, this is what Christian love is. It does not seek the deserving, nor is it judgemental when it makes its decisions – judgemental, that is, about the people it wants to serve. *Agape* goes out to our neighbours not for our own sakes nor for theirs, really but for God’s. We can say quite plainly and colloquially that Christian love is the business of loving the unlovable, i.e. the *unlikeable*.³⁴²

Fletcher’s affirmation of the value of human beings is further enhanced by his idea that it is only when virtues, such as patience are applied to human beings that their tangible value could be appreciated.

4.3.2.1 Relevance for Ministerial Ethics

In Miles’ estimation, goal ethicists think moral faithfulness comprises the capacity to discover and pursue the highest human goals as a result, and pastors are lately emphasising this kind of therapeutic approach directed towards individual happiness and self-fulfilment.³⁴³

Employing diction that appears to echo Fletcher, Miles observes, “Christian goal ethics often insist that the ultimate goal is happiness, this ultimate happiness comes from loving and serving God and others.”³⁴⁴ She appreciates the benefits of such approaches as dynamic and flexible as they allow Christians to be guided by the Holy Spirit or to respond to the peculiar

³³⁹ Grenz, *The Moral Quest*, 178.

³⁴⁰ Richard G. Jones, *Groundwork of Christian Ethics*. (London: Epworth Press, 1984), 148.

³⁴¹ Jones, *Groundwork of Christian Ethics*, 148.

³⁴² Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 105.

³⁴³ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 22.

³⁴⁴ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 22.

needs of the situation. Miles is convinced that this approach is useful in pastoral care to help people "relate the immediate moment to their highest goals and ultimate relationship to God."³⁴⁵

Similarly, Gula develops a covenant framework for ministerial relationships and insists that all such relationships should be mediated by the love of God.³⁴⁶ And he supports Fletcher's position, which rejects prescriptive ethics, "But a ministerial relationship is open to services that are not so predictable and so cannot always be spelled out in advance. Ministers need to be flexible. Ministry must allow for spontaneity. When we act according to a covenant, we look beyond the minimum."³⁴⁷ The application of consequential ethics in ministry for instance comes into focus, where a pastor faces the dilemma of keeping or disclosing information about an adulterous husband, at the peril of a marriage break up.³⁴⁸

4.3.3 Virtue Ethics in the Christian Tradition

Weist and Smith appreciate the essential effect of character as the moral sensor that shapes life into, "meaningful and predictable patterns" of behaviour which demand that the Christian minister internalises the moral standards of his faith, in order to behave ethically most of the time.³⁴⁹ What seems to be the most comprehensive view of Christian ethics is captured by the term "sanctification," which connotes a process of moral transformation that is geared towards ethical maturity. Both the Hebrew term, *qodesh* and the Greek equivalent *hagiasmos* translated as sanctification, mean separation or setting apart. Sanctification expresses the dynamics of divine-human interaction in character growth and ethical maturity. The divine

³⁴⁵ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 22.

³⁴⁶ Gula *Ethics in the Pastoral Ministry*, 15.

³⁴⁷ Gula, *Ethics in the Pastoral Ministry*, 15.

³⁴⁸ Trull and Carter, *Ministerial Ethics*, 58.

³⁴⁹ Walter E. Wiest, & Evelyn A. Smith, *Ethics in Ministry: A Guide for the Professional*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 182.

dimension of Christian character development introduces mystery into moral philosophy. And since discussions in ontology do not necessarily exclude the superhuman or supernatural, one can comfortably introduce the spiritual dimension into the debate. Invariably, the empirical evidence of this divine-human discourse is attested to by the moral transformation of the individual concerned.³⁵⁰

Sanctification implies the conscious effort to avoid unwholesome and sinful behaviour and endeavour to lead a morally upright life which conforms to the standard of righteousness revealed in Scripture. Holiness is an attribute of God which expresses itself in his purity, transparency and an immaculate nature that is not tainted by any kind of evil. And God demands that human beings who want to have a relationship with him should be sanctified, that is, they must be people who are focused on approximating to the same standard of holiness: "The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy"" (Leviticus 19:1-2).

It is important to emphasise the prominent role of the Holy Spirit in sanctification, where the Spirit provides instruction and conviction which lead to repentance; "When he [Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement" (John 16:15). According to Paul, the Holy Spirit ultimately produces in the believer the fruit of the Spirit; "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). These are character traits of the ethically mature Christian, revealing the fact that it is the Spirit of holiness who generates and sustains moral purity among Christians.

³⁵⁰ A practical example of how moral transformation occurred in a sinner who encountered divinity is captured in Charles Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage of Life: Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare the First 40 Years*. (Accra: Heritage Graphix, 2002), 3-4.

Evidently, in spite of the availability of these divine resources to humankind to help one overcome moral shortfalls, there is a large differentiation in individual standards of morality, even among pastors. This situation is difficult to explain; however, one can ascribe it to the level of sensitivity of the individual in appropriating these equitable and readily accessible divine resources for character transformation.

4.3.3.1 Relevance for Ministerial Ethics

Invariably, Christian ethics is biased towards the virtue approach, as revealed in this doctrinal category of sanctification. Sanctification connotes moral exemplars; that is, the recognition of people who excel in the expression of specific virtues, such as integrity, honesty, courage, fidelity, and a progressive maturity in ethical decision-making. Nevertheless, since sanctification is a process that lasts for a life time, it is possible for even a mature Christian and the human moral exemplars to be in error occasionally. Hence the occasional moral failure of some Christian leaders could be explained in the light of their experience in the character development process. In other words such leaders are not plaster saints; they remain flesh and blood who keep striving to attain the challenging goal of God's standard of moral perfection.

Gula devotes the third chapter of his book *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry* to "The Minister's Character and Virtue" where he avers that the character of the minister speaks louder than his or her sermons. He further argues that Christian ministry is one field of human endeavour where, "the medium and the message are so closely tied together,"³⁵¹ by implication it is incongruent and illogical for a minister to sermonise on morality and model something different. Gula proceeds to define character as "the *kind of person* who acts in a certain

³⁵¹ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 31.

way”,³⁵² explaining further that character focuses on inner realities of self, comprising motives, intention and attitudes.³⁵³ Like many others, Gula is convinced that character quality is an extremely important qualification for ministry:

Clearly, good character is a prerequisite for ministry. Ideally, people who chose to enter the ministry have woven into the fabric of their lives the values and habits that make them caring, generous, and trustworthy people committed to promoting the good of others. The public assumes that ministers have good character. No wonder, then, that when a minister is caught up in self-centeredness, it is taken as such a shocking disappointment.³⁵⁴

Gyekye, in challenging theological institutions to raise moral leaders for society, intimates that character quality and the capacity for moral guidance are critical in ministry. He further insists that there is a general presupposition that such leaders model the desired moral values and virtues of the community in order to inspire and direct others to chart the same course.³⁵⁵

In Gyekye’s estimation, “His/her [the minister’s] moral life has become a moral paradigm and a point of reference for others.”³⁵⁶ Willimon locates character ethics in the wider context of the ethical debate by suggesting that it is complementary to act-oriented ethics. He insightfully posits that it is impossible to divorce the question, “What ought I to do?” from “Who do I hope to be.”³⁵⁷ Willimon uses this complementary approach in examining the concept of character and calling in the ordained ministry, and I have employed the same model in navigating Ghanaian Pentecostal ministerial ethics.

³⁵² Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 33.

³⁵³ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 33.

³⁵⁴ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 35.

³⁵⁵ Kwame Gyekye, “Spiritual and Moral Leadership: The Role of Theological Institutions”, *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XV No. 1 (January 2005), 34-40.

³⁵⁶ Gyekye, “Spiritual and Moral Leadership”, 35.

³⁵⁷ William H. Willimon, *Character and Calling: The Virtues of the Ordained Life*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 12.

4.4. Pentecostal Ethics

Assimeng has made the insightful observation that the Pentecostal Movement did not expound new truths or new applications, rather they seem to be revivalists who recovered popular religious convictions.³⁵⁸ This statement, if true, has to be tested even to their ethics. Typical of the Protestant tradition, Pentecostals claim their ethics is based on the authority of the Bible. However, the unique distinguishing factor of Pentecostal ethics is the intense awareness of the active role of Holy Spirit in moral formation. The key moral terminologies in Christian doctrine, such as sanctification, righteousness, purity and holiness are very much applicable in the Pentecostal/Charismatic context, albeit with extra pneumatological emphasis. Pentecostals would ascribe ethical maturity to the dynamic and practical work of the Holy Spirit, who becomes the agent of moral transformation. The Spirit is expected not only to teach, but also to empower both the individual and the community to make the right moral choices. In certain cases of moral failure, such as persistent alcoholism or promiscuity, the problem is ascribed to spiritual causes and the Holy Spirit is often invoked in deliverance sessions to cast out, as they often claim, the “demon” of alcoholism or dishonesty, as the case may be.³⁵⁹

Evidently, the Pentecostal/Charismatic experience is very subjective, as it turns to place much value on the individual's ability to engage with the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the religion is also easily adaptable, in that it develops more out of experience than doctrinal formulation; consequently it may be difficult to apply neat doctrinal parameters to evaluate the various kinds of spiritual manifestations the adherents could express. These factors of subjectivism and adaptability could allow certain personal and cultural nuances to seep into the ethics of

³⁵⁸ Max Assimeng, *Saints and Social Structures*. (Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1986), 133.

³⁵⁹ This approach of numinous emphasis in ethical formation has promoted a unique focus on demonization and exorcism popularly referred to among Pentecostals as deliverance ministry. The spiritual value of this ministry notwithstanding, it has generated some level of abuse being perpetrated on suppliants by some of the deliverance ministers, which is discussed further in chapter 6.

Pentecostals/Charismatics, with positive or negative implications. Sometimes their hermeneutics could generate a kind of ascetic and regulated morality— this is a kind of approach to Christian morality, where for instance the Deeper Christian Life Church proscribes self-adornment with jewellery to its members. As stated above, Fletcher takes issue with such application of rigid moral codes in a religious tradition that is supposed to be more experiential and subjective than doctrinal and sacerdotal.

This strong biblical emphasis notwithstanding, it sometimes becomes difficult to readily endorse all of Pentecostal hermeneutics and ethical practices as authentically scriptural. Hollenweger argues that Pentecostal ethics reveals a basic pattern of ethical prescriptions, as well as significant influences from the cultural background of each particular group.³⁶⁰ Menzies has also made the revealing observation that Pentecostals often use narrative material from the Bible for their theological foundations without questioning their doctrinal utility.³⁶¹ According to Bonino the assertion that Pentecostal faith is a Bible-centred one is not self-evident, because although their hermeneutic is often literalistic, their focus is basically inspirational, seeking direction to solve mundane problems rather than doctrinal formulation.³⁶² This fluid approach in Pentecostal hermeneutics seems to inform Land's opinion that Pentecostal concept of soteriology emphasises "salvation as participation in the divine life more than the removal of guilt",³⁶³ which implies that enjoying the benefits of "sharing in divinity" receives more attention than striving for moral rectitude.

³⁶⁰Hollenweger, *Pentecostals*, 407.

³⁶¹William W. Menzies, cited in Wonsuk Ma, "Biblical Studies in the Pentecostal Tradition: Yesterday, Tomorrow, and Today", eds. M. W. Dempster et al (ed.), *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*. (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999), 55.

³⁶² José Miguez Bonino, "Changing Paradigms: A Response", in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, 117-118.

³⁶³Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 23.

4.4.1 Pentecostal Concepts of Sanctification

4.4.2 Sanctification as an Event

The classical Pentecostals who emerged from the Azusa Street revival had their roots largely in the Wesleyan Holiness tradition with its strong emphasis on sanctification. The Wesleyan tradition teaches that apart from having a person's sins pardoned through faith in Christ, one's sinful nature could be eradicated through Christ's atoning work. They believe that this secured an experience of entire sanctification, which is also known as sinless perfection. Thus sanctification was regarded as an event rather than a process; it was regarded as a sudden act of heart purification which occurs after conversion, but was necessary before Spirit baptism. This historic link between the Holiness Movement and Pentecostalism is much attested to by scholars: "Pentecostalism", according to Johns, did not "appear 'suddenly from heaven', but rather quite naturally from well document Wesleyan perfectionist precedent upon which it built."³⁶⁴ Anderson is also convinced that the nineteenth century movement, which emerged from the teaching of John Wesley, provided the immediate background for modern Pentecostalism.³⁶⁵

The Wesleyan concept of entire sanctification is still upheld by the Pentecostal Holiness Church and the Church of God in Christ in the United States of America. It appears no Pentecostal Church in Ghana currently sticks rigidly to this three-stage process of spiritual growth from conversion to sanctification to Spirit baptism. Nevertheless, the vestiges of the Wesleyan Holiness moral codes are still discernible in the strict ethical standards maintained by Churches such as the Apostolic Church, Ghana and the Church of Pentecost. It is interesting to know that one of Ghana's foremost scholars on Pentecostalism, Professor Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, a Methodist minister and Dean of Graduate Studies at Trinity

³⁶⁴ Jackie David Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit: The Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis" in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, 95

³⁶⁵ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 25.

Theological Seminary, Legon, is convinced that true Wesleyan Methodist holiness is more discernible today in the Church of Pentecost than the Methodist Church.³⁶⁶ By implication, the public exposure of sin, and strict moral codes upheld by this Pentecostal Church is closer to primitive Methodism than the situation in many other Church traditions.

4.4.3 Sanctification as a Process

Evidence of instability in the Pentecostal concept of sanctification was manifest when another tradition emerged within the Movement which taught that sanctification was a process which one experiences over a life time. The foremost proponent of this position was William H. Durham, who in 1910 challenged the Wesleyan entire sanctification doctrine by arguing that sanctification began at regeneration and continued as growth.³⁶⁷ According to Land, Durham's rejection of the perfectionist doctrine generated tension between some Pentecostals and the Holiness movement that cradled it.³⁶⁸ Durham preached what he called the "finished work of Calvary", purporting that when one believes in Christ he is justified and sanctified in Christ, making him or her complete in all that is relevant to salvation.³⁶⁹ To "finished work" adherents, sanctification became positional and progressive.³⁷⁰ Other Pentecostal Churches, such as Assemblies of God (AG), the Elim Pentecostal Church (EPC), and the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (ICFG) view sanctification as both given in salvation and progressive throughout the Christian life.

Pearlman, writing in one of the official Assemblies of God Systematic Theology books, insists that sanctification is progressive and not instantaneous:

³⁶⁶ Interview, Accra: 2nd June 2009.

³⁶⁷ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 185.

³⁶⁸ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 186.

³⁶⁹ Stanley M. Horton, "The Pentecostal Perspective" in *Five Views on Sanctification*, M. E. Dieter, (ed.) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 107.

³⁷⁰ Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 186.

Sanctification is absolute and progressive – absolute in the sense that it is a work done once for all (Heb. 10:14), progressive in the sense that the Christian must follow after holiness (Heb. 12:14) and perfect his consecration by cleansing himself from all defilement. 2Cor. 7:1.³⁷¹

This category of Pentecostals, unlike the Wesleyan Holiness group, does not insist on external expression of moral purity in dress code etc. It, however, does not imply that they have no concern for moral standards; far from that, they do uphold Christian moral principles which include sexual propriety, honesty, integrity, decency and decorum in appearance. In Ghana the Assemblies of God (AG) and many of the Charismatic Churches, such as International Central Gospel Church (I.C.G.C.), Word Miracle Church International (WMCII) and Christian Action Faith Ministry (C.A.F.M.), among others, identify with this “finished work” category.

This seemingly flexible position of the “Finished Work Pentecostals” has led some scholars to think that they do not take issues related to morality seriously. For instance Hocken is convinced that “Finished Work” Pentecostals such as Assemblies of God, have generally downplayed the importance of developing a comprehensive moral theory³⁷² However the fact that the Finished Work category does not insist on rigid ethical formulations does not imply they have little concern for ethical issues. Their approach is not a community regulated ethics; the community’s role is one of mentoring and encouragement rather than imposing strict controls and sanctions. Christian moral values are taught in sermons and during Bible study sessions, and the choice and responsibility is left for the individual to apply them. For instance, a manual for Assemblies of God adult Sunday School Teachers has Christian

³⁷¹ Myer Pearlman, *Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*. (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1937), 254.

³⁷² Hocken, “Ethics in the Classical Pentecostal Tradition”, 610.

growth as one of its objectives: “to grow mature Christian character, people who believe the Bible and apply its principles for guidance in matters of conduct.”³⁷³

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted a brief overview of biblical approaches to ethics and identified the unique emphases the various segments of the Bible reveal. In addition, I have explored some systems in Christian moral philosophy, namely Divine Command Theory, Fletcher’s Situationism and the virtue ethical approach, known as sanctification in Christian terminology, and attempted to approximate their general relevance to ministerial conduct. Furthermore the two Pentecostal concepts of sanctification, namely “entire sanctification” and “finished work” have been examined to understand their influence on their communal ethics. The implications of Pentecostal communal morality for ministerial conduct are discussed in the next chapter.

³⁷³ Alex Ofori Amankwa, *Assemblies of God Sunday School Prospective Teacher's Course*. (Accra: Assemblies of God Literature Centre, n.d.), 13.

CHAPTER 5

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IN SELECTED GHANAIAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES

5.1 Introduction

As we have already observed, Christian ethics is communal; therefore no adequate reflection on ministerial morality can be undertaken without an understanding of church polity or the administrative framework within which the ministers operate. According to Gilkey, "Polity connotes the institutional structure of the community: its patterns of authority and responsibility, its governing bodies or persons, their rights and obligations, the institutional roles and functions of its officers, committees, and so on."³⁷⁴ This assumes the existence of institutional structures that equip, support, and guide ministers, as well as stipulate disciplinary procedures that hold such leaders morally accountable. The relevance of Gula's opinion to institutional accountability is best appreciated in his own words:

The presence of structures of accountability implies the existence of distinct professional organisation which establishes the qualifications for the admission of new members, the course of their preparation, the standards of competence for licensing, standards for peer review, and the disciplinary procedures and sanctions for controlling deviant behaviour.³⁷⁵

Consequently, the three approaches in Church governance, namely Congregational, Presbyterian and Episcopalian (to be explained soon) have been examined to help us understand their response to ministerial accountability. It is worth mentioning that factors such as theological and ecclesiological orientation of the founder(s), cultural context, and certain defining events in the formative stage of a Church would considerably influence the polity of the denomination. This chapter therefore examines the historical background for some of the defining events that shape denominational polity and standards in ministerial

³⁷⁴ Langdon Gilkey, "Forgotten Traditions in the Clergy's Self-Understanding", *Clergy Ethics in a Changing Society: Mapping the Terrain*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 39.

³⁷⁵ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 62.

ethics. Furthermore, Gilkey's model of polity categorisation into "The Sacramental Church", "The Church of the Word" and "The Churches of the Spirit" provide us with a useful platform for the discussion of the interrelatedness, if any, of ministerial morality to ministerial efficacy. Furthermore, the administrative structure and ministerial ethical codes of selected churches are analysed for their responsiveness to ministerial ethical problems.

5.2 Three Approaches in Church Governance

The Congregational system of Church government places authority in the hands of the congregation, who, to a large extent, decide what the leadership can do. The appointment of Church officials is undertaken by popular vote and major decisions have to be ratified by the congregation before they are implemented. The scope of the Pastor's authority varies with the congregation, and the Deacons Board may play a mainly advisory role. In most cases decisions in the Church are subjected to open ballot. The Multiple Elder system is ruled by a Board of deacons who have the authority to hire or fire a pastor. The Pastor's authority is subject to the Deacons Board, although in many cases he is given considerable authority to take certain decisions and implement them with the support of the Deacons Board.

The Presbyterian system of Church governance is the government of representatives chosen by the congregation or by the clergy with the approval of lay members. The selected lay leaders, who may be variously called Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses, constitute the Session of the local Church who work in consultation with one prominent but equal Elder or Pastor. Delegates from the local Church are in turn selected to represent the local Church at higher levels, covering a wider geographical area called Presbytery. Furthermore, members of the various Presbyteries are elected to the General Assembly, which constitutes the national decision-making body of the Church.

The Episcopalian or hierarchical³⁷⁶ approach to Church leadership occurs, where the clergy, as distinct from laity constitute the governing council of the denomination. In such cases important decisions, appointment to Church offices and discipline of Church functionaries become the prerogative of this hierarchical body. This system of Church government is practised mainly by the Roman Catholic Church, although it occurs in varying degrees in other Churches. Conner has observed that many "Independent Churches" or "Autonomous Churches" practise this kind of government where the founder becomes the monarchical leader, and may not be accountable to anyone.³⁷⁷

It is noteworthy that each system has different levels of moral accountability to congregation members. In the hierarchical system, where authority and appointment to Church office is the preserve of the clergy, a considerable level of responsibility resides with the clergy to be self-critical, as they strive to maintain appreciable standards of ethics in ministry. It also has the advantage of a high level of confidentiality, which protects the privacy of the individual from excessive public invasion. However, the situation of lack of accountability to the laity in the Episcopalian style of leadership can be a recipe for abuse and manipulation. The Presbyterian system of Church government has the advantage of achieving a balance of power between the clergy and laity, where lay representatives are selected by the congregation to help pastors exercise authority locally and over a wider geographical area. The lay members of the Presbytery share responsibility with the clergy, and each category may hold the other accountable for ethical standards in Christian leadership. Furthermore, this system affords the clergy an appreciable degree of confidentiality as the lay members of the session bear the responsibility of protecting the privacy of the minister. Of the three options, Congregational governance, which gives considerable power to congregation members in appraising

³⁷⁶ The word *hierarchy* means priestly governance, deriving from the Greek words *hierus* (priest) and *arche* (rule).

³⁷⁷ See Kevin J. Conner, *The Church in the New Testament*. (Chichester: Sovereign World, 1989).

ministerial performance and preventing abuse of authority, appears the most effective in regulating ministerial conduct. Nevertheless the minister becomes extremely vulnerable as his or her vision and private affairs are always subjected to public scrutiny. Although the congregational approach has the highest probability of regulating morality in ministry, its potential lack of confidentiality is rather challenging from the minister's viewpoint.

It is however noteworthy that these systems of Church governance, which developed initially in the North African and West European contexts have gone through a process of adaptation in sub-Saharan Africa. Reflecting on the impact of cultures on church forms O'Meara suggests that the Spirit's dynamic influence should be allowed to birth approaches to church governance relevant to various cultural contexts: "The forms of church life exist on that edge where revelation meets civilisation. The constellations of culture are the catalysts of ecclesial forms. From history we gain not a unique model of ministry divinely given but an understanding of the adaptability of the church."³⁷⁸ The scope of this thesis would not permit a thorough analysis of the various Church governance approaches and how they interact with the Ghanaian culture. However it is noteworthy that the process of adaptation has yielded in its wake, in some cases, a kind of a hybrid of a system that manifests almost all the three approaches concurrently; a system one can conveniently term the "dynamic and relevant Ghanaian approach to Church governance."³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ O' Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 80.

³⁷⁹ For instance in an interview with the General Secretary of Assemblies of God, Ghana, Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie, he indicated that because comprehensive congregationalism was not relevant to Ghanaian culture, they have adapted it by requesting the local secretary only to assess a pastor's performance by responding to a questionnaire. Similarly, both Rev Dr E. Anim, Dean of Theology, Pentecost University College, (interview, Sowutuom, 15th February 2012) and Apostle Alfred Kodua, General Secretary of The Church of Pentecost (CoP) (interview, Accra 7th June 2007) agree that CoP polity demonstrates traits of all the three approaches in church governance.

5.3 Linking Ministerial Morality to Ministerial Efficacy

The thought of predicating the efficacy of ministerial functions on the personal morality of the functionary has triggered an inconclusive debate in the Christian community since the Donatist controversy of circa 312.³⁸⁰ The Donatists held a puritan view of the church, insisting that it should be a totally sanctified and exclusive community in its empirical reality.³⁸¹ Consequently, they were convinced that the validity of the sacraments depends on the proper moral standing of the minister, rather than any intrinsic quality imputed by ordination.³⁸² Scholars who sympathise with Donatism tend to appreciate the fact that the Donatists attempted to establish high ministerial ethical standards. Stitzenger for instance suggests that the bone of contention for the Donatists was the purity of the church and the holiness of its pastors, which approximated to biblical standards.³⁸³ The mainstream church however rejected the Donatist position when in AD 411 the Conference of Carthage, presided over by the Count Marcellinus, endorsed the Catholics position that “the Church on earth was a mixed body containing good and evil, and not, as the Donatists claimed, a society of the elect ‘without spot or wrinkle’.”³⁸⁴

This informed the Roman Catholic position that the validity of a sacrament does not necessarily depend on the character of the one administering the sacrament. Gula locates this doctrinal position in the Catholic Church, which according to him has “enshrined one form of

³⁸⁰ This controversy emerged in North Africa, where Donatus, a churchman objected to the consecration of Caecilian as Bishop of Carthage by Felix, because the latter apostatised during the Diocletian persecution. To Donatus, failure to remain faithful during persecution invalidated the authority of Felix to ordain because he has committed the unpardonable sin. W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 12.

³⁸¹ Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), 221.

³⁸² Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 221.

³⁸³ James F. Stitzenger “Pastoral Ministry in History” in J. MacArthur (ed.) *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 34.

³⁸⁴ W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 287.

the power of official appointment in its sacramental theology of *ex opere operato*”,³⁸⁵ which means that the validity of the sacrament depended more on the ordination rite of the minister than his worthiness. This position is confirmed by O’Meara’s conviction that “The ministry serving the church and the community is sacramental, and there is a sacramentality of ministry.”³⁸⁶ The Council of Trent resolved that “If anyone says a priest can ever become a layman again, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA,” which generated this pithy saying, “Once a priest; always a priest”.³⁸⁷ The Catholic catechism declares, “As in the case of Baptism and Confirmation this share in Christ’s office is granted once for all. The sacrament of Holy Orders, like the other two, confers an indelible spiritual character and cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily.”³⁸⁸

Gilkey’s classification of the Sacramental Church, include Orthodox, Roman and High Anglican,³⁸⁹ as such churches emphasise the sacramental mediatory role of the priesthood more than their moral vision. What sustains that role, in Gilkey’s opinion, is the apostolic succession, the Episcopal line, which it is believed, extends unbroken to the founding of the church. No sacrament, it is believed, is valid or conceivable, if it is not sponsored by that line. According to Chadwick, this doctrine is traceable to the Augustinian school which thought that: “In the sacraments, ... the priest’s actions belong to God who at the moment of ordination has imprinted upon the priest an indelible mark (*character*); therefore, ordination is independent of the moral and spiritual condition of the person ordained, and the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend on the devout state of mind of the baptizing or celebrating

³⁸⁵ Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 70.

³⁸⁶ O’Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 199.

³⁸⁷ <http://rentapriest.blogspot.com/2005/01/catholic-teaching-once-priest-always.html> (accessed 1st February, 2012)

³⁸⁸ Catechism of the Catholic Church Sections 1582 and 158, <http://rentapriest.blogspot.com/2005/01/catholic-teaching-once-priest-always.html> (accessed 1st February, 2012)

³⁸⁹ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 43. It is noteworthy that these categories are not watertight. To varying degrees almost all church traditions reflect certain aspects of the sacramental, the homiletic, and the pneumatic. Nevertheless Gilkey’s approach is useful in identifying the broad outlines that characterise and help define significant traits in church polity.

preist.”³⁹⁰ And this doctrine seems to condition the direction of their ministerial ethics; as “the ethics of the clergy is primarily directed at the preservation of this divinely established structure of the church”.³⁹¹ Therefore the priest, as long as he maintained the outward demands of obedience and order for his role as mediator was “free from the burden of total personal sanctification if he was to do his professional task.”³⁹² A remarkable illustration of this extreme sacramental pose is Graham Green’s “whiskey priest” in his novel *The Power and the Glory*. In spite of his loss of faith, the village folk compel the “whiskey priest” to say mass, since all the other priests had either fled or apostatised officially to escape persecution. He complied because of his office, and to the communicants, the validity of the mass had no linkage to his faith and morals.³⁹³

This extreme sacramental emphasis of Gilkey’s notwithstanding, a more comprehensive view of such churches acknowledges the rigorous and ascetic discipline of the monks, whose pattern of life has bequeathed to the church a rich and enduring heritage in ministerial self-control. For instance *The Rule of St Benedict*, which is acknowledged as one of the most influential documents on European Christian morality originated from the monastery. And the Catholic Church has produced some of the saintliest personalities in church history as well as in modern times, such as Mother Teresa.

The second kind of church polity identified by Gilkey is what he calls “The Church of the Word”, a tradition which was rediscovered by the Reformation. In his view, such churches recognise the invisible presence of Christ in proclamation of the Word or Scripture: “The Holy within the community was no longer the sacramental gift of healing grace; rather it was

³⁹⁰ Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 222.

³⁹¹ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 43.

³⁹² Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 43.

³⁹³ Green, *The Power and the Glory*, 67- 69.

the preserve of the gospel of justification of the sinner and the promise of reconciliation with God contained therein.”³⁹⁴ The Word captured in Scripture and its proclamation now provided the locus for the believer to directly encounter God’s ineffable presence.³⁹⁵

In the Reformation type church context, preaching or proclamation of the Word becomes the focal point of the church and the minister’s main task. According to Gilkey, the Reformers did not emphasise the clergy’s inner perfection or saintliness, rather they demanded fidelity to the Word, “which requires obedient study of scripture and commitment to the role of obedient proclamation.”³⁹⁶ The outcome of this polity is lamented by MacArthur who suggests that it has resulted in doctrinal purity, and not moral purity: “We have people with the right theology who are living impure lives.”³⁹⁷ In such a context, Scripture displaces the authority of church tradition, as a result, the clergy reject Episcopal instructions when it conflicts with Scripture.³⁹⁸ The authority of the priests therefore depends on their knowledge of Scripture and their faithfulness to its true meaning. Oden, for instance forcefully upholds the authority of Scripture in defining the pastoral ministry:

Pastoral theology lives out of Scripture. When the pastoral tradition has quoted Scripture, it has viewed it as an authoritative text for shaping both the understanding and its practice of ministry. We do not put Scripture under our examination, according to criteria alien to it, in order to understand ministry. Rather, Scripture examines our prior understandings of ministry. It puts them to test.³⁹⁹

In contrast to his limited perspective on Sacramental ministerial ethics, Gilkey offers a broader view of the evangelical position by acknowledging that since the Scriptures comprise the law as well as the gospel, the clergy were bound to interpret the divine law and

³⁹⁴ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 46.

³⁹⁵ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 46.

³⁹⁶ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 46.

³⁹⁷ John MacArthur, “The Character of a Pastor”, in J. MacArthur (ed.), *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 68.

³⁹⁸ Gilkey, “Forgotten Tradition”, 46.

³⁹⁹ Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1983), 11.

consequently define the proper morals for the community of believers.⁴⁰⁰ To Gilkey's mind, Reformed church traditions such as Calvinists churches regarded the clergy as "moral legislators and executive implementors of the moral rules governing the community."⁴⁰¹ Implying that, in this context "the holy abides not only in Word (and sacraments) but also in the holy community and especially in and through the person."⁴⁰² This provides the historical precursor to the extremely high moral demands Pentecostals make of their clergy, which is the subject of the next section.

The third category of churches, according to Gilkey's model is "The Churches of the Spirit", which he intriguingly⁴⁰³ locates among black communities. Gilkey describes such congregations "as a new synthesis of spirit-centered churches with a worldly, liberationist task, uniting types now a bit worn out in mainline churches or warped into fundamentalist forms in many evangelical congregations."⁴⁰⁴

The main characteristics of Gilkey's "Spirit Churches" are subjectivity, transformation unto perfection, and fellowship. By subjectivity the author means the evidence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the believer, which is manifest in conversion and an overriding concern for high moral standards. In Gilkey estimation, this is authentic Christianity which is valued more than sacraments, ceremonies robes, creeds, liturgy, bishops, learning doctrines, and cathedrals.⁴⁰⁵ By implication, although there may be some observance of sacraments and

⁴⁰⁰ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 47.

⁴⁰¹ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 47.

⁴⁰² Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 47.

⁴⁰³ The sense of intrigue relates to the resonance of the polity of these black churches in the USA to their counterparts in Ghana, which constitute the subject of this thesis.

⁴⁰⁴ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 49.

