

**A THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL STUDY OF LOUD CHRISTIAN PRAYER ON
THE**

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA CAMPUS, LEGON

BY



**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
M.PHIL RELIGIONS DEGREE**

OCTOBER, 2013

DECLARATION

This thesis with the exception of materials quoted from other scholarly works which have been acknowledged fully, is the original production of research work by the researcher under the supervisions of Dr. Rebecca Y. Ganusah and Dr. Ben Willie-Golo at the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana. Any error in this thesis is fully acknowledged as the fault of the researcher.

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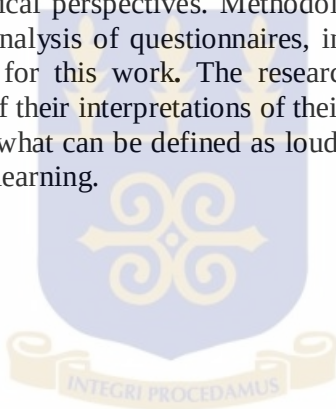
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ABSTRACT

Prayer provides the means of communicating with one's object of worship. The mode of prayer, however, can be problematic sometimes, particularly when prayer "disturbs" others who are not part of the praying group. It has, however, become common today among some Christian groups to engage in loud forms of prayer. A typical example is what happens on the University of Ghana campus where some student Christian groups organize loud prayer meetings around halls of residence and libraries and thereby disturbing other members of the University community. However, the University of Ghana, Legon is an academic institution that promotes academic excellence and which requires a high level of serenity and an atmosphere that promotes learning. Furthermore, just like any other institution, the University has its own rules and regulations guiding the conduct of students-among which is regulation on noise-making. The focus of this thesis is to look at the theological and ethical issues that arise as some Pentecostal Christian religious groups of the University of Ghana, Legon, engage in loud public prayers.

The aim of this work is to investigate why some Christian religious groups indulge in loud prayers and the theological ethical implications of such an act. This work is viewed from Christian theological and ethical perspectives. Methodologically the review of scholarly works, the deployment and analysis of questionnaires, interviews and observations were employed in gathering data for this work. The research found that students of some Christian groups, as a result of their interpretations of their scriptures and other theological considerations, do engage in what can be defined as loud prayers which disrupt academic work and affect research and learning.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was made possible by the Almighty God who worked through persons on earth. I want to show my appreciation to my two supervisors, Dr. Rebecca Ganusah and Dr. Ben-Willie Golo for their tremendous contribution towards my work. I want to show appreciation to all lecturers of the Department for the Study of Religions for their continuous support towards my work, my respondents, colleagues and friends and my family members for the support they have shown me, through diverse ways to the completion of my thesis.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dearest mum, Sarah Eduful, who believes in my every dream and is always there for me. Her prayers and love keeps me going. I love you mummy. God bless you.



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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The University of Ghana, Legon, was founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast on the recommendation of the Asquith Commission on higher Education in the then British colonies. The recommendation of the Asquith Commission, which was set up in 1943 to consider the promotion of Higher Education, recommended among other things, the setting up of University Colleges in association with the University of London. The University College of the Gold Coast was founded by Ordinance on August 11, 1948 for the purpose of providing for and promoting university education, learning and research.¹

Its first principal was the late Mr. David Nowbray Balme who was foresighted, courageous and dedicated to the promotion of scholarship. By his vision, industry and single-mindedness of purpose, he built a college and laid the foundations for a sound University which is now a source of pride.² During his tenure of leadership for ten years, he created an institution whose aim was orderly living with dignity in a community of scholars.³ In the 1960-61 academic years, the College Council made a request to the Government of Ghana for legislation to constitute the University College into a University with the power to award its own degrees. The Government appointed an International Commission to examine how this could be implemented. On the recommendations of that Commission, the University of Ghana was set up by an Act of Parliament on October 1, 1961 (Act 79). The then President of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, became the first Chancellor of the University, with Nana Kobina Nketsia 1V, Omanhene of Essikado, as the (Interim) Vice Chancellor.⁴

The University of Ghana has its own rules and regulations guiding the conduct of members of the community and visitors as well, among which is the regulation on noise-

¹ University of Ghana: Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011, August, 2009, 9.

² University of Ghana: Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011, August, 2009, 9.

³ University of Ghana: Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011, August, 2009, 9.

⁴ University of Ghana: Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011, August, 2009, 9-10.

making. The 2009-2011 handbook for the Bachelor's degree (Humanities) of the University of Ghana has the following guideline in relation to noise-making, in order to regulate the conduct of students as far as the University is concerned. Article 17, sub section 1 clause VII of the University's handbook states that "it shall be an offence for a Junior Member to é Make undue noise within the University precincts. In particular, the hours between 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. are to be regarded as hours of quiet, provided that this rule shall not apply where permission to organise a function has been granted by the Head of Hall or Dean of Students."⁵

Various notices have also been posted to the various halls of residence by the Dean of Students Affairs to inform students on the need to regulate whatever they do, as far as the University is concerned. Noise-making is one of the social problems that confront members of the University community, whereby some people make excessive noise to the discomfort of other members of the institution. These noisy acts include praying loudly, mounting loudspeakers on vehicles for announcement, playing loud music, shouting and many others. One cannot overlook the moral implications of such acts, since they affect the productivity of other members of the university community. Below is a notice signed by a Dean of Student Affairs:

It has come to my notice that for some time now noise making on the fields, in halls of residence and the hostels are on the increase. These activities are a nuisance to the university community and trample on the core function of the University as a place of secular thought and citadel of knowledge.

I wish to remind students of the regulations on noise-making in the handbook for bachelor's degree, article 17 clause vii.

é Students are entreated to exercise moderation in whatever they do to prevent unpleasant consequences.⁶

⁵ University of Ghana- Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011. August, 2009, 41.

⁶ Dean of Student Affairs, "Notice on Noise Making", University of Ghana, Legon, 3rd November, 2011.

In spite of the University being an academic and secular institution, religion plays a vital role in shaping the conduct of some members of the community. This is largely because one carries one's religious background everywhere one finds oneself. Religion, as defined by Simon Blackburn, is the attempt to understand the concepts involved in religious belief: existence, necessity, fate, creation, sin, justice, mercy, redemption and God.⁷ According to Kofi Asare Opoku, a close observation of Africa and its societies will reveal that religion is at the root of African culture, and it is the determining principle of African life. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that in traditional Africa, religion plays a crucial role in the lives of the people. Religion gives meaning and significance to the people's lives, both in this world and in the next to come.

Africans are said to be engaged in religion in whatever they do-whether it be farming, fishing or hunting; or simply eating, drinking or travelling.⁸ In other words, quoting Kofi Asare Opoku as Bolaji Idowu has also rightly put it, "Africans are a people who in all things are religious."⁹ In Opoku's words "The general African belief concerning man is that he is made up of material and immaterial substances and although there may be variations of this idea from one African society to another, the fundamental assumption among them is the unity of the personality of man. Man is a biological (material) being as well as a spiritual (immaterial) being."¹⁰ The vast majority of people in the world are religious in some aspect or form. Most people are religious in the sense that they believe in the existence of an invisible world that is different, but not separate from the visible world, which they can communicate and interact with, and which is deemed to have effective

⁷ Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 316.

⁸ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), 1.

⁹ Bolaji Idowu as quoted by Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 1.

¹⁰ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 10

powers over their daily lives.¹¹ For them, the spirit world possesses power: spiritual power that can be employed to improve the quality of life of those who resort to it. For religious believers therefore, spiritual power is an enabling power.¹² Religion is expressed in a variety of ways- in sacred stories, in scripture, in ritual action, in art and literature.¹³

On the University of Ghana campus, it is a common phenomenon to see religious students engaging in overt religious activities. This is due to the fact that there are varieties of organized Christian groups on the campus. These include the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM), Pentecostal Students Association (PENSA), Methodist- Presbyterian Union (MPU), University Christian Fellowship (UCF) and Campus Christian Family (CCF). There are also other religious groups like Muslims and Hindus. These groups frequently organize open air prayer meetings to ask for God's protection and guidance throughout a semester's work, good health, passing examinations and the like.

Prayer is indeed, one of the religious practices on the University of Ghana campus that is visibly patronized by a lot of such religious groups. Simon Blackburn defines prayer as any kind of communication believed to be addressed to a deity.¹⁴ Prayer is the central phenomenon of religion.¹⁵ Some Christians also see prayer as a duty that has to be performed daily, whether regulated or not.

¹¹ Gerrie ter Haar, 'Religion in the Development Debate: Relevance and Rationale' *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, 3 (2008): 2.

¹² Haar, 'Religion in the Development Debate: Relevance and Rationale' 2.

¹³ T. William Hall ed, *Religion: An Introduction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), 125.

¹⁴ Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 288. See James F. White, *Introduction To Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 168.

¹⁵ Quoting Heiler in Aylward Shorter, *Prayer in the Religious Traditions of Africa* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1975), 1.

On the University of Ghana campus, religious students engage in all kinds of prayers and what are of interest to the researcher are loud Christian prayers, a term used to include any kind of Christian prayer that bring some form of discomfort to other members of this community. Most noticeable of these loud Christian prayers are the religious groups from the Pentecostal renewal movements, a term that encompasses Pentecostal groups that 'consciously seek to experience and affirm the active presence of the Holy Spirit as part of normal Christian expression'¹⁶ such as speaking in tongues, prophesying, visions, healing and miracles in general

Despite the fact that prayer is one means of communication to one's object of worship as practiced by some Christians, the practice has the tendency to be loaded with problems. For instance, in an academic community, such as the University of Ghana, the practice has the tendency of affecting productivity of both students and workers of the University as one has to resort to something less productive during hours of loud public prayers. It is not an overstatement to say that the disturbances that occur as a result of the loud prayers are a threat to productivity, peace and tranquility on campus. This is because some Pentecostal Christian groups pray aloud at areas very close to halls of residence such as the Sarbah field and sometimes, very close to libraries (Balme library, hall libraries) meant for academic purposes. Already, there have been an intense and sensitive discussions among senior members on campus on the intranet about this phenomenon and its impact on academic productivity.

¹⁶ J.Kwabena Asamoah-Gyedu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: African Christian Press, 2005), 16.

Elsewhere there were incidents of clashes that had occurred as a result of loud Christian noise-making. An example was the case between Alive Chapel International, Tesano and residents of the neighborhood over excessive noise as a result of the church's activities. The church walls had to be demolished by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) over non-permission for church building in a residential area. A similar incident happened between the Ebenezer Miracle Worship Center, Spintex road branch, and residents of the area for the church's engagement in holding noisy church activities in breach of an interim injunction placed on the church by the Adjabeng Court. All these indicate the impacts that the phenomenon has on other human beings within the reach of such loud prayers and the potential threats the phenomenon poses to community.

The nature of the problems associated with loud Christian prayers are ethical and theological as it involves, for example, the fundamental rights of people to worship (or not to worship) as stated in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. "Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, color, religion, creed or gender shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest."¹⁷ This implies that people have the right to worship (or not to worship), wherever they find themselves. The problem arises where one has to respect the rights and freedoms of others in one's bid to exercise one's rights to worship. The Bible also encourages Christians to be just and loving towards others they live in community with and it therefore becomes a theological ethical concern why some Christians will go contrary to this rule

¹⁷ Freedom & Justice: 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, (Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom, Article 2 sub section 2: 1996) 11.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Against the background of the fact that the University of Ghana campus is meant for academic work and yet students engage in loud Christian prayers that have given reason for people to complain, the researcher wants to find out why Christian students engage in loud prayers in ways that create or lead to people raising concerns especially in an environment that is not conducive for the main reason why the University is established. It is in light of this that the researcher wants to find out why students engage in such activities.

1.3 Aims and objectives of the study

My main aim and objective of this work is to find out why some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers, examine the impact of loud Christian prayers on academic work and social life on campus and the responses of members of the University of Ghana community towards such loud Christian prayers. In order to effectively meet this main objective, the following objectives have been set:

- i. Investigate why some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers.
- ii. Examine the impact of loud Christian prayers on academic work and social life on campus and the responses of members of the University of Ghana community towards such loud Christian prayers.
- iii. Explore some Christian theological and moral interventions towards organized Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus.

1.4 Research Question

My main question in this work is ñWhy do some Christian groups engage in loud prayers and what are the theological and ethical issues that are associated with loud public prayers, as practiced by some Pentecostal groups on the University of Ghana campus?.ò In order to effectively answer this question, the following specific questions have been asked.

- i. Why do some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers?
- ii. What are the responses of members of the University of Ghana community towards loud Christian prayers on campus and how they affect academic work and social life of members of the University community?
- iii. What are some Christian theological and moral interventions towards organized prayer on the University of Ghana campus?

1.5 Scope of the study

The focus of this study is to examine loud prayers as a Christian practice by some Pentecostal groups on the University of Ghana campus with particular attention to the theological and ethical issues involved. For the purpose of this work Pentecostal groups such as the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) are used because they are typically Pentecostals who emphasize on the active empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian, such as speaking in tongues.

The work was viewed from Christian ethical perspectives. This is because the groups under study are Christian groups and in order to effectively analyze the morality of loud prayer and the theological foundations of the act, it would be good to base the reflection largely on Christian moral norms such as love, justice and a sense of community. Specifically, the study was aimed at finding out what happens especially around the

Sarbah field, Central Cafeteria and places around the New N Block on campus. The choices of these places on the University campus are as a result of their frequent use by some students of the Pentecostal groups for loud Christian prayers.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Prayer is one of the core components of devotional practices in Christianity. Christians are encouraged to pray continually throughout the day's activities. Prayer either regulated or not, is important to the Christian life and hence Christians see it as a duty. The idea of prayer as a Christian duty makes it imperative for the researcher to use deontological framework where duty is seen as the basis for the morality of an act, for the research. Barbara Mackinnon has argued that moral decision-making in ethics can be examined from the perspectives of the motive, manner and the consequences of an act.¹⁸

However, because of the varied manner in which prayer is performed, coupled with its consequences on other people who may not necessarily be partaking in such prayers, it is important to look at the consequential dimensions to guide this work. There is no doubt that rules guide one's moral conduct, as an individual or a group but there are also difficulties applying rules alone, to one's moral conduct because there are exceptional cases to rules that make sense than just following strict rules.¹⁹ Consequentialism argues that the consequences of an act also play a crucial role in determining the rightness and wrongness of an act²⁰ as it considers outcome of an act on the greater number of people.²¹

¹⁸ Barbara Mackinnon, *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*, 5th edition (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007), 10-1.