⁴⁰⁵ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 50. It is however necessary to mention that one of my theses focuses on the eclectic nature of the Pentecostal movement, which appears to be a strength revealed in its diversity. Some of these ceremonial expressions listed by Gilkey, which the Holiness movement and the progenitors of Pentecostalism rejected, have resurfaced in the movement. I argue in the next chapter that the pomp and pageantry expressed currently in some Pentecostal/Charismatic churches has drawn criticism from certain

the use of sacred objects, these are overwhelmed by concerns for the influence of the Holy Spirit in the practical real life choices of the believer. Gilkey further avers, "It [the Spirit Church] is holy simply because it is made up of authentic Christians, real believers and real followers who have the Spirit and know they have it, and who follow its leading."⁴⁰⁶ This "intimate relationship" with the Spirit, depicted by Gilkey, defies logical and empirical investigations, however such believers lay claim, in their testimonies, to personal pneumatic encounters that impact their life choices significantly. Gilkey, in explaining his idea of moral transformation in the "Spirit Churches", intimates that there is no higher ethic for the clergy than the laity: "If anything, the community, not the clergy is set apart. Here in principle the whole congregation equally is called to perfection."⁴⁰⁷ The clergy in such churches find themselves in a paradoxical role, where the clergy are expected to be more than perfect to make up for the moral lapses of the congregation.⁴⁰⁸

This issue of the relating clergy morality to effectiveness appears in my literature review (Section 1.5.2), where I quoted Asamoah-Gyadu's debatable suggestion that among Pentecostals "the effectiveness of a person's anointing depends on moral uprightness and enhanced spirituality achieved through fasting, Bible study and prayer."⁴⁰⁹ He thus predicates the efficacy of ministry on clergy character and personal spiritual capability rather than some perpetual supernatural essence conferred on the minister through the ordination ritual. In line with this position, Willimon challenges the medieval notion of "once a priest, always a priest" by arguing that: "Pastors are significant, not because of some inner, ontological

segments of society as injudicious use of resources. This is collaborated by Asamoah-Gyadu's assertion: "In the African context within which I work, renewal movements have been described as movements of reformation in their own right, but they have developed a certain penchant and proclivity for things that reflect glory and power, including seeing material things as reflective of God's favour" Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "The Way to Pentecost is Calvary": Martin Luther, the Cross and African Neo-Pentecostalism", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XVII No. 2 (July 2009), 69. (69-82)

⁴⁰⁶ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 50.

⁴⁰⁷ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 51.

⁴⁰⁸ Gilkey, "Forgotten Tradition", 51.

⁴⁰⁹ Asamoah Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 55.

essence they possess, but rather because of what needs to happen in the church. A functional rather than an ontological basis of the priesthood is essential.”⁴¹⁰

In an interview with Rev Prof Chris Thomas, on this subject, he intimated that one cannot call for absolute perfection in a priest before his or her ordination and subsequent sustenance in ministry.⁴¹¹ One can therefore respond to the constitutional stipulation of The Church of Pentecost captured in Section 1.1, where dishonesty and immorality attract dismissal that all the ministers, consequently warrant dismissal. Probably there should be a clause of relativity on the magnitude of specific cases of immorality and dishonesty to guide the application of this constitutional provision. Thomas rightly argues that even among the Donatist priests immoral conduct was discernible, since priests, like all other human beings are fallible. He is also convinced that God in his sovereignty can decide to use any human agent, so attempts to tie ministerial efficacy to character may not be valid in every context.⁴¹² For instance Judas Iscariot⁴¹³ had a “successful apostolic ministry” until he betrayed Jesus. Thomas also noted the crucial role Judas played in God’s redemption plan, which triggers the philosophical hypothesis of holding divine sovereignty and human responsibility in tension. Thomas’ perceptive conclusion that God can use everything, including evil to accomplish his ultimate good purpose is instructional.⁴¹⁴ Responding to the question of what moral gauge he would regard as appreciable for Christian ministry, Thomas thinks anyone who is committed to observing the Ten Commandments and willing to study and update themselves in moral philosophy and other disciplines relevant to ministry could be a good potential for ministry.

⁴¹⁰ Willimon, *Character and Calling*, 122.

⁴¹¹ Interview, Accra, 9th February 2012.

⁴¹² Interview, Accra, 9th February 2012.

⁴¹³ For instance in Luke 10:17, after the mission of the seventy, which did not exclude Judas, the disciples reported that even the demons were subject unto them; and this was in spite of Judas’ moral failure.

⁴¹⁴ Interview, Accra, 9th February 2012.

To my mind, the sacraments and the word of God have integrity of their own and cannot be defiled by the character quality of the human vessel handling them. It behoves the one receiving the religious facility to appropriate its efficacy by faith and integrity. This observation notwithstanding, I am convinced that character and charisma are complementary rather than competitive in ministry. And this position is well articulated by Willimon, "But when it comes to pastors, smart or dumb, there is a link between character and competence that makes character and competence complementary."⁴¹⁵ The subsequent sections therefore explore the resilience of the polity, administrative structure, and constitutional provisions of selected Pentecostal churches in responding to ministerial moral dynamics.

5.4 Moral Philosophy in Church Leadership

The responsibility of the clergy as moral guides to the church and society is paramount. According to Gyekye, "The role of the pastorate as moral leaders and shepherds is recognized in Christian, as well as non-Christian communities of all nations, including Ghana."⁴¹⁶ And he argues further, "Indeed, society expects them to lead exemplary moral life; that is why people feel scandalized when a minister of religion is found guilty of moral or criminal offence."⁴¹⁷ This underscores the need to relate ethical theories to church polity in the application of principles and the examination of their effects, first, on the institutional structures and secondly on the individual stakeholders. Although one would think that Church constitutions and their application should strictly reflect Christian or biblical moral theories, it is important to note that, the Christian message is always incarnated into cultures that had already established their value systems.⁴¹⁸ And in many cases, the interaction of the two value

⁴¹⁵ Willimon, *Character and Calling*, 41.

⁴¹⁶ Gyekye, "Spiritual and Moral Leadership: The Role of Theological Institutions", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* Vol XV No. 1 (July 2005), 37.

⁴¹⁷ Gyekye, "Spiritual and Moral Leadership", 37.

⁴¹⁸ For instance if this observation of Gyekye's was anything to follow, then one would conclude that the integration of Christian moral values in Ghana would be an uphill task: "African leaders, whether political or

systems, traditional and Christian, reveal common grounds on the one hand, and conflicting positions on the other hand. For instance Ghanaian traditional ethics find support for its rejection of murder in the Christian gospel; but the two systems do not agree on polygamy.

Consequently it becomes necessary to relate moral theories that developed outside the Christian community to biblical ethics in order to find areas of agreement that will reinforce each other. The underlying principle over here is that there is a universal aspect to moral philosophy, which, in certain cases reveals obvious similarities that cannot be ignored. For example, the moral values referred to as *honesty* and *patience* carry the same meaning, whether in the Christian, Western secular, or traditional Ghanaian contexts. Obviously the so-called secular approaches to moral philosophy can be valuable to ministerial ethics; albeit with selective application. To illustrate this point, one would discover that the strict principle-based ethics of Kant, for example, has a lot of features in common with the Divine Command Theory. Similarly, although some Christians object to Utilitarianism as a hedonist philosophy, they would apply its cost-benefit approach in addressing moral dilemmas that the Bible does not directly address. And the most revealing example in this analysis is the idea of personalism projected by Fletcher in his Situationism, which states that it is human experience rather than *a priori* concepts that gives meaning to moral principles, hence human beings come before principles.

A close examination of Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church documents and their practices reveal a principled-based moral philosophy, approximating the Divine Command Theory and its secular parallel of Kantian ethics. The ethical emphasis of many of the Pentecostal/Charismatic institutions seems to be deontological, which appears to confirm

otherwise, including our chiefs, are nurtured in a society whose morals are corrupt.”⁴¹⁸ Gyekye, “Spiritual and Moral Leadership”, 35.

Fletcher's observation that Pentecostal morality is legalistic.⁴¹⁹ However, one cannot ignore the fact that beyond such documents, practical application of constitutional provisions would depend largely on the interpretation and focus of those in power.

It is also noteworthy that any worthwhile Christian ethical enterprise should contend not only with rules, regulations and results, but it may have to "go the extra mile" (Matt 5:41), in responding to human need and moral susceptibility. This is demonstrated in the magnanimity of forgiveness, and sacrificial service and support for the vulnerable who cannot reciprocate the gesture. Institutional policies and outreach undertakings of some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in Ghana suggest an exemplary concern for the marginalised. In addition, some individual Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders personally model remarkable forgiveness in the face of deep provocation.⁴²⁰

Nevertheless there are instances when some of the leaders have deviated from such high ethical standards and demonstrated unprincipled subjective ethics to the detriment of their ministry and the public image of the Churches they lead. This thesis has therefore been designed to respond to this problem by examining the personal conduct of some of the ministers in relation to their denominational ethical stipulations.

Bridges has observed that one significant feature of Christian ministry, which sets it apart from other professions is its moral emphasis, therefore whoever cannot meet the moral demands of Christian ministry should avoid enlisting.⁴²¹ This resonates with Gula's idea that to uphold high moral standards in ministry, the structures of accountability assume the

⁴¹⁹ Fletcher, *Situation Ethics*, 24.

⁴²⁰ For instance, see M. K. Ntumy, *Struck Down but not Killed: A Personal Account of God's Deliverance from Unknown Assailants*. (Accra: Advocate, 2006)..

⁴²¹ James K. Bridges, "Introduction: The Pastor's Personal Life" in *The Pentecostal Pastor: A Mandate for the 21st Century*, T. E. Trask, et al (eds.). (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 2000), 105.

existence of stipulations of admission requirements, the training programme, the standards of competence for licensing, method of supervision and peer review mechanism, and the disciplinary procedures and sanctions for controlling deviant behaviour.⁴²² Willimon also emphasises the importance of institutional supervision in ministry: "Today, a singular mark of any "profession" is that profession's ability internally to credential, examine, and police the members of the profession."⁴²³ And he concludes that any church that neglects a structural method of clergy supervision by other clergy appears an ethically dangerous ecclesiastical arrangement.⁴²⁴

The manifestation of ethical principles in the moral codes of Churches reflect various approaches to moral philosophy. For instance those who have a strict Kantian or Divine Command approach to ethics argue for rigid rule application in ministerial discipline; Willimon, who is of that persuasion, insists that any clergy who is guilty of a severe moral lapse⁴²⁵ should be removed from the ministry.⁴²⁶ Churches whose polity lean towards deontology tend to dismiss ministers outright for certain category of offences, and in certain cases without any opportunity of restoration.⁴²⁷

It is important to note that the Pentecostal movement is characterised by eclecticism not just in theology but also in its ecclesiology and ethics. This is confirmed by Mwaura's observation:

Within the NPC [Neo-Pentecostal church] movement there are differences in doctrine, polity and ethics, in spite of a shared vision and vigorous liturgy.

⁴²² Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 62.

⁴²³ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 70.

⁴²⁴ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 71.

⁴²⁵ Unfortunately, Willimon does not define "severe moral lapse"; which is always a problem for ethical systems which stress rules over results. In recognizing that the magnitude of offence or transgressions may vary with the situation, the deontologist approach may be challenged to demonstrate a certain level of relativism.

⁴²⁶ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 74.

⁴²⁷ For instance, The Church of Pentecost, a classical Pentecostal Church, which has been influenced by the entire sanctification doctrine, dismisses ministers for sexual immorality and fraud. Where a minister is clearly guilty of a sexual offence, they are never restored to ministry, but the situation is not very clear with fraudulent behaviour, since some pastors have been restored to ministry when they refunded the money they embezzled.

Among them are indigenous ministries, charismatic groups, interdenominational fellowships, Eucharistic ministries, deliverance, intercession, Bible distribution, children ministries and women's fellowship.⁴²⁸

As stated above, even within the Pentecostal Movement, divisions prevail on key ethical concepts such as sanctification (Section 4.4 above). And it becomes evident that whilst some segments emphasise success prosperity and trendy fashion, others would eschew any form of ostentation.⁴²⁹ Whilst this eclecticism would suggest inconsistency to some students of the movement, I discern strength in this variety of ecclesiastical expressions because they would respond adequately to any critic who attempts to stereotype or overemphasise any one dimension of Pentecostalism. Queen Elizabeth II once said of the British Commonwealth of nations, "in our variety lies our strength"; and it can equally be said of the Pentecostal movement "in its variety lies its strength." For instance critics of the so-called prosperity gospel do not need to look far to find out that some of the classical Pentecostal churches actually oppose the prosperity gospel, in addition, whilst some of the Pentecostal churches recognise full range women's ministry, others think it is unscriptural to ordain women. It is with this mindset of admirable eclectic ecclesiastical arrangements that I proceed to examine the polity of selected Pentecostal churches in Ghana. It is also necessary at this stage to remind ourselves that all the churches selected for this survey fall within Gilkey's category of "The Churches of the Spirit."

⁴²⁸ Philomena N. Mwaura, "New Religious Movements: A Challenge to Doing Theology in Africa", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XIII No. 03 (July, 2003), 5.

⁴²⁹ For instance, the Deeper Christian Life Church proscribes the use of jewelry to their members to the extent of forbidding their men folk to wear tie pins, because the pins could attract the attention of ladies. And some members of the same denomination avoid the use of television and similar electronic gadgets.

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5.5. Assemblies of God, Ghana

5.5.1 Historical Background

Assemblies of God (AG), Ghana, was the first Pentecostal Church to be introduced into the country through the efforts of American missionaries in 1931. The Church is part of an international network of Churches in 212 countries, registering about 53,000,000 members worldwide, and 12 200,000 in Africa by 2006.⁴³⁰ In June 2007 the Church had 3000 branches in Ghana, but the accurate membership figures were not readily available.⁴³¹

Rev Llyod and Margaret Shirrer who were missionaries from AG, U.S.A stationed in the then Mosiland, now Burkina Faso, crossed over to the Northern Region of the then Gold Coast to plant the Church. They settled at Yendi and were later joined by Miss Buelah Buchwalter and Guy Hickock; these two however died in 1942. According to Ton-Laar the success of the Shirrers was attributable to their willingness to identify with the Dagbons by learning their language and teaching literacy skills to the indigenes.⁴³² The first Ghanaian Mamprussi convert to the Mission was Mba Mahama who joined the Church in 1936. Tamale (which was the administrative capital of the Northern Territories) mission station was established by Henry B. Garlocks in 1932. Walewale, another town in the Northern Territories was evangelised by Eric Johnson in 1934. This is an excerpt from Ton Laar's report on the progress of mission work in Walewale and outlying communities:

The gospel found a firm foundation at Walewale, where the mission bungalow was built and also at Gbimsi where there was a good population of the Kasena people. Later on Wulungu and Kpansinkpe also received the gospel. These were typical Manprusi villages. Among the few converts were Brothers K. K. Kofi of Wulugu, Daniel Azundow of Kpasenkpe and Tia Yidana of Diani.

⁴³⁰ Assemblies of God. Ghana 75th Anniversary Magazine, (6th August 2006), 8.

⁴³¹ Interview with Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie, General Secretary, at the Church Headquarters in Accra on 8th June 2007.

⁴³² Thompson Yaw Ton-Laar, *History: Assemblies of God Ghana, 1931 – 2011*. (Tamale: GILLBT Press, 2009), 13.

These men later on answered the call of God on their lives [to be ministers] but suffered persecution from their families.⁴³³

The Shirrers were later joined by other missionaries who helped to spread the Christian message through community development, as they ran literacy classes and organised the men into work crews to learn carpentry and masonry skills. And the first AG Clinic was opened at Saboba in 1948.

The Southern phase of AG mission work began in 1945, when Mr and Mrs Burdette Wiles, American missionaries arrived in Kumasi. Within a few years the Kumasi church became the base for outreach to major communities such as Sunyani, Nkawkaw and Dorma-Ahenkro, among others.⁴³⁴ The Accra mission was initiated by Rev Homer T. Goodwin on 26th May 1946, the work progressed steadily, with other missionaries such as Rev and Mrs W. F. McCorkle, Wiedman and Rev E. D. Davis making their input at various stages. The Evangel Assemblies of God chapel at Adabraka, being the first to be built in the city, was completed and dedicated on 19th October 1959.⁴³⁵

Progress of mission work compelled the inauguration of the Northern Ghana District Council headquartered in Tamale, in 1949, which comprised “national pastors and missionaries working in the Northern Sector of the country coming together annually to deliberate on

⁴³³ Ton Laar, *History: Assemblies of God, Ghana*, 13. Reference to persecution in this passage carries both moral and historical lessons for students of ecclesiology. The moral dimension highlights the high price of oppression, rejection and deprivation some of the pioneers of certain denominations had to endure. This calls for a sober reflection on the contemporary emphasis on success, prosperity, and creature comfort that characterises a sizeable segment of the Pentecostal movement in Ghana today. Historical trends seem to suggest that Assemblies of God attracted more following and developed faster in the southern territories of Ghana than in the north. Many factors, such as harsh weather conditions, sparse population and economic underdevelopment, relative to the South could account for this; however one cannot rule out the impact of persecution from family and communities of converts, who were likely to emerge from either a Muslim or a traditional religious background.

⁴³⁴ Ton Laar, *History: Assemblies of God, Ghana*, 33-34.

⁴³⁵ Ton Laar, *History: Assemblies of God Ghana*, 35-36.

matters pertaining to the work of God.”⁴³⁶ This was followed by a similar arrangement in 1950 to launch the Southern District Council sited in Kumasi. To facilitate effective administration, in 1986 the Southern District Council was divided into Mid-Ghana District Council, and Coastal District Council, headquartered in Kumasi and Accra respectively. The Northern and the Southern district councils used to meet separately until 1964, when the first General Council Meeting was held at Kumbungu to synchronise administration by electing one General Superintendent, Harold Lehman, to head both the Northern and Southern sectors.

5.5.2 Leadership and Administrative Structure

The first AG Ghana, Bible School started in 1950 at Kumbungu in the Northern Region and was headed by Rev Fur Thomas, also an American missionary. Three Ghanaians who were the pioneer graduates of the Bible School passed out in 1951. Currently the Church has two other Bible Colleges situated in Kumasi and Saltpond, which have trained over 2000 Pastors.⁴³⁷

The events and personalities that contributed to the evolution and trajectory of AG, Ghana, have not only defined the administrative structures of the Church but they have also moulded its ministerial ethics considerably. The long period of American Missionary leadership, 1931 to 1970, has significantly influenced the ethos of AG, Ghana. The last American missionary to serve as General Superintendent of the Church was Rev. Harold Lehman, and he handed over to the first Ghanaian General Superintendent, Rev Elijah Nyamela Panka in 1970. The latter held this position until Rev. Dr. S. B. Asore took over from him in 1986. Rev. Asore also served the AG, the nation and the Christian community in various capacities as Member of Council of State, Chairman of Bible Society of Ghana, and Board of Directors of the

⁴³⁶ Ton Laar, *History: Assemblies of God Ghana*, 56.

⁴³⁷ Assemblies of God. Ghana 75th Anniversary Magazine, (6th August 2006), 11.

Ghana Institute of Linguistics Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT). The next General Superintendent, Rev. William Dontoh succeeded Rev. Asore in 2002, but the former passed away in office in 2009. The current General Superintendent is Rev Paul Y. Frimpong Manso.

AG, Ghana, practices the Congregational system of Church governance,⁴³⁸ which is largely a legacy of four decades of American missionary leadership. This kind of open democracy, where every action and decision of leadership is subjected to the examination of the whole Church public seems to be foreign to Ghanaian culture. Traditional leadership, as we discussed in chapter 2, could hardly be subjected to the scrutiny and corrective measures based on the consensus of majority of the community. In an attempt to make the Church more culturally relevant, AG, Ghana has adopted a hybrid Congregationalist approach to suit the Ghanaian context. According to Rev Appiah-Boachie, the General Secretary, unlike the Baptist Church system of comprehensive congregationalism, where the minister is subjected to appraisal by the whole congregation at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the Church only demands of the local secretary to fill in a questionnaire on the minister's performance.⁴³⁹ In his view, the Ghanaian culture is receptive to this arrangement, since, as he put it in Akan, "*abɔfra enka ɔpanyin asem*"⁴⁴⁰ that is, literally, the child does not examine an adult's behaviour; by implication, the followers should not openly evaluate their leader.

In terms of ecclesiastical titles, the American influence seems to dominate, as AG uses only two designations, which are "Pastor" and "the Reverend". The use of elaborate titles is one of the main features of Ghanaian traditional institutions and indeed a general cultural

⁴³⁸ Interview, Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie, Accra, 8th June 2008.

⁴³⁹ Interview, Accra, 29th July 2009.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview, Accra, 29th July 2009.

phenomenon.⁴⁴¹ This practice of using a few Church accolades in such a large institution is foreign to traditional Ghanaian culture; some other Churches that appear to be more culturally relevant in this dimension have developed an elaborate titles regime. In an interview with Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie,⁴⁴² it was revealed that AG also recognises the functions of evangelists, who specialise in outreach programmes to win converts; prophets who possess peculiar spiritual insights to give direction to the Church; and apostles who have the unique authority to develop and institute policies that define Church structure. However AG does not encourage those who function in such offices to use them as official designations or titles.

The Congregational leadership structure of AG offers a local Church Board, consisting of deacons and chaired by the Pastor, who, together constitute the decision-implementation body of the congregation. The business meetings of the local Church are to be held annually, with all members, eighteen years and above, participating.⁴⁴³ The local Church is semi-autonomous and is supposed to send only 10% of its tithes⁴⁴⁴ income to headquarters. The local Church Board is the policy-implementing body and not policy-making, because that would have to be done by the whole congregation.

The corporate structure of AG, Ghana, comprises the General Council, the Regional Council, the District Council and the Local Church. The highest decision making body is the General Council, which consists of all AG, Ghana, Ordained Ministers, Missionaries from a foreign sister Church, approved personnel from para-church organisations, AG national departmental

⁴⁴¹ It is interesting to note that many Ghanaians introduce themselves to new acquaintances or on the phone by mentioning their titles first, "I am Mr or Pastor or Rev Dr Kweku Ananse", and insist that people should always address them as such.

⁴⁴² Interview, Accra, 8th June 2008.

⁴⁴³ Assemblies of God Constitution, 12.

⁴⁴⁴ Tithes refer to 10% of a person's income that is paid to support the Church regularly.

directors, and a voting delegate from each local Church. Next in line is the Regional Council that is formed by all ordained ministers in the Region, Licentiates,⁴⁴⁵ Exhorters,⁴⁴⁶ expatriate Missionaries, and a delegate with a voting right from each local Church. Directly below and accountable to the Regional Council is the District Committee which serves as the immediate supervisory body above the local Church, also comprising ordained ministers of all local Churches within the district, Licentiates, Exhorters, Lay Pastors (part time ministers), Missionaries, Departmental Representatives and a voting delegate from each local Church.⁴⁴⁷

5.5.3 Position on Sanctification

Obviously the level of emphasis any denomination lays on good character formation in its doctrines would reflect in the moral conduct of its leaders and followers alike. It is therefore relevant to identify and discuss the doctrinal stance of AG, Ghana on the concept of sanctification and examine its implication for their ministerial ethics.

Article 6 of the AG, Ghana Constitution is its Statement of Fundamental Truths, and the 7th Item, (Article 6, Item 7) is entitled Sanctification – A Holy Life:

- (a) Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God – Rom 12:1- 2; 1Thess, 5:23 and 2Cor. 6:17.
- (b) God is holy and requires holiness in His people, for without holiness, no man shall see the Lord - Heb 12:14. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to obey His command, “Be ye holy for I am holy”.
- (c) Sanctification is attained
Through faith in the Word of God – John 17:17 and Eph. 5:26.
faith in the blood of Christ – Heb 10:10,29.
Through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives – 1Pet. 1:2 and Gal. 5:16
- (d) Sanctification is attained
Instantly – at conversion by union with Christ in His death and resurrection –
1Cor 6:11.

⁴⁴⁵ Licentiates are licensed to practice as ministers, but are yet to undergo ministerial training.

⁴⁴⁶ Exhorters are lay people who are certified to preach.

⁴⁴⁷ Assemblies of God, Ghana, Constitution, (unpublished document), 10.

This particular Article in the Statement of Truth reveals that AG belongs to the Finished Work category of Pentecostals. This group of Pentecostals, as mentioned in Section 4.4.2 believe that sanctification is given as part of conversion, and later becomes a lifelong process; a position which is rejected by the holiness Pentecostals. Consequently this Finished Work group which does not insist on the total eradicating of sin from the individual’s life avoids the practice of strict and regimented ethics.

This category of Pentecostals emphasise internal and attitudinal purity rather than the observance of external stipulations that are supposed to portray holiness. For instance the Church of Pentecost and the Apostolic Church, Ghana, (who originated from the Holiness Pentecostal tradition) request of their womenfolk to cover their hair at Church and avoid the use of “ostentatious” cosmetics, to portray modesty and purity. Furthermore, these Churches segregate the sexes in seating arrangement at Church as an external expression that the men and women in the Church are not promiscuous. Thus although AG is a classical Pentecostal Church, the ladies are not obliged to cover their hair at Church, the sexes are not segregated in seating or dancing arrangements, and the womenfolk are allowed to wear makeup.

Some of the prevailing moral restrictions in AG have to do with smoking, fornication, adultery, fraud, drinking alcohol and the use of hard drugs.⁴⁴⁹ The practice of substance abuse, which is injurious to health, is something the Church takes seriously and would sanction any congregation member who indulges in it. And the same level of concern is

⁴⁴⁸ AG, Ghana, Constitution, 3-4.

⁴⁴⁹ In an interview with Rev Nana Agyapong (March 17, 2008 in Accra), an AG Pastor at Abofu, a suburb of Accra, it was revealed that if a member persists in these habits and in other open sin such as promiscuity, the offender would be allowed to attend Church, but he or she would not have full membership rights. For instance, the offender is debarred from taking Communion.



attached to any form of sexual misconduct and fraudulent behaviour among the membership, such as suspension from full membership and excommunication in extreme cases.⁴⁵⁰ This approach in regulating Christian conduct depicts a principle-based ethical system that stipulates appropriate institutional sanctions in response to moral lapses.

It is important to note that AG would sanction a member for “Any moral or ethical failure, including sexual misconduct.”⁴⁵¹ However, there are two clauses on discipline in the Constitution that are ambiguous and may yield to any kind of interpretation. They are: Section 60 Article 3 (b) “A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly” and Section 60 Article 3 (h) “Any conduct that brings shame to the name of the Lord”.⁴⁵² Although these clauses do not mention specific examples of conduct to be regarded as shameful or incorrect representation of Pentecostal testimony, it is believed that, the leaders, guided by the Bible, would be able to identify such items and handle them appropriately.

5.5.4 Charity Projects

As stated above, a comprehensive Christian ethical enterprise goes beyond just doing one’s duty to include a compassionate and sacrificial response to human needs. As a corporate body, AG has risen to the occasion in responding to the crying social needs of the country. Currently, the Church runs two hospitals at Nyakpanduri and Saboba, whilst a third one is under construction in Kumasi. The Church has also established numerous basic and secondary schools, whilst some of the local Churches operate scholarship schemes for needy students. In addition the Church’s Street Children Rehabilitation Project called “Lifeline” sited at Agbogloboshie in Accra has rescued over 235 street boys and girls and provided them

⁴⁵⁰ According to Rev Stephen Kwefio-Okai, Senior Pastor of Assemblies of God Church Tesano, depending on the gravity of the offence, his Church Board could sanction a member for a period of 3 months to 2 years or even excommunicate altogether for offences such as polygamous marriage. Interview, Accra, 7th February 2009.

⁴⁵¹ AG, Ghana, Constitution, 40.

⁴⁵² AG, Ghana Constitution, 40.

with vocational training. Furthermore, AG has a disaster alleviating department called Assemblies of God Relief and Development Agency (AGREDS) which has supported disaster victims in diverse ways.⁴⁵³

The moral philosophy of AG in relation to its ministerial ethics is discussed more elaborately in the next chapter.

5.6 The Church of Pentecost

5.6.1 Historical Background

The Church of Pentecost (CoP) has a registered membership of 1,586,590, in 12,774 local congregations, with a total number of 704 full time ministers in Ghana.⁴⁵⁴ By April 2006, the Church had established 65 mission outposts in foreign lands. The Church is noted for making Pentecostalism culturally relevant by adapting it to traditional Ghanaian forms of cultural expression, mainly in music, dance, and to some extent, theology and administrative structure. The CoP is also associated with rigid discipline, which may have resulted from its chequered history of initial strives and dissensions.

CoP has its roots in the indigenous ministry of Apostle Peter Newman Anim (1890-1984), who later requested the Apostolic Church in Britain, headquartered in Bradford for missionary support to help develop the Church.⁴⁵⁵ The response to this appeal was to sponsor Pastor James McKeown to Ghana. The effort of Anim, who is regarded as the father of Ghanaian Pentecostalism, and his alliance with Pastor James McKeown have culminated in

⁴⁵³ AG, Ghana, 75th Anniversary Magazine.

⁴⁵⁴ M. K. Ntumu, "State of the Church Address" presented at the Opening Ceremony of the 11th Session of the Extraordinary Council Meetings, 26th May 2007.

⁴⁵⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 107.

three major classical Pentecostal denominations, namely Christ Apostolic Church, The Apostolic Church, Ghana, and The Church of Pentecost.

Anim was a Presbyterian from Anum Boso, who experienced faith healing by reading the Christian magazine, *Sword of the Spirit* from Faith Tabernacle Church in Philadelphia, USA in 1917.⁴⁵⁶ This encounter motivated him to found a Faith Tabernacle Church in the same year at Asamankese in the Eastern Region, and to establish links with the American Church. As Anim's Church was birthed out of a direct spiritual healing encounter, he and his followers strictly adhered to a no-medication doctrine, where converts were forbidden to seek medical attention when indisposed.⁴⁵⁷

Anim later switched allegiance from the American Faith Tabernacle Church to the UK Apostolic Church, because the former was evangelical but not Pentecostal. The Gold Coast Faith Tabernacle Church became affiliated to Bradford Apostolic Church in 1935. Anim requested a missionary of this group, and they responded by sending Rev James McKeown in 1937.⁴⁵⁸

Barely three months after McKeown's arrival tension developed between him and his host concerning the ban on medication. According to Asamoah-Gyadu, "The mission partners, James McKeown and Anim, worked together for a while until they split up into separate apostolic churches, mainly over the reluctance of James McKeown to observe a strict faith-

⁴⁵⁶ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 99.

⁴⁵⁷ Christine Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana: The Story of James McKeown and the Church of Pentecost*. (Chichester: New Wine Press, 1989), 22.

⁴⁵⁸ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 23.

healing stance adopted by the African movement headed by Anim.”⁴⁵⁹ As a result, McKeown had to relocate to Winneba in 1938 where he worked independent of Anim. The following year saw a permanent rift developing between McKeown and Anim’s group. Anim’s Church later changed its name to Christ Apostolic Church in 1942.⁴⁶⁰

After settling in Winneba, McKeown continued working as a missionary of the Bradford Apostolic Church until 1953, when certain developments led to his secession. McKeown attended the General Council Quadrennial Conference of the Apostolic Church in 1953 at Bradford, where he was dismissed for failing to sign a constitutional amendment. The said Constitutional amendment sought to segregate the leadership of the Church along racial lines, McKeown found this objectionable and refused to sign, hence his dismissal.⁴⁶¹

When the Church in the Gold Coast heard the news of McKeown’s dismissal, one faction rallied behind, facilitating his return to the Gold Coast to lead that segment of the Church called Gold Coast Apostolic Church. The other faction which remained loyal to the Bradford Apostolic Mission was called the Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast.⁴⁶² Thus by 1953 interactions and tensions in the relationships between McKeown, Anim and the UK Apostolic Church had produced Anim’s Christ Apostolic Church; McKeown’s Gold Coast Apostolic Church; and the UK-related the Apostolic Church of the Gold Coast.

There was much conflict and litigation between the two Apostolic Churches, which caught the attention of the Convention People’s Party (CPP) Government. The then Head of State,

⁴⁵⁹ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience in Africa Today: The Case of Ghana ‘Church of Pentecost’” *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XII, Nos. 1&2 (July/December 2002), 35. 30-57.

⁴⁶⁰ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 101.

⁴⁶¹ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 138; Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 212-213.

⁴⁶² Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance ...” 37-38.

Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah intervened in 1962 and accepted the fact of the existence of the two Churches, but he requested of McKeown's group to change its name.⁴⁶³ Before this change of name could be effected, the followers of the Bradford Apostolic Church wanted to compel the McKeown group and prevent them from seceding. This prompted the then General Secretary of Ghana Apostolic Church (McKeown's group) to write to the leader of the Apostolic Church of Ghana; the letter was titled "Agents of Bradford (England) Religious Institution Intrude Ghana Apostolic Church". Part of the letter which is a scanned copy of the original 1962 document is presented below (the scanning accounts for the change in font type):

Since the Press release issued by the minister of Education on the Apostolic Churches, against the implementation of which the Ghana Apostolic Church petitioned Osagyefo the President of Ghana, Pastors, Overseers, elders and members of your Church have been forcing their way into our Church platforms to cause commotion in our chapels.....By a copy of this letter I am hereby informing the Commissioner of Police, Ghana, of what you and the Apostolic Church are doing and asking him to assist our assemblies all over Ghana to thrust out any Pastor, Overseer, elder Or member of the Apostolic Church who makes an attempt to speak at any meeting of our assemblies without the permission of the Ghana Apostolic Church pastor or Overseer in-charge of the Assembly. This also applies to any of your assemblies which moves as a whole body into our assemblies as the case has been in some places in Ghana.⁴⁶⁴

This letter seemed to have been effective and the Ghana Apostolic Church became stable and consolidated its gains leading to a change in name in 1962 to the Church of Pentecost.

A particular internal leadership crisis which threatened the survival of the Ghana Apostolic Church is worth exploring here to help understand why the CoP maintains a rigid stance on ministerial ethics. When the ripple effects of 1957 political independence impacted the Church, Pastor J. C. Anaman who had risen to a position of trust, as next in rank to

⁴⁶³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 238-239.

⁴⁶⁴ Egyir Paintsil, official letter to Rev F. Johnson of The Apostolic Church dated 16th June 1962.