¹⁹ Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues* (London, Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 41. See also Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices- An Introduction To Ethics* (New York: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 33-4, Glen H. Stassen and David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context* (New York: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 121-2 and Kyle D. Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality* (New York: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 19.

²⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality*, 18.

The consequentialist framework helps one to access the morality of an action based on its consequences and its relevance in the scheme of this work is to help the researcher to examine the morality of loud prayer in the light of its impact or consequences. From this premise, ethical theories considered in this work will not be seen as distinct but complementing each other to achieve an ethical life, on the University of Ghana campus.

As such the loud prayers by some Christian faithful is examined from the framework of the consequences of these prayers on other members of the University community who may not be part of the prayer groups or even Christians and also on the phenomenon of prayer itself. This theoretical framework thus agrees with Glen H. Stassen and David P. Gushee's position on living a moral life. They argue that Christian ethics must integrate deontological absolutes and those goals which the scriptures urge the church to strive for as part of kingdom-seeking as well as those virtues of character which people are to seek to get there.²² The theoretical framework therefore enables the researcher to investigate the notion of loud Christian prayers as a duty as well as the impact or consequences of these prayers on the larger University community, especially, as a public academic institution.

1.7 Methodology

This study utilizes the phenomenological approach and grounded in theological and ethical methodologies. The phenomenological approach is a method grounded in epistemological considerations and implies a striving towards neutrality concerning questions of truth and value,²³ through the performance of *epoche* on the part of the researcher. The phenomenological aspect to this work looks at the phenomenon of loud Christian prayers

²¹ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119.

²² Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 99, 121-2.

²³ Olov Dahlin Zvinorwadza: *Being a patient in the religious and medical plurality of the Mberengwa district, Zimbabwe* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 22.

and people's view and responses to it. 'The ethical approach employs a systematic study to morality using various standards.'²⁴ The researcher has looked at some of the theories, with Christian ethics as a backdrop. With the theological approach, the researcher looked at what some theologians have said about prayer as a Christian religious practice and their understanding of prayer in relation to the topic under discussion.

1.7.1 Data Collection Method

The term method is used here to refer to ways in which evidence is obtained and used, or, more conventionally, to techniques of data collection and analysis.²⁵ This study employed both the primary and secondary methods of data collection. These methods helped in achieving the objectives of this thesis and also in answering the research questions. In this work, data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, observation, published and unpublished materials, journal articles, the Bible, Bible commentaries, internet sources and newspapers.

1.7.1.1 Primary Sources

Primary data are generated by a researcher who is responsible for the design of the study, and the collection, analysis and reporting of the data. This is a new data, used to answer specific research questions.²⁶ In this study, questionnaires and interviews as well as personal observation were employed. A comprehensive questionnaire and interview guide, which sought answers to very pertinent questions relating to loud public prayers among the Pentecostal Churches on the University of Ghana, Legon campus, was designed for

²⁴ Patrick Tetteh Kudadjie, 'The Use of Cell Phones among Ghanaian Youth: Christian Ethical Perspectives', M.Phil. thesis (University of Ghana, Legon 2010), 9.

²⁵ Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research* (New York: Polity Press, 2000), 232-3.

²⁶ Blaikie, *Designing Social Research*, 183.

members of the University community. Students, lecturers and researchers and other occupants were sampled.

Since the study is interested in the theology and ethics of loud prayer as a Christian phenomenon by Pentecostal Churches on the University of Ghana campus, in administering the questionnaire, students from some halls within the University were considered. This was to sample responses of students to the phenomenon of loud Christian prayers on campus. To fairly represent the student body, the study considered students from Graduate hall: Valco Phase 1 and 2 and Legon Hall Annex B. A section was selected from Valco Phase 1 and 2 and Legon Hall Annex B respectively to represent the student population. Though there are some isolated places where such religious activities take place on the University of Ghana campus, these halls were chosen as a result of their closeness to the Sarbah field where religious activities such as loud public prayers normally take place, especially in the night. Questionnaires were administered to eighty-nine (89) students. Out of the number, forty-three (43) were females and forty-six (46) were males. Of the general student respondents who responded to the questionnaires, seventeen (17) were from Valco Trust Phase One, ten (10) were from Valco Trust Phase Two, fourteen (14) were from Akuafo Hall, twenty-six (26) were from Mensah Sarbah Hall, one (1) was from Alex Kwapong Hall, one (1) from Evandy Hall, one (1) was from Jean Nelson Hall and nineteen (19) were from Legon Hall. Eight members of staffs of the University of Ghana, Legon were also interviewed in relation to the thesis. Some of the people interviewed included the Chairman of the Chaplaincy board, Secretary to the Chaplaincy board, Head of Security, Dean of Student affairs, Charismatic/Pentecostal prayer groups and leaders of such groups. The aim of interviewing some members of staff

of the University was to seek their views on the phenomenon under study and also sample their views on the possible solution to this phenomenon on campus.

The Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) prayer groups were interviewed in this regard because these groups can be categorized as Pentecostal churches and are usually found indulging in loud public prayers on campus. Interview with these groups were to sample their views on the theology and ethics of loud prayers as practiced by them on the University campus. The researcher also observed loud prayers as organized by individuals on the Mensah Sarbah field in order to be well informed about the phenomenon under study.

1.7.1.2 Secondary Sources

The secondary sources which formed the basis for the literature review comprised some published and unpublished materials, journal articles, the Bible, Bible commentaries and dictionaries, internet sources and newspapers that are related to the thesis. These sources helped in identifying and appreciating the traditional and contemporary association between loud Christian Prayer and communal living.

1.7.2 Samples and Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed the method of purposive sampling and social networking approach to gather data for this work. In purposive sampling, the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because of their features or because they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed in the universe, but they are typical or they exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to

the study.²⁷ This approach was used in choosing the scope of study, religious groups to be interviewed and students from specific halls of residents because of special characteristics to the topic under discussion. This method was used in granting interviews to the Christian religious students, students, chaplaincy board, lecturers, researchers and other school authorities and as the interview progressed, there was the need to interview other people who may have close linkage to the topic under research.

1.8 Limitations in Methodology and Possible Remedies

It is not assumed that the methodology discussed above was without limitations. On account of the sensitive nature of the questions, especially in the questionnaire, respondents were likely to be restrained in their responses. This trend was minimized by using a variation of open and closed-ended questions. The close-ended questions enabled the respondents to choose from alternative responses. The open-ended questions, likely to be less sensitive ones, helped to reveal the amount of information the respondents possessed. Above all, the respondents were re-assured of the strictest confidentiality, which their information was accorded.

The researcher distributed over hundred questionnaires for this research in order to make up for a substantial amount that could respond to the questionnaire. This is because it was difficult getting students to respond to the questionnaire as they appeared too busy to

²⁷ Tom K.B Kumekepor, *Research Methods & Techniques of Social Research* (Accra: SonLife Press & Services, 2002), 138.

attend to other things. For this reason, the researcher distributed the questionnaires in the evenings when it was assumed most students would have retired to their rooms after studies and therefore, some could make time to respond to them. However, the evenings were no exception to their busy schedules as some were relaxing or having personal studies and did not readily want to respond to the questionnaire. The researcher had to spend some time with those who were responding to the questionnaire, in order to get their feedback soon after they had filled the questionnaire. Some of those who responded to the questionnaire chose multiple answers from the alternatives given and that made it challenging analyzing their views. Some of the respondents did not return their questionnaire and that affected the sample size that was originally intended for this work and thus, the sample size for the students' respondents reduced.

For the staff respondents, it was not too easy getting them for interviews as some seemed to be too busy with academic work and some had travelled. In this light, the researcher left a copy of the interview guide for them to be privy to the topic under discussion, so the researcher could get back to them when they were less busy. The researcher also sought their permission to record the interview in order to later listen to the conversation when not clear on an issue raised. Again, telephone communication was also vital to limit the limitation in my methodology as some of the staff could call on phone to explain information they were privy to in relation to the work. In the case of one of the staff respondents, her busy schedule made the researcher resort to an official complaint, she made to the Dean of Student Affairs since her views were also critical to this work.

For the religious groups under study it was challenging having group leaders to interview as they were too busy after prayer sessions. In order to meet them, the researcher kept

interacting with them individually till the researcher could meet them as a group after their exams. Telephone conversations also helped in this manner as some of them were pressed for time. This however, increased the financial cost of research.

1.9 Literature Review

The literature review has been categorized into two, namely ethics and theology of prayer. The areas of ethics and theology of prayer are areas that have received wide publication from different perspectives. In the current review, some of the relevant works that deal with loud Christian prayers were looked at by paying attention to the main issues raised in the literature. It also focuses attention on what is known about the subject and also seeks to find gaps in the knowledge of the subject. We shall begin by defining the term "Ethics".

Ethics

Ethics comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which means character. Ethics is the study of the concepts involved in practical reasoning: good, right, duty, obligation, virtue, freedom, rationality, choice.²⁸ Ethics, as an area of study, has received varied opinions on what is morally right or wrong in respect to the conduct or actions people take. Ethics is a subject which has been and still is of an immense amount of difference of opinions, in spite of all the time and labor which have been devoted to the study of it.²⁹ Ethics can therefore be said to be both an art and a science that is concerned with the process of determining right

²⁸ Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 121.

²⁹ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 1.

and wrong.³⁰ It does involve some precision like the sciences, but like art, it is an inexact and sometimes intuitive discipline.³¹

The main points of Scott B. Rae's work, *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, are on moral life and decision making³² and how in practical terms, most people would want to live in communities, where issues of morality are upheld. He categorizes ethical systems as either action-oriented systems or virtue based systems. These two major divisions can further be sub-divided into deontological systems, teleological systems and relativism. He defines deontological systems as "systems that are based on principles in which actions (or character, or even intentions) are inherently right or wrong."³³ To him, there are three primary deontological systems: divine command theory, natural law and ethical rationalism. According to him, "the Christian will tend to be more deontologically oriented because of the emphasis in Christian ethics on the commands of God as moral absolutes. Secondly he looks at teleological systems as one of the categories of ethical systems. He defines teleological systems as systems that are based on the end result produced by an action. If it produces more beneficial consequences than harmful consequences, then it is good. Third, relativism refers to an ethical system in which right and wrong are not absolute and unchanging but relative to one's culture (cultural relativism) or one's own personal preferences (moral subjectivism)."³⁴

Rae recognizes that much of biblical ethics revolves around God's specially revealed commands. Therefore many people will associate the divine command theory of ethics

³⁰ Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An Introduction To Ethics* (New York: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 15.

³¹ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 15.

³² Rae, *Moral Choices*, 11.

³³ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 16.

³⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 16-17.

with biblical ethics. This therefore poses the question: whether something is good because God commanded it or whether God commands something because it is good. The writer proposes that such a question cannot be adequately addressed without a consideration of natural law.

Again, Rae ascertains that just as the Old Testament is not a systematic theology but a mixture of different theological emphases presented in a variety of literary styles, so too, the Old Testament is not a carefully arranged system of ethics, but a mixture of different types of moral reasoning. Rae makes mention of the Mosaic Law, as deontological in nature, as a guide to order the lives of the Israelites, the wisdom literature containing a measure of utilitarian reasoning. According to Rae, the Old Testament also appeals to natural law, where right and wrong are drawn from observations drawn from nature. The author indicates that in the Old Testament, Israel was a theocracy, a nation in which the law of God was automatically the law of the land. There was no distinction between law and morality, as one could find in a pluralistic society.³⁵

Rae makes reference to Jesus's reinterpretation of deontology where Jesus essentially reinterpreted and reapplied the principles of the Law that were misused by the Pharisees. For instance, Matthew 12:1-14, talks about Jesus coming under attack from the Pharisees for healing a man with the withered hand on the Sabbath Day. In Rae's words "Jesus was grieved at their blind adherence to rules and resulting lack of compassion for the man." He rejected a rigid and callous commitment to principles that were not consistent with the Law. He aimed for a deontology that accurately applied the Law, combining a

³⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 21.

commitment to principles with a compassion for people.³⁶ Rae talks about the delimitations of deontology, an example is when there is conflict of commands as in the case of Rahab in Joshua 2.

Rae notes that Christian ethics from time immemorial was never intended to exist in a vacuum, isolated from other relevant ideas about right and wrong, rather it has interacted historically with other disciplines of morality. This is because “any Christian ethic that is serious about being heard and having an influence in a secular world must interact with other major figures in the history of ethics.”³⁷ In making ethical decisions, he proposes a seven-step model that one has to follow. First, he says one should gather the facts of the issue at hand, determine the ethical issues, one should ask oneself; what principles have a bearing on the case, list the alternatives, compare the alternatives with the principles, consider the consequences and finally make a decision.

The relevance that Rae’s work brings to bear on the current work, in terms of the models he proposes, is for one to critically examine an act based on the merits and demerits before one considers it ethically right or wrong. Though Rae’s presentation on ethical theories is viewed from an ethical perspective, it is relevant to this work which is from a theological and ethical perspective. It has thrown light on ethical decision-making and some of the difficulties of applying them in decision-making. Rae’s views on obeying strict rules without exercising compassion on people as Jesus demonstrated by healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day will help in the analysis of obeying scriptural laws when they do not conform to exercising compassion on others. Though Rae recognizes

³⁶ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 28.

³⁷ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 44.

that a Christian will tend to be deontologically oriented towards what the Bible says, one cannot also act without love or compassion towards others as Jesus demonstrated.