McKeown, saw an opportunity to oust the latter and replace him as Chairman of the Church. In 1960 when McKeown was out of the country on furlough, Anaman wrote to him, suggesting that the President of the Republic of Ghana had written to demand that Ghanaians should take over and head all Churches that had been planted by expatriates. McKeown consented and Anaman became Chairman briefly. A communiqué issued by McKeown later takes the story further:

Later the Council learned that there is no letter from the Government on this matter, that the whole affair was a well-planned ecclesiastical coup d'état. The Council then demoted the man whom they had made Chairman. I was still on furlough, I could not understand what had taken place. I should have returned to Ghana about the end of 1960, but as I was told I would be arrested when I arrived in Ghana, I was advised to delay my coming. I arrived in March, 1961, to find this confusion. The Council met at Kade prior to the Easter Convention. The case was opened and the plan of the Coup was uncovered. Pastor J.A.C. Anaman raised his hands to Heaven and called on God to witness that he had done no wrong. He was asked to produce the letter from the Government, there was no letter. Later he confessed his wrongdoing. He confessed but did not repent, he was the one who created the so-called working Committee to fight for him and work for all this confusion which we now find ourselves in.⁴⁶⁵

Obviously events such as Anaman's unsuccessful attempt to overthrow McKeown would inform any leader to demand the highest standard of loyalty and integrity from his followers. As a result, McKeown instituted stringent measures to regulate behaviour in the Church, especially among its ministers. And some of them are discussed below.

5.6.2 Leadership and Administrative Structure

After Pastor J. A. C. Anaman's foiled attempt to oust James McKeown, the latter resumed office as Chairman and worked until his retirement in 1982, having served the Church for 44

⁴⁶⁵ James McKeown, "Statement of the Facts" Church Communiqué, March 1962.

years. Apostle S. F. Safo took over from McKeown, but passed away in 1987. In April 1988, Prophet M. K. Yeboah was made Chairman of CoP. Yeboah served two consecutive 5-year terms, during which he was appointed to serve as a member of the Council of State in the National Democratic Congress Government (NDC). He handed over to Apostle M. K. Ntuny in 1998, who also served for two terms and was succeeded by the current Chairman, Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah.

The administrative structure of the CoP seems to be a blend of all three approaches to Church governance, namely Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Congregational. It is best regarded as a dynamic approach which adopts a system when it is useful. What the Church of Pentecost refers to as Presbytery is actually a session, which comprises elders, deacons and deaconesses, a more appropriate name would be local church board. Every local "Presbyter" becomes, in effect, a district presbyter as well as an Area presbyter. The local Churches are normally administered by a lay leader called a Presiding Elder, supported by elders, deacons and deaconesses who comprise the local presbytery. The presiding elder is directly responsible to the District Pastor who may be in charge of a number of local Churches. The District Pastor is in turn responsible to the Area Head (normally an Apostle, Evangelist, Prophet or a senior Pastor), who supervises all the pastors and Churches in the Area, with the help of an Area Executive Committee.

The highest decision-making body of CoP is the General Council, comprising all Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, ordained Pastors, Elders' representatives from the areas, and National Heads (who may either be missionaries posted from Ghana or indigenous heads of external

mission stations). The other members of the General Council are National Deacons, Trustees, Chairmen of Boards and Committees, and the Movement Directors.⁴⁶⁶

In spite of its Presbyterian label, CoP practices a highly centralised system of administration headed by an executive Chairman who is supported by a General Secretary, an International Missions Director, and four other Executive Council members elected from Ghana, as well as one representative each from the Anglophone and Francophone mission outposts. The Executive Council has the prerogative in determining transfers, callings, appointments and disciplinary action. About 70% of the income of the local Church is forwarded to the Headquarters, where the Finance Board, with the approval of the Executive Council decide the disbursement of funds.

The Executive Council, depending on feedback from the Area Heads, decides transfers, postings, callings and appointments to which no one is allowed to raise objection. Some observers think that the administrative structure of CoP considerably reflects the traditional chieftaincy institution. After watching the numerous visitors and the kind of attention they received at the CoP Area Head's home in Kumasi, Leonard reflects on McKeown's administrative legacy thus:

In Ashanti Region, we sat for hours in the apostle's house as he received a constant stream of people. We did not understand the language but whether the visitor was a little child, the presbytery from a local assembly come to sort out some problem, or another apostle come to greet him, we noticed everyone was treated with the same attention and courtesy. I understood something David Mills said referring to James [McKeown] – in some ways he ran his administration like a tribal chief. This was how it must have been in the court of King David in the Bible – there was the same mixture of family accessibility and formal dignity. Again it was African – this model of apostleship fitted their culture.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶ The Movements comprise Women's Movement, Children's Movement, Youth Ministry, Witness Movement, and Men's Fellowship.

⁴⁶⁷ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 125. It is noteworthy that one of the strengths of McKeown, as a missionary, was his adaptability. He used to say that he would not plant an English oak in African soil; therefore he studied

It cannot be denied that CoP has contributed significantly to the use of ecclesiastical titles in Ghana. Titles such as, deaconess, deacons, elders,⁴⁶⁸ overseer, pastor, evangelist, prophet, apostles (in ascending order) abound in the Church. Among the clergy, these titles have hierarchical significance: the apostle is the ultimate, followed in descending order by prophet, evangelist, pastor and overseer.⁴⁶⁹ The calling and appointment to these offices is the preserve of the Executive Council, unlike Assemblies of God, where duration of service and examination results are considered in promotions, the C oP does not have open and objective criteria for the purpose. This approach seems to have generated a lot of grumbling and murmuring, as some accuse those in charge of appointments of practising favouritism with ecclesiastical offices. The Church leadership may want to bring some level of objectivity and transparency to bear on such administrative procedures to help limit such allegations, without eliminating the inspirational role of the Holy Spirit in such matters.

An examination of the status of women in CoP reveals a case of institutional male domination. Kalu argues that the beginnings of the Pentecostalism produced prominent female functionaries who contributed significantly to the spread of the movement. This innovation according to Kalu, “angered fundamentalists and fuelled their virulent attacks. This forced the restriction of women’s ritual power that was installed based on some Pauline verses of terror. Exclusion of women consolidated a patriarchal ideology.”⁴⁷⁰ A similar trend seems to have characterised the contribution and position of women in CoP. Leonard captures the input of women in the origins of the Church (1930s): “Women were even opening

the cultural context closely and reinforced whatever structures he thought would enhance his ministry. David Mills, whose opinion is captured in this quotation, was a Missionary from Links International, a Pentecostal group from the UK who worked with the CoP.

⁴⁶⁸ These three categories of leaders are normally lay leaders who are not on Church pay roll.

⁴⁶⁹ In CoP terminology, an overseer is a minister on probation for ordination, apart from a few exceptions, the probation period takes about four to five years.

⁴⁷⁰ Kalu, Ogbu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 147-148.

assemblies at that time – Dunkwa on Offin, Kumasi, Sekondi, Takoradi – the women went to all the places from Saltpond, ... If James had his way, most of the human credit for the foundation of the Church of Pentecost would go to women like Mrs Obo.”⁴⁷¹ However by 2002, Quist, after recognising the outstanding contribution of women in the early days of CoP proceeds to lament their relegation to insignificant roles in the Church: “As the church [the Church of Pentecost] grew there were fewer opportunities for women to be leaders as society generally considers the woman’s place to be essentially in the home. Women’s role in the church is not very different from what pertains in the home.”⁴⁷²

CoP, which is the largest Pentecostal denomination in Ghana, registering a total membership of 897,926,⁴⁷³ has not got a single female among its 704 ordained ministers. Although women are in two-thirds majority, (570, 624 as against 327,302 men), only two women, the Director of the Women’s Movement and her assistant, participate in its annual General Council meetings, which constitute the highest decision-making body of the Church. On a few occasions, mainly when marking ceremonies relevant to women, they are allowed to preach, but they do not occupy significant administrative positions.

5.6.3 Position on Sanctification

CoP appears to be regarded as one of the most disciplined Churches in the country. This statement is supported by the opinion of Honourable Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry, Private Sector Development and President’s Special Initiatives who said, “One thing that we all need to note about the Church of Pentecost is that it is synonymous with discipline, tolerance, honesty, humility, hard work and pursuit of

⁴⁷¹ Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, 55.

⁴⁷² Ernestina, Quist, “Roles of the Women in the Church of Pentecost in Ghana”, M Phil Thesis, University of Ghana. (Legon: 2002), 62.

⁴⁷³ See The Church of Pentecost June 2006 Council Meeting Reports.

excellence.”⁴⁷⁴ This appreciative stance notwithstanding, their strict response to moral failure reflects almost an absolutist approach in Divine Command theory, which has elicited criticism from some theologians. For instance Asamoah Gyadu thinks the way CoP publicly exposes sinners is not pastoral, and to use his words, they “are doing the same thing the Pharisees did”⁴⁷⁵. He also thinks it makes a section of the Church consider themselves as holier than the others who are exposed to public shame.⁴⁷⁶ Thus, the pendulum of public opinion swings between admiration for CoP’s strict discipline and outright condemnation as Pharisaic.

In reality CoP does not have any elaborate documented statement on sanctification; however, the practical aspects of worship and Church membership do emphasise holiness, sometimes to a fault. The Fifth Tenet of Faith of the CoP is entitled “Repentance, Justification and Sanctification”. Under this heading there is only a brief statement on sanctification; “We believe in sanctification of the believer through the working of the Holy Spirit (1Cor 1:30; 6:11)...”⁴⁷⁷ Since the document does not expand the concept it is difficult to analyse it further. Suffice it to say, from observation, that although CoP emerged from the holiness tradition, their position is shifting in practice towards the concept of progressive sanctification.

In terms of dress code and general behaviour, the male leadership instructs the women to observe strict rules, and conduct themselves well at home. The women are charged to dress modestly by wearing long skirts and avoiding make up or fashion accessory that appears flamboyant. They are also expected to cover their hair at Church, and sometimes even at

⁴⁷⁴ Address delivered by the said Deputy Minister at the Fourth Matriculation Ceremony of the Pentecost University College on 29th September 2007.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

⁴⁷⁶ Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

⁴⁷⁷ *The Constitution of the Church of Pentecost*. (Accra: Pentecost Press, 2005), 2.

home. This is reminiscent of Hollenweger's views on early Pentecostal attitude of fashion (Section 1.5), which suggests that fashionable clothes should be avoided by Christians, and women should reject trendy hair styles and make-up. This position clearly has left its vestiges on some of the classical Pentecostal denominations such as CoP.

The CoP Constitution appears to be deontological with strict applications, which sometimes raise issues of sensitivity to victims. For instance Article 14 of the Church Constitution presents an elaborate approach to Church discipline. Article 14, Item 2, identifies the following as punishable offences:

- (a) Habitually visiting questionable places
- (b) Falling into open sin
- (c) Embracing or spreading false doctrine
- (d) Divorcing wife or husband
- (e) Marrying more than one wife
- (f) A sister getting married to a married man
- (g) Disobeying and showing disrespect to The Church authority at any level
- (h) Practising immorality⁴⁷⁸

A few of the offences captured here are quite detailed and specific, revealing a Church that is extremely concerned about high moral standards. However, some of the items appear rather imprecise such as "Habitually visiting questionable places" and "Falling into open sin." The key words in these statements, "questionable" and "open" are so vague and indefinite that a level of confusion can occur in their interpretation and application.

The attendant sanctions to these offences range from being publicly rebuked, to the extreme case of outright excommunication.⁴⁷⁹ The practice of sanctioning people in CoP could appear stressful, as the offender is often called up front and exposed to the whole congregation.

⁴⁷⁸ *The Constitution of the Church of Pentecost*, 75.

⁴⁷⁹ *The Constitution of the Church of Pentecost*, 75-76.

Some of the other moral issues captured in the Constitution are discussed in the next chapter in direct relation to ministerial ethics.

5.6.4 Charity Projects

CoP has demonstrated a high standard of social responsibility in undertaking numerous projects to provide essential social services such as education and health care delivery. The Church has a University College situated at Sowutuom, Accra, to its credit, where courses in Theology, Business Administration and Information Technology (IT) can be accessed. Pentecost Social Services (PENTSOS) is a semi-autonomous body of the Church, charged with oversight of the social outreach projects of CoP. In the area of health care delivery, the Church has a fully fledged hospital, Alpha Medical Centre, located at Madina, and clinics at Kpassa, Kassapim, and Twifo Agona. The Church has established 61 basic schools nationwide; it has two Senior High schools at Koforidua and Chinderi, and five Vocational schools nationwide. A special initiative worth mentioning is its Orphans and Young Widows Project which seeks to provide support in terms of financial assistance and skills training for these vulnerable members of society.⁴⁸⁰

5.7 Word Miracle Church International

5.7.1 Historical Background

Word Miracle Church International (WMCi) was one of the Charismatic Churches that emerged totally out of indigenous Ghanaian initiative, as a result of the evangelical revival that hit the country in the 1970s and 1980s. Currently the Word Miracle Church International has 83 plus branches, with over 50,000 members worldwide. The Church has a well developed media ministry which reaches millions of people by Television, Radio, audio

⁴⁸⁰ These statistics are captured in the 2008 PENTSOS report.

tapes, DVDs and VCDs. WMCI has also developed a prominent international evangelistic programme that enables the founder, Bishop Dr Charles Agyin-Asare, to preach in over 40 countries; in nations as diverse as Togo, Ukraine, Pakistan, La Cote D'Ivoire and India, among others.

Bishop Agyin-Asare, founder and General Overseer of WMCI, attended St Martin's Secondary School, Nsawam, where he acquired his General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O Level). He later taught at United Primary School, Bamvim Continuation School and Dungu Primary Schools, all in Tamale. Bishop Agyin-Asare got converted into the Church of Pentecost (CoP) at Tamale in 1980 and lived with an employee of the Church for two years under the oversight of the Regional Head, Apostle D. K. Arnan (this initial encounter with the Church of Pentecost would influence his Church administration later). He was very active in Church and soon became a Sunday school teacher, secretary to the Women's Movement (due to the low level of literacy in the community, men were allowed to play leadership roles, even in the Women's Movement), and an executive member of the youth wing.

His break with CoP occurred when he encountered the kind of authoritative leadership style which characterises certain segments of the Church. According to Agyin-Asare, when Apostle Arnan, his mentor, left Tamale, one Rev S. A. Tetteh became his replacement. Agyin-Asare's encounter with Rev Tetteh caused him to quit the Church of Pentecost. In Agyin-Asare's own words:

Rev Tetteh was informed by some of the young men in the church that I had taken over everything in the church. Without any investigation to ascertain the truth, he relieved me of my assignments in the church. With my zeal and enthusiasm to work, just being a pew warmer without any offence was not

something I could stand a long time. After three months of that situation, I quit my job and decided to move down to Accra.⁴⁸¹

Agyin-Asare started an evangelistic ministry in March 1983 called Brother Charles Gospel Crusades. He had the opportunity of attending Morris Cerullo School of Ministry in Accra in the same year. In 1984 he joined Brother Enoch Agbozo's Ghana Evangelical Society (G.E.S.), where he was ordained a Missionary and sent to the hinterlands to preach. He left G.E.S. later to develop his own ministry. Agyin-Asare enrolled at Idahosa's All Nations For Christ Bible Institute, Benin City, Nigeria, in January 1986 to study Crusade Planning.

Upon his return from Nigeria Agyin-Asare moved to Tamale and began Word Miracle Church International (WMCi) in March 1987. He visited England in 1991, where he was consecrated a Pentecostal Bishop and awarded an honorary Doctorate degree by the London-based Shiloh Apostolic Ecclesiastical College. WMCi headquarters was relocated to Accra in 1994. And vigorous mission work was undertaken to plant branches of the Church in various parts of the country and many nations abroad.

In 1997 some of the Pastors in the Eastern Region broke away from the Church en masse, after accusing Bishop Agyin-Asare of being a wicked person. According to Bishop Agyin Asare, the dissenting ministers had acknowledged publicly how much they had benefited in material terms and from ministry opportunities offered by their Bishop, only to turn round and attack him. This is how the Bishop reports the dissensions:

However the next month they said "the Bishop [Agyin-Asare] is a wicked man"... I was also told that two of them had planned to take over their [Churches] illegally. When I sent word to one of them asking him whether it was true, he denied, however a week later he took the church. I wrote to another asking him to take over the church because I realized that was what he

⁴⁸¹ Charles Agyin-Asare, *The Pilgrimage of Life*, 5.

was up to. He wrote back to say it was far from that. However, two weeks later he also took over that branch of the Church.⁴⁸²

By “taking over” of a Church, the Bishop means the said Pastors broke affiliation with Headquarters and took the affairs of the branch into their own hands. Agyin-Asare thinks these events taught him not to trust human beings, and the end result of the breakaways was the emergence of stronger and bigger WMCI branches in replacement.

5.7.2 Leadership and Administrative Structure

The administrative structure of WMCI is a hybrid of the various Church governance approaches, similar to that of CoP. Aspects of its administration reflect a hierarchical approach, whilst other dimensions suggest a Presbyterian system. Although the term “Church Board” which is associated with congregational governance is used, the administrative framework and functions seem to be more Presbyterian than Congregational. The hierarchical style in WMCI is supported by the executive position reserved for the First Presiding Bishop who among other things has the veto power to, if necessary;

1. Appoint Executive Council without reference to the laid down procedure.
2. He shall have the right to nominate and appoint members to serve on the Executive Council.
3. He shall have the right to veto any decision of the Executive Council.⁴⁸³

The Church leadership reflects a kind of blend of Assemblies of God congregational and the Church of Pentecost structure (this is reminiscent of the founder’s CoP background). The highest policymaking body of WMCI is the General Council, with an Executive Council in charge of the implementation of such decisions and daily oversight of the Church. For administrative purposes, the country has been demarcated into divisions that are headed by

⁴⁸² Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage*, 24-25.

⁴⁸³ Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage*, 13.

Divisional Church Councils. Below the Divisional Church Council is the District Church Council which covers a smaller geographical area than the divisional Church Council.

At the grass roots is the Local Church Board, which comprises the Branch Pastor, Church Secretary, Church Accountant and three others from amongst the Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and members.⁴⁸⁴ One function of the Local Church Board, which resonates with the subject matter of this thesis is in the area of discipline; "The Board shall serve as a disciplinary body for the Branch in respect of any other leaders of the Branch and Church members apart from Pastors, Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses."⁴⁸⁵ The Church Board is therefore responsible for the maintenance of moral standards in the local Church.

WMCI is one of the Charismatic Churches that holds women's ministry in high esteem. The Church ordains women, and by 22nd May 2007 it had eleven female Pastors.⁴⁸⁶ Kalu is convinced that as a general rule, Pentecostal ministries give women the opportunity to minister their charismatic gifts at the ritual level, provided they do not challenge the patriarchal polity.⁴⁸⁷ WMCI however permits a female voice at the top echelon of administration, as the Presiding Bishop's wife is reckoned as the co-founder of the Church, and besides being the head of the Women's Ministry, she also deputises for her husband to chair the Executive Council of the Church. According to the constitution, "In the First Presiding Bishop's absence, the co-founder Rev. Mrs Agyin Asare shall chair the Executive Council."⁴⁸⁸ According to Pastor Noah Twum-Asamoah, resident pastor of the Headquarters branch at Dzorwulu, the women ministers of WMCI are some of the most seasoned pastors

⁴⁸⁴ Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage*, 30.

⁴⁸⁵ Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage*, 30. Although WMCI uses titles such as Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses, which are very popular in the Church of Pentecost, (AG uses only Deacons), WMCI refers to the team of leaders in a local Church as a Board rather than Presbytery, as obtains in CoP.

⁴⁸⁶ Interview with Rev Michael Arhin, Secretary to the General Secretary, Dzorwulu, 22nd May 2007.

⁴⁸⁷ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 152.

⁴⁸⁸ Agyin-Asare, *Celebrating the Pilgrimage*, 12.

they could boast of. There is ample evidence of women occupying significant leadership positions in the administrative structure of the Church. The Secretary to the Presiding Bishop, the Registrar of Miracle Ministerial College, as well as the resident pastor of the Kwame Nkrumah Circle branch are all women.⁴⁸⁹

5.7.3 Position on Sanctification

WMCI Statement of Faith does not directly mention the word “sanctification”. Nevertheless the ethical aspect of their tenets is captured under the heading “The Fruit of the Spirit”. Article 4, Item 8 of the Church Constitution declares, “We believe that every born again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ should produce the fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance” (Gal 5:22-23). As stated above, there is a direct correlation between sanctification and the fruit of the Holy Spirit, since the attitudes referred to as the fruit of the Spirit represent the moral values that are expected of a Christian who is being sanctified.

However, by interacting with some of the leaders and through participant observation, I have become convinced that WMCI belongs to the category of Pentecostals who believe in the doctrine of sanctification as a process. Unlike some Pentecostal groups who think certain forms of external expression denote holiness and high morals, the Church does not insist on a rigid outfit code and the so-called Pentecostal “modesty”. This does not mean WMCI has no concern for high moral standards. According to Rev Noah Twum-Asamoah, their practice is to preach about decent dressing and leave the choice to the members, who they trust to make responsible choices. Furthermore, the Church proscribes the use of alcoholic beverages in any form and would readily sanction members who are involved in promiscuous behaviour, such

⁴⁸⁹ Interview with Rev Noah Twum-Asamoah, Resident Pastor of the Headquarters Church at Dzorwulu, 22nd May 2007.

as adultery and fornication. Such sanctions may range from suspension from full membership for a period of three to six months or in some extreme cases, outright dismissal from the Church.⁴⁹⁰

Furthermore, it is important to note that local Church discipline features prominently in the Church Constitution. Article 115, Item 18 of the Constitution addresses this very important aspect of Church life:

b) If a person is accused of an offence of a nature that would affect the integrity, spiritual standard or testimony of the church, the person shall be brought before the Church Board (Matt. 18:15-17). When a member is found guilty:

i) The Church Board may write him a warning letter.

ii) He may be suspended from holding any office in the church i.e. member of any church department, departmental head, treasurer, secretary etc. during this time, he must be taken through counselling and the Word of God and prayer by the pastors of the church.

iii) After a period of time, when the Church Board is satisfied that the accused has undergone adequate correction and discipline, he may be restored to his former position.

iv) A church member who is dissatisfied shall have right of appeal to the District/Divisional/National and if possible General Council.⁴⁹¹

Although this Constitutional provision appears to be principle-based and “legalistic”, to use Fletcher’s words, it gives due consideration to the impact of any disciplinary action on the individual and directs that the process be monitored through to the point of restoration. This is discernible in the clause that provides for counselling and prayer support by the pastors to help the person reform. Moreover, the person is graciously offered the second chance, as one could be restored to his or her former position – unlike, for instance, the Church of Pentecost, where the suspended leader has no chance to ever take up his or her former leadership position again.

⁴⁹⁰ Interview, Dzorwulu, Rev Noah Twum-Asamoah, 22nd May 2007.

⁴⁹¹ *Word Miracle Church International Constitution*. (N. p; n.p., 2003), 73-74.

5.8 Redeem Evangel Church

5.8.1 Historical Background

The founder of Redeem Evangel Church (REC), Rev Christopher Atta Titriku, who hails from Akoefe-Tokor, a village near Ho was born on 18th January 1957. His educational pursuit stalled temporarily after he successfully got his Middle School Leaving Certificate, due to financial constraints. He enrolled as a plumbing apprentice at St Paul's Plumbing Works in Accra and graduated in three years (1973 – 1977). Rev Titriku later upgraded himself by studying for and earning the National Vocational Training Institute Grade II Trades Certificate. This enabled him to secure a job as an Assistant Plumbing Foreman with Beno Construction Company Limited in Accra.

Rev Titriku got converted to Christianity in 1977. According to Deh and Adjei, his co-biographers, Titriku “had a divine visitation of the Lord on three different occasions in regard to his divine calling and ministry.”⁴⁹² It is significant to note that although this Church was initially founded in Accra, the founder later decided to relocate his headquarters to a provincial town, Ho, capital of Volta Region.

The Church began when Rev Titriku started a prayer group at Achimota in 1978 with eleven members, known as Redeem Prayer Group, who met regularly to pray and embark on evangelism. With time, the group expanded and the name was changed to Redeem Evangelism Incorporated. It is noteworthy that Rev Titriku, and some of the Charismatic Church leaders did not have any significant level of theological education before embarking on ministry. The group later organised outreach programmes to a couple of towns in the Volta Region, including Worawora, Peki Dzake, Guama, Nsuta and Kpedze. This group

⁴⁹² K. K. Deh & E. L. Adjei, *Life Story of Rev Christopher Atta Titriku*. (Ho: Dickwin Press, 2007), 7.

became the foundation members of the Redeem Evangel Church. After this initial phase of ministry at Achimota, Titriku enrolled at Christ is the Same Training Institute of Evangelism and passed out with a certificate in Evangelism in 1978. On completion he held a crusade at his hometown, Akoefe-Tokor, near Ho, which resulted in the planting of the Redeem Evangel branch.

Rev Titriku again embarked on further studies in theology at All Nations for Christ Bible Institute in Benin-City, Nigeria, where he pursued a Diploma in Christian Discipleship and graduated in 1980. All along, the main target and focus of Rev Titriku's ministry has been the Ewes in Ghana and Togo. This is attributable to a directive he claims to have received from God just before returning from Nigeria, when God told him to join his own people, the Ewes, and minister to them.⁴⁹³ It was upon this instance that he left the Accra branch at Christian Village in the care of Rev Essau K, Amezado, to settle at Ho and have full time oversight of the Akoefe-Tokor Church.

In 1986, Rev Titriku started another branch of the Church at Ho, which was initially called Redeem Evangelism Incorporated. The Ho Church grew rapidly and soon became the headquarters of the network of his Churches. Eventually the name of the Church was changed to Redeem Evangel Church (REC) in 1989. Currently REC has a theological institute at Ho, known as Evangel Ministerial Training Institute, which was inaugurated in 1999. By December 2006, the Church had a total of twenty-two branches: fourteen in Ghana and eight in the Republic of Togo.

⁴⁹³ K. K. Deh & E. L. Adjei, *Life Story of Rev Christopher Atta Titriku*, 13.

5.8.2 Administrative Structure

The administrative structure depicted by REC does not readily suit the rigid classification of Episcopal, Presbyterian or Congregationalist patterns. The Church, similar to the Church of Pentecost, seems to reflect a dimension of all three approaches in church governance. The local leaders of REC are elders, deacons and deaconesses; however the highest decision-making body in the local Church is the Pastor and Elders Board, which suggest a kind of representative (Presbyterian) approach. Nevertheless REC also exhibits centralised or hierarchical trends, where much authority and power is vested in the General Overseer who alone has the prerogative of ordaining new Ministers of the Church and assigning duties to all workers.⁴⁹⁴

Membership of the General Council of Elders comprises the General Overseer, General Secretary, National Treasurer, all Regional Overseers, appointed District Pastors and selected lay members. Next in line, and directly responsible to the General Council is the Regional Council, constituted by a Regional Overseer, Regional Secretary, Regional Treasurer, all District Pastors in the Region, and any such other members as the Regional Council shall direct.⁴⁹⁵ Similar to the Assemblies of God structure, REC has District Councils that come between the Local Church Boards and appropriate Regional Councils. The District Council of Elders consists of the District Pastor, all other Pastors or Presiding Elders in the District, District Secretary, District Treasurer, and one Elder from each Local Church Board. Local church discipline and maintenance of moral standards is the responsibility of the Local Church Board. The Constitution stipulates that "in matters of punishment, it [the Board] shall, as much as possible comply with the provisions contained in the Constitution".⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁴ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church (unpublished document, 1998), 32.

⁴⁹⁵ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 25.

⁴⁹⁶ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 30.

5.8.3 Position on Sanctification

REC records a very comprehensive declaration on sanctification. The presentation is so detailed that, one is left in no doubt, after reading, that the Church believes in progressive sanctification. Below is the relevant excerpt from the Church Constitution:

Sanctification -

We believe that without Christ we were in the world performing its sinful deeds, exercised by the lusts and craving, but at our conversion we were set apart from the tyranny of Satan, dominion of a sinful nature and contamination of a vile, worldly system unto a Holy and righteous God. Positionally, in Christ we were set apart unto God; presently we are progressively set apart unto God through the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer each day as he wars against the sinful nature; and futuristically, we will be glorified when our bodies will be resurrected and translated into the exact likeness of God, Christ's glorified body; separated unto God eternally. (Corinthians 1, 2; II Corinthians 7; Hebrews 10:9, 10, 14; Thessalonians 3:12, 13). Article III Item 10 H.⁴⁹⁷

This constitutional provision begins with a description of the sinful state of the believer before his or her conversion and the setting apart or devotion of the individual's life to God upon conversion, which is referred to as positional sanctification. It then proceeds to explain progressive sanctification, which is a daily exercise accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

In view of the level of attention REC gives to issues of morality, a significant portion of the Church Constitution is devoted to discipline. Article XVII, Item 4, titled "The Administration of Punishment within the Church" deals with the various categories of offences, adjudication procedure, respective punishments, and the processes of restoration. For instance Item 4 (1) (a) under the Article XVII declares:

Some matters require Church punishments: Offences committed openly within the community leading to a scandal to the Church shall merit punishment as follows:

⁴⁹⁷ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 6.

(a) Offences such as idolatry, partaking in fetish rituals, juju, sorcery, stealing, adultery, false swearing, suicide attempts, human exploitation, leaving husband or wife in search of wealth through dubious means, refusal to care for wife and children, cruelty, and similar offences.⁴⁹⁸

An elaborate system of adjudicating misconduct of members is outlined in the same constitutional provision. This involves investigation and arbitration of the Church Board to establish the guilt or otherwise of the accused. Additionally there are detailed pronouncements as far as sanctions for specific offences are concerned. Some of such punishments are:

1. Suspension from the Lord's Supper [a symbolic congregational ritual meal] once or twice.
2. Indefinite suspension until the culprit shows signs of reform, which shall be announced to the congregation if necessary.⁴⁹⁹

In extreme cases the Church Board is compelled to issue expulsion orders. According to Article XXVI Item 5, complete expulsion from the Church shall be announced to the Congregation. Essentially this is the severest punishment, which shall be applied on persons who have ignored all warnings and rebukes.

- (a) Where the member voluntarily partakes of pagan rituals such as juju, sorcery, magic, soothsaying, spiritism, sacrifices etc.
- (b) Acts that violate the Gospel and Christianity, such as polygamy, and endogamy.
- (c) Other offences such as incest, fornication, adultery, sedition, stealing and false swearing.
- (d) Taking the Church to a Court of Law.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 55.

⁴⁹⁹ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 62.

⁵⁰⁰ Constitution of the Redeem Evangel Church, 62.

One notable feature of the section of REC Constitution on Church discipline is its specific and comprehensive delineation of various misconducts and the appropriate responses from the Church. This is a positive shift from other Church constitutions which only make general and indefinite statements concerning moral issues. However, the mention of "endogamy" as a practice that violates the Gospel needs to be reviewed, as endogamy only means marrying from one's own tribe, which is acceptable to many Christian traditions.

5.9 Conclusion

A close examination of the leadership structure and constitutional provision of some selected Pentecostal Churches reveals a significant concern for high moral standards among congregation members, and more importantly, in the ranks of leadership. This concern demonstrates a bias towards deontological ethics, where constitutions spell out rules of conduct and their attendant sanctions. Although one cannot deny the importance of such regulatory documents in the life of institutions, not least, the Church, with its extreme concern for moral rectitude, the interpretation and specific application of constitutional provisions should avoid a legalistic and oppressive ethical regime. It thus behoves the Churches to provide institutional support and encouragement to promote exemplary moral behaviour. By so doing the Churches would be giving adequate attention to the result and impact of Church discipline on individuals, giving them self-worth, and avoiding the tendency of using institutional structures to oppress the weak.

Although the relevant documents of almost all the Churches under discussion focus on approximating high moral standards, the personal choices of individual Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders could be guided by a variety of ethical approaches. The next

chapter therefore explores the realities of practical ministerial ethics which occur within some Pentecostal/Charismatic establishments as well as in the personal lives of the leaders.

CHAPTER 6

ISSUES IN PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC MINISTERIAL ETHICS IN GHANA

6.1 Introduction

The moral moorings of Christianity, which we have discussed so far, suggest that those in Christian leadership are expected to be moral icons. The author of James' epistle admonishes, "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach would be judged more harshly" (James 3:1). This assertion requires that the Christian leader or "teacher" should know better and as a result, excel in manifesting the values of the Faith; since his or her standard of behaviour becomes the yard stick for his or her followers. It is also important to note that Christians are cautioned in the same text to avoid a presumptuous rush into leadership, if they cannot live up to the exceptional moral demands of the office. No wonder Church members, the general public and the Press in particular take pains to hold Christian leaders accountable for the moral values of the Faith they profess.

In this chapter I have ventured to establish a biblical framework for ministerial ethics by interpreting and applying some of the relevant Bible passages to ministerial conduct. In addition, I have examined the impact of Ghanaian cultural values on the institutional structures and personal choices of the Pentecostal churches and their ministers. Furthermore, institutional provisions in terms of ministerial ethical codes and disciplinary procedures in the selected churches have been explored to appreciate their adequacy in responding to ministerial ethical challenges. Beyond that the contemporary situation in some Ghanaian

Pentecostal ministries is examined to discover how social norms, spiritual and institutional factors, as well as personal choices interact to shape their moral standards in ministry.