Kyle D. Fedler's main goal in *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality* is to help one examine one's own use of moral language and concepts so as to become more aware of how one makes ethical decisions and also to become familiar with the main doctrines of Christian ethics. Fedler noted the different approaches to ethical decision-making such as egoism, deontology, and utilitarianism. Fedler looked at their strengths and delimitations from the Christian perspective. Looking at virtue ethics, Fedler mentions that:

Since Christian ethical thinking began, Christians have argued that it is not enough simply to follow a prescribed set of rules or even to do the right thing. One must also develop a certain set of character traits. To be a truly good person, it is not enough that one simply does the right things; one must also feel the right and do the right things with the right motives and intentions. In other words, one must possess a certain kind of character.³⁸

Fedler looks at some Christian virtues such as justice, faith, hope, love and other virtues that shape one's very self, of developing a certain set of virtues, emotions, and dispositions as a Christian.³⁹ Fedler further mentions the use of scripture and other sources of Christian Guidance. To put it in Fedler's words, "These are the four recognized sources of Christian guidance or wisdom in the Christian tradition: the Bible, tradition, experience, and reason."⁴⁰ According to Fedler,

The Bible is the life story of the people of Israel, Jesus Christ, and the early Christian church. But it is not merely the life story of a people; it is the story of their relationship with their God. It is through the stories of God's dealings with the Jews and early Christians that we come to know who God is and what God wills. This is to say that God reveals God's self in the history of these peoples.⁴¹

³⁸ Kyle D. Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality* (New York: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 33.

³⁹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 48.

⁴⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 51.

⁴¹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 52.

Fedler views tradition as one of the sources of Christian guidance or wisdom in the Christian tradition. The word tradition according to Fedler “comes from the Latin *traducere*, meaning to “hand down.” It is the wisdom, knowledge, and methods of interpretation that have been handed down through the centuries.”⁴² Fedler asserts that in analyzing moral issues, one must interact with what other great thinkers of history have said about a particular issue, so that it does not sound like one is the first to be challenged with such an issue.⁴³

The role of experience in Christian ethics, according to Fedler, is quite controversial but it is a great source of moral guidance. Fedler asserts that one’s experiences shape one’s reading of Scripture. Also, experience might function as an independent source of knowledge. Fedler thinks that because no one comes to the reading of Scripture with a blank head, so do one’s experiences shape one’s reading of the scripture.⁴⁴ Reason, as another source of Christian moral guidance, implies that anything that is internally inconsistent with whatever one does, then that act is wrong and vice versa.⁴⁵ Christians also believe that as they receive Christ as their Lord and personal savior, the Holy Spirit now comes to live in them and convicts them of their wrong doings. So, Christians believe that it is the Holy Spirit in them that prompts their reasoning in the right way from wrong actions.

Fedler analyses at love and some other virtues as Jesus’s model of the Christian life. Fedler demonstrates that loving God and one’s neighbor is central to Jesus’s teachings. In the

⁴² Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 62.

⁴³ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 62-3.

⁴⁴ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 63.

⁴⁵ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 64.

author's concluding remarks, she mentions that "What Christians believe about the character and will of God shapes our character and actions. How we view ourselves, other human beings, and the created world determines the kinds of lives we will try to live. Ethics and faith are essentially indistinguishable."⁴⁶

Fedler's work has helped in the discussion of the concepts of Christian ethics in chapter three of this work and how secular views on ethics have helped in shaping Christian ethical decision-making. In writing on love as a central virtue in Christian ethics it will help in the discussion of Christian ethical systems, recommendations, reflections and analysis of the field work in relation to loud prayers close to residencies and libraries, as found in chapter three (3), four (4) and five (5) of this work. The issue of faith, as a central role in the lives of Christians, has also informed one of the reasons why Christian groups will resort to prayers wherever they find themselves, regardless of an academic setting such as this.

Judith A. Boss is a moral philosopher who shares major concerns on moral issues. Boss asserts in *Analyzing Moral Issues* that moral theories are important in any ethical study.⁴⁷ According to Boss, real moral issues cannot be adequately discussed without looking at moral theories. This is because they help to reshape our worldview concerning some moral issues.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 205.

⁴⁷ Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues* (California: Mayfield Publisher, 1999), 4.

⁴⁸ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 4.

Though Boss's work on ethical issues is viewed from philosophical perspectives, it is relevant to the current work which is from a theological and ethical perspective. This is because according to Boss, it will be incomplete or inadequate to discuss real moral issues without a thorough discussion of ethical issues and also it has helped in the discussion of the concepts of ethics in chapter three of the current work which is from a theological and ethical perspective. Boss discusses some of the moral theories such as deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. Boss asserts that "Deontological theories regard duty as the basis of morality. Duty, or doing what is right for its own sake, is the foundation of morality."⁴⁹ Boss sees justice as one of the prima facie duty and as a result, many philosophers consider it as the most important social duty, where it requires that each person is given equal concern.⁵⁰

Utilitarianism also considers the greater number of people who will be affected by an act to justify its rightness or wrongness. According to Boss "Virtue ethics emphasizes right being over right action" however, it is not an alternative to ethical theories that stress right conduct. Rather, virtue ethics and theories of right action complement each other.⁵¹ This is to suggest that not one ethical theory alone can guide one in making moral decisions as ethical decision making process requires a multidimensional approach because of the limitations each ethical theory poses.⁵² This assertion by Boss is critical to the current work as it seeks to demonstrate that ethical decision making processes may require diverse ethical approaches than just following one ethical approach in decision making. Also, though the current work dwells on Christian ethical perspectives, studies

⁴⁹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

⁵⁰ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 28.

⁵¹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 37.

⁵² Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 41.

show that some Christians practically employ some of these ethical theories consciously or unconsciously as their ethical guidelines in life.

Theology of Prayer

Donald G. Bloesch's book, *The Struggle of Prayer* is intended as a theology of prayer and not as a practical guide for the development of the life of prayer.⁵³ Bloesch's writing sets out to correct any association of mystical prayer with biblical prayer. Bloesch, thinks that new meaning of prayer as the means of ecstatic release from the stress of daily living or as an experience of self-awareness by which one enters into the inner sanctum of the soul is different from the biblical perspective of prayer. This view is also supported by Paul Johnson in his book, *Psychology of Religion*.⁵⁴ Bloesch asserts that "Christian prayer rests upon the irreversible fact of the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ and its confirmation in our hearts by the Holy Spirit."⁵⁵ The emphasis of the Holy Trinity in Christian prayer is much emphasized by the author. He also looks at the two main categories of Christian prayer and asserts that it could be both private and public, but it is not exclusively either of these. Christian prayer is deeply personal, but it is not individualistic.⁵⁶

Bloesch looks at some of the contributing factors of unanswered prayers, to be that of doubting God, enmity with our neighbors and that faith plays a crucial role in the answering of Christian prayer. The Lord's Prayer, according to the author, is a model of how Christians should pray, and not necessarily the exact words to say when praying.

⁵³ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), ix.

⁵⁴ Johnson, E. Paul, *Psychology of Religion* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 2004), 122.

⁵⁵ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 26.

⁵⁶ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 40.

According to Bloesch, the ultimate goal of the life of prayer is the glorification of God and the advancement of the kingdom of God and that it is kingdom service that gives glory to God.⁵⁷

Donald G. Bloesch's view on Christian prayer is to a large extent useful to the current work as it reflects the theological basis of Christian prayer. He discusses some of the key principles of Christian prayer to be the Holy Trinity (God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and their respective roles in Christian prayer and as their function may inter-lap they are seen as three in one God. He demonstrates why some Christian prayers are not answered by God due to one doubting to receive one's needs or one having enmity with one's neighbor. The application of Bloesch's idea of the critical role faith plays in Christian prayer to the work is that, God listens to our prayers even when we do not voice it, though it may please God we interact with Him as our father.

Bloesch affirms that the ultimate goal of the life of prayer is the glorification of God and the progression of his kingdom.⁵⁸ Glorifying God does not readily come up in good times only but also in challenging situations, believing that God's glory will be made manifest in the lives of Christians. This assertion is affirmed by Hubert van Zeller's contention that the end of prayer is to glorify God⁵⁹ as one will find Christians usually spending some ample time glorifying God during prayer sessions before any other petitions are brought before God.

⁵⁷ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 158.

⁵⁸ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 71, 158.

⁵⁹ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 20.

Salvation and preservation in this world is a worthy goal in prayer, so long as this does not become the paramount concern of prayer.⁶⁰ Christians believe that to be saved on earth and in heaven amount to having good life that includes good health, academic excellence, good marriages and many other more as they ask God in prayers in the hope of having a much glorious life in heaven. The gifts of the Spirit are also important reasons why Christians pray. It is true that if we have the Holy Spirit we will also have his gifts, among which are perfect love, fortitude, wisdom, humility, inner peace, and joy.⁶¹ These gifts of the Holy Spirit are to enable one live a victorious life here on earth by being at peace with God and human beings.

The essence of true prayer is heartfelt supplication, bringing before God one's innermost needs and requests in the confident expectation that God will hear and answer.⁶² One cannot ignore the fact that the human life is full of ups and downs and prayer provides one the opportunity to ask God for what one needs as human and in the hope that God is able to provide all that we ask for so long as it is in conformity with his will. This view is supported by Johnson that "No psychology of prayer can overlook needs, for every prayer comes to focus upon a need. The range of human needs vary with the specific situations in which people find themselves, from the elemental physical needs for maintaining life to the more sophisticated needs."⁶³ Some Christians believe that rather than go about telling people about their problems and be ridiculed; it is better to tell someone who is able to meet their needs and has them at heart.

⁶⁰ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 159.

⁶¹ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 160.

⁶² Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 67.

⁶³ Paul E. Johnson Johnson, *Psychology of Religion* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 2004), 114.

Bradley C. Hanson, in his work *Introduction to Christian Theology* justifies the prominence of prayer as the most predominant devotional act among Christians⁶⁴ and even those who patronize corporate prayer and its sacraments continue to pray. Hanson acknowledges that one's conception of the ultimate reality says a great deal of how one performs his or her prayer. One's relationship with God also depicts the manner in which one practices his or her prayer. The act of praying according to him, Ó assumes that ultimate reality is an Other to whom one can speak and from whom a response may be sought.⁶⁵

According to Hanson, one can grasp a better understanding of prayer if it is thought of as an activity or relationship with four dimensions which may be present all together as aspects of one's whole communication with God. The first dimension is speaking to God which Hanson recognizes as the most common aspect of prayer, where the one praying expresses his or her thoughts in words either loudly or silently. Hanson thinks that it is not enough for people to equate prayer, only with speaking with God. The second dimension of prayer identified by Hanson is listening to God. ÓChristian meditation also involves the use of words and thoughts as a person reflects on his or her life in relationship to God. Common forms of Christian meditation are to ponder a passage in Scripture, some event in the life of Jesus, or some personal experience.

The third dimension of prayer is contemplation or contemplative prayer. This is the awareness of God's presence, and in some instances words recede and may cease altogether, yet there is consciousness of the presence of God. Contemplative prayer is also

⁶⁴ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (New York: Zondervan, 1997), 300.

⁶⁵ Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, 300.

is unusually sensitive to the absence of God and the human inability to grasp God in human ideas and words.⁶⁶ The fourth dimension of prayer is the communal dimension in which humans support and teach each other. In this sense, prayer does not include only relationship with God but also having relationship with others. This communal aspect is usually expressed through intercessory prayer where one prays on behalf of others. In less obvious ways, all prayer has a communal dimension, for even when a solitary person prays in the name of Jesus, she or he has learned to pray in this manner from other Christians.⁶⁷

Hanson's dimension on prayer as speaking to God, listening to God, contemplation or contemplative, and communal prayer is to a large extent useful to the current work. It reveals that Christian prayer is not all about speaking to God but also listening to God to speak back to His people after prayer. The essence of praying on behalf of others who may not necessarily be present is also critical to the current work as it brings out the communal aspects of praying out in a group. This is why private and public prayer should not be seen exclusively to each other. One's conception of prayer influences how one prays and is crucial to this work as it brings to bear some of the reasons why people resort to loud prayers as evident on the University of Ghana campus.

Another work is Hubert van Zeller's *Approach to Prayer*. It sets out to write on the theology of prayer, the need of prayer, its experience and influence.⁶⁸ According to Zeller, the one condition of the approach to prayer is the desire to get in touch with God.⁶⁹ Zeller

⁶⁶ Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, 301.

⁶⁷ Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, 302.

⁶⁸ Hubert van Zeller, *Approach to Prayer* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), ix.

⁶⁹ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 1.

mentions that it is by the grace of God that one is able to love God and wants to commune with Him in prayer. Zeller indicates that this grace is sufficient for all and not reserved for some few.⁷⁰ This grace gives the opportunity to all to come before God in prayer, in the hope that their prayers will be heard.

Zeller remarks that before the fall of Adam and Eve, humanity could communicate to God directly but now, prayer has become an effort of faith, hope and love.⁷¹ Zeller states that 'A man's faith is consequently the measure of his prayer, and his prayer is the sign of his faith and love. Thus the level at which the soul lives is conditioned by the life of faith and the life of prayer.'⁷² Faith, to Zeller, is the starting point of a successful prayer. Zeller also lays emphasis on love as one of the basis by which one approaches the throne of grace. This is because if one loves God, one will desire to consistently communicate with God. Zeller also comments that 'We do not pray so as to bring God's will into line with our own; we pray, and our own will is raised to the level at which His will is accepted and followed and loved.'⁷³ Zeller indicates that one of the most noticeable effects of prayer is a growing conviction of God's immanence⁷⁴ where the believer believes that God's presence is ever-recurring.

Zeller remarks that the place of prayer has significance as one can find evidences in the Old Testament; where Abraham was told to take his son Isaac to a certain place where his faith was to be tested. Jesus himself decided to choose any one place over the other when he wanted to pray. To put it in Zeller's words 'Experience seems to show that certain

⁷⁰ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 1.

⁷¹ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 3.

⁷² Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 7.

⁷³ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 63-4.