6.2 Ministerial Ethics: Biblical Standards

To reiterate (see Section 4.2), the Old Testament significantly projects the themes of holiness, righteousness, sanctity of life, fairness, justice, self-control, compassion for the vulnerable and faithfulness, among others. Israel's response to these ethical stipulations defined the quality of their relationship with Yahweh and with one another within the covenant community. Leviticus, to a considerable extent emerges as the ministerial manual and ethical code for the priests in Judaism. Harris (see Section 4.2), suggests that Leviticus expresses God's laws to regulate the conduct of the people under the administration of the priest in both mundane and cultic life of Israel. Although Leviticus is appreciated as the priestly moral and sacerdotal code of the Old Testament, Wenham has rightly observed that it is impossible to study the theology of Leviticus in isolation of other books of the Pentateuch, especially Exodus and Numbers.⁵⁰¹ For instance, Exodus describes the mediation of the Sinai Covenant and the erection of the tabernacle, which are all central to the functions of the priests. Furthermore, Wenham is convinced that the theme of God's presence in Leviticus is not limited to worship, but permeates even the mundane duties of life, insisting that "The behaviour of each member of the covenant people must mirror that of God himself (20:7)."⁵⁰² Von Rad, reflecting on the Yahweh's presence in Israel intimates that the presence demands a stipulated standard of behaviour, which was regulated by God's holiness within a framework of specific rules that had to be carefully observed.⁵⁰³ Focussing on God's demand for holiness, Wenham suggests, "'Be holy, for I am holy' (11:44-45; 19:2 ;20:26) could be

⁵⁰¹ Gordon J. Wenham, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Leviticus*. (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1985), 16.

⁵⁰² Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 17.

⁵⁰³ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Vol 1: The Theology of Israel's historical Traditions*, D. M. G. Stalker (tr.) (Louisville; Westminster John Knox Press, 1962, 2001).

termed the motto of Leviticus.” It was the duty of the priests to distinguish between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean” (10:10).⁵⁰⁴ Wenham further intimates that anything given to God is holy, the oblations, the tabernacle and its equipment, as well as the Sabbath and the other religious festivals.⁵⁰⁵ Furthermore, the sanctification of the priests is well appreciated in Leviticus, “A person dedicated to the service of God is holy. Pre-eminently holy in this sense are the priests (Lev 21:6ff).”⁵⁰⁶ However it is noteworthy that the Old Testament priesthood was hereditary, and as to whether all the priests had the innate capacity to approximate to these exceptionally high moral demands remains debatable.

Consequently the problem of moral failure among religious leaders became a prominent theme for the prophets, who were inspired to call their colleagues in religious leadership to order. Jeremiah for instance exposes the false prophets and priests who abused authority in his day:

The prophets prophesy lies,
the priests rule by their own authority,
and my people love it this way.
But what will you do in the end? (Jer 5:31)

Commenting on this passage, Charles Feinberg avers “Those who should have been the chief moral backbone of the nation had treacherously denied the Lord’s commitment to them. The leaders have become misleaders. Foremost among the guilty were the false prophets ... next to them were the spineless priests ‘who ruled by their own authority’”⁵⁰⁷ Similar accusations directed at the priests occur in Ezekiel 22:26; Zephaniah 3: 34; Malachi 1:6, among others.

⁵⁰⁴ Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 22.

⁵⁰⁵ Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 22.

⁵⁰⁶ Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 22.

⁵⁰⁷ Charles L. Feinberg, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with the New International Version: Jeremiah*, Vol. 6. F. E. Gæbelein (ed.). (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 418.

Paul wrote what may be regarded as the most systematic and well developed documents on Christian leadership in the New Testament in his epistles to Timothy and Titus. First and Second Timothy and Titus address various aspects of Christian ministry; however, the portions which are directly relevant to ministerial ethics occur in 1 Timothy 3; 5:17-23 and Titus 1:6-8. In these passages, Paul delineates the timeless moral values and standard of conduct that are deserving of a Christian leader: "Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect" (1 Timothy 3:2-5). Titus 1:6-8 is similar in content.

1 Timothy 3:2-5 reveals that the pastor's testimony is his greatest treasure; as one is requested in the first instance to be above reproach, *ανεπιλημπτος*. This, according to MacArthur, does not mean sinless perfection, as no human being could ever meet that prerequisite. He suggests it is "a high and mature standard that speaks of being a consistent example."⁵¹¹ Stott also, in interpreting *ανεπιλημπτος* rejects any suggestions of sinless perfection; he thinks it refers to a blameless reputation, which manifests in irreproachable observable conduct.⁵¹² For lack of space, I would select from Paul's list of character prerequisites, "the minister's family life", "temperament", and "attitude to money" for further comment due to their relevance and significant moral import. Paul's standard of the *επισκος*, overseer being "the husband of but one wife" has been variously interpreted. Whilst some think it means "married only once", the most universally accepted interpretation is monogamy, that is having only one wife at any

⁵¹¹ John MacArthur, "The Character of a Pastor", in *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 68.

⁵¹² John Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*, (Nottingham: IVP, 1996), 92.

given time.⁵¹³ MacArthur takes his interpretation beyond just an acceptable marital arrangement, to exclude those guilty of marital infidelity from the ministry; “we believe the Bible clearly teaches that once a man falls in the area of sexuality, he is unqualified for pastoral ministry any longer.”⁵¹⁴ The next character quality for our consideration is *νηφαλιον* “temperate”, which in classical Greek meant “not mixed with wine,”⁵¹⁵ and later assumed the broader sense of “temperate” or “sober”. In Anderson’s view, the suggestion here is to be self controlled, especially in the area of appetites, where the pastor avoids gluttony, and ostentatious living.⁵¹⁶

According to O’Meara, “history is not only the situation of the church; it is the church’s mentor”,⁵¹⁷ therefore no adequate exploration in ministerial ethics can be undertaken without a brief reference to church history. Two authors who have examined the ethical implications of Christian ministry over the generations are Pierce, *Ministerial Ethics*⁵¹⁸, and Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”.⁵¹⁹ Each of them identifies and attempts to explain some of the defining events and personalities that characterised the various significant epochs in the Church’s ministerial legacy. Stitzinger’s five-epochal model is easier to comprehend, compared to the eight-era demarcation of Pierce. Stitzinger’s segmented periods comprise, the biblical period, early Christian Church (A.D. 100–476), the medieval period (A.D. 476 - 1500); the Reformation period (1500 -1648), and the modern period (1649 – present). One of

⁵¹³ Ralph Earle, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with the New International Version: 1&2 Timothy, Vol.11*. F. E. Gæbelein (ed.). (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 364.

⁵¹⁴ MacArthur, “The Character of a Pastor”, 68. The biblical basis of this absolutist stance on excluding those guilty of marital infidelity from ministry is hard to find. One wonders why those who breach the other stipulations on Paul’s list in 1Tim 3:2-5, such as hospitality, self-control, and the right attitude to money are not also dismissed. An argument from church history, where laxity to sexual misconduct has bred persistently promiscuous ministers, appears more convincing.

⁵¹⁵ Earle, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: 1&2 Timothy, Vol.11*, 364..

⁵¹⁶ Robert C. Anderson, *The Effective Pastor*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 7.

⁵¹⁷ O’ Meara, *Theology of Pastoral Ministry*, 83.

⁵¹⁸ T. Burton Pierce, *Ministerial Ethics: A Guide for Spirit-Filled Leaders*. (Springfield: logion Press, 2000), 83 - 107.

⁵¹⁹ James F. Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History” in *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically*, J. MacArthur (ed.), 27-46.

the most influential documents on ministerial ethics *The Rule of Benedict* emerges from the medieval era and still has an enduring impact on European Christian and social morality today.⁵²⁰ Chittister has accomplished a remarkable task by writing a commentary on *The Rule of Benedict* to make its application relevant to contemporary times. The following excerpt which is an interpretation of the specific rule quoted is deeply perceptive on accepting responsibility for one's faults and repenting of them: Chapter 46 "If someone commits a fault while at any work ... either by breaking or losing something or failing in any other way in any place, he must at once come before the abbot and community and of his own accord admit his fault and make satisfaction. If it is made known through another, he is to be subjected to a more severe correction."⁵²¹ Chittister's reflection on this rule is:

Benedict clearly never supposes perfection in a Benedictine community ... what Benedict does require, however, is a sense of responsibility ... What everyone does affects all others and it is to everyone that we owe accounting and apology and reparation ... The notion that everything we do affects others and stands to be budged by them constitutes a concept of human community that is long lost.⁵²²

Chittister's application of the same rule to contemporary society is extremely revealing:

In this world, corporations gut the center out of forests and say not one word of sorrow to the children of the world who will inherit the dry and eroded mountains on which the trees once grew. Bankers take profits that close business and say nothing to the people made homeless by the deal. Politicians make policies that rape the Third World and say not a thing to whole nations held hostage to greed. Individuals [pastors inclusive] overheat, overconsume, and overbuy until the resources of the globe are wasted away to nothing and we think nothing of it.⁵²³

⁵²⁰St Benedict, *The Rule of St Benedict in English*, Timothy Fry\ (ed.). Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982. In his preface, Fry suggests that although St Benedict wrote primarily for monks, his "sound principles of working and living together have proved relevant to people of all classes of society through fifteen hundred years", page 9. The influence of The Rule of Benedict on European emotional expression of happiness in a gentle smile rather than garrulous laughter is attributable to rules 52- 54, "Prefer moderation in speech and speak no foolish chatter, nothing just to provoke laughter; do not love immoderate or boisterous laughter" page 28.

⁵²¹ St Benedict, *The Rule of St Benedict in English*, 68.

⁵²² Joan Chittister, *The Rule Of Benedict: Insights for the Ages*. (New York: Crossroad, 2006), 129-130.

⁵²³ Chittister, *The Rule of Benedict*, 130.

Scriptural stipulations and lessons from church history notwithstanding, in various contexts, the ability of Christian leaders to observe high ethical standards, which in turn accords them the moral authority to instruct others, has often been called to question. That is why we now want to examine the practical realities of Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leadership to find out how far they have approximated to the biblical yardstick for ministerial ethics.

6.3 Institutional Provisions and Personal Standards

6.3.1 The Call and Philosophy of Ministry

The sovereignty of God's purpose for calling individuals into Christian ministry defies any objective and logical analysis. O'Meara ascribes the call totally to divine activity: "I am my vocation, for God who created my individuality out of finite potentials is the same God who has introduced me into his wider plan of meaning and life. It is out of this interweave of my personality and promise that my vocation, God's various calls emerge."⁵²⁴ By implication, the individuals who are called into Christian ministry have been created such that they can only fulfil their purpose of existence by serving in the ministry.

However, from the human perspective, the call to Christian Ministry may normally be authenticated by the three factors of personal inner conviction, the testimony of others, and the results or impact of demonstrated leadership ability. Firstly, the dimension of one's personal conviction is extremely important because the ministry demands character, talent, and sacrifice, without necessarily generating the desired financial reward. A strong inner conviction provides the necessary motivation and encouragement to withstand pressure and psychological strain in the ministry. This aspect of ministerial calling can however be so subjective that its defining parameters may be difficult to identify. Secondly, the observation

⁵²⁴ O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 208.

of mature Christians concerning a person's ability and potential for Christian leadership, in many cases, seems to be a useful guide that helps individuals to decide for the ministry. Evidently those who have much experience in Christian leadership possess the capacity to detect latent ability and character strength in others for the ministry.⁵²⁵ According to Oden,

The call to ministry requires not only a private, inward, intuitive feeling that one is called by God to ministry; if we had only that, we would invite the abuses of self-assertive, subjective, individualistic self-righteousness. To avoid these abuses, it also requires the affirmation of the visible, believing community. It is the church that outwardly confers the office of ministry.⁵²⁶

This kind of recommendation from a Church context seems to serve as an expedient external confirmation of the inner conviction of the call to Christian leadership. Since many Christian leaders grow up or develop within a Church or Christian community, it is expected that the individual might have had some opportunities for service, with positive results. Such fruitful Christian duty offers another external proof, and a source of confidence that the person has potential for the ministry.

At the heart of the issue of proper conduct in ministry is the fundamental concern of why a person decides to become a minister of the gospel. Montayo is convinced that "The formulation of a statement of purpose is another way of referring to a philosophy of ministry. For a pastor, a philosophy of ministry must come from the mandates addressed to Christ's Church."⁵²⁷ In an attempt to find out the motives for entering the ministry, this researcher requested of some Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors to disclose their personal philosophy of ministry or the basic guiding principle in their ministry, and their responses are rather revealing. It is interesting to note that many of them did not even think of such a principle

⁵²⁵This approach could be subject to human fallibility, as there are instances of experienced ministers recommending or mentoring people who later fail in Ministry.

⁵²⁶ Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology, Essentials of Ministry*. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1972), 20.

⁵²⁷ Alex D. Montoya, "Approaching a Pastoral Ministry Scripturally" in J. MacArthur (ed.) *Pastoral Ministry*, 48.

until the question was asked of them. I often had to give some time for the person to ruminate before I could get the following answers from some of the ministers: “To respond and obey His [God’s] divine call upon my life”;⁵²⁸ “Preaching the gospel and healing the sick”;⁵²⁹ “To serve my generation and advance God’s kingdom”;⁵³⁰ “I am in ministry because God has called me”;⁵³¹ “To know and fulfil God’s will.”⁵³² One of the few ministers⁵³³ who had a ready philosophy of ministry was Apostle Ofori Yeboah, La Area Head of the Church of Pentecost, who was in ministry “to serve God and mankind.”

The philosophy of ministry serves as a guide, whose usefulness is underscored by Montayo “It becomes the map to keep him on track, a guide for his course of action, to correct him when blown astray by the hazards of ministry, and an encouragement to his life when the weight of the task burdens and almost overcomes him.”⁵³⁴ He further admonishes that if a minister has a flippant understanding of the purposes of the church, they would use pragmatic, carnal, and even sinful approaches to accomplish their personal goals in ministry.⁵³⁵ Developing a comprehensive philosophy of ministry, as well as committing one’s self to a consistent ethical system will continue to challenge Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers.

My suggested philosophy of ministry is: The minister is “a person devoted to God who serves the best interest of God’s people from God’s perspective.” This statement considers Christian ministry from three perspectives; the first one being, the individual who engages in ministry

⁵²⁸ Karim Awuni, a New Entrant in the Church of Pentecost Ministry, interview 27th May 2008.

⁵²⁹ Rev Duke Otoo, founder of Chosen Vessels Ministry at North Kaneshie, interview, New Fadama, 30th May 2008.

⁵³⁰ Rev J. C. Agbesi, The Church of Pentecost, Achimota District Pastor, interview, Accra 29th May 2008.

⁵³¹ Rev M. Nana Banyin Arhin, Associate Pastor of Headquarters Branch, Word Miracle Church International, interview, Accra, 1st June 2008.

⁵³² Rev Kwefio, Pastor of Tesano Assemblies of God Church, interview, Abeka, 8th June 2008.

⁵³³ Sermon at Pentecost University College, Accra, 10th June 2008.

⁵³⁴ Montoya, “Approaching a Pastoral Ministry Scripturally”, 49.

⁵³⁵ Montoya, “Approaching a Pastoral Ministry Scripturally”, 49.

considers him or herself as a person set apart for God and his purposes. Right from the outset, the Christian Minister is aware that his life and service are regulated by divine principles rather than personal agenda. Secondly, the target group receiving the service (Church members) are identified with God, which implies that they belong to God; hence they cannot be abused or taken for granted. The last segment, which is the most important, is to offer ministerial service from "God's perspective". The overriding concern that could help a Christian minister make responsible ethical choices is the awareness that ultimately he or she is accountable to God. There is therefore the need to be conscious of, and evaluate personal convictions, as well as the social and institutional framework within which one operates from God's perspective.⁵³⁶

6.3.2 Administrative Structure and Ministerial Ethics

The prevailing administrative structures in many of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches suggest an appreciable concern for high ethical standards. And in affirmation of Willimon's assertion that running a church without any structural means of clergy supervision is an ethically dangerous arrangement,⁵³⁷ many of the churches have established ethically responsive supervisory structures. The systems of calling, training and supervising the individual in ministry, all demonstrate various degrees of commitment to impressive moral principles. Arguably the amount of attention a particular denomination gives to ethics in the various facets of ministry would generally determine patterns of conduct of the leaders.

⁵³⁶ Institutions, including the Church, sometimes make laws and engage in practices that serve the interest of the people in power. In modern times, stories of Pentecostal /Charismatic ministers who cause patients to deteriorate by detaining them, instead of sending them to health facilities for treatment, and the chaining and maltreatment of lunatics at prayer camps are rife. In addition, abuses such as demonizing people and ruining their lives under the guise of revelation are common features of some Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers; Adwoa Konadu (not her real name) told this researcher of a Pentecostal Church she attended at Dansoman, where women who failed to join their husbands in the Church were branded as witches by the founder. The outcome of such accusations was to encourage such men to sue for divorce and marry someone else in the Church.

⁵³⁷ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 71.

The ethical benchmark of the Church documents, as observed in the previous chapter, appears largely to be principle-based. However the application of these principles, against a cultural backdrop of patriarchal control, could degenerate into a situational approach, where subjectivity may interfere with objective and logical assessment. Furthermore it becomes an issue of concern when the personal examples of some these leaders reflect standards that differ from the principles they claim to uphold.

6.3.3 Qualifications for Ministry

In certain dimensions, the Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership scenario is hardly regulated. Institutional borders are difficult to establish, as new Churches emerge frequently and some old ones could split to form different entities.⁵³⁸ And since the Ghanaian Constitution upholds freedom of worship: “All persons shall have the right – freedom to practise any religion and to manifest such practice”⁵³⁹ – it is as if no one can prevent the establishment of new Churches unless the founder fell foul of the law. In line with this, the concept of calling or vocation becomes significant as it ushers many Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders, with little or no ministerial training, into ministry. Some of the older Pentecostal Churches, such as Assemblies of God (AG), The Church of Pentecost (CoP), The Apostolic Church, Ghana (ACG), and some of the structured Charismatic Churches such as Word Miracle Church International, Redeem Evangel Church (REC) and Lighthouse Chapel International (LIC) have clearly defined procedures for engaging someone into full time ministry.

⁵³⁸ T. L. Adesina has explored the impact of this phenomenon on Ghanaian Christianity in his book *Secession within the Charismatic Churches: Causes and Possible Solutions*. (Accra: Livingwaters Publishers, 2007). He identified factors such as personal conviction, greed, lack of submission and doctrinal differences, among others, as factors responsible for the frequent disaffiliations (see pages 33 – 35).

⁵³⁹ *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*, 1992; Article 21, Item 1C.

For instance, in Assemblies of God (AG), anyone who desires or thinks he or she has a call to become a minister must first discuss it with his local Pastor, who would in turn present the candidate to the Local Church Board for vetting. The next stage is to refer the candidate to the District Pastor, whose recommendation would qualify the candidate to apply to any of the AG Theological Colleges. The candidate may have to pass an entrance examination for admission to the College of his or her choice. Normally, after a two-year diploma training programme, if the candidate is still focussed on AG ministry, he or she would have to be interviewed by a panel consisting of his Regional Executive and both the Dean and Principal of the Theological College he or she attended.

After the individual has been accepted into the AG ministry, he or she is regarded as an Exhorter, who can only preach and baptise, but cannot serve Holy Communion, bury the dead or bless marriages. After a probation period of two years, the Exhorter writes an examination, where a pass, coupled with a favourable field appraisal from both the District Pastor and Regional Superintendent, qualifies him or her for ordination as a Licentiate. A Licentiate would execute every ministerial duty except the blessing of marriage. After three years, the Licentiate takes another examination, a positive result, supported by the recommendations of the District Pastor and the Regional Superintendent qualifies him or her for full ordination as a Reverend Minister.⁵⁴⁰ This well structured process of admission to the ministry is designed for quality assurance in terms of ministerial ethics and performance.

Many of the established Pentecostal Churches have similar procedures leading to ordination. The Apostolic Church however calls ministers both by recommendation by senior ministers

⁵⁴⁰ Interview, Rev S. Wengam, Director of Administration, Headquarters, Accra, 27th June 2008.

and prophecy,⁵⁴¹ and ordains them after a probation period of six years.⁵⁴² It is however worth noting that the practice of calling ministers through prophecy is often abused in some Church contexts. Nevertheless the Apostolic Church, Ghana has instituted the necessary check and balance of subjecting such prophecy to the scrutiny of the National Council of Apostles and Prophets for authentication.

I also discovered through field work that in the Redeem Evangel Church (REC), the individual who expresses interest in the full time ministry is interviewed by the representatives of the General Council. He (the Church has only male Pastors) is then admitted to the Church training school for six months, and he subsequently goes on attachment with a senior minister for six months. He is later posted and kept on probation for two years, and if at the end he merits it, he is ordained as an Assistant Pastor, who would still work under the supervision of a senior pastor. It is only when the person maintains a good track record over a four-year period that he is ordained as a fully fledged minister of the Church.⁵⁴³

Word Miracle Church International (WMCi) Constitution has equally robust demands in character quality and performance standards for prospective applicants to ministry. Article 74, Items 1 and 2 capture these prerequisites:

- (1) In accordance with 1Cor 12:2a and Eph. 4:11, Ministers of the Church shall be those called into Office by revelation, prophecy or the recommendation of the Executive Council.
- (2) A Person may qualify for Admission into the Ministry if he is Born-Again and baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- (3) Qualifies in terms of 1Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-8.
- (4) Willing to learn

⁵⁴¹ This occurs, where under the claim of inspiration someone mentions another person's name as a candidate for the ministry.

⁵⁴² Interview, Apostle Kwadwo Baiden Denson, General Secretary, The Apostolic Church Ghana, Bubushie, 17th September 2007.

⁵⁴³ Interview, Rev Christopher Atta Titriku, Founder and General Overseer of REC, Ho, 22nd July 2009.

- (5) A mature person but not exceeding forty-two (42) years of age. This pertains to the full time ministry.
- (6) He is obedient to the General Church Council.
- (7) He has sound body and mind as shall be proved by medical examination.
- (8) He possesses a clear voice without impediment of speech.
- (9) He possesses such amount of education as shall be deemed satisfactory.⁵⁴⁴

This evidence of institutional demands to assess and regulate entry into some Pentecostal ministries reveals that the Churches are concerned about moral standards and effectiveness in leadership. Nevertheless it is admissible that no human institution has absolute flawless and infallible systems that could totally prevent abuse; hence, in spite of these safeguards one cannot rule out the possibility of misfits entering the ministry. It is the awareness of this probability that has motivated many of the Churches to institute disciplinary measures to check and correct misconduct in leadership, which would be discussed later.

6.3.4 Ministerial Formation

Omenyo,⁵⁴⁵ Ogunewu,⁵⁴⁶ Ojo⁵⁴⁷ and Larbi have all observed that the Pentecostal movement was initially apathetic towards theological education in an academic context. According to Omenyo, the response of the first generation Pentecostals to formal theological training was polemical, as they regarded theological seminaries as “theological cemeteries”. Omenyo, however acknowledges that this trend has changed from the 1980s when Pentecostals began expressing growing interest in theological education in Africa, with some of the new churches establishing their own theological colleges.⁵⁴⁸ However, a close study of the curricular of some of the colleges surveyed by Omenyo reveals little emphasis on ministerial ethics. Ogunewu also laments how some Pentecostal leaders “abandoned their studies in

⁵⁴⁴ *Word Miracle Church International Constitution*, 45.

⁵⁴⁵ Cephas N. Omenyo, “‘The Spirit-Filled Goes to School’: Theological Education in African Pentecostalism” *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*, Vol. XII (2) (2008), 41- 57.

⁵⁴⁶ Leke Ogunewu, “Charismatic Movements and Theological Education: Past, Present and Future” *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*, Vol. XII (2) (2008), 58- 82.

⁵⁴⁷ Matthew Ojo, *The End-Time Army*. (Trenton: Afrivan World Press, 2006), 236.

⁵⁴⁸ Omenyo, “The Spirit-Filled Goes to School”, 46.

order to engage in active evangelism” as they considered the call of God as the only prerequisite for ministry.⁵⁴⁹ Similar to Omenyo’s observation, he acknowledges that currently there is a change in mindset towards education and admonishes that Pentecostal theological education should be adequate both in quantity and quality.⁵⁵⁰ In an interview with Professor Ogbu Kalu (Professor of World Christianity and Mission, McCormick Theological Seminary, USA), he also lamented that in admitting people to the ministry many of the Pentecostal Churches use apprenticeship and in-breeding, where a potential minister just understudies a senior one instead of experiencing a considerable period of rigorous ministerial education. This, according to Kalu, results in “ministerial mal-formation”.⁵⁵¹

Nevertheless linking success in ministry to education is not absolute, as some of the successful Pentecostal ministers did not have any theological training before embarking on ministry. Miller and Yamamori’s observation on this issue is insightful, “We were surprised by how many of the highly successful pastors did not have seminary degrees. Some of them were well educated, but not in theological studies.”⁵⁵² Such cases are however the exception rather than the norm, and no one can underestimate the value of education in theological and moral formation in ministry. The co-authors have identified some of the factors impeding theological education among Pentecostal leaders as the high cost of college education and lack of a competent reliever for pastors when they are studying. Miller and Yamamori’s

⁵⁴⁹ Ogunewu, “Charismatic Movements and Theological Education”, 66.

⁵⁵⁰ Ogunewu, “Charismatic Movements and Theological Education”, 74.

⁵⁵¹ Interview, Accra, 20th June 2007.

⁵⁵² Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: the New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 195. For instance Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, founder of one of the largest Neo-Pentecostal denominations in Ghana, embarked on ministry without any theological education, although he was originally a medical doctor. This raises the problem of relating charisma to education in ministry. For instance Quist mentions women who were illiterate but have been used by the Holy Spirit to lead famous prayer centres in the Church of Pentecost, such as Maame Dede of Kade and Maame Grace of Edumfa (Quist, “Roles of Women in the Church of Pentecost”, 67). Such examples make it difficult to demand education as a prerequisite to Christian leadership. Nevertheless one cannot exclude the fact that some level of formal theological education would enhance performance and extend one’s scope of influence to various segments of society.

response to the problem is, “Short courses in theology, practical ministry and biblical studies make more sense.”⁵⁵³ Prof Chris Thomas has also suggested that quality continuous education for Pentecostal leaders already in ministry could help improve upon their ministerial conduct.⁵⁵⁴

The duration of training in many of the Pentecostal theological colleges is short, and in some cases, so inadequate that the course component on Christian and ministerial ethics receives little attention. This situation could be responsible for the inadequate knowledge on moral philosophy that seems to be demonstrated by some Pentecostal ministers (Table 4). In addition, scholars such as Nel, Sarpong, and Kunhiyop have demonstrated that the formal reflective approach used in Western Christian moral education appears foreign to Africa. Nel suggests that the traditional African moral systems “may not necessarily be a philosophical or apprehensive system as text, but a system inductively construable from assumptions and actions of communities and individuals.”⁵⁵⁵ Kunhiyop thinks it is a futile effort for anyone to attempt studying African ethics through abstract philosophical principles.⁵⁵⁶ Sarpong is also convinced that studying virtues and vices in abstraction is alien to the Akan; “For it would appear that for the Akan, what a man is is less important than what he does. To put it more concretely, a person is what he is because of his deeds. He does not perform those deeds because of what he is ... no man therefore is ‘good’ or ‘evil’ outside the context of what he does or omits to do.”⁵⁵⁷ Reconciling Sarpong’s view with Gyekye’s opinion poses a challenge to Ghanaian ethicists. Gyekye thinks the Greek pedagogical approach to morality is inadequate in making people ethical, therefore theological institutes should “put premium on

⁵⁵³ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 196.

⁵⁵⁴ Interview, Dansoman, 9th February 2012.

⁵⁵⁵ P. J. Nel, “Morality and Religion in African Thought” www.ajol.info (accessed, 1st October 2011), 35.

⁵⁵⁶ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 8.

⁵⁵⁷ P. Sarpong, “Aspects of Akan Ethics” *The Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, Vol. 4.No.3, (December 1972), 40. 40 – 44.

spirituality and moral virtue,” and such institutions “ought to teach virtue and how it can be cultivated.”⁵⁵⁸ Gyekye’s emphasis on the concept of “virtue”, which is normally an abstract character quality conflicts with Sarpong’s opinion which negates abstractions in Akan moral thought. With dissonant voices emerging from African scholars on the right approach to moral education, those engaged in the discipline are challenged to hold abstractions and concrete forms of moral expression in equilibrium.

The emphasis on a practical approach to morality advocated by some scholars seems to be responsible for general impression of lack of deep reflection on ethical concepts among Ghanaian Pentecostal ministers. Many of those I interacted with demonstrated little awareness of the key theories and concepts in moral philosophy such as teleology and deontology, free will and human responsibility, situationism, and ethical relativism, among others. Those interviewed would readily submit that they were Christian moral absolutists but when exposed to a hypothetical case of moral dilemma, they would suddenly shift position to become “situationist”. In certain cases, their situationism has no philosophical grounding which correlates to Fletcher’s concepts. Their idea of “situationism” is one that makes a decision when they find themselves in a particular “situation”, rather than Fletcher’s principle of doing what love demands in the situation. Some prominent Ghanaian Pentecostal ministers interviewed seem to suggest that their ethics was duty-based, where the issue was clearly stated in the Bible, but they would consider a teleological or situationist approach in the case of an ethical dilemma.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁸ Gyekye, “Spiritual and Moral Leadership”, 38-39.

⁵⁵⁹ The said ministers include, Rev Oko Bortei-Doku of the Pastoral Care Department of Lighthouse Chapel International (Accra, 13th June 2007); Rev Noah Twum Asamoah, Resident Pastor of the Headquarters of the Word Miracle Church International (Accra, 22nd May 2007); Apostle Dr M. K. Ntummy, Chairman, The Church of Pentecost (La, 21st February 2007). However, Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie, General Secretary of Assemblies of God Churches in Ghana, thinks his Church’s ethics is strictly and consistently duty-based (Accra, 22nd June 2007).

With regard to duration of and intensity of training, Pentecostals can take a cue from African traditional religions, where acolytes undergo intensive training from 6 months to 4 years (see Section 2.9.1). According to Ekem, “Akan traditional religion, trainee priests, priestesses and shrine devotees are expected to so discipline themselves that they would be transformed into persons who are awake and spiritually sensitive to the promptings of the deities as well as the needs of communities where their priesthood will be exercised.”⁵⁶⁰ From the Eve context, Dawubo Gavɔ, the priest in charge of Anyigbatɔ Shrine at Denu claims they normally observe a prospective priesthood candidate for six months before admission, and they train them for a further three years.⁵⁶¹ I want to suggest that, to help improve the moral formation of their ministers, Pentecostal Churches could set a target of between 2 to 3 years training of new ministers; this suggestion is informed by both the Bible and secular academy. Jesus’ disciples followed him for three years before they were left on their own as leaders of the early Church. In addition many college programmes in the humanities require a period of three years for the student to adequately grasp the rudiments of any discipline in order to earn a Bachelor’s degree.

The low level of formal theological education among some Church leaders has not escaped the attention of prominent academicians and other keen observers of the Christian community. Professor Andam, Vice-Chancellor of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is reported to have insisted that there was a crying need to extend the training period of pastors; “the situation where students graduate from some Bible training schools after three-months’ training was wrong, since those graduates lacked the

⁵⁶⁰ John D. K. Ekem, “Fulfilling Your Ministry: Some Biblical Reflections”, *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XV, No. 1. (January 2005), 28.

⁵⁶¹ Interview, Denu, 2nd April 2012.

right training in the scriptures.”⁵⁶² Similarly Rev W. W. Marfo, on a religious programme dubbed “Open Doors”, monitored on Unique FM on 26th October 2008, decried the practice where people who think they have been called rush into ministry without training, thus having little knowledge about the dynamics and ethics of ministry. He also identified the period of three years of training as adequate for those who aspire to Christian ministry.

6.3.5 Application of Ministerial Ethical Codes and Constitutional Provisions

Since each Pentecostal denomination has an identifiable polity, the stipulations of its ministerial code of ethics may be designed to suit the particular context. For instance, those who practise the centralised system of administration, such as the Church of Pentecost, request of their ministers to comply with postings and transfers without raising any objections. Whilst on the other hand, the Congregational Churches, for example, Assemblies of God, allow their ministers, in many cases, to settle in congregations of their own choice.

In certain instances, the approach of some of the Churches to ethics appears so rigid, with little sensitivity to the impact of policies on the individuals involved. This is often revealed in the application of Church discipline; whilst some of the centralised Churches, for instance, the Church of Pentecost would apply outright dismissal, without restoration, to cases of immorality like embezzlement of funds and sexual misconduct, others, such as Assemblies of God, Redeem Evangel, Word Miracle Church International and Lighthouse Chapel International would rather rehabilitate the offender and encourage him or her to continue or return to ministry after complying with the sanction period.

⁵⁶² Maximus Attah “Extend Time for Training of Pastors – Prof Andam”. *Daily Graphic*, (6th October 2005), 30.