⁷⁴ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 66.

settings offer a particular attraction for prayer.⁷⁵ This work will inform the current work on the theology and ethics of prayer as mention is made of the suitability of a place of prayer which is devoid of causing undue disadvantages, especially to those who are not part of the group.

James F. White in his work *Introduction to Christian Worship* discusses what he thought is the historical background of daily public prayer. White observes that it is quite possible that non-Christians gain most of their impressions of Christian worship by noticing the holy days their Christian neighbors keep and the buildings Christians frequent on such days. But the community gathered for Christian worship relies even more heavily on two other forms of communication: the spoken word and the acted sign. To put it in White's words, "The importance for worship with words and acts should not surprise us; they are the primary ways people relate to one another. Sayings and doing are as vital in our relating to God through worship as these activities are for our communicating with other humans. The Creator knows us best, and God communicates with us through words and actions, using human speech and acts."⁷⁶

As part of the historical background of daily public prayer, White notes that knowledge of the daily worship of the earliest Christians is meager. Apparently, the Jewish customs could be cited as an example of how its adherents set prayer at certain times as early evidences of the gradual development of private devotions for individual Christians.⁷⁷ Late in the first century or early in the second, the *Didache* (the teachings of the apostles)

⁷⁵ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 94.

⁷⁶ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 131.

⁷⁷ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 132.

advised Christians to pray the Lord's Prayer three times a day.⁷⁸ Others sought disciplines in the Bible itself as ways to make the scriptural injunction to 'pray without ceasing' (1 Thessalonians 5: 17) practical. Psalm 55: 17 suggested 'evening and morning and at noon,' and Daniel prayed three times a day (Daniel 6: 10).⁷⁹ Psalm 119: 164 mentioned 'seven times a day I praise you for your righteous ordinances' and verse 62 added 'At midnight I rise to praise you.'⁸⁰

According to White, although the proper number of times during the day concerned many early Christian writers, Clement of Alexandria felt that Christians should pray throughout one's life, Tertulian and Cyprain called for prayer thrice during the day and many other recommendations. In addition, there were daily meetings for directions and prayer as well as daily services of prayer and praise in the chief church of a city, attended by all Christians. In White's words evidences about these services mounted as we look to the fourth century A.D. and the growing respectability of Christianity after persecution ceased.⁸¹ White's theological reflections on daily prayer have to be seen in the totality of the Christian life to see what is significant and distinctive about it. He writes;

Daily public prayer has a different and more personal focus: our response in praise to God in the midst of daily life. Thus it is a sharing of our words to God in a corporate fashion. Even though common forms must be used to make it fully communal, each of us supplies the gifts for which we give thanks, the complaints that we express, the joys for which we give praise. This ability to express ourselves in the setting of daily life makes daily public prayer distinctive.⁸²

White also argues that there is the matter of balance between public prayer and private prayer. It is assumed that public prayer is usually accompanied by prayer in private at

⁷⁸ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 132.

⁷⁹ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 132.

⁸⁰ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 133.

⁸¹ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 133.

⁸² White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 146-7.

other occasions during the day. Neither replaces the other; each strengthens its companion. We must, then, see private prayer as the other end of the same pole, not as distinct from public prayer. Private prayer brings energy and focus to public prayer. In any case, public prayer provides a good balance for private prayer for Christians. We do not pray against people but for them and with them. And we need the discipline of public prayer to make our own private prayers fully Christian. Otherwise they may stray from the mark and voice private fantasies and aberrations.⁸³

Although White's work presents a historical background of daily public prayer and the current work is viewed from a theological and ethical perspective, it will help in the discussion of the relevance of meeting daily to pray as a group as practiced by Christian groups of the University of Ghana campus. He mentions that the community gathered for Christian worship relies even more heavily on two other forms of communication: the spoken word and the acted sign as they are primary ways by which we relate to God and to humans. Daily prayer to White is distinct as one is able to communicate with God in spite of the changing faces of life. White's advice that public prayers should not be seen as replacing private prayer but they should be seen complementing each other. White's view on daily public prayers has also informed why Christian groups meet on daily basis to pray, irrespective of an academic setting such as this.

1.10 Organization of Chapters

The thesis is organized into five (5) chapters. Chapter 1 which is the Introduction gives a general introduction to the background to the study, indicating the statement of problem, the objectives of the study, research questions to be addressed and the methodology

⁸³ White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 147.

adopted to achieve the objectives of the research. It also presents the scope of the study, research design and methodology adopted to achieve the objectives. This was followed by literature review, organization of chapters, and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 discusses prayer as a Christian phenomenon. It introduces what Christian prayer means based on scholarly materials – it also looks at the diverse ways by which Christians pray and the significance of prayer. It also looks at Jesus's teachings on prayer and how it can be applied to a given context. This is to inform the work on the theology behind prayer as a Christian practice and why Christians resort to the type of prayer they practice, especially from the Pentecostal groups.

Chapter three looks at some foundations for Christian (theological) moral decision-making, such as deontological theories, utilitarianism and virtue ethics that has to do with virtues such as love, justice and a sense of community in guiding one's decision making, especially in multi-religious setting like the University of Ghana, Legon. The chapter also looks at foundation of Christian ethics because we are looking at a Christian phenomenon.

Chapter four examines loud Christian prayer in terms of its impacts and responses on the University of Ghana campus, and discusses the theological and ethical issues that are involved in loud public prayer as a religious practice on the campus. This discussion is grounded on Christian virtues such as love, justice and a sense of community in guiding the Christian conduct.

Chapter five is the concluding chapter comprising the summary, suggestions or recommendations.

1.11 Significance of the study

A theological and ethical study such as this has many benefits. The study has both academic and practical relevance. First of all, the researcher widens his or her academic knowledge as the work progresses to completion.

The research seeks to add to existing knowledge in the field of ethics and theology of loud public prayers and thereby advancing such knowledge, particularly in the case of Ghana. Again, the research will contribute to knowledge on how to use the Christian ethical norms to address loud Christian prayers. The findings of the research will also be useful to the school authorities, the chaplaincy board, religious groups, students and other members of the University community as well as the general public. This work will help evaluate the effect of religion on society.

In Scott B Rae's words 'most people would not want to live in a society in which morality was unimportant, in which conceptions of right or wrong carried little weight.'⁸⁴ This is because such a society with individuals of this kind of thinking and perceptions would be prone to all kinds of oppression, chaos, violence and the like. People face moral choices in their everyday lives and it is important that the moral choices they make are governed by ethical reasons.⁸⁵ Therefore there is the need to look at ethical issues involved in one's bid to express one's religiosity through prayers, in order to guide one's decision-making, especially where there seems to be conflicting interest in the exercise of one's religion and the society's code of conduct.

⁸⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 12.

⁸⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 12.

The work also brings to bear some of the challenges involved in carrying out one's religious duty such as loud prayer, especially in an academic institution such as this and explore some Christian theological and moral interventions towards organized prayers on the University of Ghana campus. The researcher believes the recommendations could be applied to similar circumstances as we find in various communities in Ghana where churches are organized in residential areas.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter gives the general background to the thesis. The general overview of issues that give a clearer picture or understanding to the statement of problem which is the focus of the thesis has been provided. The statement of problem, aims and objectives of the study, the scope of the study, the niche to be filled have also been presented. The chapter then continues with methods and the design the research employed. The researcher resorted largely to interviews, observations, looking at materials theologians have written on prayer in the data collection. Again, the challenges encountered in the use of each method and how they influenced the outcome of the research have also been presented.

CHAPTER TWO

PRAYER AS A CHRISTIAN PHENOMENON

2.1 Introduction

Prayer is a subject that has received varied opinions from diverse groups of people. Although this thesis focuses on prayer from the Christian perspective, it is significant to note that prayer is well patronized by members of other religions such as Islam and African traditional religions, even though their doctrines on prayer may be varied. This chapter seeks to look at the whole concept of prayer as a Christian phenomenon and it deals with five main issues. First, it discusses the concept of prayer and some key elements in prayer as a Christian practice. Secondly, it looks at the various types of prayer as practiced by Christians, and their importance to practitioners who resort to them. Thirdly, it describes how prayer is performed by Christians. It also discusses Jesus's teachings in relation to the type of prayer practiced among Christians on the University of Ghana campus. The chapter concludes with the essence and role of prayer in the lives of Christians.

2.2 The Concept of Prayer as a Christian Phenomenon

In the Bible, prayer is the spiritual response (spoken and unspoken) to God, who is known not merely to exist, but also, to have revealed Himself and to have invited His creatures into communion with Himself.⁸⁶ Thus prayer covers a wide spectrum of addressing and hearing God, interceding with and waiting for the Lord, and contemplating and petitioning the Father in Heaven.⁸⁷ According to Bradley C. Hanson, "Prayer is the most prevalent devotional act among Christians. Polls show that even most of those people who drop out of corporate Christian worship and its sacraments continue to pray."⁸⁸

Prayer in the Bible addresses the personal God who reveals Himself to human beings, created in His image.⁸⁹ Christian prayer is born out of the realization that human beings, in and of themselves, are incapable of saving themselves from the forces of darkness within and about them. In genuine prayer, Christians come to God with empty hands trusting solely in His mercy.⁹⁰ Yet, in another sense, Christians also come before the throne of God with full hands, full of the promises of God. Christians come empty of things but full of faith and hope. Christians do not bring God offerings that can win His favor, but they do bring before Him the petition of earnest heart.

Prayer involves both waiting on God and striving to make one's needs and requests known to Him. Before Christians make meaningful petitions, they are to pray that the Spirit might

⁸⁶ J.D Douglas & Merrill C. Tenney (eds), *New International Bible Dictionary: Based on the NIV* (New York: Zondervan, 1987), 817.

⁸⁷ Douglas & Tenney (eds), *New International Bible Dictionary*, 817. See also Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (New York: Zondervan, 1997), 301.

⁸⁸ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (New York: Zondervan, 1997), 300.

⁸⁹ E.P Clowney, "Prayer" in T. Desmond Alexander & Brian S. Rosner (eds), *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 691-696, 691.

⁹⁰ Donald G. Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), 19.

lead them in prayer. Christians must wait in silence for His Spirit to come to them and work within them. Following our requests, we should then look forward to God's answer: "Morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation" (Psalm 5:3).⁹¹ Some Christians believe that in order to acquire something great from God it requires that one continuously go to God in prayer with all seriousness and not with a calm attitude. Others also believe that the attitude one sends to God in prayer does not matter but rather God can hear one even when the person is groaning. In either ways, one thinks God hears the prayers of his children and it is left to His discretion to answer their prayers and how He will answer them is left for God to decide.

God is believed to speak to Christians during prayers and there is the need to apportion some time for God to speak back to the one praying. This is readily demonstrated in some Christian prayer groups, where some period of silence is observed for God to speak back to His people through the manifestations of the Holy Spirit on one or more of the people present, as to what God has for them.

"Prayer understood as the pouring out of the soul before God is indissolubly related to faith."⁹² Quoting Richard Sibbes, Bloesch indicates that "prayer is the voice of faith, the flame of faith". If we have faith... we will pray; the more faith, the more we pray; the greater faith the greater prayer."⁹³ Hubert van Zeller re-echoes the fact that "A man's faith is consequently the measure of his prayer, and his prayer is the sign of his faith and love. Thus, the level at which the soul exists is conditioned by the life of faith and the life of prayer. Just as there can be no prayer where there is no faith, so there can be no

⁹¹ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 62-3.

⁹² Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 19.

⁹³ Quoting Richard Sibbes in Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 19-20.

supernatural conceptions of God without faith.⁹⁴ Faith therefore plays a crucial role in the prayer of Christians as it assures the believer that his or her needs will be met according to God's own discretion.

Christians pray in the hope that what they ask for will be granted to them by God. They believe that once they ask in the name of Jesus, they will receive (Matt. 7:7). Faith plays a major role for a prayer to be successful as one is expected to rely solely on the discretion of God for one's prayers to be answered. Christian prayer arises out of love and faith. The element of need is always present, but it is a need illumined by faith and subordinated to the will and glory of God.⁹⁵ In Christian prayer, one is aware of one's fallible nature in the sight of God, and one asks for His cleansing and mercy, as one confesses them in prayer. In Christianity, prayer is the miracle of God's intervening grace and therefore one cannot force God but can only plead that God's will be done.⁹⁶

Quoting Shorter, Heiler defines prayer as the expression of the faith, the life, work and ruling motive of the religious believer.⁹⁷ Bradley C. Hanson shares similar assertion that "Participating in the very act of prayer says a great deal about one's conception of ultimate reality."⁹⁸ This could mean that prayer provides one access to one's object of worship, in a form of communication. It could also mean that what one believes could influence what one professes in prayer. For instance, if one has the faith that God is able to forgive sins, the person professes it through prayer for forgiveness. If one believes that God is able to heal, prayer becomes a medium to ask for healing. Fred Cloud asserts that prayer, for

⁹⁴ Hubert van Zeller, *Approach to Prayer* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), 7.

⁹⁵ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 20.

⁹⁶ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 20.

⁹⁷ Shorter, *Prayer in the Religious Traditions of Africa*, 1.

⁹⁸ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (New York: Zondervan, 1997), 300.

Christians, as for practitioners of other religions, is essential for the health of the human spirit, just as breathing is for the body.⁹⁹

Prayer takes many forms: invocation, praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, intercession, oblation and others. Each of these operates in a somewhat different way, yet, what they all have in common is the creature's voice to the Creator. We may beg for forgiveness, offer praise, or plead for someone else in prayer, but whatever the function, the methods are similar: it all culminates in the articulation of deeply felt human needs as we confess, rejoice, or beg.¹⁰⁰ Fred Cloud notes that group prayers are voiced by families and groups of friends; in churches, synagogues, temples; in the natural world; and in gatherings of persons dedicated to working for peace and social justice and the meeting of urgent human needs.¹⁰¹

With regard to the place and time of prayer, a Christian can pray anywhere, anytime that they find the need for it. It is worth-mentioning Stassen and Gushee's practical view on the times for prayer:

You may do this in the morning before the rush of the day makes you more task-oriented. Sometimes your priorities for the day come into your mind, and you let them be examined by God in God's presence. The result may be change in priorities, or an acceptance of your limits that you have not been accepting. You yield your life and your concerns to God. The virtues of yieldedness, surrender and humility in God's presence are the base of the spiritual life and of the character that seeks the reign of God. Others may find time during or before the lunch break, or at night when you can review what was to be thankful for during this day, and what there was you could learn from and do better next time. Let all this be examined in God's compassionate and forgiving presence. And give thanks for the mustard seeds of God's reign, present in very small but grace-giving ways. This may not

⁹⁹ Fred Cloud, "Prayer" in Daniel Patte (ed.), *The Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1001.

¹⁰⁰ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 168.

¹⁰¹ Cloud, "Prayer" 1001.

come easily at first. But slowly, or maybe even suddenly, you will experience a closer relation with the presence of God.¹⁰²

Concerning the length of prayers, Bloesch puts it that “the saints, through the ages, generally advocated short prayers rather than lengthy ones. Jesus, who alone embodied perfect holiness, gave this warning: “When you pray, do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because their prayers are long” (Matthew 6:7).¹⁰³ Lengthy prayers are not to be ruled out altogether in the Christian life, but they should be considered more the exception than the rule. Many of the great saints are said to have spent hours in deep and fervent prayer and in reverent reflection on God’s Word. In the Bible, Jesus passed whole nights in prayer and meditation. David fasted and prayed for one week (2 Samuel 12:16-23).¹⁰⁴ One can pray as long as one wants to and as led by the Spirit of God but should avoid repeating words without attaching importance to them. It is helpful to cultivate the habit of prayer, whether in bad or good times.

Christians generally believe that the success of one’s prayers is tied to the decision of God. They affirm that God will respond to the prayers of the faithful, but He will answer in His own way and in His own time. He will often give one beyond what one asks for.¹⁰⁵ However, God may also answer with a refusal. He will not reject one’s prayer, but He may well reject the way one wishes one’s prayer to be answered.¹⁰⁶ Christians believe that God is able to do all things but there are times that he exercises his own discretion, without necessarily doing what one desires most because he knows all things and what is best for

¹⁰² Glen H. Stassen & David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 455-6.

¹⁰³ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 60.

¹⁰⁴ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 61.

¹⁰⁵ Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 91.

¹⁰⁶ Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 91.

us at each given point in time of one's life. One would often find some Christians ending their prayers with "Let your will be done."¹⁰⁷ So God is not expected to do things one's way but according to his will, which is believed to be perfect for all.

Though faith plays a role in making a prayer to be successful, one is also expected to take up steps to ensure that it happens in reality and not only in the spirit. For instance, if one has the dream of attaining higher education, one is expected to make the effort to study. At the Assemblies of God Church's "Examination Prayers" organized for students, though the students recognized the spiritual side to excel academically, the leader of the group also drew the minds of the people to study hard to show themselves approved as God is the giver of wisdom and all things that one needs to excel in life.¹⁰⁸

Some Christians also believe that for their prayers to be successful, they must recognize God's greatness in all they do and not taking God's glory. For instance, before the preacher begins to preach he prays that the glory of God may come mightily that the people present may see His glory and glorify Him at the end of it all. Some preachers also have people praying on their behalf while they are preaching because they recognize that they cannot do anything by their own might, but rather by the power of God.

It is also worth noting that there is the understanding among Christians that at times, prayers go unanswered.¹⁰⁹ Christians believe that prayers can sometimes remain unanswered based on certain reasons. Doubt could be one of the reasons why prayers may

¹⁰⁷ Augustine Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 102. See also Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 44.

¹⁰⁸ Observation, Agnes Quansah, University of Ghana, Legon, 30 April 2012.

¹⁰⁹ Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 44.

not be answered, where one does not believe that one's request will be granted.¹¹⁰ One could draw references from the Bible to demonstrate that God sometimes does not answer prayers. One could readily talk of David's cry unto God in order for his child with Bathsheba to be healed but God refused because the child was born out of adultery (2 Samuel 12:16-23). Enmity with one's neighbor can also be a reason why one's prayers may be rejected by God (Matthew 5:21-26).¹¹¹

2.3 Purpose of Christian Prayer

Prayer plays significant roles in the lives of Christians but the ultimate goal that could quickly come to mind concerning Christian prayer is to glorify God.¹¹² Glorifying God does not readily come up in good times only but also in challenging situations, with the belief that God's glory will be made manifest in the lives of Christians. Christians glorify God in the midst of challenges believing that God will cause a change in their lives. Christians also glorify God for what he is capable of doing in their lives and that of their loved ones. This assertion is affirmed by Hubert van Zeller, when he states that "the end of prayer is the glory of God."¹¹³ In agreement with Zeller, Bloesch also agrees that "In all Christian prayer the overriding motivation is to glorify God and to discover his will for our lives. We glorify God by seeking to know his will, by beseeching him to disclose his will to us. We also glorify God when we seek his aid in order to accomplish his will."¹¹⁴ In all Christian prayer the overriding motivation is to glorify God and to discover his will for one's life.

¹¹⁰ Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 45.

¹¹¹ Bloesch, *The Struggle Of Prayer*, 45.

¹¹² Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 20.

¹¹³ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 20.

¹¹⁴ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 71.

Prayer also gives Christians the opportunity to tell God anything that makes them uncertain of a bright future and to lay all burdens upon the Lord in order to face the uncertainties of life in all boldness in Christ Jesus. This view is re-echoed by Paul E. Johnson that "Prayer in faith and hope releases tensions, brings peace of mind, disposes of worry and fear, undergirds insecurity with basic confidence."¹¹⁵ Also to Zeller, "One of the most noticeable effects of prayer is a growing conviction of God's immanence." The realization that God pervades his universe is deepened by, and itself deepens, the prayer of God's presence.¹¹⁶ This could be one of the underlining factors why Christian religious groups pray for some form of transformation in their lives because they believe that God is able to transcend all of human needs and capable to do all that one may ask for in His name

2.4 Forms of Christian Prayer

Christian prayer can be both private and public, but it is not entirely either of these. It is deeply personal, but it is not necessarily individualistic. It may invariably assume corporate expression, but the personal element is never missing in true prayer. Even when prayer is private, it is offered in the body of Christ through the One Spirit who dwells in all the members.¹¹⁷ There is also the issue of balance between public prayer and private prayer. Neither replaces the other; each strengthens its companion.¹¹⁸ Christian prayers are also performed through several ways and Christian groups of the University of Ghana campus are no exception to this. We shall also look at why some Christians prefer one form to the other.

¹¹⁵ Paul E. Johnson, *Psychology of Religion* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 2004), 122.

¹¹⁶ Hubert van Zeller, *Approach to Prayer* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), 66.

¹¹⁷ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 40.

¹¹⁸ James F. White, *Introduction To Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 147.

2.4.1 Public Prayer

Public prayer is where two or more persons meet to pray for a common goal.¹¹⁹ This could be on a regular basis or occasionally. The prayer group of this kind usually has leaders who raise prayer topics and the whole group responds accordingly.¹²⁰ The venue for such prayers can be in an open space or in an enclosure. The leader is usually expected to raise his or her voice for all present to hear and pray in like manner. For this reason, the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry prayer group and the Pentecost Students Association (both of the University of Ghana) are found grouped in circle forms with the leader in the middle directing the prayer group on prayer topics.

When prayer groups meet, they do not pray to seek their own interest but also intercede for other people who may be of concern to them. They also intercede for each other's burdens and collectively thank God for his many blessings upon their lives. With Pentecostals, mentioning people or groups by name and praying for specific needs in the world is more common to find. For instance, the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry has specific day(s) set aside for fasting and prayers towards the end of semester examination. Also, if one of the group members is suffering from any illness, that person is called upon and prayed for. The Bible is very clear on the power of intercessory prayer.¹²¹ The prayers of Abraham for the people of Sodom (Genesis 18:23-33) and of Moses for Israel (Exodus 32:11-14) are classic models of intercession.

¹¹⁹ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 302.

¹²⁰ Observation, Quansah, Agnes, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, 16th December 2012.

¹²¹ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 88.

2.4.2 Private Prayer

Private prayer is usually done by an individual in one's closet¹²² (though one would also find individuals praying in public space). This may include giving God thanks, asking for forgiveness, bringing one's request before God and interceding on other people's behalf. This could also come in the form of sighing and groaning, without uttering words to God. Sometimes it could come in the form of crying and sobbing, especially in difficult times when one cannot find the right words to tell God. Hannah, in the Bible, was said to have gone into the presence of God sobbing and crying out of her frustrations as a result of childlessness (1 Samuel 1:13). David laid all night on the ground interceding for the health of the child that Bethsheba bore him (2 Samuel 12:15-23).¹²³ Christians also thank God in a form of spontaneous outbursts of praise and supplication, without necessarily following a structured pattern of prayer.¹²⁴ For instance, one may say, "Thank you God" or even through music, just to express one's joy. Some Christians are found jubilating in this kind of prayer when their requests are granted or in the hope that their requests will be granted through their demonstration of faith.

2.4.3 Silent Prayers

Silent prayers may mean praying without necessarily voicing out one's words especially to the hearing of others who may not be the address of one's prayer.¹²⁵ Some Christians perform their prayers silently because of the understanding of who God is. Some Christians view God as one whose presence is ever-recurring and therefore there is not the need to shout or be loud when praying to one who is everywhere at any time and at any

¹²² Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 40.

¹²³ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 41.

¹²⁴ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 52.

¹²⁵ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 51-2.

place.¹²⁶ Biblical under-pinning¹²⁷ are no exception to why some Christians may want to pray silently. Isaiah 59:1 states that “Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ears too dull to hear.”

2.4.4 Praying Aloud

Praying aloud is normally associated with Pentecostal churches because of their emphasis on the Holy Spirit.¹²⁷ However, this is not entirely the case on the University of Ghana campus as some belonging to mainline churches also do resort to praying aloud sometimes. Some Christians believe that praying aloud is symbolic of the presence of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁸ Such Christians make reference to texts such as Ezekiel 11: 13 where “Now as I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell facedown and cried out in a loud voice, Ah, Sovereign LORD! Will you completely destroy the remnant of Israel?”

In some instances, it is what the leader of the group instructs the congregation to do that the group does accordingly.¹²⁹ For instance, it is a common practice to see Pentecostal prayer groups praying aloud or lifting up their hands in prayer. The Assemblies of God Campus Ministry and Pentecost Students and Associates are most likely to be found, shouting, kneeling, jumping and performing of other gestures as ways to worship God, in prayers. There are various reasons for religious group involvement in loud prayers. According to Cephas Narh Omenyo, one of the reasons is that “it keeps one active or it

¹²⁶ This assertion is expressed by Ben-Willie K. Golo, in a Symposium- “Loud Worship Forms: Merits and Demerits”, University of Ghana, 22 April 2013.

¹²⁷ Asamoah-Gyedu, *African Charismatics*, 6.

¹²⁸ Cephas N. Omenyo, “Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches: The Case of the Bible Study and Prayer Group of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana”, M.Phil. thesis (University of Ghana, 1994), 136.

¹²⁹ Observation, Quansah, Agnes, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, 16th December 2012.

helps one not to sleep, it has Biblical precedent, it depends on the situation, it shows how serious one is, one is sometimes led by the Holy Spirit (uncontrollably), it helps some to learn how to pray, it is a way of expressing one's feeling freely before God, it ensures mass participation and oneness in prayer, God listens to loud prayer more than quiet ones, it is in vogue particularly among others.¹³⁰

The Bible story of the walls of Jericho breaking down as a result of a loud shout by the Israelites as they march round the walls of Jericho as instructed by God (Joshua 6:1-20) is another basis for which some Christians would want to perform their prayers by shouting so that something tremendous could happen in their lives.¹³¹ We also have in Psalm 100:1 which says that 'Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.' This is one of the popular verses on which Christians base their praying aloud on. Prayer therefore, one may say, is offered aloud or in silence depending on which verses in the Bible one has found appropriate to use, in moments of prayer. We shall, however, in our later discussions, discuss some ethical issues that may be involved in praying aloud, with special reference to an academic institution of the University of Ghana.

2.5 The Addressee of Prayer in Christianity

Some Christians believe that true Christian prayer can be achieved on the basis of the Holy Trinity. Thus, they pray to God, through his son Jesus Christ and also through the Holy Spirit.¹³² However, it is worthy to note that not all Christians believe in the Trinity (that is, the oneness of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), but such Christians address a

¹³⁰ Omenyo, 'Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches' 135.

¹³¹ Pentecost Students and Associates, Legon (PENSA) Prayer Secretary (Enoch Abbey), Interview, 16th December 2012, University of Ghana.

¹³² Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 26.

spirit being (usually addressed as God) as a person who is believed to meet their needs.¹³³

Christians address this God, even though they may not necessarily believe in the Trinity.

Clowney supports the assertion that prayer leads Christians to a tri-personal God, without the believer necessarily understanding the mystery of the Trinity, as he points out that:

It is addressed not simply to a personal, but to a tri-personal God. In prayer, as in theology, we may misunderstand the mystery of the Trinity. But prayer draws us into communion with the living God, and makes it easier, not harder, to confess the Trinity. In prayer, we address the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and earth is named (Eph. 3:14-15). Even as we address him as Father, we are aware that we do so only through his Son, and in the Spirit who reveals him to us. Prayer to the Father does not exclude the Son or the Spirit, but confesses the purpose of the Father in sending them. In union with the Son we are made children, among whom there is no longer male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).¹³⁴

Since the Christian groups under study believe in the Trinity, we will have a close look at the addresses of prayer- God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit- have to do with prayer. This is to understand the nature of the addresses who initiate such prayer and also to assess loud Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus.

2.5.1 God and Christian Prayer

God is one divine essence in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.¹³⁵ For both Jews and Christians, God's proper name is expressed by the tetragrammaton, YHWH.¹³⁶

However, Christians have attributed other names of God based on their conception of Him. This God is first of all the center of everything, that is, he created all things and has the power to decide what he does with his creation at any point in time. He is capable of having fellowship with humanity because he has demonstrated this through his fellowship

¹³³ E. P. Clowney, 'Prayer' in T. D. Alexander Brian & S. Rosner (eds), *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 691-6, 691.