One major problem with some of the Pentecostal ministries is that they have no clearly defined and documented code of ethics for their ministers, although the same institutions hold the individuals accountable for unethical behaviour. The Churches that could not provide a documented ministerial ethical code when this researcher visited included the Apostolic Church, Ghana, Assemblies of God, the Church of Pentecost, Redeem Evangel Church, and Christian Mission Dunamis. Word Miracle Church International (WMCI) is one of the few with a ministerial ethical code which the founder has developed into a book, *Pastoral Protocol: A Guide to Ministerial Ethics* (See Literature Review, Section 1.5.3). Beyond the moral standards applied to the Ministry in *Pastoral Protocol*, the WMCI Constitution also makes provision for disciplinary action against ministers who breach the code of conduct. Article 87 of the Constitution of WMCI is entitled Ministerial Discipline with the following stipulations:

Disciplinary action shall be taken against a Minister in respect of the following actions:

- 1) Unfaithfulness
- 2) Disobedience to his calling
- 3) Refusal to fellowship with fellow Ministers
- 4) Preaching erroneous doctrine
- 5) Negligence of duty
- 6) Insubordination
- 7) Drunkenness or smoking
- 8) Absence from duty without permission
- 9) Fraud
- 10) Dishonesty
- 11) Immorality⁵⁶³
- 12) Use of indecent language or disorderly behaviour
- 13) Refusing access to a Church building, mission house or pastor's residence.
- 14) Failure to honour financial obligations, including the payment of tithes, payment of local Church amalgamation and failure to pay for Church stationery and materials sold for the Church etc.
- 15) Any other conduct or behaviour that in the opinion of the General Church Council directly or indirectly brings the name of the Church into disrepute.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶³ Identifying "immorality" as a separate item in this list is superfluous, as almost all the vices captured in the list such as fraud, dishonesty etc all happen to be immoral acts. This reflects a Ghanaian attitude of classifying sexual misconduct only as immorality.

⁵⁶⁴ *Word Miracle Church Constitution*, 51.

The WMCI Constitution further outlines the procedure of investigation by the Ministerial Disciplinary Committee and the adjudicating system, including the right to appeal. The appropriate disciplinary measures are also clearly stated in the Constitution, which include caution, suspension, demotion, termination, summary dismissal, and excommunication.⁵⁶⁵ Offences for which a minister may suffer summary dismissal are theft, fraud, dishonesty, immorality, and gross insubordination.⁵⁶⁶

In an endeavour to discover the practical application of the constitutional provision related to ministerial discipline, this writer accessed records that captured the dismissal of some ministers for various reasons. According to the records, five WMCI ministers were dismissed between 2005 and 2007 for offences such as sexual misconduct, non-performance, insubordination, and for getting involved in visa fraud.

Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), one of the prominent Charismatic churches in Ghana was founded by Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, a medical doctor by profession, in 1988 at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. Known as the Mega Church, it has developed into a network of over 400 LCI branches. According to Akoto, "Bishop Heward-Mills oversees this charismatic denomination, which now operates in thirty-four different countries in Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Australia, the United States and South America."⁵⁶⁷ LCI happens to be one of the few Pentecostal/Charismatic churches with a documented code of ethics, authored by the Heward-Mills and published as, *Ministerial Ethics: Practical Wisdom for Christian*

⁵⁶⁵ *Word Miracle Church Constitution*, 52.

⁵⁶⁶ *Word Miracle Church Constitution*, 53.

⁵⁶⁷ Peace Aku Akoto, *Ghana: Church Guide & Effective Shepherding*. (Tema: Smile Publications, n.d.), 75.

Ministers.⁵⁶⁸ In his opinion, the causes of misconduct are traceable to societal pressure experienced by contemporary ministers:

The challenges and realities of modern-day ministry are fraught with all sorts of pressures. The pressures of finances, the pressures of family and the pressures of human expectations are just a few of the many demands of ministry; these pressures in the Lord's work are often the causes of improper behaviour in a minister's relations with others.⁵⁶⁹

The book has various sections that address moral standards in ministry from both the Founder and Associate Pastors' perspectives. The first section which delineates ethical standards from the founder's focus is entitled "Ethics for the Head" and it reflects a consciousness of duties and responsibilities of the leader. He instructs thus, "Let everyone know that you are the Head, and that you "know" that you are the Head."⁵⁷⁰ Such a statement reveals a mindset of a leader who is aware of the welter of responsibility his position places on him, which agrees with Willimon's idea that "power ought to be owned, admitted and used responsibly and critiqued publicly."⁵⁷¹ However the possibility of public criticism of the use of ecclesiastical power is a challenge to Pentecostals leaders in Ghana. The other sections of the book address issues relevant to the moral responsibility of Associate or Assistant Pastors, and also respond to various aspects of ministerial morality, covering areas such as one's relationship to family, superiors, subordinates, colleagues, wider society, and financial management.

Although Redeem Evangel Church (REC) does not have an exclusive document for ministerial ethical code, I was able to access a manual entitled "Rules and Conditions of Service for the Pastoral and Non-Pastoral Staff of Redeem Evangel Church". And Article 3 of this document is captioned "Discipline"; Item 1 under this Article captures the types of

⁵⁶⁸ Dag Heward-Mills, *Ministerial Ethics: Practical Wisdom for Christian Ministers*. (Accra: n.p, 1999. There was however no access to the Church Constitution, as this researcher was told it was not available to the general public.

⁵⁶⁹ Heward-Mills, *Ministerial Ethics*, 1.

⁵⁷⁰ Heward-Mills, *Ministerial Ethics*, 7.

⁵⁷¹ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 109.

offences that warrant punishment: "Disciplinary action will be taken against an employee in respect of inefficiency or misconduct, e.g. wilful disregard of instructions, neglect of duty, absenteeism, stealing, drunkenness and immorality etc."⁵⁷² The disciplinary process which varies with the magnitude of the offence, ranges from verbal warning, to written warning, to interdiction, and ultimately, to dismissal. Though there is no clause on restoration, during my interaction with Rev Titriku, the founder, he intimated that if a minister is dismissed, the person is offered the opportunity for re-engagement if he demonstrates genuine repentance and reformation. He further stated that REC has so far dismissed one minister, who could not be restored because he did not appear to have reformed much.⁵⁷³ I was privileged to read the dismissal letter, which was addressed to Kofi Amedzro (not his real name) of the Kpedze branch, numbered REC/HQ/P.3/33 of 8th March 2005. The said letter was signed by B. M. Degboe, General Secretary, and it specified the minister's offences as alcoholism and sexual misconduct.



Among the classical Pentecostals, the Assemblies of God (AG) and the Church of Pentecost (CoP) have well developed administrative structures; however, neither Church has an appreciable documented ministerial ethical code. What obtains in the AG domain is a book from the United States of America context which presents general theories on ministerial conduct, consequently, some of the concepts do not appear to be directly relevant to the Ghanaian situation. The book, *The Spirit-Filled Pastor's Guide*,⁵⁷⁴ which is more like a manual for ministry than an ethical code, covers a wide range of topics such as Pastoral Theology, Organisation, Evangelism and Ritual, among others. One chapter is devoted to ministerial ethics, where the author examines the minister's relationship with his or her

⁵⁷² "Rules and Regulations of Service for the Pastoral and Non-Pastoral Staff of Redeem Evangel Church", 3.

⁵⁷³ Interview, Rev Titriku at Ho, 22nd July 2009.

⁵⁷⁴ R. M Riggs, *The Spirit-Filled Pastor's Guide*. Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1948.

predecessor, successor, visiting ministers and other pastors.⁵⁷⁵ Beyond that the author also discusses Pastoral Theology and limits the discourse to the acquisition of knowledge in Homiletics, Church History, Personal Evangelism, and Apologetics.⁵⁷⁶

To supplement the content of this book, AG, Ghana, Constitution has a section that is expected to control and guide the behaviour and sense of ethical responsibility of its ministers. The Constitution stipulates that a Credentials Committee of the General Council shall be the final authority in matters of doctrine and personal conduct of all Ministers.⁵⁷⁷ The cases for which AG would take disciplinary action against a minister include:

- (a) Any moral or ethical failure including sexual misconduct;
- (b) A failure to represent our Pentecostal testimony correctly;
- (c) A contentious or non-cooperative spirit;
- (d) A declared open change in doctrinal views;
- (e) A habit of incurring debt which brings reproach;
- (f) Contracting any form of marriage contrary to the principles of the Church;
- (g) Violation of ministerial ethics;
- (h) Any conduct that brings shame to the name of the Lord;
- (i) Failure to honour financial obligations including the payment of tithes;
- (j) Barricading a Church building, Mission House or Pastor's abode;
- (k) A minister or his/her spouse engaging in active partisan politics.⁵⁷⁸

The disciplinary procedure of AG allows for appeal, until a clear and significant case of misconduct is established, where the dismissal or other forms of corrective measures are published to notify the general Church public.

The Church of Pentecost (CoP) is well known for its strictness in matters of discipline; internal evidence available in a recently published history book confirms this:

The Church [CoP] does not compromise with sin in any form. It is frowned upon and treated with seriousness, though out of love. Leaders who misconduct themselves and, thereby, bring into disrepute the Church and their

⁵⁷⁵ Riggs, *The Spirit-Filled Pastor's Guide*, 248 – 264.

⁵⁷⁶ Riggs, *The Spirit-Filled Pastor's Guide*, 42 – 44.

⁵⁷⁷ Assemblies of God, Ghana Constitution, 40.

⁵⁷⁸ Assemblies of God, Ghana Constitution, 40.

own lives are suspended from active Church activities or any office they might be holding at the time.⁵⁷⁹

The CoP Minister's Handbook contains some material on ministerial ethics, where Section 10 of the document deals with discipline by identifying the following forms of misconduct as causes for the dismissal of a minister:

- i. Theft
- ii. Fraud
- iii. Dishonesty
- iv. Immorality
- v. Adultery
- vi. Insubordination
- vii. Drunkenness
- viii. Serious dereliction of duty
- ix. Unfaithfulness to the Church
- x. Disobedience to his calling
- xi. Refusal to fellowship with fellow ministers after attempts have been made to settle the misunderstanding
- xii. Preaching erroneous doctrine
- xiii. Living a questionable life
- xiv. Conduct which, in the opinion of the General Council, may directly or indirectly bring the Church into disrepute.⁵⁸⁰

The rigidity of this moral code becomes obvious in some of the above stipulations, where, for instance "dishonesty", "unfaithfulness to the Church" and "living a questionable life" attract outright dismissal without any attempt to define the degree, for example, of the "dishonesty" that would warrant dismissal.

A practical application of the rules occurred when disciplinary action was announced in circular letters against some CoP ministers. Pastor Kofi Nitaimoah (pseudo name) of Offinso West District, New Tafo Area, has been demoted from "Pastor" to "Overseer" for gross

⁵⁷⁹ E. K. Asem (ed) *A History of The Church of Pentecost* Vol. 1. (Accra: Pentecost Press, 2005), 158.

⁵⁸⁰ The Church of Pentecost, Minister's Handbook (unpublished document), 20.

indiscretion in the handling of a disciplinary case involving his immediate family member.⁵⁸¹

In another instance Pastor Setowu Xose (pseudo name) of Ho North District⁵⁸² was dismissed outright for misapplying Church income. This approach to ministerial discipline has yielded some benefits, as CoP ministers do not often appear in the Press for scandalous ministerial behaviour. In an interview with Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah, Rector of Pentecost University College⁵⁸³ and an International Executive Council member of CoP, he indicated that because the Church was proactive in applying the rules for misconduct, there would be little information that is newsworthy for the Press to report.⁵⁸⁴

According to the Minister's Handbook, "A dismissed minister may be suspended and later reinstated to full membership by the lifting of the suspension administered by the Executive Council, *but he shall not be restored into the ministry*"⁵⁸⁵ (emphasis added). The above statement, "A *dismissed* minister may be *suspended*" (emphasis mine), would not be meaningful to the outsider, as one would ask how a dismissed person could be suspended at the same time; but it is very meaningful in CoP context. "Dismissed" here refers to being sacked from the ministry, whilst "suspend" captures a milder disciplinary action such as debarring one from Holy Communion and taking up any other leadership roles in the Church. Thus, a minister who is dismissed from the service of CoP will continue to worship in the Church but will not partake in Holy Communion for a certain time and is denied any leadership role in the Church.

⁵⁸¹ Circular letter to all CoP Assemblies worldwide, dated 18th July 2007, (signed by Prophet J. E. Ameyaw, Acting Chairman of the Church of Pentecost). The use of real names here is justified by the fact that the circular letters are all public documents.

⁵⁸² Circular letter to all CoP Assemblies worldwide, dated 16th August 2007, (signed by Michael Kwabena Ntuny, Chairman of the Church of Pentecost).

⁵⁸³ Whilst this thesis project was underway, Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah became Chairman of the Church in August 2008.

⁵⁸⁴ Interview, Accra, 24th March 2007.

⁵⁸⁵ The Church of Pentecost Minister's Handbook, 21.

Although this extreme concern for high ministerial moral standards is commendable, there are certain dimensions, such as the impact of sanctions on individuals and families, which need to be revisited. CoP may therefore have to show more concern for a dismissed pastor's wife, and review its approach in calculating the financial entitlements of a dismissed minister. If a minister is dismissed for misconduct, for instance for adultery, his wife – who may have given up a lucrative job to support her husband in ministry (and might not have any hand in the immoral act) – receives no financial aid. The Church may find it necessary to give out a kind of financial package to such women in appreciation of their service and sacrifice, and more importantly in compassion for their plight.

In addition, the Handbook specifically states that “A minister who resigns without blemish from the service of the GENERAL COUNCIL shall be entitled to “A” & “B” contributions after deductions there from any indebtedness to the CHURCH” (page 30). However it is a different case with dismissed ministers: “A minister summarily dismissed on grounds of gross misconduct shall be entitled to “A” contribution only, after deducting there from any indebtedness to the CHURCH”(page 30). The “A” contribution is the individual's contribution towards their provident fund, whilst “B” constitutes the employer's part. The Handbook stipulates that if a minister is dismissed, he is entitled to only his contribution to the fund and forfeits the employer's contribution. Leadership may want to consider the fact that since the provident fund is something the employee has earned it should not be subjected to institutional discretion.

6.3.6 Modes of Assessment

In an attempt to maintain an admirable standard of moral conduct among their ministers, some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches have developed methods of assessment to

evaluate individual performance. Assessment forms from the Apostolic Church and the Church of Pentecost, for instance, identify specific areas of ministerial conduct. Among other items of assessment, the Apostolic Church form appraises ministers on human relations and team spirit, (see Appendix 1). The Church of Pentecost Ministers' Appraisal Form also evaluates ministers on issues of integrity, co-operation (team spirit); conduct (whether friendly, too reserved or indifferent); how well he manages his relationship with his wife; leadership ability (promptness of action, soundness of decision, application of good shepherding principles), etc., (see Appendix 2).

Surveying some of the emerging Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches like Rev Emmanuel Ofosu-Akuamoah's Redemption Faith Ministry at Kwashieman, Rev Francis Yeboah's Living Praise Sanctuary Ministries, located at Kwashiebu and Apostle Waye Onyinah's Christian Mission Dunamis Sakaman, it became evident that their institutional structures were progressively being developed. As a result no policy document relevant to ministerial ethics was readily available. This situation, however, does not imply that such Churches do not give any attention to moral concerns in ministry. Far from that; some of them have very responsible pastors whose concern for decent ministerial conduct has inspired them to develop creative ways of addressing moral challenges in ministry.

One such approach, which can be presented as a model to other Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leaders is the establishment of voluntary associations of ministers. Apostle Waye Onyinah has initiated a group called Association of Pentecostal Pastors (APP) headquartered at Sakaman. This group, which had a total membership of 70 pastors as at 21st January 2008 is a voluntary association with the following aims and objectives:

- i. To promote mutual fraternity among Pastors of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches

- ii. To help young Pastors through counselling
- iii. To organise periodic seminars and/or conferences for the members
- iv. To encourage and motivate members who face difficulties, and
- v. To exchange pulpits by her members⁵⁸⁶

Apostle Waye Onyinah is convinced that there are many pastors on their own who are talented, but lack adequate education and training for ministry. In his view, such ministers could be trained through associations like his own to develop character qualities and resourceful capacity worthy of their vocation.⁵⁸⁷ Apostle Onyinah describes his methodology as a peer review approach, where members hold each other responsible for ethical conduct. According to him the process of developing a disciplinary code for APP was underway; however they annulled one minister's membership in December 2006 for expressing excessive anger at a public gathering. He also cited promiscuity and drunkenness among pastors as some of the major moral issues the Association was often confronted with.

6.4 Specific Ethical Issues

6.4.1 Relationships

One area of ethical concern that deserves extra attention from Pentecostal ministers is the issue of relationships. The extreme tests of character that one experiences when interacting with family, friends, colleagues and supervisors has in some cases exposed unethical behaviour in some Pentecostal ministers.

Clergy marriage and sexuality have received copious attention in much of the available literature on ministerial ethics. Willimon thinks sexual immorality among clergy is a "sin against the Christian community, and a fundamental reproach to the communitarian vocation

⁵⁸⁶ Constitution of Association of Pentecostal Pastors (unpublished document), 1.

⁵⁸⁷ Interview, Accra, 21st June 2008.

of pastors.”⁵⁸⁸ And he advocates the dismissal of pastors “who can only sometimes be counted upon to keep their marriage vows.”⁵⁸⁹ Miles is also convinced that “of all clergy misconduct, sexual misconduct is especially reprehensible.”⁵⁹⁰ And she provides rather sobering statistics from a study on clergy sexual affairs: 12.7 percent of pastors admitted to having sexual intercourse with a parishioner; 38.6 percent admitted to some “sexual contact”; and more than 75 percent of the clergy reported that they know a pastor who has had sexual intercourse with a parishioner.⁵⁹¹ Gula suggests that pastoral sexual misconduct usually has a devastating impact because of our symbolic representation of the Church, and ultimately God. And he proceeds with this telling observation: “Moreover, in the public’s eye, nothing quite makes for sensational news the way a sex scandal in ministry does.”⁵⁹²

Pierce has responded to the problem by suggesting some precautionary measures such as extra caution when a man is counselling a disillusioned woman, avoid taking advantage of the love and trust of a female counselee, and to discourage the vigorous frontal hugging and kissing.⁵⁹³ Mile’s list of precautionary measures also include self-awareness, watching for signs that the opposite sex might be attracted to the minister, and being conscious of the responsibility to keep the boundaries.⁵⁹⁴

Divorce and remarriage are thorny issues in Christian ministry, and Miles has perceptively observed that many books on pastoral ministry avoid any attempts to pass judgment about divorce.⁵⁹⁵ Peirce is one of the few authors who insist that the prohibition of divorce is clear

⁵⁸⁸ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 77.

⁵⁸⁹ Willimon, *Calling and Character*, 77.

⁵⁹⁰ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 103.

⁵⁹¹ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 103.

⁵⁹² Gula, *Ethics in Pastoral Ministry*, 92.

⁵⁹³ Peirce, *Ministerial Ethics*, 223 – 224.

⁵⁹⁴ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 111 – 112.

⁵⁹⁵ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 82.

and categorical in the Scriptures.⁵⁹⁶ Furthermore, Pierce identifies some of the problems associated with divorce, “Almost invariably divorce reflects alienated affections in one or more lives. Divorce flouts the marriage ordinance of God. Divorce destroys a home and the relationships that make it a haven in a troubled world.”⁵⁹⁷ Although Pierce’s position may appear laudable, taking an absolutist stance against divorce is to ignore certain harsh realities of the marital relationship. Miles thinks the absolutist obligation view of marriage can be abused to make the weak spouse a sacrificial lamb for the strong and powerful. Such a situation, she thinks, provides “an excuse for sadistic abuse and control on one side and passive masochism on the other.”⁵⁹⁸ This implies that each problematic marriage should be assessed on its own merit, rather than maintaining general inflexible positions that might be more inimical than beneficial. Although this position might appear to some as situationist and “unbiblical”, at least it is realistic.

From the year 2005 to 2007, the domestic life of Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams, founder of Christian Action Faith Ministry (CAFM), became a prominent topic in the Ghanaian media when he went through divorce proceedings with his wife Francisca.⁵⁹⁹ The whole of the Christian community and wider society wondered how a leader and model of such a high standing could have his wife estranged from him. In her book, *Reflections: The Untold Story*, Mrs Francisca Duncan-Williams reveals some of the tensions behind the divorce: “In my marriage, I found loneliness in another form. This time around, the loneliness was worst than first because it constituted a greater disappointment.”⁶⁰⁰ The reason she ascribed to this loneliness had to do with neglect from her husband whose ministerial duties

⁵⁹⁶ Peirce, *Ministerial Ethics*, 142.

⁵⁹⁷ Peirce, *Ministerial Ethics*, 142.

⁵⁹⁸ Miles, *The Pastor as a Moral Guide*, 82.

⁵⁹⁹ Ghana Web, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/> (posted: 30th June 2005; accessed, 8th March 2012)

⁶⁰⁰ F. Duncan-Williams, *Reflections: The Untold Story*. (Accra: Action Faith Publications, 2002), 34 – 35.

kept him away from home for very long stretches of time. Eventually she sued for divorce and it was granted.

Exegetes such as Stott think Paul's single wife clause for Christian leaders in 1 Timothy 3:2 is an exclusion clause for those who have divorced and remarried.⁶⁰¹ Pierce also suggests the divorce encounter undermines the minister's moral authority as a guide for family relationships, "Having been divorced, even the most gifted minister cannot be respected and accepted as the pastoral role model for family relationships in the congregation."⁶⁰² Debate on the acceptance of the leadership of a divorced and remarried minister was triggered when the report of Archbishop Duncan-Williams's remarriage hit the headlines.⁶⁰³ Responding to this issue, Apostle Ekow Badu Wood, General Secretary of Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), intimated that GPC did not approve of the remarriage and had therefore decided to send a letter of reprimand to the Archbishop.⁶⁰⁴ He claims GPC resorted to this course of action because Archbishop Duncan-Williams was not forthcoming with information on the cause of his unstable marriage when they attempted to help restore the relationship.

To many Christians the Archbishop had broken the biblical injunction that proscribes divorce. This event, they thought, could lead the Church towards a position of subjective ethics, where individuals would determine their own family values instead of living by biblical principles. For instance, one wonders how Archbishop Duncan-Williams would respond to requests for divorce from members of his congregation; that is, whether he would have the moral authority to counsel against it. However, although it is clear that going by principle-based ethics, one would fault the divorce and remarriage of the Archbishop, our

⁶⁰¹ Stott, *1 Timothy and Titus*, 93.

⁶⁰² Pierce, *Ministerial Ethics*: 145.

⁶⁰³ C. B. Okine, "Rosa: I'm Happy with what the Lord has Done" *The Mirror*, (6th May 2008), 19.

⁶⁰⁴ Interview, Accra, 28th June 2008.

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⁶⁰¹ Stott, *1 Timothy and Titus*, 93.

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⁶⁰⁴ Interview, Accra, 28th June 2008.

judgement might not be well-informed, since we do not know every dimension to the case. Supposing his marriage to Francisca had degenerated to a situation that was life threatening, then, guided by the principle of utility, one could argue that the divorce procedure, although seemingly unethical, was a reasonable decision.

In an extremely disturbing case of sibling relationship management, an Assemblies of God (AG) minister was provoked to commit the ultimate crime of killing his own blood brother. I visited Nsawam Medium Security Prison on 14th November 2008 to interview Pastor John Tekperthey who had been remanded in prison custody for 3 years. Pastor Tekperthey, who was 56 years old at the time, had a wife and 3 children and had served as an Exhorter in AG for 5 years at Asesewa. Thereafter, he was ordained and posted to Kpong as a Pastor for 3 years; in all he had been in AG Ministry for 8 years. According to Pastor Tekperthey he had a misunderstanding with his younger brother, Tetteh Tekperthey, who was living at Asamankese, over property rights; as the latter wanted to mortgage a portion of their late father's cocoa farm without the approval of the rest of the family.

When John confronted Tetteh and asked him to stop the mortgage procedure, Tetteh had his brother arrested for threatening his life. After the Pastor was granted bail, he appealed to a traditional ruler to intervene and settle the case out of court. Tetteh however went ahead and mortgaged the land without waiting for an amicable settlement. This action provoked Pastor Tekperthey so he went to his brother's house to discuss the issue. On his arrival in the house, a quarrel ensued between them, and John hit Tetteh with a stick and killed him instantly. John was arrested and taken to Asamankese Circuit Court which had remanded him in prison for the past three years; awaiting trial. The Pastor attributed his action to extreme provocation and said, upon reflection, that he should have behaved otherwise and let go of the property.

The Rev Superintendent James Tetteh,⁶⁰⁵ the Prison Chaplain, however, gave a good testimony of Pastor Tekperthey's conduct in prison and said the latter was helpful to him in leading worship and offering Christian service to his fellow prisoners.

Although one may try to understand Pastor Tekperthey's motive as acting under extreme provocation, it is still worthwhile to examine this rather outrageous act of fratricide in the light of some of the ethical concepts discussed earlier on. According to him, his intention was to hit his brother in order to teach him a lesson, but not to kill him. All the same one wonders how a pastor could resort to violence in seeking redress for an offence. This reveals a situation of an extremely subjective response to an event that proved to be a severe test of character. In addition to breaking God's moral law, Tekperthey's use of brute force reveals a situation of ethical relativity, which fails the test of Kant's categorical imperative; since he has ignored principles and the rights of others in making a crucial moral decision.

The second Pastor I encountered at Nsawam Medium Security Prison on 14th November 2008 was Pastor David Tetteh, an Associate Pastor at God's Divine Tabernacle Ministry, a charismatic church headquartered at Nungua. Pastor David Tetteh was 28 years old and had a 3-year old child with a lady with whom he had been co-habiting. According to Tetteh, his call to ministry came as a personal signal in a series of dreams, where he saw himself preaching and healing people. And the call was further confirmed by the testimony of some senior ministers of his Church.

However, because of financial difficulties he was compelled to live with a lady, who was a trader, even though he was not duly married to her. This lady and her mother together

⁶⁰⁵ Interview, Nsawam, 14th November 2008.

provided his needs and also took care of their 3-year old baby. According to him, the relationship turned sour and he began to suspect the lady of having an affair with another man. Although David confessed that he had assaulted his partner on several occasions in the past, the most severe one which landed him in jail occurred in July 2008 after the lady told him on the phone that she had lost interest in their relationship. In reaction, David picked a knife, went to the lady's house and assaulted her. Consequently he was arraigned before court and sentenced to 6 years in prison. When I met David, he had spent 4 months of his jail term at Nsawam Prison. My interaction with him revealed that he was still struggling to come to terms with his situation, as he would rather blame demons than accept responsibility for his violent conduct. However, Rev Superintendent J. Tetteh spoke well of him as one of the useful Christian leaders in the Prison.

Pastor David Tettey's case, when examined closely, suggests a laxity in attitude to family values which manifested in his common law marriage and a failure to uphold the principle of sanctity of life. The ethical principles informing Tettey's behaviour may be difficult to understand, and one could only ascribe it to subjective morality which rejects societal norms and Christian principles guiding marriage and the preservation of life.

The relationship between some Pentecostal ministers and their colleagues, supervisors and followers also sometimes generates so much conflict that one would struggle to reconcile their attitudes to the Christian love-your-neighbour message. Some of these conflicts go beyond the Church context, finding their way to the secular law courts for redress. Such cases had at a certain point become so rampant that the Attorney-General could not avoid making a public statement on them when some ministers of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) visited him. According to this media report:

The Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr Joe Ghartey, has decried the increasing levels of litigation in the Church, saying it contravened the Holy Bible and the work of Christ. He said there was the need for Christians to show tolerance and compromise and resolve their disputes internally, using alternative dispute resolution mechanisms instead of resorting to the courts.⁶⁰⁶

It is interesting to observe, by reading this report that, the Hon Joe Ghartey was playing the role of a preacher by admonishing those who were supposed to know better. Responding to the Attorney-General's comment in the same news report, Rev Amponsah Frimpong, Head of the Legal Department of CAC, confirmed that the Church was involved in "unbridled litigation" and they were making efforts to withdraw all cases from the courts for settlement internally.⁶⁰⁷ Rev Amponsah Frimpong confirmed in an interview that since their meeting with the Attorney General they had reconciled two litigating factions in the Church at Old Bantama in Kumasi without recourse to the law courts.⁶⁰⁸

6.4.2 Attitude to Power

Another area of great diversity in Pentecostal leadership manifests in their attitude to power. Globally the movement has produced both heroes and villains, relative to their use or abuse of power. From a positive perspective, Miller and Yamamori intimate that many successful Pentecostal churches have developed a flat organisational structure, where the senior pastor's creative vision is supported and implemented by associates, staff and the laity.⁶⁰⁹ The co-authors pay this tribute to exemplary Pentecostal leadership, "Some of the wisest senior pastors we interviewed had made replication and expansion of their ministers their primary goal rather than making themselves indispensable."⁶¹⁰ In contrast, Miller and Yamamori's research has also revealed a cultlike attachment to some founding pastors. In one particular

⁶⁰⁶ M. A. Dabbu, "A-G Decries Increasing Litigation in the Church", *Daily Graphic*. (29th June 2007), 3.

⁶⁰⁷ Dabbu, "A-G Decries Increasing Litigation in the Church", 3.

⁶⁰⁸ Interview, Accra, 4th July 2008.

⁶⁰⁹ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 186 – 187.

⁶¹⁰ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 187.

case narrated by the co-authors, a commentator said “about a successful young minister that for many of his members the question would not be whether to jump at his requests, but to ask, ‘How high?’”.⁶¹¹ Reflecting on this state of affairs, Miller and Yamamori think “this style of leadership has many potential pathologies, both for the individual leaders who starts to mistake ambitions for the will of God, but also for the congregation whose growth is stunted so long as membership is based on attraction to a person rather than a transcendent vision.”⁶¹²

A general observation of the Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic scene reveals some exemplary leadership; the late Prophet M. K. Yeboah and Rev Asore (see sections 5.5 and 5.4.2.2 above) for example, have demonstrated humility and an appreciable immunity to the intoxicating effects power. Many of the pastors lead unassuming lives and are willing to accept postings to remote areas, deprived of modern amenities. They readily identify with their congregation members and survive on the modest income their denominations provide as well as what the generosity of some of their congregation members and others could supply.⁶¹³

Nevertheless, in certain circles, the problem of power abuse is often identified as one of the difficulties that plague the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement in Ghana. Relevant to this view point, Asamoah-Gyadu has opined that any movement that emphasises spiritual manifestation normally generates autocracy, as the one who is “closer to the spirit” is revered to the extent that even his personal opinion is regarded as coming from a divine source.⁶¹⁴

⁶¹¹ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 187.

⁶¹² Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 187 – 188.

⁶¹³ These observations have their source in my personal experience and interaction with colleagues when I served as a District Minister of the Church of Pentecost for three years (1996 – 1999) at Kpedze, a provincial town near Ho.

⁶¹⁴ Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

This observation seems to support one of my theses that traditional leadership styles are reflected in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership. According to Asamoah-Gyadu, since matters of the spirit are not readily verifiable, the one who is regarded as being more in tune with the spirit world, be it the traditional priest or the chief (who is supposed to be closely affiliated to the ancestors), is revered, and no one challenges his opinion. There seems to be a parallel tendency among Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders to develop such personality cults. In an attempt to cover up their lack of accountability and transparency, congregation members are advised, "touch not the Lord's anointed." This resonates with Wurata's idea quoted earlier (Section 2.6) that Christian leaders have exploited the African cultural heritage of reverence to their spiritual leaders for their own personal glory and enrichment.⁶¹⁵ And Kalu is also convinced that the church derives its character and sources its idiom from the interior of African worldview.⁶¹⁶ He thinks the manifestation of power abuse in modern institutions is rooted in traditional values:

This is why rulers in Africa act as chiefs and wield symbols, such as, the fly whisk, the leopard skin and the "big man's" walking stick. The effort is a form of villagization, the transfer of patriarchal ethics from the village to the town and to the modern state, a deliberate manipulation of public space so as to escape the accountability which the modern state demands.⁶¹⁷

An appeal by Mrs Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie, a Member of Council of State, who stopped worshipping at Word Miracle Church International and returned to her former Church, a Wesleyan Methodist congregation a few months before making this statement, calls for accountability from Church leaders to their members:

A Member of Council State... has appealed to Church leaders to appreciate the demand to be accountable to their congregation and not hide behind spiritualism of being accountable to only God.... The leadership should therefore appreciate that those whose sweat and toil keeps the wheels of the

⁶¹⁵ Wurata, "Who is Jesus Christ for Africans Today?", 63.

⁶¹⁶ Ogbu U. Kalu, "Shape and Identity in Contemporary African Church Historiography", *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XII Nos. 1 & 2. (July/December 2002), 1-2. 1-22.

⁶¹⁷ Kalu, "Shape and Identity..." , 2

Church going must be given information, even if it's through their representatives so as to help maintain integrity of leadership.⁶¹⁸

Rev Professor Kingsley Larbi also thinks that it is because Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leadership is not democratic and transparent that a lot of tension and relationship problems seem to be emerging in their fold. He finds it objectionable that a kind of autocratic leadership approach seems to be surfacing in some Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, where the leader's view is never challenged; undermining accountability and fostering abuse of authority.⁶¹⁹

On occasion, internal denominational power struggle occurs when there is a chance for one person to rise to a higher office among a group of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers. In certain instances, the situation becomes so explosive that it leads to dissensions, Church splits and open litigation at the law courts, which tend to receive much media attention. One prominent example happened in the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) in July 2003 which resulted in a Church split. Rev Dr Augustine Annor Yeboah, who was Chairman, was voted out of power and replaced by Rev Michael Nimo. As a result, the former broke away with some of the members to found a new Church.⁶²⁰ Again Winners' Chapel also experienced a leadership crisis that resulted in a break away, with the former Ghanaian leader, Bishop George Adjeman taking one faction to form a new Church which he initially called Life Assembly, only to change the name a few weeks after to Winners' Chapel Ghana.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁸ Gifty Afenyi-Dadzie, cited in M. Oppong & M. A. Paintsil, "Church Leaders must be Accountable to Members" *The Spectator*, (1st May 2008), 23.