¹³⁴ Clowney, 'Prayer' 696.

¹³⁵ Paul E. Capetz, 'God, Christian Views of: A Historical Overview' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 463-464, 463.

¹³⁶ Eugene Teselle, 'God, Christian Views of: Names for God in the Bible and Church Traditions' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 464-465, 465.

with his chosen people, the Israelites.¹³⁷ God chose the Israelites as his people and entered into a covenant relationship with them to be their God at all times and led them to an expected end by caring and providing their needs and honoring his promises to them.¹³⁸ God is believed to be a living God, not an abstract being who is known to have existed since ages and this can be verified through his word, that is, the Bible. He provided food for the Israelites and protected them from their enemies. He provided a path for the Israelites to pass through in the Red Sea, so that their enemies could not over-power them. Christians also believe that though God knows all things and is capable of doing all things, it is prudent for one to formally invite him into one's affairs, so that God can act in the affairs of the individual.¹³⁹

The biblical picture of God as "heavenly Father" reinforces the idea that he is loving and caring and the need to come before him as his children, and not as slaves. Christians do not ask as beggars but as sons and daughters, since he is the Father of all creation.¹⁴⁰ Clowney affirms this point that Biblical prayer, whether formal or informal, it addresses God as a person¹⁴¹ who seeks to have fellowship with mankind and showering upon them his many blessings. Paul J. Achtemeier, Joel B. Green & Marianne Meye Thompson emphasize that there is one God, who, as the source of all goodness, is unblemished by evil and gives generously to all who ask.¹⁴² God is also portrayed as transcendent. To put it in Bloesch's words:

He is the Creator, we are only finite creatures. Although he comes into us by his Spirit, he is never a part of us. Although he is the center of our being, he is not accessible to us except as he makes himself accessible. He is hidden from all sight and understanding (Isa. 50:10; 1 Cor. 2:9-11). Because he is enveloped in mystery, he must be approached in awe

¹³⁷ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 26-27.

¹³⁸ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 26.

¹³⁹ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 26-7.

¹⁴⁰ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 27.

¹⁴¹ Clowney, "Prayer" 691.

¹⁴² Paul J. Achtemeier, Joel B. Green & Marianne Meye Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (New York: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 506.

and reverence. He is a supernatural God, one who exists beyond all finite existence. One reason for the incarnation is that he had to become like us so that we could know him and enter into fellowship with him.¹⁴³

This assertion is visibly demonstrated as some Christian groups of the University of Ghana meet to have fellowship with this God who is believed to have some kind of relationship with humans and therefore, the need to have constant communion with him in a form of prayer, to worship him and lay before him one's inner-most requests upon the belief that he is capable of granting them.¹⁴⁴ This relationship is further demonstrated as they see God as Creator and they as creatures and therefore accord Him all the respect in prayer and believe that as they bring their requests before Him, they will be granted. This God is believed to talk back to his people when they talk to him in prayer and is believed to instruct them on what to do, in order to have successful Christian life. This God is also believed to offer many blessings and as a result, the more one gets close to him in prayer, the tendency for one to receive His many blessings.¹⁴⁵

2.5.2 Jesus Christ and Christian Prayer

Jesus is the second person of the triune God and the son of God, according to Christians' belief. He was given birth by the Virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:23). The life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the basis of Christianity,¹⁴⁶ as it gives some sort of hope to Christians, to live an abundant life here on earth, or receive eternal life in fellowship with God. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for the sins of humanity so that all could be sinless in the eyes of God. If one does not receive the free

¹⁴³ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 30.

¹⁴⁴ Observation, Quansah, Agnes, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

¹⁴⁵ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 301.

¹⁴⁶ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, second edition (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 322-3.

gift of eternal life by experiencing the forgiveness achieved by Jesus, then one will receive the punishment one so justly deserves.¹⁴⁷

This assertion of Jesus taking away the sins of the world through His death on the cross for all humanity, gives some sort of boldness for one to go before God in prayer, in the hope that one's needs may be met. I John 3:5 reads: "But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin." Jesus also calls both women and men to fellowship, identifying them as equally important persons (Luke 11:27-28, 8:1-2).¹⁴⁸ One will therefore find men and women in the groups under study, being given equal opportunity to lead loud Christian prayers on the University campus.

Christians believe that Jesus Christ plays a critical role in Christian prayer, as he mediates and intercedes on their behalf, in order to be favored in the sight of God. Christians believe that because of their sinful nature, there has to be a mediator to speak for them and for their requests to be met. The death of Jesus is of significance to Christians and is symbolic as atonement for their sins and serves as a link between human beings and God. If Jesus could die for their sins, then it sounds right for him to be given much prominence in Christian prayer. Margaret A. Farley defines mediator as "one who intervenes between two parties for the purpose of communication or reconciliation". Christ's role as mediator implies no distance or inferiority, for there is immediate union of the divine and the human.¹⁴⁹ Scott Thumma also defines intercession as prayer on behalf of others,

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.whoisjesus.com/whois.html> See also McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 391.

¹⁴⁸ Anne Nasimiyu Wasike, "Christologies in Africa: Images of Christ" in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 218-219, 218-9.

¹⁴⁹ Margaret A. Farley, "Media and Christian Worship" in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 781.

usually for specific issues or events in their lives. The word is derived from the Greek word *Lat-ña* coming between.¹⁵⁰

Clowney agrees with the view that Christ is the ultimate mediator, one who intercedes in drawing one back to God, any time one falters before him because he sacrificed his life for the sins of all.¹⁵¹ Jesus is seen by Christians as the unblemished son of God who continually intercedes on behalf of human beings to God so that one's requests will be granted. Sin is believed to always draw one away from God and the need therefore for a mediator to continually intercede for one and also to bring one back to the unlimited or unmerited grace of God. It is therefore not strange to find the frequent use of the name Jesus, wherever Christians meet to pray in order for Him to mediate between them and God and also to intercede on their behalf, so their prayers will be granted by God.

Christ already triumphed over the powers in his dying on the cross, and he confirmed his triumph through his resurrection from the grave. By bearing the brunt of the attack of the powers of evil in his own person, by not succumbing but remaining in union with God until the end, by demonstrating his power over death and hell in rising from the dead, Christ overthrew the demonic adversary.¹⁵² Again, Christ gives our prayers form and substance in his role as Intercessor in heaven. He prays our prayers for us. He unites our prayers with his so that God hears us (cf. Romans. 8:34).¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Scott Thumma, 'Institution, Words of,' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 611, 611.

¹⁵¹ Clowney, 'Prayer' 695.

¹⁵² Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 34-5.

¹⁵³ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 35.

The name Jesus has received much prominence among Pentecostal prayer groups and this is found also on the University of Ghana campus. It is a common practice to see individuals or groups praying with the recurring mentioning of the name of Jesus Christ to cause some form of change in their lives, among which are a fruitful semester, freedom from diseases, accidents and the like; with the belief that one's prayer is made effective with the mentioning of the name Jesus.¹⁵⁴ Christian prayer groups, who meet to pray for their needs, do not pray for their members only but to intercede on behalf of the school authorities, students, the nation in which they live and their loved ones as Christ demonstrated. They also show their complete reliance on God for anything they want in life, though one is expected to show the right attitude. For instance, one who is expecting academic excellence from God should show complete reliance on God for wisdom and understanding to study while one also puts in the effort to study.

2.5.3 The Holy Spirit and Christian Prayer

Christians give much prominence to the Holy Spirit because they believe that it is the Holy Spirit who reminds one to pray and even directs one on the right words to even say to God (even in one's groaning, it is the spirit of God, that enables one to speak the right words to God).¹⁵⁵ They also believe that the Holy Spirit gives us the strength to go before God in prayer as the disciples were empowered to speak boldly of Christ on the day of Pentecost. Hubert van Zeller says that "a soul prompted by the Holy Spirit and seriously trying to respond to the grace of prayer, cannot be praying in a way that is wrong."¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 44.

¹⁵⁵ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 37.

¹⁵⁶ Zeller, *Approach to Prayer*, 1-2.

Christians believe that any time one feels bad about an action one took, it is the Holy Spirit that is convicting one of sin and the need for repentance through prayers.¹⁵⁷ Some even believe that it is the Holy Spirit who directs us on our daily basis on what to do and what not to do as one may be prompted in diverse ways.¹⁵⁸ For instance, the Holy Spirit may be instructing one not go to a particular place and may cause the person to lose interest of going to the place, for the person's own good. Christians believe that anyone could receive the Holy Spirit if only one believes but it also does not mean that one will have the Holy Spirit even when one grieves Him through a sinful nature.¹⁵⁹ Christians therefore pray for the Holy Spirit to be with them always. It is common to see Pentecostals observing some silence after prayer because it is believed that the Holy Spirit could speak through someone to the people present. This could come in the form of speaking in tongues, interpreted in a language familiar to the people praying. It could be in a form of rebuke, caution, reassurance of God's promises and many others. Generally, it is believed that the Holy Spirit empowers people to pray all out. This is corroborated by Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, when she noted that Pentecostals believe in a universal enablement of all Christians by the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁰

2.6 Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

What is usually referred to as The Lord's Prayer is a classic example of attitudes to prayer that is expected of Christians.¹⁶¹ The Lord's Prayer is the most widely used Christian

¹⁵⁷ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 38.

¹⁵⁸ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 37-39.

¹⁵⁹ Bloesch, *The struggle of Prayer*, 38.

¹⁶⁰ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 'Holy Spirit,' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 555-556, 556.

¹⁶¹ Scott Thumma, 'Institution, Words of,' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 611, 611. See also Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 36, 72, Augustine Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 98 and Glen H. Stassen & David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus In Contemporary Context* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 459.

prayer, and it is a clear example of both speaking to God and communal prayer.¹⁶² This, we shall now turn to in order to have some insights into certain key elements in prayer. In Matthew 6:5-13, Jesus teaches:

5. And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.
6. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who see what is done in secret will reward you.
7. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.
8. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.
9. This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
10. your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
11. Give us today our daily bread.
12. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6: 5-13).

The disciples' acts of devotion such as prayers are to be performed in worship of God and not for public show. As an example of how His disciples should pray, Jesus teaches a kind of Prayer, which is devoid of the empty phrases and many words that characterize the prayers of the Pharisees. The Lord's Prayer is a model that the disciples are to approximate in formulating their own prayers.¹⁶³ Donald G. Bloesch shares similar view that the Lord's Prayer is a model for Christian prayer, but it was not intended as a prayer to be constantly recited. And that Jesus did not say, 'pray these precise words but pray, then, in this way' (Matthew 6:9). In other words 'The Lord's Prayer does not bind Christians to its form of words but its content.'¹⁶⁴

Stassen and Gushee also point out that Jesus taught Christians not to fill the air with many fancy words. This means that much of Jesus' deep and extensive prayer life was not just speaking to God, but listening for God's will as well. They therefore advocate a prayer life

¹⁶² Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 302.

¹⁶³ Augustine Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew* (New York: The Liturgical Press, 1989), 98.

¹⁶⁴ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 82.

that does give thanks, and does make requests, as the Lord's Prayer does, and also a prayer life that listens for God's will, God's presence.¹⁶⁵ While some Christian groups may recite the Lord's Prayer on many occasions when they meet to pray, other groups may recite it occasionally. Some individuals also recite it in their prayers. In whichever way, it is to be an example one may look for in formulating one's prayers and not just reciting it, without placing any significance on it.

The opening verse of the Lord's Prayer begins with adoration, praising the name of the Lord with phrases such as "Our Father" and "Hallowed be your name". This style of prayer, where praises and much reverence is given to God is much common with some prayer groups or when individuals meet to pray, where ample time is devoted to give honor and praises to God before other requests are brought before him in prayer.¹⁶⁶ Some Christians believe that when one gives praises to God without asking anything from him, will grant all of one's needs since he knows one's inner-most needs even before one asks him in prayer. In some formal church services, during praise and worship time, ample time is given to give thanks and praises to God without necessarily asking for anything. When one says Our Father, it could mean one is identifying oneself with God as his child, who is believed to have entered into some form of relationship with him and as one goes before him in prayer, God is believed to fulfill his promises to his own.¹⁶⁷

Some Christians end their prayers with the Lord's Prayers as a sum up. Stassen & Gushee share the view that "The fact that they are to pray 'Our Father' reminds one of the

¹⁶⁵ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 455.

¹⁶⁶ Observation, Quansah, Agnes, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

¹⁶⁷ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 100-101.

corporate nature of this prayer- disciples do pray individually , but it is not insignificant that Jesus taught his followers to pray as a community in this model of prayer.¹⁶⁸ This point to the fact that private and corporate prayers must not be seen as opposing each other but must be seen as complementing each other in prayer. Augustine Stock's view of God as heavenly father, is a contradiction to the heavenly fathers of the disciples,¹⁶⁹ who demonstrates His love unconditionally, for all humanity.¹⁷⁰ Also, it stresses the nearness of God to us¹⁷¹ as our earthly fathers could be described. However, Hanson notes that "this Father in heaven" transcends the domineering ways of an earthly patriarchal father.¹⁷²

Verse 6 states "Go into your room" and Stassen and Gushee explain this to mean one should go into one's room or somewhere where one can have privacy and be as quiet as Jesus normally did by withdrawing from the crowd to pray. They advocate that one should sit in a relaxed position, with one's eyes closed, so not too many outside distractions interrupt the person.¹⁷³ Quoting Augustine Stock, the phrase "go into your room" in a wider sense could mean "an out-of-the-way room, one not visible from the street."¹⁷⁴ Stock however noted that the goal of this rule is not to prescribe a certain place for prayer but the kind and goal of prayer that does the harm.¹⁷⁵ Most important, one may enter meditation receptively in the confidence that one is seeking God only because God has already found that person. One may first begin with a Scripture reading, or one may begin

¹⁶⁸ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 459.

¹⁶⁹ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 101.

¹⁷⁰ Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, 303.

¹⁷¹ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 104.

¹⁷² Hanson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, 303.

¹⁷³ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 455.

¹⁷⁴ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 99.

¹⁷⁵ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 99.

with a request or a concern for God. One may ask God to guide one's thoughts and simply sit quietly, waiting and listening.¹⁷⁶

In verse 8, the phrase "For your Father knows" gives the impression that long prayers may not be necessary because God knows what one needs before one prays.¹⁷⁷ Abba is the definite form of the Aramaic word "father", properly translated as my father or our father.¹⁷⁸ Some Christians believe that the length of the prayer is not necessary so long as one is saying the right words to God and not doing so with the intention to win God's favor.¹⁷⁹ This is because God will do things His own way and not the way of human beings. Some also believe that even though God knows everything, there is the need to still go before him and tell him all of one's troubling needs.¹⁸⁰ However, some Christians also believe that long prayers could be described as striving before God in prayer as in the case of the persistent widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18: 1-8). Bloesch affirms the view that "prayer does effect a change in God's attitude towards us and in his dealings with us."¹⁸¹

In verse 10, the phrase "Your will be done," helps one to understand how God and his creatures work together: An important example is the Gethsemane scene, Matthew 26:42, when Jesus prays that God's will be done, he prays not only that God does what he wills, but also for the strength to actively apply this will of God to himself.¹⁸² Bloesch also mentions that it permits one to "pray for anything that promotes the plan of salvation that

¹⁷⁶ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 455.

¹⁷⁷ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 100.

¹⁷⁸ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 100.

¹⁷⁹ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 100.

¹⁸⁰ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 28.

¹⁸¹ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 73.

¹⁸² Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 102.

advances the kingdom of God.¹⁸³ This phrase has found much prominence in ending Christian prayers, in the hope that God's will prevails at the end of the prayers.

In verse 12, the expression "Forgive us as we also have forgiven" The petition for the forgiveness of debts, or sins, is an appeal to God, to graciously forgive Christians their sins and to enable them to forgive one another.¹⁸⁴ Stassen and Gushee explain how Christians can demonstrate forgiveness and concern for people they may not be in agreement with and sometimes letting go certain things that affect one's wellbeing:

Sometimes anxieties will come into your mind: worries about relationships, about work, about your own priorities. You do not fight them; you offer them up to God. You ask God if there is some guidance for them. Sometimes a word comes to you, or a picture. Sometimes it is a new awareness of something you could do today that would be in line with God's will, and that otherwise you would not have thought of. Sometimes it is a picture of what a person with whom you have some antagonism is really concerned about: it may not be directed at you, as at that person's own suffering, need or sense of life's purpose. You learn, as Paul says, to rejoice with your enemies when they rejoice and mourn with them when they mourn (Rom 12:15). That means you are concerned for your enemies' valid concerns, even if you cannot affirm their actions.¹⁸⁵

When one learns to forgive others without harboring any form of hurt within, it enables one to be at peace with God and also one's neighbor because one is not harboring any hurt within the person. Having a forgiving heart also enables one to go about one's activities without any fear of being confronted by a supposed enemy. If God forgives Christians of their unpardonable sins then it is wise to demonstrate likewise the Christ-forgiving spirit in them.¹⁸⁶

Verse 13 states "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." This final petition is a plea that God should guide Christians through life that their relationship

¹⁸³ Bloesch, *The Struggle of Prayer*, 72.

¹⁸⁴ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 103.

¹⁸⁵ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 455.

¹⁸⁶ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 42. See also Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 462.

with Him as Father may never come into danger and that they may be preserved from evil of every kind.¹⁸⁷ Sin, as already mentioned, is one that separates one from God¹⁸⁸ but since one is fallible to sin, it is one's prayer that one is not led into sin in the first place and when one finds oneself in trials or temptation, God should deliver the person and draw the person back to His love.

2.7 Conclusion

The chapter discussed prayer and some of its key elements as a Christian religious practice as well as a review on some earlier works on how some scholars have looked at prayer from the Christian perspective. This is to help bring out the theology behind prayer as a Christian religious practice. The chapter also examines the various types of prayer practiced by Christians so that we find some kind of correlation between them and not see them as opposing to each other. The chapter also looked at how prayer is performed by Christians with references to the Bible and its correlation in present times. Jesus's teaching on prayer was also looked at to inform the work on the ethics and theology of prayer in the current work. It concluded with the essence and role of prayer in the lives of Christians. Generally what this chapter sought to do was to explore the theological foundations and essence of prayer as a Christian phenomenon – an exploration considered crucial for the discussions that follow in the next chapters on the theological and morality of loud prayer on the University of Ghana campus.

¹⁸⁷ Stock, *The Method and Message of Matthew*, 103.

¹⁸⁸ Marguerite Shuter, 'Sin' in Daniel Patte (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1158-1160, 1159.

CHAPTER THREE

SOME FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING

3.1 Introduction

Ethical decisions are based on principles or foundations of ethical decision-making. In like manner, Christians would base their ethics on some Christian principles or foundations, based largely on the Bible. This chapter seeks to demonstrate the interrelationship that exists between some approaches to moral (ethical) decision-making and the morality of prayer as a Christian phenomenon. Consequently the chapter looks at some ethical theories or principles that influence ethical decision-making such as deontological ethical theories, utilitarianism and virtue ethics in their correlations with Christian moral decision-making. The goal of the chapter is to explain some of the moral foundations for Christian ethical decision-making that are pertinent for assessing the morality of loud prayer among Christians, in this case among Christian students of the University of Ghana campus, Legon.

3.2 Some Principles of Ethical Decision-Making

Before one will look at some approaches to ethical decision-making, we shall first turn our attention to the concerns of ethics and morality in decision-making. This is because one thinks that Christian ethics cannot be looked at exclusively in decision-making process since it can be influenced by other secular thoughts.¹⁸⁹ Ethics, already discussed in chapter one, comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which means character. Ethics is the study of the

¹⁸⁹ Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An Introduction* (London: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 43.

concepts involved in reasoning about what is: good, right, duty, obligation, and other cognate terms in decision-making.¹⁹⁰ Whenever one asks, 'what I ought to do?' or 'is it wrong for me to do this?' whenever one hazards such remarks as temperance is a virtue and drunkenness a vice- one is undoubtedly in the business of ethics, as one tries to find answers to such questions.¹⁹¹ We can then say that in the vast majority of cases, where we make statements involving any of the terms such as virtue, vice, duty, right, ought, good, bad, we are making ethical judgments; and if we wish to discuss their truth, we shall be discussing a point of ethics.¹⁹²

Ethics, as an area of study, has received varied opinions on what is morally right or wrong in respect to the conduct or actions people take. Ethics is a subject which has been and still is of an immense amount of difference of opinions, in spite of all the time and labor which have been devoted to the study of it.¹⁹³ It does involve some precision like the sciences, but like art, it is an inexact and sometimes intuitive discipline.¹⁹⁴ Most people use the terms ethics and morality interchangeably but these have some technical differences.

The word morality is technically used to refer to the practical application of theories, principles and standards of human conduct to particular acts or situations.¹⁹⁵ For a concise definition, one may refer to morality as prescriptive measures, norms or set of values acceptable for human and social conduct, or code of conduct that binds a people and compels them to conform to an acceptable mode of behavior in a society.¹⁹⁶ Whenever

¹⁹⁰ Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 121.

¹⁹¹ George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 1.

¹⁹² Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 1.

¹⁹³ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 1.

¹⁹⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 15.

¹⁹⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 15.

¹⁹⁶ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 48.

religion is found, in individuals or groups, one component of it usually has to do with moral codes that provide norms for right attitudes and actions. These principles are the oughts for sentiments and behavior. Morality, in this sense, can be defined as the aspect of the religious life that prescribes how people ought to feel, think, and behave.¹⁹⁷

Ethics, as distinct from but related to morality, is the systematic and self-conscious process of understanding, evaluating, and interpreting morality. While morality is a style of living based on principles believed to be right; ethics is a theoretical way of explaining and defending (sometimes criticizing) moral action.¹⁹⁸ Thus, we can say that while morality is living according to standards of conduct; ethics is the evaluation and interpretation of morality, often aiding in the establishment or revision of moral codes.¹⁹⁹

Scott B. Rae classifies ethical systems as either action-oriented systems or virtue-based systems. Under these two major divisions of Rae are three subcategories by which ethical systems may be further classified. These three subcategories are deontological systems, teleological systems, and relativism. One is however mindful of the fact that classifying ethical theories is not an easy task. This is simply because some of the categorizations overlap into others. In this chapter, we are limiting ourselves to classifying ethical theories into deontology, teleology and virtue ethics.²⁰⁰ It is noteworthy to say however that we do not see the theories as necessarily competing with each other but rather, as complementing each other, on their own merit. It may also be difficult, one may say, as humans, to follow one ethical theory consistently throughout a person's life.

¹⁹⁷ T. William Hall (eds.), *Religion: An Introduction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1986), 125.

¹⁹⁸ Hall, *Religion: An Introduction*, 125.

¹⁹⁹ Hall, *Religion: An Introduction*, 125.

²⁰⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 51. See also Wyndy Corbin Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics: The Promises and Pitfalls of Classic Models of Morality* (New York: Brazos Press, 2008), 29.

3.2.1 Deontological Principles in Ethical Decision-Making

The term *deontology* comes from the Greek word *deon*, which means obligatory or binding.²⁰¹ Kyle D. Fedler defines the term deontology as derived from the Greek *deontos*, meaning duty.²⁰² Wyndy Corbin Reuschling defines deontology as “the study of duty or obligation, where the weight of moral focus is on the rule or prescription that enables a person to answer the question “What ought I to do?” The answer is, “I ought to obey the rules or prescriptions that tell me what I ought to do.”²⁰³ This moral method focuses on the nature of the action itself. For deontologists, the moral life is seen primarily as adherence to a set of rules or principles. Deontologists contend that there is something inherent in the very nature of certain human actions that makes them right or wrong. It is not simply a matter of the consequences of the action being good (consequentialism) or that the action reveals something about the nature of the person (virtue theory). Rather, certain acts have qualities that (at least initially) make them right or wrong. Key themes in a deontological system include obligation, fairness, rules, justice, and, especially, duty.²⁰⁴

A deontological method of doing ethics stresses the notion that certain actions are inherently right or wrong. Therefore it is important to differentiate those rules or laws that dictate which actions are right and which are wrong. Once one discovers them, one must adhere to them.²⁰⁵ A deontologist emphasizes that certain acts are right or wrong in themselves and one must adhere to or not and not based on the outcome of the action or

²⁰¹ Glen H. Stassen & David P. Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context* (New York: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 119.

²⁰² Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 18.

²⁰³ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 29.

²⁰⁴ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 18.

²⁰⁵ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 18.

the number of people who may benefit from it.²⁰⁶ Deontology prescribes certain principles one has to follow in achieving a moral life.²⁰⁷ In this regard, one will find some Christians adhering strictly to some laws or commandments of the Bible depending on how it is interpreted.²⁰⁸

Citing deontologist Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Boss puts it that it is believed that we should do our duty purely out of the good will, not because of rewards or punishment or other consequences.²⁰⁹ A person of goodwill can be depended upon to do what is right, even when other intentions are absent. An action that is done out of sympathy or because one enjoys helping others, rather than out of a sense of duty, may be praiseworthy, but according to Kant it has no moral value.²¹⁰ Kant also argued that if there is a universal moral law and if it is to be morally binding, it must be based on reason. According to Kant the most fundamental moral principle is the *categorical imperative*. He came up with two formulations of the categorical imperative. The first formulation states: 'Act only on the maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.'²¹¹

Kant believed that all rational beings would recognize the categorical imperative as universally binding because reason provides the foundation of morality, this makes humans and other rational beings very special in Kant's mind. Whereas rational beings have free will, everything else in nature operates according to physical laws.²¹² Rational beings must be treated with dignity as ends in themselves. This ideal is summed up in the

²⁰⁶ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 18.

²⁰⁷ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 18.

²⁰⁸ Observation, Quansah Agnes, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, 16th December 2012.

²⁰⁹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

²¹⁰ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

²¹¹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

²¹² Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

second formulation of the categorical imperative: “So act as to treat humanity, whether in their own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end in itself, never as a means only.”²¹³

The categorical imperative according to Kant is a formal principle, that provides a framework for deriving moral maxims or duties, such as do not lie and help others in distress. When deciding whether a particular maxim creates a moral duty, we need only ask, keeping in mind that rational beings must be treated with dignity, whether we would will that it be a universal law.²¹⁴ Reuschling also asserts that the categorical imperative is the centerpiece of Kant’s moral philosophy, as what guides our reason and will by minimizing the conflict between what we may want to do and what we ought to do.²¹⁵ The categorical imperative relieves a person of the contingencies of ethical decision making by focusing on the supreme principle of duty or obedience, which is the categorical imperative. It is not determined by the end result it produces, the inclinations and desires of humans, or the intentions of the decision maker.²¹⁶

The Golden Rule in Judeo-Christian ethics and the law of reciprocity in Confucian ethics are both similar to the categorical imperative. The Golden Rule states “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (This can be found in Luke 6:31 and also Matthew 7:12). Similarly, when Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) was asked if there was a single

²¹³ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

²¹⁴ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25.

²¹⁵ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 34.

²¹⁶ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 34-5.

principle that can be used as a guide to conduct in our lives, he replied, "Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire."²¹⁷

Some of the difficulties leveled against deontology are when there is an apparent clash amongst two commands in scripture. For example, Rahab in Joshua 2 was confronted with the challenge of speaking the truth and giving out the Israelite spies to the authorities or telling the authorities a lie in order to save the spies. Her act is commended in God's hall of faith in Hebrews 11.²¹⁸ This suggests that there are real life situations that one is confronted with the clash of two commands. Boss also asserts that "Deontology sacrifices community in the name of individual autonomy."²¹⁹ In this case the individual is believed to be autonomous in taking decisions without necessarily looking at the larger effect on the community and as a result some people have criticized deontology as one of the principles in guiding one's moral conduct. However, the community in which we find ourselves plays a crucial role in our development and decisions we take as humans are inter-dependent on one another.