⁶¹⁹ Interview, Dansoman, 21st June 2007.

⁶²⁰ See Adjoa Yeboah-Afari (ed), *The Ghanaian Times*, 26th July 2003.

⁶²¹ Breda Atta-Quayson, "Winners' Church Falling Apart" in *Daily Graphic*, 22nd June 2004. This crisis featured in the Ghanaian media for a considerable period of time as the two factions issued press releases to defend their positions. The immediate cause of the split was the decision to transfer George Adjeman from Ghana to Nigeria. According to a press release by the Nigeria mission, Adjeman "was transferred because of misappropriation of funds", see Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafu, "The Winners' Chapel Saga: Reasons for Transfer of Bishop Adjeman to Lagos" *Daily Graphic* 10th July 2004, see also Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafu, Advertiser's Announcement "Winners' Chapel" *Daily Graphic* 9th August 2004.

O'Meara intimates that titles in the early church were functionary;⁶²² however it appears the intoxicating effect of power has influenced some Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders to become preoccupied with the trappings of position, such as titles, expensive regalia or outfit, flashy vehicles and palatial places of residence. The penchant for impressive titles and accolades among Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders has often engaged the attention of some opinion leaders and social commentators. Professor Kwesi Yankah, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana, according to the *Ghanaian Observer*, has expressed "grave concern about the gross misuse or abuse and sometimes the fraudulent uses of academic titles ... by impostors and academic charlatans."⁶²³ The eminent scholar discerned a local love for "pomp and pageantry", which manifests at such awards ceremonies, as some of the underlying factors motivating politicians and other public figures who engage in this practice. And one would think that pastors would be exonerated in such a situation of moral scrutiny. To the contrary, a whole paragraph is devoted to their complicity; part of the press report reads:

Disputed titles used in Ghana include religious honorifics, ... without due process, lay preachers perhaps in the name of free expression, have elevated themselves overnight as pastors, reverend ministers, bishops and archbishops, bypassing laid down procedure ... Of late the title "Reverend" soon after its use, has quickly attracted the Doctor, Dr to render the honoree a "Reverend Dr," ... A close look would sometimes reveal that none of the titles has been properly earned.⁶²⁴

Reflecting in this situation, Ogbu Kalu thinks that despite their original egalitarian stance, "African Pentecostals changed from puritan anti-establishment to pomp, pageantry and episcopacy".⁶²⁵ By implication, the Pentecostal movement which started on the margins and upheld a holiness code of economically prudent living, with equal opportunities to everyone to contribute his or her talents and ideas, appears to have become hierarchically structured

⁶²² O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 75.

⁶²³ Kwesi Yankah, cited in Jonathan Adams, "Academic Titles on Sale" *The Ghanaian Observer*, (30th November 2009), 2.

⁶²⁴ Yankah, "Academic Titles on Sale", 2.

⁶²⁵ Interview, Accra, 29th August 2007.

and worldly, with their initial spiritual focus, to some extent, being compromised for social recognition and economic power.

6.4.3 Women's Liberation

Gender discrimination against women appears to be a universal phenomenon, and Stott reveals these rather unfortunate but realistic male impressions on the issue:

For there is no doubt that in many cultures women have habitually been despised and demeaned by men. They have often been treated as mere playthings and sex objects, as unpaid cooks, housekeepers and child minders, and as brainless simpletons incapable of engaging in rational discussion. Their gifts have been unappreciated, their personality smothered, their freedom curtailed, and their service in some areas exploited, in others refused.⁶²⁶

This global perspective on females notwithstanding, the magnitude of the problem varies with communities. As stated in Section 2.2.2, traditionally, women are marginalised in Ghana and are often seen as useful only in carrying out domestic chores; and they play insignificant roles in the leadership structure of social institutions. Quist, reflecting on an Akan myth, has observed that, similar to the creation narrative in Genesis, women are often branded as the cause of certain problems of the world.⁶²⁷

With the liberationist message of the gospel, one would expect the Church to spearhead the freedom charter for women, but unfortunately the church seems to be the last social institution willing to accord full recognition to women's leadership potential. Stott, in appraising the problem in Britain observes, "By the 1960s only two professions were still closed to them [women], the London Stock Exchange and the ordained ministry of the

⁶²⁶ John Stott, *New Issues Facing Christians Today*. (London: Marshall Pickering, 1999), 285.

⁶²⁷ Quist, "Roles of the Women in the Church of Pentecost", 47.

historic churches. In 1973, however the Stock Exchange capitulated. Now it is only ordination which, in some churches, is denied to women.”⁶²⁸

The roles and recognition of women among Pentecostals is another area that highlights the eclectic nature of the movement. Whilst some of them have lifted every limitation to women’s leadership role in their denominations, others, as it were, still “keep them in their place.” Kalu, in analysing the attitude of Pentecostal churches to women thinks “there are four prominent categories of female discourses within African Pentecostalism: founders, sisters, first ladies, and jezebels.”⁶²⁹ The founders comprise females who demonstrate outstanding charisma to establish and lead a denomination or healing ministry, for instance Christy Doe Tetteh, pastor and founder of Solid Rock Chapel, Accra and Maame Grace Mensah of CoP Edumfa Prayer Centre in Central Region. The “sisters” are women who are allowed to exercise their charismatic gifts at the ritual level without confronting the patriarchal base of the polity. The “first lady” refers of the pastor’s wife, who in some churches become the focal point for mobilising the women for evangelism. Cast in a negative light are those referred to as jezebels, who are accused of targeting Pentecostal ministers to entrap them sexually.⁶³⁰

Generally, in Ghana, a handful of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches are receptive to the idea of women’s ministry, for instance, the Assemblies of God Church has ordained 20 women pastors.⁶³¹ There is also an emerging trend in some of the Charismatic Churches, where apart from ordaining other women, the founder’s wife also becomes an automatic minister. For example Mrs Viviane Agyin-Asare, wife of the founder of WMCI, is ordained

⁶²⁸ Stott, *New Issues Facing Christians Today*, 287.

⁶²⁹ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 148.

⁶³⁰ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 148 - 153.

⁶³¹ Church records, Assemblies of God Church, accessed on 21st March 2007.

and regarded as the co-founder of the Church. As to whether such women develop their leadership potential by creating their own niche or operate in the shadow of the husband's charisma is a debatable issue.

As stated above, the Church of Pentecost (CoP), the largest Pentecostal denomination in Ghana, registering a total membership of 897,926,⁶³² has no female among its 704 ordained ministers. Although women are in two-thirds majority, 570, 624 as against 327,302 men of CoP, only two women, the Director of the Women's Movement and her assistant, participate in its annual General Council meetings (comprising more than 500 people), which constitutes the highest decision-making body of the Church. After exploring the contribution of women and their role recognition in CoP, Quist's conviction is that although women in CoP are not devoid of charismata, they are restricted in its use by the patriarchal polity.⁶³³

Generally, the male dominant Pentecostal Church leadership has defined roles and stereotypes for the women. The influence of women, no matter how resourceful, is normally restricted to women's ministry. In an interview with Apostle Dr M. K. Ntumy,⁶³⁴ he suggested that CoP could not ordain women ministers in the foreseeable future, as many of the Churches with women ministers seem to be having a lot of problems with them. Although Apostle Dr Ntumy did not state the specific problems, his view however contrasts with the opinion of Pastor Noah Twum⁶³⁵ of WMCI, who thought their women ministers were among their most seasoned.

⁶³² The Church of Pentecost, June 2006 Reports.

⁶³³ Quist, Roles of Women in the Church of Pentecost, 68.

⁶³⁴ La, 27th February 2001.

⁶³⁵ Interview, Dzorwulu, 22nd May, 2007.

For Rev Christopher Titriku, founder of REC, the whole idea of women's ordination was doctrinal; and since the Bible proscribes it (he cited the example of Jesus calling only male disciples, and also of Paul forbidding women to teach and rule over men (1Cor 14:34-35; 1Tim 2:11-14), anyone who ordains women was breaking a divine injunction.⁶³⁶ Other arguments advanced against women's ministry include the challenges of maternity leave and domestic responsibilities, which may compete with ministerial duties. However, one can argue that since other institutions in commerce, industry and academia, as well as sister Churches engage women in significant leadership roles, the rejection of women's ministry in some Churches is ascribable only to the choice of those in authority. It is noteworthy that apart from Assemblies of God, almost all the other classical Pentecostal Churches, such as CoP, Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and the Apostolic Church, Ghana (AC) reject female ordination.

Interestingly, one of the factors responsible for this attitude of male dominance in Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches is the fact that even the women folk in the Churches seem to prefer the ministry of male pastors to the female ones. This viewpoint was attested to by two women ministers in WMCI, Rev Millicent Nana Atsu, the Headquarters minister in charge of outreach and Rev Cecilia Adzo Dickens, Registrar of Miracle Ministerial College, the theological training establishment of the Church.⁶³⁷ Both of them lamented the fact that this situation is partly attributable to traditional culture which accords women little recognition.

⁶³⁶ Interview, Ho, 22nd July 2009.

⁶³⁷ Interview, Accra, 3rd April 2009.

6.4.4 Undermining the Virtue of Responsibility

Reflecting on O'Meara's discerning observation that "If history is the church's life situation, it is also its cross", one could aver that if culture is the vehicle of the gospel, it is also its cross. Theologians such as Bediako,⁶³⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu,⁶³⁹ Larbi,⁶⁴⁰ and Mwuara⁶⁴¹ acclaim the contextualisation and relevance of the pneumatic churches in "successfully" engaging with the African worldview. Larbi thinks "the significant factor that has given rise to a boom in Pentecostal activities in the country is that Pentecostalism has found a fertile ground in the all-pervasive primal religious traditions, especially in its cosmology and in its concept of salvation."⁶⁴² And this is confirmed by Mwuara's opinion:

Pneumatic experiences resonate well with indigenous African spirituality with its belief in the existence of spiritual forces. But whereas in indigenous spirituality people are subject to the capriciousness of spirit forces, in classical/spiritual AICs, liberation is experienced through the salvific death of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, which it made possible.⁶⁴³

Mwuara however proceeds to identify the inherent pitfalls in this situation of extreme consciousness of pneumatic experience. She thinks,

Some prophet-healers capitalise on the fear of people, who believe that their problems arise from witchcraft and sorcery ... This reinforcement of the belief in witchcraft and sorcery (much as we accept it is a reality in Africa) has entrenched this belief. There are people, who are unwilling to look beyond these beliefs, for the sources of their problems, even when there is a logical explanation to them.⁶⁴⁴

The ethical problem that emerges from this situation is the obsession with superstition, which turns to weaken congregation members' sense of responsibility. As stated in Section 2.5 above, the Ghanaian world view projects a high level of consciousness for spiritual reality; oftentimes, it is claimed that evil spirits operate variously through witchcraft, dwarfs,

⁶³⁸ Bediako, *Jesus in Africa*, 22.

⁶³⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatic*, 17.

⁶⁴⁰ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 31.

⁶⁴¹ Mwuara, "New Religious Movements", 8.

⁶⁴² Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 31.

⁶⁴³ Mwuara, "New Religious Movements", 8.

⁶⁴⁴ Mwuara, "New Religious Movements", 16.

ghost, water mermaids and ancestral curses to harm people or impede their progress. In traditional society, it fell to the priests to identify and exorcise those who possess evils spirits and prevent them from harming other members of the community. Some Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers who seem to have taken advantage of these traditional beliefs and practices have specialised in handling the demonic through witchcraft accusations and deliverance.

I visited Achimota Forest on 16th September 2009 and participated in a prayer meeting with a group led by “Prophetess” Lydia Selorm, who was a member of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG). The manifestation of Pentecostal phenomenon in a group led by a lady from one of the Western Mission oriented Churches appears to confirm my concerns raised earlier in this thesis that, both the positive and negative factors in Pentecostalism would invariably influence the other persuasions of the Christian Faith (see Section 1.7).⁶⁴⁵ During the opening prayer session, “Prophetess” Selorm directed the members to invoke the fire of God to consume every enemy from their families who was militating against their success in life.

Soon after, Brother Okoe, who was also a lay member of PCG preached on “How Demons Enter People”. He introduced his sermon by saying that many people were praying all over the nation because they had existential problems. And these problems, he said, were attributable to demonic activity. Brother Okoe then proceeded to identify and explain the various means of demonic influence. The first to be identified was a person’s family line. In his view, one of the basic ways of contracting evil spirits is through one’s lineage. He developed this theme further and advised his hearers to be hesitant in inheriting any dead relative’s property, because the dead person’s ghost could possess the beneficiary. Brother

⁶⁴⁵ See Cephas Narh Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*. Zotermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006. This is confirmed further by the views expressed by almost all the participants at the Lausanne Theology Working Group Africa Chapter Seminar on Prosperity Teaching at Akropong from September 3-4, 2009. Many of them were of the opinion that, contrary to popular thinking, the prosperity gospel is no longer the preserve of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, but it has taken root in all the Christian denominations in Ghana.

Okoe went on to mention child naming rites, excessive ambition, greed, participating in traditional festivals, and some food items as the other means by which a demon could possess a person. Obviously, the ethical implication of such demonology is to shift blame for human choices and attitudes to the activities of evil spirits.

On 29th May 2009 an event took place in Ghana, which, if given adequate attention by academics and Church leaders could make a positive impact on the religious and socio-economic life of the nation. A seminar was organised by the Centre for Inquiry (CFI) in collaboration with the Ghana chapter of Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA) on the theme "Witchcraft and Superstition: Impact on African Development". The Chairman of CFI, a transnational organisation, Mr Leo Igwe rightly "stressed the need to fight against superstitious beliefs that had the tendency of undermining development, creating fear, hatred and confusion, which oppressed women and undermined their ability to succeed."⁶⁴⁶ A seminar of this nature, which, in this writer's opinion, was long overdue, was organised by a civil society group, rather than the Church, which should have taken the lead in fighting superstition in Africa. To aggravate matters, the presentations at the conference accused the kind Churches referred to as "spiritual" of promoting witchcraft and superstition. According to the *Daily Graphic* report, Mrs Bernice Heloo, President of SWAA, said such Churches are responsible for the perpetuation of superstition and witchcraft beliefs in Africa.⁶⁴⁷

One would think that with the benefit of formal education and exposure to science and technology, current African Christian leaders would respond with a balanced spiritual perspective to some of these prehistoric societal problems. But the grip of witchcraft and

⁶⁴⁶ L. Igwe, cited in Jennifer Dornoo, "Superstitious Belief: Its Impact on Development" *Daily Graphic*, (30th May 2009), 11.

⁶⁴⁷ B. Heloo, in J. Dornoo, "Superstitious Belief: Its Impact on Development" *Daily Graphic*, (30th May 2009), 11.

superstition on the consciousness of some Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders directs their ministry towards pre-science age practices such as witch hunting; a rather worrisome development. Gifford thinks, "Concerned Ghanaians themselves speculate on the modern spread of belief in witchcraft, and its baneful influence"⁶⁴⁸ Opoku is one of the concerned Ghanaians who thinks "the preoccupation with the demonic by Pentecostals generates tension with cultures, and other religions, as well as causing harm to candidates of exorcism. Opoku further laments "Additionally, in some ways, exorcism was found to be an instrument for oppressing the poor".⁶⁴⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu is also convinced that some deliverance ministers just capitalise on people's fear of tragedy to manipulate and abuse them.⁶⁵⁰

An important moral ramification of the deliverance ministry is identified by Asamoah-Gyadu, in his observation that some Pentecostals leaders ascribe moral failure to demonic activity (see Section 1.5.2). In a similar vein, Opoku examines the practice of deliverance and exorcism, where sinful behaviour is ascribed to evil spirits and insists that the Bible seldom identifies demons as the source of sinful behaviours.⁶⁵¹ Folarin also reflects on the demonization situation prevailing in Nigeria and conjectures, "this wrongly relieves men of responsibility for their sins, and their problems. All the blame is now shifted to the devil and his agents."⁶⁵² And Asamoah-Gyadu further avers that when pastoral care attributes moral deviance to demons it becomes impossible to hold people accountable for their behaviour.⁶⁵³ Evidently this approach turns to limit people's sense of responsibility, as they disregard personal efforts at moral reformation, and instead, as it were, try to cast out "the demon of lying."

⁶⁴⁸ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 88.

⁶⁴⁹ Opoku, "Akan Witchcraft", 393.

⁶⁵⁰ Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

⁶⁵¹ Opoku, "Akan Witchcraft", 356.

⁶⁵² George O. Folarin, "Prosperity Gospel in Nigeria: A Re-examination of the Concept, Impact, and Evaluation", *African Journal of Biblical Studies* Vol. XXXIII No. II, (October 2006), 95.

⁶⁵³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 197.

Ganusah also contributes to the witchcraft debate in her insightful research work on puberty rites among the centrally-located Ewes. She argues from the premise that demonic and witchcraft related issues defy empirical examination; however, since epistemology is possible without scientific verification, one cannot readily dismiss such claims as invalid. That is, the acquisition of knowledge can occur through dreams and intuition and not only through our physical senses. She argues further that in spite of the various psychological and sociological theories that may be employed to explain the witchcraft phenomenon away, the average Ghanaian is convinced of its reality.⁶⁵⁴ To quote Ganusah, "... the beliefs and practices about witchcraft are so embedded in the life situation of the people that they could not be laughed out of existence."⁶⁵⁵ She also points out that the existence of the demonic has some biblical basis, and consequently advocates prayer that invokes the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the manifestation of evil spirits.

Whatever one's view may be on the existence of demons, it cannot be denied that the Bible recognises their manifestation which could result in adversities such as sickness. Jesus did many exorcisms and healed some invalids by first casting out the evil spirit behind the condition (Matthew 17:14 – 18, Mark 5:1 – 16, Luke 8: 26 – 35). We can therefore logically conclude that dealing with evil supernatural forces is an integral part of Christian theology. Nevertheless, the approach some of the Ghanaians ministers use seems to suggest a deviation from biblical standards. Jesus' strategy of dealing with demon possessed people was to invoke the power of God and cast out the oppressive spirit out of the person's life. The practice of identifying the "flesh and blood" witches behind a person's crisis and consequently invoking a curse upon the "demonic agent", which appears to be so popular with our deliverance ministers appears alien to scriptural norms.

⁶⁵⁴ Rebecca Yawa Ganusah, *Christ Meets the Ewe-Dome of Ghana: A Theological Reflection on the Rites of Birth and Initiation into Womanhood*. (Legon: Legon Theological Studies Series, 2008), 109.

⁶⁵⁵ Ganusah, *Christ Meets the Ewe-Dome of Ghana*, 111.

In Opoku's opinion the Christian community needs a doctrinal reconstruction that responds to the areas of tension between traditional ideas on demonology and Christian concepts, into what he calls, "the framework of biblical theology."⁶⁵⁶ In the Church context, education can be useful if we develop a robust and revolutionary theology that instils courage in Christians to face the vicissitudes of life boldly, rather than laying their troubles at other people's door. Opoku is one theologian who has made this attempt by suggesting that the eschatological tension of a redeemed people living in a fallen world would inevitably expose them to certain tragic events: "Misfortune does not mean that the devil has attacked; neither does it mean that the person has sinned. It may simply be the result of our fallen world."⁶⁵⁷ Examining the deliverance and demonic phenomena from a pastoral perspective, Lartey, rejects the reductionist approach that explains every difficulty in terms of spiritual causation, thereby turning Christianity into a formulaic model of "fear and faith".⁶⁵⁸ His suggested solution is a constructive and critical engagement with these practices in order to develop an effective pastoral response.

6.5 Conclusion

I have attempted to establish in this chapter that church polity and the character quality of individual ministers interact to define ministerial ethics in every denominational context. An assessment of the administrative structures and constitutional provisions of some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches reveals that the organisations demonstrate concern for high moral standards for ministers. And some of the ministers have complemented this institutional concern by emerging as moral models for the church and the wider society.

⁶⁵⁶ Opoku, Akan Witchcraft, 358.

⁶⁵⁷ Opoku Onyinah, *Spiritual Warfare*, (Accra: Advocate, 2008), 35.

⁶⁵⁸ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, "Of Formulae, Fear and Faith: Current Issues of Concern for Pastoral Care in Africa" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XI Nos. 1&2 (January/July 2011), 5 – 13.

This constructive ministerial ethical outlook notwithstanding, some level of moral laxity in relationships, power abuse, denial of women rights and unconstructive demonology seem to cast a slur on the image of the Church leaders in question. Despite the high moral principles captured in the church documents, some of the pastors' conduct reveal a significant deviation from such stipulations, with inherent adverse implications for church and society. The next chapter therefore examines the responses of the relevant identifiable segments of society to this problem.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION ON PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC MINISTERS

7.1 Introduction

So far, I have attempted to establish in my thesis that there seems to be a level of tension between what *is* and what *ought to be* in terms of morality in Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leadership. We have discovered that although some of the leaders maintain a high standard of moral conduct, which their conscience, the Christian faith and society demand of them, some serious cases of infraction of moral principles have also been registered in their fold. The events and personalities which depict this state of affairs often feature prominently in news items, creative works, public opinion, and in the pronouncements of the Church leaders themselves.

However it would be remiss of any objective observer of the Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic scene to accept these reports superficially without making any effort to verify their authenticity. Furthermore it is necessary that all stakeholders reflect upon these issues in order to develop a constructive and adequate response to them. Consequently, I have engaged with the role of the media in shaping public opinion on Ghanaian Pentecostal ministerial ethics by investigating some of the relevant news items, and talking to some of the people identified in the stories. Interviews, questionnaire responses and relevant primary literature are also examined to help understand the prevailing moral standards in Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership in Ghana.

7.2 Public Opinion

Public opinion, to a large extent, seems to be replete with a barrage of criticisms directed at Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders in an attempt to hold them accountable for the ethical

standards of their Faith. Besides news reports and statements from opinion leaders, the misconducts of the clergy provide a ready theme for creative works in the arts. For instance Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero*,⁶⁵⁹ reveal Brother Jero as a charlatan of a prophet who takes advantage of Chume, his faithful acolyte and his wife Amope. Brother Jero bought goods on credit from Amope and defaulted in payment, so the lady decided to lay siege near former's residence until she had recovered her money. When Brother Jero discovered that his creditor was Chume's wife, he advised Chume to take Amope home and beat her – although hitherto Brother Jero had forbidden wife-beating to Chume. The timelessness of Soyinka's theme manifests in its relevance and resonance with contemporary developments on the Christian scene.

Dr Ephraim Amu (1899 – 1995) also engaged with the motif of clergy ethics in his song *Esrɔm Miele*. The lyrics which are in Ewe considerably capture the high moral expectations society has for Christian leaders in general. According to his daughter, Misonu, this song was composed to mark the ordination of Amu's bosom friend and colleague, the late Rev Prof Baeta in 1935 as a minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana.

Esrɔm miele, be miadi Yesu

Esrɔm miele, esrɔm miele, esrɔm miele
Be miadii, mia dii, mia dii Yesu tutuutu
O! Mawu dɔwɔla dii wu, dii wu
di Yesu afetɔwu
L' ame dokuibɔwɔ danyi kpoo me
dii wu, dii wu, di Yesu afetɔwu
Le havi subɔsubɔ vivie me
dii wu, dii wu, di Yesu afetɔwu
Le seseɔ'ame ti de too me
dii wu, dii wu, di Yesu afetɔwu
O! Mawu dɔwɔla dii wu, dii wu, di Yesu afetɔwu loo.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁹ Wole Soyinka, *The Jero Plays: The Trials of Brother Jero and Jero's Metamorphosis*. (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1964, 2007), 8- 44.

⁶⁶⁰ This song is used here with the express permission of Misonu Amu, the custodian of the Ephraim Amu estate.

English translation (to approximate the original meaning the translation appears more literal than idiomatic).

We are Learning to be Like Jesus

We are learning, we are learning, we are learning
to be like Him, absolutely like Jesus
O! you worker of God be more like him, be more like Him, be more like
Him, be more like Jesus
In quiet humility,
be more like Him, be more like Jesus
In sacrificial service to mankind,
be more like Him, be more like Jesus
In deep sympathy with fellow humans,
be more like him, be more like Jesus
O! you worker of God be more like him,
be more like Jesus

The subject matter of this composition is the need for the “worker of God” or Christian leader to stand out as a shining moral example to the rest of humankind. The song further identifies some specific virtues that such leaders may have to excel in namely, humility, sacrificial service, and compassion for the vulnerable. The composer emphasises the need for the Christian leader to set enviable standards by repeating the refrain, *dji wu* (that is be more like Christ, in comparison to other people).

6.2.1 Public Opinion: Laity Survey

I used a questionnaire (see Appendix V) to undertake a survey of the opinion of 177 lay people on Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial moral standards. Since the issues explored have implications beyond the scope of the Churches I have chosen as case study, namely the Church of Pentecost (CoP), Assemblies of God Church, Ghana (AG), and Redeem Evangel Church (REC), the questionnaire was administered beyond that context. The number of respondents from the CoP was 42, those from AG were 13, the number from WMCI was 32, and 22 people were covered in REC. The members from all other Pentecostal churches numbered 57 and those from the Historic Western Mission oriented Churches totalled 11. The

disparity in the total numbers responding to specific questions occurred because respondents did not necessarily answer every question. This questionnaire comprises two sections; **Section A** requests of respondents to select one Pentecostal/Charismatic minister and evaluate the impact of his or her ministry and moral life, whilst **Section B** was designed to gather data on all Pentecostal ministers in general. Table 2 below captures the responses in Section A, which covers specific ministers.

Table 2: Assessment of the Moral Standards of Specific Pentecostal Ministers (The use of the male pronoun is generic, to help save space).

No.	Issue	Yes	%	No	%	Not Sure	%	Total
1	Ministry Beneficial	156	88	2	1	19	10	177
2	Ministry Changed my Behaviour	112	63	1	0.5	64	36	177
3	Minister is Demon Consciousness	34	19	101	57	42	23	177
4	He Accuses People of Witchcraft	4	2	116	69	47	28	167
5	He is a Respectful Leader	154	87	2	1	21	11	177
6	He is Confidential	139	78	3	1	35	19	177
7	He is Decent with Opposite Sex	143	80	4	2	30	16	177
8	He is Democratic	135	76	8	4	34	34	177
9	He is Ostentatious	31	17	100	56	46	25	177
10	Tricks for Money	2	2	136	76	39	22	177

The general impression from Table 2 is that those who accessed the ministry of the leaders in question give them an overwhelming endorsement. The first question tried to find out whether the ministry of the specific pastor selected by the respondent has been beneficial to him or her; and a significant number of 156, representing 88% answered in the affirmative. The second item is a derivative of the first one, where I attempted to discover if the specific minister has helped improve the respondent's behaviour; in response a majority of 112 or 63% responded "yes". It is noteworthy that a significant number of 64 or 36% were not sure of the ethical impact of the said pastor's ministry on their lives – indicating the need of increased moral education for the ministers.

At question three, 101 people or 57% think his or her pastor was not demon conscious; which can be regarded as a positive development, coupled with the next item (four), where 116 or 69% of respondents claim the minister under scrutiny does not accuse people of witchcraft. In terms of the minister having respect for other people (question five), a significant number of 154 or 87% think the minister in question respects people. And at item six, 139, representing 78% respondents were convinced that the minister they were evaluating is confidential. 143 respondents were sure that the minister treated the opposite sex with decency (question seven), implying they were not promiscuous. At item 8, 135 or 76% said the ministers were democratic, whilst 34 or 19% were not very sure.

At question nine, an attempt was made to explore the suggestion that the ministers were extravagant or had expensive habits; 31 or 17% people said "yes", 100 or 56% responded "no" whilst 46 or 25% were not sure. The final item was applied to discover if the selected ministers used tricks to extort money from their followers; and only 2 people answered in the

affirmative, 136 or 76% said “no” whilst 39 or 22% were not sure. Although field data in this Table appears to give an impressive approval of the morality of majority of the ministers evaluated, the numbers indicating certain negative attitudes are quite significant, and they call for improvement. For instance 19% said the ministers they selected were too demon-conscious and 17% of respondents claimed their pastors were extravagant.

The second part of the same questionnaire (Appendix V), **Section B**, was designed to sample views on general information and certain perceptions of respondents on all Pentecostal ministers. And their responses are captured in Table 3 below.

Table 3: General Information on Moral Standards among Pentecostal Ministers

No.	Issue	Yes	%	No	%	Not Sure	%	Remarks
1	Knows a Tribalistic Minister	21	11	124	70	32	18	177
2	Knows a Promiscuous Minister	50	28	91	51	36	20	177
3	Knows a Fraudulent Minister	43	24	100	56	34	19	177
4	Know a Charlatan Prophet	55	55	82	46	40	22	177
5	Supports Women's Ordination	117	66	27	15	33	18	177

Question one in Table 3 requested of respondents to declare if they knew any Pentecostal/Charismatic minister who practised tribalism; 21 people or 11% said “yes”, 124

or 70% said “no” and 32 or 18% said they were not sure. Concerning sexual misconduct, item two sought to find out whether respondents knew any Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers who were promiscuous; and 50 of them or 28% said “yes”, 91, representing 51% answered “no” whilst the rest 36 or 20% were not sure. The third question demanded of respondents to state if they knew any Pentecostal/Charismatic minister who had embezzled money; 43 people or 24% were positive about knowing one, 100 or 56% said “no” whilst 34 or 19% said they were not sure. To find out how widespread false prophecy had become, question four asked of respondents to indicate whether they knew any prophet that had misled somebody; 55 people, representing 31% knew a false prophet, 82, or 46% did not know any, with 33 people not being very sure. The last question examined the respondent’s attitude towards women’s ordination; and there seem to be an overwhelming support for it, as 117 or 66% answered in the affirmative, 27 or 15% were opposed to the idea and 33 respondents or 18% did not take any stand on the issue – this shows how far Ghanaian society has shifted from a male chauvinist position and is advocating support for women in Church leadership.

Unlike Table 2, Table 3 does not give such a tremendous acclamation to Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics in Ghana. Although all the 5 indicators appear to be positive, – 70% do not know a tribalistic minister, 51% are not aware of any promiscuous minister, 56% cannot identify any case of ministerial embezzlement, 46% have not encountered any case of a misleading prophet, and 66% support women’s ordination. The level of approval given on some of these issues seems to be rather thin. It therefore becomes an issue of concern if 28% of respondents knew sexually incontinent pastors, 24% were aware of ministerial embezzlement cases, and 31% could point out misleading prophets.

Some of the respondents who went further to explain their understanding of certain aspects of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial morality provided answers that appear to be rather revealing, and I have captured some below:

Under witchcraft accusations, the following responses emerged as intriguing: "It [witchcraft accusation] is not necessary because it brings about hatred in most families"; "It's awful"; "It is real, I can testify of someone I know"; "There is nothing wrong if they [the so-called witches] are accused publicly. They should be prayed for"; "Witchcraft accusations should be treated with maximum care"; "I don't think people should be accused of witchcraft. The pastors should be confidential about it"; "It scares me and makes me wonder if it really exists." The tone of these answers suggest a polarisation of positions, where, one group is convinced of the reality of witchcraft and support its public exposure, whilst the other group is sceptical about its existence and would rather have it handled as a private matter.

A second item in the questionnaire which also received engaging answers is the one that enquired whether the individual had received a prophetic message from a Pentecostal/Charismatic minister. I need to mention over here that this item has a follow-up question which tested how meaningful and relevant the message was to the recipient. The following responses to both questions are presented verbatim: "It was prophesied to me that I will one day be a great person"; and according to the respondent, the message was "so much meaningful". Another one said "That I will be filled with the Holy Spirit and in six months I will find my beloved", and she also claims she found the message meaningful. A third one said "It was prophesied that I will one day be a great person"; this message was also useful to the respondent. One message, which sounds rather poetic, reads: "As stars don't struggle to shine and rivers don't struggle to flow so shall you also not struggle to succeed in life"; this message was also relevant to the one who received it. Another respondent stated that she

encountered a man of God who revealed "things that go on in households"; and although the person did not declare the specific message, she claims "I find the message meaningful because I remember that was the same situation that goes on in our house. I took the message and the guidelines and it has really helped us." This gives ample evidence that some of the respondents find the prophetic messages useful and encouraging. However we also need to explore the opinions of those who think otherwise.

Other respondents were not so enthusiastic about the positive impact of the prophetic messages they had encountered. One person who thought he was deceived outright by a prophet wrote: "I received a message that somebody wanted to kill me with a food poisoning and it was not true." A few others who were also not so impressed by "the oracle" responded by saying they found the messages "somehow meaningful", three of such prophesies are captured here: "I see that you are a prophet and a teacher so go and work on it"; "I was told that someone was going to give me a car as a gift and at the same time take me to the USA"; and "I will be a great man, I will be head of my family. Satan has seen it so they have planned evil against me." These answers further reveal that the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministries have both genuine prophets and charlatans, and anyone dealing with them may have to be discerning enough to classify them. One category of prophets that need to be avoided is the group that readily instils fear in people by predicting disaster in order to manipulate their suppliant's sense of insecurity to personal advantage.

Responding to the request for general comments on Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers in the questionnaire, some respondents had these to say: "Some are good leaders, God fearing, loving and caring"; "They [Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers] make a lot of sacrifices to cater for others at the expense of their own families." "They [Pentecostal/Charismatic

ministers] are righteous men and holy men who are training other people in the kingdom life." A rather interesting one reads, "Some of them are being deceived by the devil while most of them are on guard against him." Another person wrote; "Most of them are able to exhibit what they preach and also comport themselves well in society." Someone else's opinion is "Some [Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers] are too judgemental; even when they have only met you for the very first time." Yet another person is convinced that, "Some are good and others are bad influence on the society. Some manipulate innocent people to either take money from them or sleep with them, which is a disgrace to the church."

By and large, those who appropriate the services of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers seem to register a positive impression of their ethics. On many specific issues of moral relevance, the respondents seem to have given the said ministers a positive evaluation. Nevertheless, some of the indicators record significant numbers that are critical of the conduct of the ministers, which call for redress. Compared to the assessment of the Press, the followers of the ministers under discussion have a more constructive opinion about their moral impact.

7.3 Evaluation of Media Reports

It is necessary at this point to recognise that the Ghanaian Press is not only preoccupied with publishing unsavoury stories about the category of Churches under discussion. There seem to be a significant level of positive reportage on the activities of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. Almost all the Television stations frequently broadcast their sermons, and both the electronic and print media cover Church and Para-Church activities which sometimes teach constructive moral principles. Furthermore, Pentecostal Church projects that provide socio-economic infrastructure and extend support to the underprivileged often capture the attention of our journalists.

Some instances of appreciative reportage on the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches are presented over here. A three-installment feature article by Rev Professor Asamoah-Gyadu targeted at educating the general public on the distinguishing features of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches was carried by *The Spectator* in April 2008. In the last of the series, he intimated something about their ethical standards thus: "The main distinguishing characteristic of classical Pentecostal churches is that they usually have a stronger holiness ethic and several of them have established as fully fledged denominations, with very well defined doctrinal positions, clearly established administrative structures and succession plans."⁶⁶¹ In another news item, *The Ghanaian Times* reported a camp meeting organised by the Greater Accra branch of the Assemblies of God Church for female Junior High School leavers in May 2008. The Minister of Women and Children's Affairs (MWAC), Hajia Alimah Mahama, who was the guest speaker, commended the Church by stating that "the innovative effort of the Assemblies of God Church in bringing together young girls from their churches to instil in them religious and moral values clearly demonstrates the church's readiness to empower its future leaders."⁶⁶²

Another constructive media report on the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches records a social outreach project in *The Ghanaian Times*. The event captured in this news item was the inauguration of the Church of Pentecost School Complex at Akyem Oda by the Chairman, Apostle Dr Micheal Kwabena Ntumy. The function, which was attended by Honourable Yaw Osafo-Marfo, Member of Parliament for Akyem Oda, and Mr Frank Kwame Busumtwi,

⁶⁶¹ K. Asamoah-Gyadu, "Who are Pentecostals? Who are Charismatics? (Part 3), *The Spectator*, (19th April 2008), 23.

⁶⁶² Hajia Alima Mahama, quoted in L. Kwesi Akpalu "Religious Leaders Urged to Help Eliminate Outmoded Customs", *The Ghanaian Times*, (20th May 2008), 11.

Birim South District Chief Executive marked the formal opening of a 450 million (GHC 45, 000) structure to house the first and second cycle schools.⁶⁶³

This positive Press image notwithstanding, there is a suggestion that there are more news items on unethical conduct than constructive ones on the ministers under discussion. To repeat (see Section 1.1), the Centre for Media Analysis published a research project, which reveals that of the stories carried in the part of the Ghanaian print media on Charismatic Churches between 1st July and 30th September 2005, 49% of the news items were negative, 29% were in the neutral tone and only 22% were positive.⁶⁶⁴ This implies that although the Church members overwhelmingly endorse the moral conduct of their ministers (see survey results above); the Press appears to portray a less impressive opinion of such leaders. For instance the media often carries stories and opinions of influential people which seem to suggest that the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders do not only preach prosperity but they also extort money, misapply Church funds, live ostentatiously, and attempt to establish personality cults.

In an attempt to ascertain the authenticity of one of such reports I sat through a Court session that involved Rev Prince Adebiorh-Dugah, founder of the Gateway Chapel at Nungua, who was arrested for allegedly duping members of his congregation out of two and half billion cedis (GH¢250, 000 .00). According to the reporter, the money was raised from the Church members in a welfare scheme, dubbed "Help Your Neighbour Welfare Scheme", only for the Pastor to end up "using the money to purchase three vehicles."⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶³ C. Neequaye, *The Ghanaian Times*, 16th May 2007.

⁶⁶⁴ Ben Ephson, ed. "Research Reveals Negative Media on Charismatic Churches", *The Daily Dispatch*, (25th October 2005). The newspapers covered in this research were *Daily Graphic*, *The Ghanaian Times*, *The Daily Dispatch*, *Daily Guide*, *The Crusading Guide*, *The Independent*, *Network Herald*, *Public Agenda*, *The Insight*, *The Searchlight*, *The Statesman*, *The Chronicle*, *Free Press*, *The Lens*, and *Accra Daily Mail*.

⁶⁶⁵ M. A. Baneseh, "Man of God in the Dock over ₵2.5 Billion Fraud" *Daily Graphic*, (23rd March 2006), 1 & 3.

The court session I encountered was at Accra High Street Cocoa Affairs Circuit Court 8, on 23rd July 2006. I listened to the Defence Counsel (Rev Adeblor-Dugah's lawyer) cross-examine the Prosecutor, Inspector J. Kwaku Lodonu, where the lawyer insisted that contrary to Lodonu's assertion, the actual name of the "welfare scheme" was "Aid Your Neighbour Missions" rather than "Help Your Neighbour Welfare Scheme". The Defence Counsel further claimed that Rev Adeblor-Dugah was on trial for leading a Church that was pursuing the second of its two objectives which were, i) preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ all over the world, and ii) seeking the financial welfare of its members.

The charge proffered against the pastor was the unlawful establishment of a financial company that was taking deposits and granting loans. When the Defence Counsel asked Inspector Lodonu whether he had seen the Constitution of the welfare scheme, his answer was in the negative. Although the Prosecutor reported that Rev Adeblor-Dugah was accepting deposits from both outsiders (which was unlawful), and his Church members, the Defence Counsel said that was not the case.

My request for interview after the Court hearing was declined by Rev Adeblor-Dugah.⁶⁶⁶ However I was able to gather from Mr Kofi Nsiah (not his real name), an investigator, that the Church had collapsed, as the members who were victim of the ill-fated welfare scheme revolted against the Pastor. Mr Nsiah, who caused the Pastor's arrest, intimated that he posed as an outsider who applied to become a member of the "welfare scheme", and his application was about to be processed when the arrest was effected. Rev Adeblor-Dugah's readiness to register a complete outsider to the Church on the so-called welfare scheme implicated him as running an illegitimate financial organisation. Mr Nsiah has since submitted his application

⁶⁶⁶ Interaction, Accra, 23rd July 2008.

form, which would have been used to register him on the so-called welfare scheme as an exhibit at Court.

In May 2011, Bishop Vaglas Kanco, General Overseer of the Vineyard Chapel International (headquartered in Madina with other branches in Ghana), was jailed for eighteen years for duping a British woman out of £120,000 under the pretence of praying to sanctify the cheque she had issued in the name of her former partner.⁶⁶⁷ In another instance, *The New Punch* of 30th March 2007 banner headline read, “Revolt at CAC [Christ Apostolic Church]: Chairman Thrown Out, Spends ₵2.2Bn on Lincoln Navigator.” The story which is ascribed to “a *New Punch* Reporter” purports that Apostle Michael Nimo who was Chairman of the Church for four years had been voted out of power for Apostle Stephen Amoaning to replace him. There is however a slight twist in this particular reportage which attempts to link this development to the exit of Apostle Nimo’s immediate predecessor, Rev Annor-Yeboah, who seceded from the Church after he was voted out of the chairmanship in July 2003.⁶⁶⁸ Part of the *New Punch* story reads:

Nearly four years after initiating a palace coup to sweep Rev Dr Augustus Annor Yeboah the then National Chairman of the CAC off his feet under inexplicable reasons, members of the General Council of the church by a decision taken at their last General Meeting at the Bunso Cocoa College in the Eastern Region, have also handed Rev Apostle Micheal Nimo the same bitter pill he and others administered to Rev Annor Yeboah about four (4) years ago.⁶⁶⁹

The report ascribes this turn of events to “the opulent and profligate (extravagant) lifestyles of the current executives.” The reporter specifically accused Apostle Nimo of spending Church funds to purchase a Lincoln Navigator, which was an expensive cross-country

⁶⁶⁷ Bokpe, “Clergy Under Fire”, 3.

⁶⁶⁸ See E. Mingle, “Annor-Yeboah’s Move Splits CAC”, *Ghanaian Times*, (26th July 2003), 1.

⁶⁶⁹ E. Ato Sam, “Revolt at CAC: Chairman Thrown Out”, *The New Punch*, (30th March to 2nd April 2008), 1 & 8.

vehicle.⁶⁷⁰ A follow up report in *The New Punch* of 29th June 2007 added to the allegations that Apostle Nimo, the former Chairman, took huge amounts of money for warm clothing allowance and per diem when travelling abroad; in addition, he owned numerous cars in addition to the two official vehicles allocated to him.

My interaction with Apostle Stephen Amoaning, current Chairman of CAC, Apostle Michael Nimo and the editor of *The New Punch*, Ebenezer Ato Sam, concerning these accusations have revealed that the story line is not as factual as the reporter would make us believe. Responding to these allegations, the current Chairman, Apostle Stephen Amoaning, said they were all unfounded. To him, the ousting of Apostle Nimo from the chairmanship carried no indication of revolt as suggested by *The New Punch* report; rather it occurred through the due process of balloting. He further intimated that the allegations of misappropriation of Church funds were all baseless and said they had invited the Editor, Ato Sam, to apologise for defamation of character. According to Apostle Amoaning, the Editor was using his paper to settle a personal score, as he was part of the faction that broke away to follow Rev Annor-Yeboah in 2003.

Apostle Michael Nimo, who is at the centre of all these allegations, is now stationed at Takoradi as the Western Region Head of the Church. He also confirmed the current Chairman's point that the assertions in the *New Punch* were fictitious and that the Editor had formally apologised to him and the Church for dragging their names in the mud. When this researcher enquired whether the story had been retracted in the newspaper, Apostle Nimo's answer was negative. A further inquiry to find out why no action had been taken to get the records straight received the response that since CAC had featured in so many negative press

⁶⁷⁰Sam, "Revolt at CAC: Chairman Thrown Out", 1 & 12.

reports, they thought it wise to spare the members another unsavoury media campaign; that was why he did not file a defamation case at court.⁶⁷¹

I was able to interview the Editor of *The New Punch*, Ebenezer Ato Sam, on the media reports in question and he acknowledged that there actually was no revolt at CAC, as his story purported. He also admitted that the change in leadership was attributable to a credible democratic process of voting. Concerning his allegations on the ex-Chairman, Apostle Nimo's numerous vehicles; Ato Sam said the Church had explained to him that some of the vehicles were personal gifts from individuals. The Editor however insisted that he would not retract the story until he had received documentary proof that the vehicles were given to Apostle Nimo as presents.⁶⁷²

My research has thus refuted *The New Punch* report of a revolt at CAC. The veracity or otherwise of the allegations concerning misappropriation of Church funds by Apostle Nimo to buy vehicles could not be determined since the documentary proof of transfer of ownership was not provided. The implication of such unsubstantiated allegations is an irreparable damage to the public image of the institution or individual concerned. One would therefore think that any form of legislation that would prevent the publication of such unfounded allegations before full investigation was undertaken would be welcomed.

Such occurrences could have influenced the Most Rev Prof. Emeritus Kwesi Dickson's opinion, which was reported as accusing Charismatic Churches of exploitation in his presentation at the 2005 annual memorial Dunwell-Acquah-Grant Memorial Lectures. To the eminent Professor, – who appears to be risking over generalisation – these Churches are “a

⁶⁷¹ Interview, Takoradi, 13th October 2008.

⁶⁷² Interview, Accra, 21st October 2008.

machinery for money-making; the pastors are cheats and a liability to our society.”⁶⁷³ In an interview with Ben Ephson, he also expressed a similar conviction by saying some Pentecostal ministers are fraudulent; in spite of that, he concedes that they are still offering valuable service to society.⁶⁷⁴ Apostle George Ofori-Atta, founder of Peculiar People’s Chapel, is also reported to have “blamed leaders of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches for breeding social vices such as personal aggrandisement, greed and a false notion of the theory of prosperity, which he said has constituted the foundation of the Charismatic movement.”⁶⁷⁵ He said further that as a result of the wrong “understanding of prosperity doctrine, some leaders and followers of Charismatic churches had found themselves in jail because of greed and criminal activities.”⁶⁷⁶ This opinion seems to be confirmed by the observation of Rev Supt J. Tetteh who said that in the 5 years of his chaplaincy at Nsawam Medium Security Prison, no minister from the mainline Churches had been incarcerated there; the only Christian ministers who were jailed happened to be 4 Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors. Two of them were imprisoned for defrauding people, one for murder, and the fourth one for criminal assault.⁶⁷⁷

As much as one cannot deny that some of the stories published in the media on the immoral conduct of Pentecostal ministers are factual, it is also suggested that there is evidence of a degree of subjectivity in such reportage. And this factor of subjectivity seems to be inspired by several concerns, not least, commercial interest. It appears some of the damaging headlines on the image of Pentecostal/Charismatic Pastors are mere allegations, which are

⁶⁷³ K.A. Dickson, quoted in M. N. Torgbor “Charismatic Churches Exploiting the Poor” *The Daily Dispatch*, (7th September 2005), 8.

⁶⁷⁴ Ben Ephson, editor of *The Daily Dispatch*, and was interviewed in Accra on 23rd July 2008.

⁶⁷⁵ R. Kwei, “Pastor Stirs Controversy: Blames Church Leaders for False Theory of Prosperity”, *Daily Graphic*, (27th December 2005), 1.

⁶⁷⁶ Kwei, “Pastor Stirs Controversy: Blames Church Leaders for False Theory of Prosperity”, 1 & 3.

⁶⁷⁷ Interview, Nsawam, 14th November 2012. Rev Supt Tetteh however made this positive statement that none the pastors who was jailed at Nsawam Prison ever came back as a repeat offender. By implication the time served in jail might have helped to reform them.

used to attract patronage. For instance, I contacted a *Daily Graphic* reporter, M. Baneseh to establish the guilt or otherwise of a Pentecostal minister, Pastor Emmanuel Kofi Tei, founder of Mispa Miracle Church at Dodowa, who, she reported as having abducted and seduced a 17-year-old girl;⁶⁷⁸ and to my surprise, the reporter said casually that she had lost trace of the case.⁶⁷⁹ In such a situation, if the pastor was acquitted later, his reputation would have been irredeemably tarnished. Consequently, it would be advisable for the media to delay the publication of such stories until the guilt of the individual had been established beyond any doubts in Court. Alternatively the reporters could follow the story through to the conclusion, as they report it at every stage. Otherwise, the credibility of some of the media houses would be significantly undermined. It is therefore advisable for the reading public to try and ascertain the facts behind some of these newspaper headlines before drawing any conclusions on any particular case.

As stated earlier, media and public opinion on Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers is not thoroughly negative; sections of Ghanaian society appreciate their contribution to the spiritual and socio-economic progress of the nation. For instance, after reading a rather scathing article, "Where is the Church: As Streetism, Child Prostitution Overwhelm Society?" written by a columnist in *The Spectator*, dubbed "Watchwoman" (whose real name is Doris Dartey), one Acheampong was moved to write a rejoinder, pointing out these insightful opinions:

These things [Christian charity projects] will never be seen by our social commentators. They see only what a few pastors and misguided prophets are doing wrong.For the sins of a few, Christianity is castigated so cruelly by people who should know better. ... It is just fashionable to bash Christians, because it is the only religion that will not visit violence on its critics. Television plays, films, social commentary etc are all filled with criticism of

⁶⁷⁸ M. A. Baneseh, "Pastor in Court for Abducting Girl, 17" *Daily Graphic*. (23rd April, 2006), 34.

⁶⁷⁹ Interview, Accra, M. A. Baneseh on 17th June 2008.



Christians. It is the only religion against whom anybody can take liberties and expect to sleep soundly.⁶⁸⁰

In an interview with Rev Father Raphael Osei Soadwah, of St Paul's Catholic Seminary, Sowutuom, he also expressed the opinion that majority of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers live morally upright lives and are making a positive contribution to Christianity and society as a whole. He thought it was unfair to use the misguided conducts of a few of such leaders to brand all the others.⁶⁸¹ A similar opinion is held by Daniel Abugah, a reporter for *Gospel Advocate*, who said the persistent negative reportage on Pentecostal Churches by the media issued out of unfounded impressions rather than facts, in many instances. According to him, this sensational reportage, which seems to be motivated by commercial interest, contributes to the promotion of negative public perceptions of such ministers. Abugah is also convinced that the positive contributions of Pentecostal ministers to the overall welfare and progress of the Ghanaian society far outweighs their negative impact.⁶⁸²

7.4 Response to the "Prosperity Gospel"

Media sensationalism notwithstanding, it cannot be denied that the ostentatious lifestyles of some Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leaders call for some self-assessment on their part. As models in a developing economy, one would think that leadership in every facet of society would exemplify thrift and prudent investment of limited resources. Nevertheless some of the expensive outfits, flashy vehicles and palatial accommodation used by some of our Church leaders reflect uneconomical resource application. Among some of these Church leaders, it seems the flaunting of wealth has become the bench mark of success and God's blessing, rather than prudent investment and the judicious application of material resources. Gifford's observation on the way some Pentecostal leaders apply wealth is, "Yet the wealth is flaunted,

⁶⁸⁰ Ignatius Acheampong, "Re: Watchwoman – Where is the Church? *The Spectator*, (March 15, 2008) 4.

⁶⁸¹ Interview, Sowutuom, 22nd June 2009.

⁶⁸² Interview, Accra, 11th March 2008.

indeed if the money went into savings and investment the point would be lost. Wealth and status go together; the former is the sign of the latter. Appearances matter – and appearances, titles, and the symbol of office often matter far more than doing the job well.”⁶⁸³

It is rather revealing to observe that this unproductive attitude to wealth is often endorsed with Scripture passages and preached as “prosperity gospel” from many Pentecostal/Charismatic pulpits. The presentation of such prosperity and success concepts give the impression that Christians had an automatic right to success, and prosperity was so much part of the salvation package that if one was poor, then there must be something wrong with the person’s faith.

Anderson’s attempt to identify some of the major tenets of the prosperity message is instructive: “The will of God is for people to prosper or succeed in every area of life (Psalm 1; 3John 2)”; “The atonement of Christ includes provision for deliverance from sickness and poverty as well as from sin”; “God’s covenant with Abraham, inherited by the Christian believer, includes a promise of material prosperity (Gen 12:1-3;13:1-2)”; “The means by which prosperity and health are appropriated is by faith alone.”⁶⁸⁴ On many occasions worshippers are motivated to exhibit their faith in generous offerings to enable them access these blessings. Asamoah-Gyadu,⁶⁸⁵ Gifford⁶⁸⁶ and Anim⁶⁸⁷ have all demonstrated that the strand of prosperity message prevalent in Charismatic churches in Ghana is the product of the

⁶⁸³ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 13.

⁶⁸⁴ Allan Anderson, “The Prosperity Message in the Eschatology of Some New Charismatic Churches” *Missionalia*, Vol 15 No. 2 (August 1987), 75-76.

⁶⁸⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 204 –206.

⁶⁸⁶ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 47 – 56.

⁶⁸⁷ E. K. Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination”, a paper presented at a Langham-Lausanne Conference on Prosperity Teaching in Ghanaian Charismatic Churches at Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture, Akropong; (6th-10th October 2008), 1

fertile interaction of American televangelist concepts and traditional Ghanaian ideas of success and fulfilment.

In extreme cases this success motif becomes susceptible to a kind of triumphalism that takes presumption for faith and claims control of all spiritual and natural phenomena. This approach to Christianity is what O'Meara refers to as sacral religion, which according to him "brings the perennial temptation to encapsulate the divine. Sacral religion is a phenomenon of extremes: it parades exaggerated claims and it achieves nothing."⁶⁸⁸ Indeed such an approach can even be destructive as was made evident by Apostle K. K. C. Gadzekpo, of the Church of Pentecost, who claimed he could drive through a flooded river at Kparekpare in the Volta Region by "faith", against the persistent call of bystanders to dissuade him, and he died in the process with one of his subordinate pastors, whilst his wife and driver were rescued from drowning.⁶⁸⁹

As observed earlier, the Pentecostal phenomenon defies stereotyping, as a more comprehensive view of the prosperity teaching admits a certain level of positive impact. For instance although Asamoah-Gyadu raises issues with the prosperity message, he admits that the concept has contributed in making the Charismatic churches financially independent, and suggests they offer lessons to the older mission churches, which are still dependent on Western mission donors.⁶⁹⁰ Okyerefo also appreciates the fact that the activities and messages of Pentecostal churches are creating communities of resourceful people necessary in generating development.⁶⁹¹ Anim postulates that the primal concept of wealth and success

⁶⁸⁸ O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, 44.

⁶⁸⁹ M. Azure Awuni, "Two Church of Pentecost Pastors Drown in Test of Faith", *Daily Graphic*, (30th August 2010), 3.

⁶⁹⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 227.

⁶⁹¹ Michael P. K. Okyerefo, "Pentecostalism and the Promotion of Human Capital in Ghana" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol XVII No. 2, (July 2009), 58. 54 – 68.

served as *praeparatio evangelica* to the prosperity gospel. His perspective further reveals a liberationist impact, where the prosperity message frees the mind from the fear of witchcraft and releases adherents to pursue an unhindered wealth creation agenda.⁶⁹² Kalu engages with Gifford's depiction of Neo-Pentecostals in his *Ghana's New Christianity* as one that lacks work ethics, waiting for a miracle to propel them to success, yet he claims the adherents appear to be ostentatious. Kalu then wonders, "if these Christians sit back and wait on God to supply their needs, where do they get the money that the pastors may demand? Where do the fancy cars and material signs of success, described by Gifford, come from?"⁶⁹³

7.5 Ministers' Response to Ethical Issues

At this stage, I will like to consider how some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders themselves have responded to the problem of unethical ministerial conduct. There is a suggestion that if media people seem to have a preoccupation for ministerial scandals, they are supported by some members of the ministerial fraternity who consciously encouraged them in that venture. A case in point is when *The Spectator*, reported that Apostle John Anan Adotey, President of The Apostolic Church, Ghana, encouraged the media to "expose corrupt Pastors and church leaders who have compromised Christian values and ethics for worldly possessions."⁶⁹⁴ This notwithstanding, the accusations of unethical behaviour levelled against Pentecostal ministers have received various responses from the ministers themselves. And some of these responses are discussed in this section.

⁶⁹² Emmanuel Anim, "The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol XVII No. 2, (July 2009), 42.

⁶⁹³ Ogbu Kalu, "Yabbing the Pentecostals: Paul Gifford's Image of Ghana's New Christianity" *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. XV No. 1, (January 2005), 11. 3- 25.

⁶⁹⁴ Apostle John Anan Adotey quoted in I. Motey, "Expose Corrupt Pastors, Church Leaders – Apostle Adotey Urges the Media", *The Spectator* (16th June 2007), 23. Whether it is acceptable for a minister of the gospel to appeal to the Press to report on the failings of his colleagues is debatable, in light of the idea that it may be inappropriate to wash one's dirty linen in public. One wonders whether it would not be more appropriate for the ecclesiastical authorities to help, as it were, sanitise the pastorate rather than submitting such a sacred assignment to the Press.

I think it is important to point out that the generalisations which purport that Pentecostal/Charismatic Church leaders show little concern for high moral standards cannot be further from the truth. Many of them model admirable ethical principles and couple them with sermons and literature that promote Christian moral value formation. Bishop Emmanuel Sackey, second-in-command at Lighthouse Chapel International (LCI), preaching on Sunday 6th June 2008, in a Church service at LCI Headquarters located at North Kaneshie, treated the topic, "Types of a Good Heart". He based his sermon on Proverbs 4:23 "Keep your heart with all diligence for, out of it spring the *issues* of life" (New King James Version) He identified a "good heart" as i) The True Heart ii) The Sprinkled Heart, and iii) The Honest Heart. Bishop Sackey intimated that a true heart is one that does not harbour hypocrisy; such a person does not come to Church on Sunday morning behaving like an angel and goes out to behave during weekdays like, as he put it, "the devil's nephew". The Bishop explained that a sprinkled heart is the heart that allows God to purge it of sin, evil and wickedness. The third kind of heart he spoke about was the "honest heart", which according to him, accepts God's word in all honesty and applies it to his or her life for moral transformation.

In another instance, although Prophet Emmanuel Dodzi of Word Miracle Church International (WMCI) was preaching on "Building a Strong Church through the Home Cell", a topic that had no direct moral focus, he was quick to slot in the fact that the Cell provided a place for conflict resolution and facilitates disciplinary action against members who engage in various kinds of misconduct.⁶⁹⁵

In the Church of Pentecost (CoP), a message of emphatic moral import is captured in statements which the Church regards as its collective covenant declaration: "the Church

⁶⁹⁵ Sermon, Sunday, 13th July 2008, First Service.

[CoP] should remember not to harbour sins, evil deeds and evil people among her membership, but rebuke, discipline and restore backsliders in the spirit of love, compassion and patience.⁶⁹⁶

I undertook a survey to discover the functional implications of certain ministerial and ethical concepts relevant to the Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership context by using a question guide to personally interact with fifty of such leaders. Although administering a question guide demanded more effort and time than a questionnaire, it has the advantage of approximating accurate answers, as the researcher was at hand to explain difficult concepts. The choice of respondents intentionally went beyond my case study Churches because the issues explored had implications for the wider Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership. In addition, I interacted only with the rank and file of the ministers in order to examine the leadership styles of those in higher office from the perspective of their subordinates. From the case study churches, I spoke with 12 ministers from Word Miracle Church International, 5 from Redeem Evangel Church, 13 from the Church of Pentecost and 9 from Assemblies of God Church. Those from the other Churches numbered 11.

⁶⁹⁶ The Church of Pentecost Minister's Handbook, (unpublished document), 54.

Table 4: The Ministers' Responses to Some Ministerial and Ethical Issues

S/N	Concept	Yes	%	No	%	Not Sure	%
1	Minister had Adequate Theological Education	14	28%	36	72%		
2	Existence of Code of Ethics	22	44%	28	56%		
3	Minister's Familiarity with Ethics	16	32%	31	62%	3	6%
4	Minister has Respectful Supervisor	46	93%	-		4	8%
5	Minister's Supervisor is Democratic	37	74%	4		9	18%
6	Church Administration is Transparent	20	40%	23	46%	7	14%
7	Church has Audited Accounts	31	62%	18	36%	1	2%
8	Aware of Controversial Fundraising Methods	42	84%	4	8%	4	8%
9	Knows Extravagant Ministers	39	78%	2	4%	9	18%
10	Ministerial Discipline Acceptable	32	64%	12	24%	6	12%
11	Preaches Prosperity Gospel	28	56	20	40	2	4%
12	Preaches Sanctification	50	100	-		-	

13	Undertakes	Witch	22	44	27	54	1	2%
	Hunting							

The first question sought to find out whether the initial theological education the minister received before embarking on ministry was adequate, and a significant number of 36 or 72% responded in the negative. This reinforces an earlier concern I have expressed about the need to increase the period of training for the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers. Question 2 enquired about the existence of a documented ministerial code of ethics in the respondent's Church, and 28 or 56% said "no". The third item tested the familiarity of the ministers with some key terminology in moral philosophy such as, "deontology", "utility", "situationism", and "absolutism"; whilst 3 or 6% of them were not sure, 31 or 62% responded "no", signifying the low level of awareness of moral philosophy among the ministers. I tried, with item four, to find out whether the immediate supervisor of the respondent respected his subordinates, and a remarkable number of 46 or 93% responded in the affirmative with a low number of 4 or 8% claiming they were not sure. This implies that unlike the traditional context, where juniors received little respect from their superiors, the senior Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers behave well toward their subordinates.

Question 5 was used to assess the level of democracy demonstrated by the immediate supervisors⁶⁹⁷ of respondents, 37 or 74% said their supervisors were democratic, 4 of them, representing 8% said they were not, whilst 9 or 18% were not sure. And this is also a demonstration of a departure from traditional Ghanaian leadership, which hardly reflects any level of appreciable democracy. Item 6 was used to find out if administrative procedures such as appointments, transfers and promotions were transparent to respondents, and 23 or 46% of

⁶⁹⁷ These supervisors who are who are mostly ministers carry various titles such as District Pastor in Assemblies of God Church, Area Head in the Church of Pentecost etc.

them said “no”, 20 of them, equivalent to 40% said “yes”, and the rest 7 or 14% declared they were not sure. Item 7 reveals that about 31 or 62% of the 50 ministers have access to the externally audited accounts of their establishment; a situation which suggests, to some extent, that the Churches maintain an appreciable standard of accountability. The responses I received to question nine reveal that an overwhelming majority of 42, representing 84%, think some of their colleagues use controversial methods of fundraising.⁶⁹⁸ There also seem to be a general impression, even among the ministers that some Pentecostal leaders live extravagantly; as a significant number of 39 or 78% were convinced that some of their colleagues did not use resources judiciously.

Concerning disciplinary actions against offenders, an appreciable number of 32 or 64% approved of the disciplinary codes and their implementation in the respective Churches. During my interaction with the ministers, 28 or 56% of them admitted that they have been preaching the so-called “prosperity gospel”, whilst 20 or 40% of them did not. The fact that each of the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers is concerned with issues of morality is confirmed by the claim of all 50 respondents admitting that they do preach regularly on sanctification. The last item gives revealing data on the concept of witchcraft, where a slim majority of 27 ministers, representing 54%, said they had never identified a witch or wizard in their ministry; nevertheless 22 or a significant 44% of them confirmed that they had identified witches in their ministry – making it an issue of concern in Pentecostal theology.

Beyond the itemized issues in Table 4, some of the respondents provided further insights on a handful of the topics which I have recorded here. One respondent thought sometimes some of

⁶⁹⁸ Some of the popular examples cited included the selling of prophylactics, charging consultation fees, and coercive methods such as give an offering in order to curse your enemy.

the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders have built heavy protocol and a troop of body guards and personal assistants that made them inaccessible to the congregation members. Another person was convinced that some of his colleagues practised tribalism in appointing people to church offices and also in promoting them.

Concerning ostentatious lifestyles among ministers, a few of the respondents think some of the perceptions of extravagance are wrong. Such ministers are convinced that “ostentation” and “extravagance” are relative terms, and depending on a person’s background and training, these words would be applied differently. One response, which I found rather fascinating, came from two respondents, who insisted that to set a public example in thrift and economical use of resources, they would reject gifts that would depict opulence and waste.

Many of the respondents suggested relevant methods that could help improve the negative press image of Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders. To some of them, more emphasis on education was necessary, especially in moral philosophy, which could help the ministers make informed and constructive ethical choices. Such education, they suggested, could comprise seminars, conferences, symposia, mentoring, counselling etc., to which ministers may be exposed throughout their working life. It was also intimated that those who admit others into the ministry may have to do more rigorous screening than before in order to select people of character and high moral standards. Others suggested that the formation of umbrella organisations which hold individual ministers accountable for their behaviour would considerably help control unethical behaviour in ministry. One person was of the opinion that, since human beings are fallible, ministerial misconduct cannot be totally eradicated; therefore the Churches should make provision for correction, reformation, and re-instatement of offending ministers.

A handful of respondents were however convinced that the Press, motivated by commercial interest, was exaggerating some of the alleged ministerial scandals. They thought journalists had to be educated to check the authenticity and accuracy of such stories before publishing them. A rather unique answer from one respondent suggested that the media exposure has a positive dimension to it, as it would help check unethical conduct among the ministers.

It is also noteworthy and much to be appreciated that some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches are self-critical, that is, their ministers evaluate themselves, and also allow their conduct to be examined by their colleagues and the Church public alike, as a control measure in ministerial ethics. The public revelation of ministerial offences could serve as a deterrent to potential offenders and also help the culprit reform. Thus, one can conclude that approaches to ministerial discipline vary from one denomination to the other, and, depending on who is implementing the code of conduct, and the level of public exposure given to the case, immoral behaviour may be easily flushed out or tolerated within ecclesiastical structures. In this light, one can even conclude that the frequent media reports on the unethical conduct of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers has a constructive aspect to it, as it reveals a situation of institutional accountability, provided the reports are based on facts.

Rev Prof Asamoah-Gyadu also thinks that the media seems to be demonstrating a penchant for Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership scandals because such ministers present themselves as paragons of virtue, who brand leaders of other Christian denominations, as it were, as "sinners".⁶⁹⁹ Thus, the media publishes such stories swiftly to reveal to the public that Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers are also human and fallible. I think there is much valuable

⁶⁹⁹ Interview, Accra, 2nd June 2009.

insight in Asamoah-Gyadu's observation; and Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders can learn from it and be humble enough to admit that, like other Christians and the rest of mankind, we are all on pilgrimage towards perfection; indeed we are all seekers, groping after the redemption of our corruptible nature.

It has also been suggested that Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders do not give character development and ethical issues the deserved attention in their ministry, (although my survey report in Table 4 reveals that all of them preach on sanctification). Among those who have expressed concern about the need for Pentecostal ministers to give more attention to moral and ethical issues is Rev Opoku-Acheampong, who is convinced that "if publishers of religious books can dwell on morality, it will go a long way to impact positively on society".⁷⁰⁰ It cannot be denied that sometimes the Pentecostal/Charismatic wing of the Christian faith concentrates on matters of prosperity and attainment of material success and social recognition at the expense of character building and moral uprightness. And they may have to strike a balance between their focus on charisma and character for holistic Christianity.

The falling standards in Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics has engaged the attention of the ministers themselves and some have directly responded in sermons, press statements and interviews to the accusations being levelled at them. Reacting to the decision of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) to ban pastors from endorsing examination application forms, Apostle M. K. Ntummy observed that the fact that WAEC could not trust pastors is an indictment on the priesthood and should be condemned as such.⁷⁰¹ To reiterate, Apostle John Anan Adotey, President of The Apostolic Church, Ghana, thinks exposure in

⁷⁰⁰ Quoted in Adjoa Yeboah Afari, "Produce Books to Transform Lives of People" *The Ghanaian Times*. (24th October 2007), 14.

⁷⁰¹ Cited in A. Cobba-Biney, "No Pastors Please!", *The Spectator*, (21st - 27th April 2007), 3

the media can contribute to solve the problem of ministerial misconduct.⁷⁰² Another minister, Rev Dr Joseph Kweku Asante, General Overseer of Full Gospel Centre and Director of King of Kings Bible College and Seminary, thinks the intervention of GPC and Christian Council of Ghana could “help develop discipline among pastors in the country to safeguard the image of the clergy.”⁷⁰³ Rev Noah Twum agrees that problems exist in the Pentecostal ministries concerning moral standards, which he also thinks could be controlled with more education on ethical issues.⁷⁰⁴

One area of criticism which Pentecostal ministers often react to is that of financial accountability and extravagant living. In a media report, Apostle Ekow Badu-Woode, General Secretary of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), is said to have rejected any notions that the Pentecostal ministers are gold diggers: “The Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) has strongly refused the increasing criticism and perception among the media and the general public that Charismatic churches are in church business for money.”⁷⁰⁵ Rev Noah Twum is convinced that a minister is at liberty to enjoy genuinely acquired wealth.⁷⁰⁶ And addressing the same issue from another perspective, Rev Divine Nortey, National Crusade Director and Radio Pastor of Gospel Light International Church (GLIC) in Accra, insisted that the ministers need strong four-wheel-drive vehicles to criss-cross the country, as well as maintain an appreciable living standard that would be respected by all people, including the wealthy.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰² Cited in I. Motey, “Expose Corrupt Pastors, Church Leaders – Apostle Adotey Urges the Media” *The Spectator* (16th June 2007), 23.

⁷⁰³ Cited in D. Abugah, “‘Arrest’ Indiscipline among Pastors” *The Gospel Advocate* (28th October – 10th November 2007), 1.

⁷⁰⁴ Interview, Accra, 22nd May 2007.

⁷⁰⁵ Daniel Abugah, “Church Business not Money Business: Says GPC Secretary” *The Gospel Advocate*, (28th October – 10th November, 2007), 1.

⁷⁰⁶ Interview, Accra, 22nd May 2007.

⁷⁰⁷ Interview, Accra, 3rd May 2008.

In an interview with Apostle Ekow Badu-Wood, he lamented that the challenges of unstable ministerial marriage, flamboyant dressing, and obsession with prosperity in general are undermining moral standards among Pentecostal ministers. According to him, the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) has an Ethics Arbitration and Development Committee which addresses concerns of unethical conduct of ministers. He however pointed out that the Council only deals with Churches as a corporate body and does not get involved with individual ministers. As a result, the Council is unable to take any action against Pastors unless their denominations referred disciplinary cases to them.⁷⁰⁸

In response to the issue of negative media reports on Pentecostal leaders, Apostle Wood thinks although some of such reports may be true, the media seem to be characterised by sensationalism, so one should read these stories advisedly. He however admitted that since the Churches are divine-human institutions one cannot rule out imperfection among their leaders. In his opinion, and to use his exact words, "the Pastors come in various shades and colours – trained and untrained, called and 'uncalled.'"⁷⁰⁹ And he promised that GPC is making efforts to educate and train some of the Pastors in all aspects of ministry including ministerial ethics.⁷¹⁰

Among the many responses to the problem of ministerial misconduct is the strong suggestion from certain sections of society that the formation of Churches should be regulated. Rev Abamfo Atiemo, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and lecturer at the Department for the Study of Religions at the University of Ghana is however of a different opinion. He thinks the Church scene should not be regulated. He is convinced that because several institutions are not well informed on religious matters, "Government should not be

⁷⁰⁸ Interview, Accra, 8th December 2005.

⁷⁰⁹ Interview, Accra, 8th December 2005.

⁷¹⁰ Interview, Accra, 8th December 2005.

trusted with basic freedoms like the right of worship.”⁷¹¹ Rev Atiemo is convinced that although religious faith should logically inform good behaviour, this does not always happen in reality; in his opinion, “Ethics and religious faith do not always converge.”⁷¹² He also rejects the idea of subjecting the control of the founding of new Churches to existing denominational leaders.⁷¹³ Rev Atiemo thinks such leaders would use their theological mindset and denominational parameters to restrict fresh approaches to the expression of authentic Christian spirituality, thus undermining the essential principles of freedom of worship.

I am supportive of Rev Atiemo’s position, as attempts to regulate the Christian landscape would inevitably infringe on the constitutional provision of freedom of religion. Unless the emerging Churches violate the Constitution of Ghana, they could be left alone to be self-critical; trusting that their internalisation of moral values and the assessment of their followers would help them approximate an appreciable standard of orthodoxy in ministerial ethics.

7.6 Conclusion

It is obvious that the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders have made a positive impact on Christianity and the wider Ghanaian society. Their messages have rescued many youths and adults from profligate lifestyles and empowered them to pursue moral uprightness and channel their resources into constructive ventures. The Christian education programmes of such Churches produce literature and messages that apply Christian principles to every dimension of life, not least, family values that promote coherence and stability in society. The upwardly mobile youth among their following are encouraged to develop their talents and

⁷¹¹ Interview, Legon, 27th August 2008.

⁷¹² Interview, Legon, 27th August 2008.

⁷¹³ J. Ackom Asante, “Maintaining Pastors Image” *The Spectator*, (26th May 2007), 4.

take advantage of opportunities for self and community development. Furthermore these Churches have partnered with Government to create jobs, build socio-economic infrastructure and donate generously to alleviate the plight of the vulnerable and marginalised members of society.

All these positive contributions notwithstanding, public opinion and media reports are fraught with accounts of unethical behaviour of Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers. The leaders are often presented as compromising on Christian moral standards by demonstrating greed and opulence, abusing power, trampling on the human rights of others, assaulting those who provoke them and harassing women sexually. Although some of these allegations have been proven to be true, in other cases, the stories seem to have been published either out of sensationalism, commercial interest, or to settle personal scores.

I have also tried to establish the fact that some of the Pentecostal ministers, operating within various institutional structures, have made efforts to address the issue of declining moral standards among their fold. Furthermore, it is gratifying to note that my field work has generated data which reveals a high level of awareness of the practical moral problems among the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders. Some of the prominent leaders among them who engage with moral issues have responded by commenting on them in various forums, and suggested some practical responses to the problem. And it is heart-warming to know that some of the ministers have also demonstrated a certain level of self-criticism. However there seems to be an urgent need for such Churches to give more attention to education on moral issues and to feature concerns for integrity and Christian character development in their sermons and literature more than they have done hitherto.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Summary

The sphere of influence of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in shaping the future of Christianity in Ghana has become so significant that, the phenomenon has, besides theological investigations, attracted the attention of sociologists, historians, journalists, and even politicians. The Movement has produced outstanding leaders, some of whose Churches have become huge institutions of considerable international repute. However, public opinion, press reports, and insightful responses gathered from some Church leaders and academicians seem to suggest that although the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement has made a general positive impact on Ghanaian society, there are serious concerns about low ethical standards among some of their leaders.

This researcher has examined traditional domestic, communal, and religious institutions, which provide the social context for the development of Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership, to appreciate how indigenous value systems have influenced their ministerial ethics. Some of the concerns identified include issues of autocracy, human rights abuse, lack of equal opportunity, the promotion of superstition, and the injudicious use of material resources, which some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers reflect in various proportions.

The key concepts in moral philosophy, as well as the various theories that guide moral decision-making have been evaluated for a more objective and logical assessment of the various value systems that the Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers may express. It was however discovered that the level of awareness of some of the ministers on key ethical concepts seems to be rather limited. There appears to be a link between this low level of

awareness of moral philosophy in traditional society and the attitude of some Pentecostal ministers to the discipline of Ethics. In certain cases, it has been discovered that some of these Christian leaders do not have well-defined and systematised ethical principles to guide their decisions and ministry; consequently their response to issues was guided by their relative personal opinions.

In terms of institutional support, only a few of the Churches surveyed have any appreciable and comprehensive documented ministerial code of ethics. The portions of some of the Church constitutions dealing with ministerial discipline capture useful principles of conduct that reflect positive obligation-based ethics. Nevertheless, the need to maintain institutional integrity has often been pursued at the expense of the impact of certain policies on individuals. In certain instances, concerns for utility, which considers the human impact of principles on those concerned, seemed to have been neglected. The need for tolerance, a major strength of ethical relativity, which recognises individual differences as well as the tension between institutional demands and individual aspirations, appears to be lacking in some of the institutional provisions. Furthermore, some of the Churches overlook the fact that character development is a progressive process of learning that acknowledges human fallibility; consequently they fail to develop adequate compassionate institutional responses to ministerial moral failure.

Of much concern is the response of the Press and public opinion to Pentecostal/Charismatic ministerial ethics in Ghana. In many instances, the Press may be commended for their efforts in reporting the constructive contributions of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches to society. As both the print and the electronic media often proclaim the social outreach projects undertaken by these Churches to help the underprivileged in society. In addition the Press

also publishes sermons, articles, and public pronouncements of some Pentecostal leaders with valuable moral import.

This constructive reportage notwithstanding, the Press sometimes does irreparable damage to the image of some of the ministers, as they readily publish allegations of scandalous behaviour without following the story through to establish the guilt or otherwise of the individual involved. Evidently, the media hardly publishes any retractions to redeem the reputation of such Church leaders; who in many cases would never litigate to claim damages.

It has also emerged through this academic investigation that some of the negative opinions members of the public hold against Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers are either informed by superficial observations or based on exaggerated premises. My interaction with some of the ministers has revealed that the frequent accusations of pastors fleecing their flock and becoming excessively rich at their expense are not always true. Some of such impressions turn to be overgeneralization and stereotyping, since majority of the ministers are honest employees who live on what their Churches provide; and many of these Pastors struggle to make ends meet. In addition, my field work has revealed that those who patronise the ministries of the Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders give overwhelming endorsement to their positive impact on society.

Nevertheless the frequency of accusations of immoral behaviour, misapplication of funds and the abuse of power should serve as a valuable awakening call to the Churches for housecleaning. In some instances, reports of promiscuity, fraud, and violent behaviour were discovered to be true. Some of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church administrative structures have also been identified as not being transparent enough, and some of those in supervisory

roles need to be a little more objective and considerate in their dealing with their subordinates. In view of the fact that Church leaders are supposed to wield moral authority in order to inspire their followers and the wider society to aspire to high ethical standards, a single case of immoral behaviour in their fold is one too many.

It is however necessary to mention that the Church leaders are not simply glossing over these concerns. Some of them have developed institutional structures that respond constructively to ministerial moral failure. And this is coupled with the fact that some of the ministers appear to be self-critical, as they consciously strive to approximate to high ethical standards. However, the ministers in question may have to consider improving upon their male chauvinist image by offering equal opportunities to their womenfolk to contribute their quota to the development of the Churches. In addition, there is a crying need for policies that hold individuals accountable for the application of the resources of the Churches in order to curb the frequency of misapplication of funds.

8.2 Recommendations

The most plausible solution to some of these problems is likely to be a multidimensional approach of strategies deriving from both internal and external sources. Internally, there is the need for more self-evaluation of the individual leaders who may have to assimilate and effectively apply biblical moral standards and principles of responsible decision-making. Secondly I suggest, as an internal source method, that the leaders in question could enlist in ministers' associations in order to participate in peer review programmes relevant to moral accountability.

Externally, it would help if creative works in the arts and research findings on ministerial ethics could be encouraged in the academy to generate useful information in a progressive response to the conduct of Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders. Other strategies, in the form of social commentary expressed in drama, novels, film shows, songs, poetry, art works and media reports, which appreciate the positive aspects of Pentecostal/Charismatic leadership and criticise the unconstructive dimension, can also make an impact to help improve behaviour in ministry. The recent initiative of His Excellency John Agyekum Kuffour's Government in conferring national awards on some outstanding Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders⁷¹⁴ is a laudable effort that would most likely motivate other Pastors to strive for resourcefulness and moral excellence in ministry. The Ghana Pentecostal Council and other Pentecostal umbrella organizations can take a cue from this and institute awards to inspire and encourage moral distinction in ministry.

More specifically, umbrella organizations such as GPC and NCCCC would have to play more prominent supervisory roles to maintain high moral standards among their ministers. In addition, the Church leaders can submit themselves to evaluation by their colleagues, lay leaders or entire congregation for useful feedback on their personal ethical standards (see Appendix III for a sample of an assessment form). Furthermore the need to produce comprehensive documented ministerial ethical codes has to be addressed by every Church in

⁷¹⁴ Some of such ministers who have received the Order of the Volta are Bishop Charles Agyin Asare, Pastor Mensah Otabil and Apostle Dr M. K. Ntumy.

order to provide justification for commending exemplary moral conduct, and holding those violating the code accountable (see Appendix IV for a sample).

Finally empowering the lay congregation members with information on certain administrative, theological, and ethical issues would help protect them and limit their vulnerability to the schemes of charlatans of Pentecostal ministers. This can be enhanced by involving a well-informed laity in church leadership to contribute meaningfully to the policies that define their institutional structures and respond comprehensively to ministerial ethical concerns.

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Interviewees/Respondents

Apostle Dr Opoku Onyinah, Rector of Pentecost University College

Rev Prof J. C. Thomas, Dean of Theology and Missions, Central University College, Dansoman

Rev Professor J. K Asamoah-Gyadu, Director of Graduate Studies, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon

Professor Ogbu Kalu, Professor of World Christianity and Mission, McCormick Theological Seminary, United States of America

Rev Professor Joshua N. Kudadjie, Vice Principal, Methodist University College, Ghana

Rev Karim Awuni, Trainee Minister, the Church of Pentecost (CoP)

Rev Duke Otoo, Founder, Chosen Vessels Church, North Kaneshie

Rev J. C. Agbesi, Minister CoP, Achimota

Rev M. Nana Banyin Arhin, Associate Pastor of headquarters branch, Word Miracle Church International (WMCI)

Rev Kwefio, Minister, Assemblies of God, Tesano

Rev S. Wengam, Director of Administration, Assemblies of God (AG) Headquarters

Apostle Kwadwo Baiden Denson, General Secretary, The Apostolic Church Ghana

Rev Christopher Atta Titriku, Founder and General Overseer of Redeem Evangel Church

Apostle Waye Onyinah leader of Association of Pentecostal Pastors (APP), Sakaman

Rev Oko Bortei-Doku of the Pastoral Care Department of Lighthouse Chapel International

Rev Noah Twum Asamoah, Resident Pastor of the Headquarters Church, WMCI

Rev Stephen Kwefio-Okai, Senior Pastor AG, Tesano

Rev Nana Agyapong, Pastor Assemblies of God Church, Abofu

Apostle Kwadwo Baiden Denson, General Secretary, The Apostolic Church Ghana

Rev Dr E. Anim, Dean of Theology, Pentecost University College

Rev Michael Arhin, Secretary to the General Secretary WMCI

Apostle Ekow Badu Wood, General Secretary of Ghana Pentecostal Council

Rev Superintendent James Tetteh, Prison Chaplain,

Apostle Dr M. K. Ntummy, Chairman, The Church of Pentecost

Apostle Alfred Koduah, General Secretary of the Church of Pentecost (CoP)

Rev Charles Appiah-Boachie, General Secretary of Assemblies of God Church, Ghana.

Elder C. Konadu, The Church of Pentecost, New Fadama, Accra

Rev John Tekperterey, inmate, Nsawam Medium Security Prisons

Mr Ben Ephson, Editor, *The Daily Dispatch*

Rev Christopher Titriku, Founder and General Overseer, Redeem Evangel Church, Ho

Mr Ebenezer Ato Sam. Editor, *The New Punch*

M. A, Baneseh, Reporter, *Daily Graphic*

Mr Daniel Abugah, Reporter, *Gospel Advocate*

Rev Divine Nortey, National Crusade Director and Radio Pastor of Gospel Light International Church (GLIC)

Pastor Fred Ntow Senior Pastor, Christ Co-Workers Fellowship, Dzorwulu

Rev Father Raphael Osei Soadwah, St Paul's Catholic Seminary, Sowutuom

Rev Abamfo Atiemo, Minister, Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Lecturer, Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana

Rev David Tetteh, inmate, Nsawam Medium Security Prisons

Rev Bannor, Founder and General Overseer of People of the Way Ministries, Odorkor

Rev Amponsah Frimpong, Head of the Legal Department of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)

Rev Professor Kingsley Larbi, founder of Regents University College at Dansoman

Rev Michael Nimo, Ex-Chairman, CAC

Rev Millicent Nana Atsu, Minister in charge of outreach, WMCI

Rev Cecilia Adzo Dickens Registrar of Miracle Ministerial College, WMCI

Apostle Stephen Amoaning, Chairman, CAC

APPENDIX I

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, GHANA

END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REVIEW FORM FOR YEAR

1. NAME OF PASTOR:.....

(a) STAFF NO :.....

(b) DISTRICT

(c) AREA:

(d) LOCAL.....

2. Assessment of Employee

Objective	Standards/Factors	Score	Comment
1)	Quality of work Work out put Team work Human Relations Time Consciousness Initiative Sub total		
2)	Quality of work Work out put Team work Human Relations Time Consciousness Initiative Sub total		
3)	Quality of work Work out put Team work Human Relations Time Consciousness Initiative Sub total		
4)	Quality of work Work out put Team work Human Relations Time Consciousness Initiative		

	Sub total		
AVERAGE TOTAL			

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON PERFORMANCE BY DISTRICT PASTOR

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Discuss and agree on the specific objectives for the coming year. These objectives must adhere to the SMARTER rules - Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, Time-bound, Enjoyable, Recorded.

Main Objectives	Targets	Main Standards
Objective 1:		
Objective 2:	1 3 4	
Objective 3:	1 2 3 4	
Objective 4:	1 2 3 4	

a) The training and development support to be given to help the appraisee meet the agreed objectives above.

.....

.....

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

PART (A) TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CANDIDATE

Name of Member:

Age:

Gender:

Course Title:

Section:

Date:

Time:

Place of Examination:

Other:

Applicant:

Period of Examination:

.....

KEY TO GRADING

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Very Good
- 3. Good
- 4. Fair
- 5. Satisfactory
- 6. Marginal
- 7. Poor
- 8. Very Poor
- 9. Failing
- 10. Failing
- 11. Failing
- 12. Failing
- 13. Failing
- 14. Failing
- 15. Failing
- 16. Failing
- 17. Failing
- 18. Failing
- 19. Failing
- 20. Failing

APPENDIX II

**THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST
MINISTERS APPRAISAL FORM**

PART (A) (TO BE COMPLETED BY REGIONAL/AREA/NATIONAL HEAD)

Name of Minister:.....**Region/Area:**.....

Any Official

Duties:.....

Present Status: Probationary Overseer/Overseer/Pastor/Apostle/Prophet Previous

Station:..... **Present Station:**.....

Date Called:..... **Age/Date of**

Birth:.....

Date of Appointment to Present Status:.....

Other

Appointments:.....

Period of Assessment

from.....**to**.....

KEY TO GRADING

i - Excellent

2 - Very Good

3 - Good

4 - Average

- | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. | Knowledge of work (i.e. understanding of ministerial calling) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 2. | Initiative & Creativity (i.e. understanding or and getting things done) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 3. | Application and Industry (i.e. carefulness and attention to work, attendance at meetings, call, etc.) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 4. | Quantity of work (i.e. held. Evangelism, Discipling, Leadership Training) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 5. | Quality (i.e. Thoroughness and accuracy of work) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 6. | Supervisory skill (i.e. Ability to oversee others) | [1] | [2] | [3] | [4] | [5] |
| 7. | Integrity (i.e. Extent to which he could be trusted with | | | | | |

- Church resources (e.g. Money, Property, etc)
8. Oral and Written Expression [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
9. Co-operation: a) Willingness to work together [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
with or support others
b) Relationship with Presbytery
10. Conduct (i.e. Friendly, Too reserved, Indifferent)
- (underline the one suitable)*
11. Effective visitation to assemblies in the year [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
12. How well he manages his family [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
13. Health (i.e. Emotional Stability, Physical condition appearance. Doctors report (if any) environmental [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
14. Care of Church property [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
15. Alertness to problem solving (i.e. Ability to anticipate problem situation) [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
- 16 Leadership Ability (i.e. promptness of action, decision, application of good shepherding [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
17. Personal Spiritual Development. [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
18. OVER-ALL RATING [1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

STATISTICS

STATE NUMBER OF:	On assumption of Duty	Year of Assessment
Membership	Date.....	20.....
Assemblies/Districts		
Converts (Baptised)		
Officers (Ordained)		
Children Dedicated		
Church Building(s) (in-progress/completed)		
Mission Houses (in-progress/completed)		
Tithes		
Missionary Offering		

ACTIVITIES: Number of Retreats, Conventions, Rallies, etc.
held:.....

19. SPIRITUAL/MORAL LIFE (Your candid assessment - *use additional paper if necessary*)

20. NATURAL

GIFTING:.....

21 SPIRITUAL

GIFTING:.....

22. POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT (State further observations and areas where development/training required - *use additional paper if necessary*)

23. Comment on frequency of presence at or absence with/without permission from duty station (*use additional paper if necessary*)

24. Retirement due to: (a) Age
 (b) Health

25. Termination due to Health, Inefficiency, Misconduct, etc.

Head's

Name:.....Signature:.....

..... Date:.....

26. The Minister

I have read this report and agree with the views expressed above

Minister's Signature:.....

Date:.....

HEAD'S RECOMMENDATION AFTER INTERVIEW WITH MINISTER

Strictly Confidential: (Not to be shown or communicated to Minister)

Would you recommend him for:

CHANGE OF STATUS [Yes] [No]

TO: 1) Full Overseer 2) Pastor 3) Area Head 4) Missionary 5) Etc.

NAME OF HEAD OF REGION/AREA:.....

STATUS:.....

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

(Official Stamp)

FOR OFFICE USE

- 1) Further Training (Recommended/Not Recommended)
- 2)
- 2) Higher Calling [Yes] [No]

Present Grade:.....

Recommended Grade:.....

With Effect From:.....

Approved/Not Approved By:.....

Date.....

CHAIRMAN/EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

APPENDIX III
EVALUATION FORM FOR PASTORS OF GRACE COMMUNITY
CHURCHES

(Model Evaluation Form Designed by Dela Quampah)

Name of Pastor:

Branch Name:

Rank of Pastor: (tick) Senior Pastor Associate Pastor Probationer

For how long have you known him or her?.....

Position of respondent: (tick) a. Elder b. Deacon c. Deaconess
d. Member

Date:.....

Section A – Ministry

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Ability to communicate effectively | A | B | C | D |
| 2. Relevance and usefulness of sermons | A | B | C | D |
| 3. Level of moral content in sermons | A | B | C | D |
| 4. Well-informed and challenging preaching | A | B | C | D |
| 5. Initiative (programs and projects) | A | B | C | D |
| 6. Effective administration | A | B | C | D |
| 7. Ability to meet deadlines | A | B | C | D |
| 8. Creativity and resourcefulness | A | B | C | D |
| 9. Judicious use of Church resources | A | B | C | D |
| 10. Practising what one preaches | A | B | C | D |

Section B - Relationships

1. Confidentiality	A	B	C	D
2. Consensus building	A	B	C	D
3. Respect for other people	A	B	C	D
4. Respect for authority	A	B	C	D
5. Showing appreciation	A	B	C	D
6. Willingness to forgive	A	B	C	D
7. Willingness to apologise	A	B	C	C
8. Showing care and concern about others	A	B	C	D
9. Demonstration of team spirit	A	B	C	D
10. Respect for human rights	A	B	C	D

Section C – Character

1. Control of anger	A	B	C	D
2. Humility	A	B	C	D
3. Tolerance	A	B	C	D
4. Willingness to accept responsibility	A	B	C	D
5. Honesty	A	B	C	D
6. Modesty	A	B	C	D
7. Demonstration of sound judgment	A	B	C	D
8. Decorum in dealing with the opposite sex	A	B	C	D
9. Purity of speech	A	B	C	D
10. Generosity	A	B	C	D

Other Observations:

i. What exceptional leadership gift(s) does he or she possess?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

ii. What do you think are his or her character strengths?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

iii. What are some of his or her weaknesses?

.....
.....
.....
.....

iv. Have you benefited from his or her ministry? Yes No

v. If you stated "yes" or "no" for item IV. Give reasons for your

answer.....
.....

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX IV

Model Ministerial Code of Ethics of Grace Community Churches

By Dela Quampah

I. Preamble

Having responded positively to God's call to a ministry that transforms sinners into saints, I acknowledge that the core issue of Christianity is character development. I also recognise that the greatest asset of a Christian leader is his testimony. Therefore, guided by this declaration of Jesus, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness ..." (Matt 6:33), I will prioritise moral uprightness above all other concerns in life and ministry. I will strive to develop a personal value system that is based on scriptural principles, guided by love and inspired by the Holy Spirit. I will also search Church history and society for lessons from moral exemplars. However, being conscious of the complexity of contemporary moral issues, I will study ethics, in order to make informed and responsible choices that approximate to high Christian moral standards in every decision-making process.

II. Philosophy of Ministry

I declare my foundational principle in ministry as: being called by God to serve the best interest of His people from His perspective.

III. Duty to God

1. I acknowledge the Holy Spirit as my resource base and recognise my absolute dependence on Him for character development, vision, ability and the enablement needed for success in ministry.
2. I will endeavour throughout my life and ministry to keep a vibrant personal relation with God through devotional activity such as prayer, meditation, fasting, intensive Bible study, reading of inspired Christian literature, fellowship with other believers and listening to other preachers.

3. I will confess all known sins in my life and endeavour to avoid any acts of wilful disobedience that will grieve the Holy Spirit and obstruct my smooth communication with God.

IV. Personal

1. I will maintain a healthy body by avoiding psychotropic substances such as alcohol, cigarettes and hard drugs. I will also cultivate a healthy eating habit, get adequate exercise, as well as optimum rest. I will submit to regular comprehensive medical examinations, take medical prescriptions appropriately and respond positively to medical advice.
2. I will study to be abreast with the religious thoughts of the day, and keep pace with the challenges of contemporary socio-cultural, political, economic, scientific and technological issues.
3. I will maintain a high standard of integrity by endeavouring, constantly, to be pure in thought, transparent in motive and truthful in speech. I will do my best to keep my word and honour every promise I make.
4. I will place service above money, personal gain and recognition. I will never manipulate or coerce anyone for financial or material benefits.
5. I will avoid gambling and any shady financial transaction that could tarnish my testimony and ministry.
6. I will strive to live within my means, avoid impulsive buying and resist the tendency to accumulate huge unmanageable debts.

V. Ministry

1. I will seek to serve rather than to be served, and place the welfare of the Church above my own personal interest.
2. I will avoid insinuations and exaggeration in my sermons, and acknowledge the sources of my information in honesty.
3. I will promote character development and moral transformation in my congregants by giving the deserved attention to the concepts of holiness, righteousness and sanctification, both in my conduct and communication.
4. I will protect the integrity of my local Church and denomination, and avoid making unguarded statements about its institutional structure.
5. I will use authority responsibly and try to overcome the attitudes of power abuse, obsession with titles, and a penchant for status symbols.
6. I will appreciate my colleagues in ministry and desist from making disparaging remarks about other Christian leaders.
7. I will respect the rights of other people and avoid discrimination against, women, children, and the vulnerable.
8. I will respect people of other tribes, religions and political affiliation, and be careful not to demonstrate tribalism, fanaticism, partisan politics or any such divisive attitudes.
9. I will resist any form of destructive superstition that is quick to brand people as witches and wizards; and also avoid the indiscriminate branding of objects and locations as demonic.
10. I will regard information received during counselling as sacred and never disclose it, unless to prevent harm to another person or requested by a law court.

VI. Relationships

1. I will love, honour and give my spouse the deserved attention, and be careful not to expose him or her to public ridicule.
2. I will care for and protect every member of my household, and discipline them with a loving touch.
7. I will treat the opposite sex with courtesy and decorum and avoid any form of promiscuous behaviour.
8. I will cultivate the values of humility, patience, tolerance and appreciation which tend to promote healthy relationships.
9. I will endeavour to resolve conflicts and maintain a healthy group atmosphere both at home and in ministry.
10. I will express special interest in the welfare of the weak and vulnerable, and do my best to help alleviate their suffering.

APPENDIX V

QUESTIONNAIRE

ON THE ETHICAL DIMENSION OF PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC CHURCH
LEADERSHIP IN GHANA

Dela Quampah is examining reports on the conduct of Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders in Ghana and would be grateful if you could spare some time to respond to the following questions. It is envisaged that your opinion on these issues would be useful in shaping people's thinking concerning such Church leaders. You are kindly requested to express your candid opinion on each question. Since this work is for academic purposes strict confidentiality is assured.

A. Personal information on the one responding

1. Sex:

M
F

2. Age (Tick the appropriate box below):

15 – 30	31 – 45	46 - 60	61 – 75	76 – 90

3. Level of Education: Junior High School Senior High School
Tertiary Other

4. Religion: Christian Islam African Traditional
Others:.....

5. If Christian, please provide denomination? Roman Catholic

Methodist Presbyterian Pentecostal Charismatic

Baptist Other.....

Name of Church.....

B. Knowledge about Minister

6. Please name the Pentecostal/Charismatic minister you want to assess.

.....

7. (a) What is the name of his or her Church?.....

..... (b)

Where is it located.....

8. How did you get to know him or her?

a) Personal contact.....

b) In the media.....

c) Other

9. For how long have you known him or her?.....

C. Assessment

I. Ministry

10. Has his or her preaching been beneficial to you in any way?

Yes
No

Not sure

a. If yes?

i. Has he or she helped change your behaviour for the better?

ii. Has his or her preaching helped improve your relationship with others?

iii. Has his or her preaching inspired you to do something constructive?

11. Does he or she preach a lot about demons and witchcraft?

Yes
No

Not sure

12. Has he or she ever accused any one of witchcraft?

Yes
No

Not sure

13. What do you personally feel about witchcraft accusations?.....

.....

.....

II. Relationships

14. Does he or she respect other people?

Yes
No

Not sure

15. Does he or she receive people and communicate well with them?

Yes

Not sure

No

16. Does he or she handle confidential information with care?

Yes

No

Not
sure

17. Does he or she relate to the opposite sex with decency?

Yes

No

Not
sure

18. Do you think his or her leadership style is democratic? (Does he or she seek the views of others?)

Yes

No

Not
sure

19. Does the minister you know appreciate material gifts from Church members?

Yes

No

Not
sure

III. Attitude to Money and Possessions

20. Do you think he or she has expensive habits in terms of dress code, vehicles and accommodation?

Yes
No

Not sure

21. You may please explain your answer in question 20.....

.....

.....

22. Does he or she manipulate Church members for money or property for personal use?

Yes
No

Not sure

23. Does he or she use fundraising methods that you think are unacceptable?

Yes
No

Not sure

If yes, kindly describe some of the methods.

.....

.....

.....

D. General Information on Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches

24. Do you know of a Pentecostal/Charismatic minister who practices tribalism?

Yes
No

Not sure

25. Do you know of any Pentecostal/Charismatic minister who was involved in sexual immorality?

Yes
No

Not sure

26. Do you know any Pentecostal/Charismatic minister who has embezzled Church funds or cheated someone out of money or property?

Yes
No

Not sure

27. Have you ever received a prophetic word from a Pentecostal/Charismatic minister? If yes, what kind of message?

.....
.....
.....

28. Do you find the message meaningful?.....

.....

.....
.....

29. Do you know about anyone who has been misled by a prophet?

Yes
No

Not sure

30. Do you agree with the suggestion that women should be ordained as Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers?

Yes
No

Not sure

31. Please give reasons for your answer as in question 30.....

.....
.....
.....

32. Do you consider any particular Pentecostal/Charismatic minister a good example to society?

Yes
No

Not sure

If yes, please provide his/her name.....

33. What are your general comments on Pentecostal/Charismatic ministers?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thanks a lot for your time.