3.2.2 Teleological Principles/Theories

The term *teleology* comes from the Greek word *telos* which means end or goal. Actions are right or wrong depending upon whether or not they further progress towards an end (*telos*) or goal that is worth striving for.²²⁰ Actions are obligatory not in and of themselves but on the basis of their projected or real consequences. The ends or consequences justify

²¹⁷ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 25. See also Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31

²¹⁸ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 33-4.

²¹⁹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 30.

²²⁰ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119.

the means one chooses. In fact the end is the only thing that justifies an action.²²¹ In this case the rightness and wrongness of an act is not determined by one carrying out one's duty but based on the consequences of the act. Different kinds of teleological ethics advocate different good ends that one should strive for. We shall now look at utilitarianism as one of the teleological principles in decision-making.

Utilitarianism says one should do whatever achieves the greatest happiness or the welfare of the greatest number of people.²²² Modern utilitarian theory was developed by English jurist, philosopher, and social reformer Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832).²²³ Bentham's utilitarian theory was inspired primarily by the theories of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.E) and David Hume (1711-1776). Hume and Epicurus both argued that certain traits are virtues because of their utility, or usefulness. Those traits that promote happiness have the greatest utility.²²⁴ Utilitarians maintain that the desire for happiness is universal and that we intuitively recognize it as the greatest good. Happiness, they argue, is synonymous with pleasure; unhappiness with pain. What counts is not just individual or even human happiness, but the sum of the happiness of the whole community of sentient beings-that is, those beings who are capable of feeling pleasure and pain.²²⁵ Utilitarianism proposes that an act can be determined as right or wrong depending on the effect it will have on the greater number of people.

Some of the difficulties leveled against utilitarianism by claiming that only end results count, include underestimating the importance of individual truthfulness and personal

²²¹ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119.

²²² Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119.

²²³ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 20.

²²⁴ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 21.

²²⁵ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 21.

obligation.²²⁶ This supposes that it is not in all cases that what may benefit the larger group may necessarily be the right decision to take. Sometimes, what is best for the individual must be taken into consideration without looking at the larger interest of the whole group. For instance, if one feels obliged to speak the truth for a lie told by a group one belongs, one must not necessarily consider it will benefit the larger group but as one conscious tells him or her to do, if one feels that is the best thing to do. According to Reuschling, the emphasis on the greatest good for the greatest number and what serves their needs is in contrast to the scriptural obligations to care for the least of these, for the minority and for those on margins of social and political power.²²⁷ This supposes that it is not in all cases that the majority may be right in pushing their views of policies through. Sometimes, the voiceless, the weak and marginalized, who are often not in the majority have to be listened to and possibly care for them.

3.2.3 Virtue Ethics in Ethical Decision-Making

Virtues are defined as qualities of a person that make that person a good person in community, and that contribute to the good of the community, or to the good that humans are designed for.²²⁸ In this instance one may argue that what a society upholds as virtuous may not apply to another society, though there may be universally acclaimed virtues.²²⁹ For instance, honesty can be considered as a universal ethical virtue because it promotes trustworthiness among people and help to build the good of a society. A good person has integrity and seeks justice. One needs to cultivate the habit of living a virtuous life in order

²²⁶ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 24.

²²⁷ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 93.

²²⁸ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 32.

²²⁹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 40.

to become a virtuous person.²³⁰ Virtues are therefore qualities of character. Virtue ethics pursues the question “What kind of person should I try to become?”²³¹

Reuschling argues that “virtue ethics relates to the moral character of moral agents in that the kind of person we are will be reflected in the kinds of decisions we make and behaviors we exhibit.”²³² “Virtue ethics concentrates on the question “What kind of moral character is needed and what kind of moral character will be shaped by my actions and behaviors?”²³³ Virtue ethics has to do with qualities an individual possesses (acquired over a period of time) that is to promote the good of all as one strives to attain excellence.²³⁴ It can be developed through practice over a period of time.²³⁵ Some may argue that if one cultivates virtues over a period, it becomes a habit and that could also imply that one does not necessarily need to follow any strict rules to be morally upright. For instance if one has instilled in him or her the habit of demonstrating love towards one’s neighbor, one may not necessarily need a rule to let the person know loving a neighbor is one of the key principles in building social relationships.²³⁶ Scott B. Rae mentions that in terms of virtue ethics in Christianity, an individual is expected to model Jesus Christ.²³⁷ The life of Christ is an example of how Christians should live a virtues life as one will find some Christians basing their arguments on moral issues, largely on the character traits on Jesus. This is because Christianity is based largely on the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus.

²³⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 36. See also Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 37.

²³¹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 51.

²³² Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 29.

²³³ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 29-30.

²³⁴ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 34-5.

²³⁵ Petre Guran, “Virtues, Cardinal and Theological” in Daniel Patte (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1293-1294, 1293.

²³⁶ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 31.

²³⁷ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 31.

Virtue ethics places actions within the history of a person, in order to determine something to be right or wrong.²³⁸ One's previous background or knowledge about a subject under discussion helps one to determine whether the act is good or bad. The individual may not necessarily be privy to the moral issue at stake but one may find a similar situation that could help one act in a virtuous way.

A difficulty leveled against virtue ethics has to do with it not offering a sufficient guidance for making real-life moral decisions. While a virtuous character may be enough to motivate the saint and those at the higher stages of moral developments, most of us also need formal guidelines.²³⁹ This implies that the virtuous nature of an individual does not suggest his or her need, not for certain rules to guide one's decision-making procedure. Rules are important as it clearly stipulates what one ought to do and vice-versa, without leaving room for any ambiguity as to what one needs to do. Another common criticism leveled against virtue ethics is that it fails to provide rules for resolving moral dilemmas.²⁴⁰ This is to suggest that humans are sometimes faced with moral dilemmas as to what to do best at a particular situation and for that matter may have to count on some prescribed rules to follow.

3.3 Foundations for Christian Moral Decision-Making

It will be good to take note of the fact that Christian ethics does not exist in a vacuum, isolated from other relevant ideas about right and wrong, the kinds we have discussed earlier on. However, the Christian will tend to be more deontologically oriented because of

²³⁸ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 35.

²³⁹ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 40.

²⁴⁰ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 94.

the emphasis in Christian ethics on the commands of God as moral absolutes.²⁴¹ Much of biblical ethics revolves around God's specially revealed commands. For many people therefore, the divine command theory of ethics, an aspect of deontological ethical theories, has become synonymous with biblical ethics.²⁴² The commands are linked with the divine, that is God and what He commands, is what man ought to perform as a duty.²⁴³ Indeed, most religious people believe that their ethics are deontologically based, as the laws are seen as authoritative²⁴⁴ and sacred; they are of no mistakes or faults and sometimes cannot be subject to analytical criticism.²⁴⁵

Indeed, Fedler has asserted that Christians have employed deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics in their decision-making process.²⁴⁶ However, Fedler notes that the Christian approach to ethics differs from the secular philosophical approach in one very important way. Aside from the ethical theories that we have discussed (among many others), there are some Christians in particular, who will base their ethical decision-making on what is acquired through what is generally referred to as Christian ethics. Therefore, whereas philosophers ground their efforts in their experience of the world and (more importantly) in human reason, Christians appeal firstly to the Bible, and to *tradition, experience, and reason*.²⁴⁷ The Bible is the fundamental authority to Christian moral thinking.²⁴⁸ Christians have experienced God through the biblical scriptures, which they have found as a guide to their ethical decision making processes. Reason is also not an exception to Christian moral

²⁴¹ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 16-17.

²⁴² Rae, *Moral Choices*, 19. See also Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*,

²⁴³ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 73.

²⁴⁴ Reuschling, *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, 73.

²⁴⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 19.

²⁴⁶ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 51.

²⁴⁷ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 51.

²⁴⁸ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 193.

guidance because Christians believe that God has given each individual the moral capacity to reason and take decisions.²⁴⁹

It is important to state that the writers of the Bible (the basic source of Christian ethics) did not set out to make a systematic presentation of what should be regarded as Christian ethics.²⁵⁰ However, there are several teachings and moral principles in the Bible that give guides as to how Christians should conduct their lives as men and women of the Christian faith.²⁵¹ Some of such moral principles that we will want to discuss, in relation to our topic, has to do with love, justice and community ethics. These are pertinent principles that run throughout the Bible.

3.3.1 Christian Deontological and Teleological Ethical Foundation

Christians base their ethics largely on what the Bible says. Some Christians see the bible as divine command or a duty that has to be followed at all times. However, the end results of an action or the consequences play a crucial role in the decision-making of Christians. The story of Rahab in Joshua 2, where she lied in sheltering the Israelites spies is a clear example of teleological ethics in Christianity.²⁵² Jesus is also said to heal a man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day (Matthew 12:1-14) because he had compassion on the man, and not just abiding by strict rules.²⁵³

²⁴⁹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 64-5.

²⁵⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 8.

²⁵¹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 8-9.

²⁵² Rae, *Moral Choices*, 34.

²⁵³ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 28.

According to Stassen & Gushee one is obligated to desist from using wrong means to an end.²⁵⁴ In other words a deontological approach says that achieving a good end is not enough; one also has to pay attention to principles of justice and fairness in how one goes about trying to get to a good end. Actions are right and wrong, for example, when they violate the moral ground rules concerning the treatment of other human beings.²⁵⁵ What one can deduce from this is that by deontological ethical standards, a commandment alone is however not enough in achieving an end as a deontologist. For instance, obeying Biblical commandments on praying without ceasing, does not also mean that in one's bid to pray at all times, one has to distract other people's life schedules.

The principle of justice and fairness is that everyone must be given his or her due. In exercising one's religious and constitutional rights therefore, one needs not sacrifice the comfort of others for one's end. Whatever a duty is therefore, it must be done in a just way (moderation) to make it morally acceptable. This point is frequently overlooked or misunderstood. A deontologist is therefore concerned about achieving good ends as long as rules or principles of fairness or rightness are obeyed.²⁵⁶ On this premise, Christianity cannot be said to base their ethics solely on one ethical principle, especially when it does not demonstrate Christlike love and compassion.

3.3.2 Love as a Moral Principle in Christian Ethics

Love is a principle that has received a lot of definitions, from both the secular world and from biblical definitions.²⁵⁷ Fedler noted the four words for love in Greek as *philia* as the love that friends feel for one another, *storge* as familial love such as one that exists

²⁵⁴ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119.

²⁵⁵ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 119-120.

²⁵⁶ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 120.

²⁵⁷ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 177.

between brothers and sisters, *eros* as the affection and desire that characterize the love between husband and wife or lovers in general and *agape* as the love Jesus commands and demonstrates to humanity.²⁵⁸ Fedler identifies three characteristics of *agape* that are revealed in Jesus's life and ministry as: *agape* is not the same as liking, but it does have an emotional component. "Agape is an active concern for others. It is the desire to see them flourish as God intended them to. It is to treat others as precious in God's sight and therefore to be as concerned about their well-being as one's own."²⁵⁹

Agape love is learning to feel with and for others. In his capacity to join the suffering of others, Jesus is the true image of God.²⁶⁰ Agape love is inclusive, for it includes loving the poor, outcasts, less privileged, women and children as Christ demonstrated towards humanity. Agape seeks shalom- In Hebrew, the word *shalom* is often appropriately translated as "peace." But it also connotes completeness, wholeness, and harmony. Agape breaks down barriers by refusing to treat the other as the enemy. It is a reconciling love. It is an expression of the coming kingdom in which the sin and hatred that divide us from one another are replaced by harmony and peace.²⁶¹ When we love others, we decline to simply enforce our wills upon them by force, to use violence to advance our own desires.²⁶²

Throughout His ministry, Jesus consistently sought to make peace between people and groups of people as He seeks to break barriers between men and women, Jews and Gentiles, slaves and masters and even showing love to his enemies.²⁶³ Jesus and the apostles take the central command of the Law, "Love the Lord your God with all your

²⁵⁸ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 177.

²⁵⁹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 177-8.

²⁶⁰ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 179.

²⁶¹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 183.

²⁶² Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 183.

²⁶³ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 183.

heart and with all your soul and with all your strength (Deuteronomy 6:5), and develop an ethic of love for God and one's neighbor.²⁶⁴ The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) defines one's neighbor as anyone who has a need that one can meet, and applies the principle to those outside the church as well as fellow believers. When a young lawyer asked Jesus about ethical and spiritual priorities in life, he replied that a person's principal duties were to love God and one's neighbor as oneself (Luke 10:25-29; see also Matthew 22:34-40); where Jesus similarly answers the question of the hostile religious leaders.²⁶⁵ Paul summarizes the whole Law under the heading of love, signifying that love accomplishes the Law.²⁶⁶ Romans 13: 8-10 reads:

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Christians are to demonstrate their love for their neighbors and others they may not necessarily know because they have this conviction that as they intercede for others and wish them well, so will their heavenly Father grant them all their heart desires.²⁶⁷ Jesus showed love to all humanity, including those who persecuted Him. Christians need to follow in like manner. Paul asserted that when one shows love to God and one's neighbor (Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:14), then one cannot cause harm by stealing, killing or bearing false witness towards one's neighbor. Love is therefore the underlining principle in promoting good behavior among people. If one loves one's neighbor as oneself one does not need to cause undue discomfort to others when practicing loud prayers, for example. Stassen and Gushee note that:

²⁶⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 29-30.

²⁶⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 30.

²⁶⁶ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 30.

²⁶⁷ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 179-180.

For Christians, love is the heart of living, of being human. Love is at the heart of the life of Christ, his teaching and his death on the cross. Even on the cross, Jesus had compassion on his mother, compassion on the two rebels crucified with him and compassion on his enemies who were crucifying him – to turn and receive God’s proffered love and forgiveness – a love which actively seeks out the sinner, just as the father sought out the prodigal son (Lk 15:20). God’s reign is thereby understood as the rule of love. Christlike love is one of the central virtues, and one of the basic convictions, in our holistic ethic of character.²⁶⁸

This type of love is rare and a demonstration of what Christians are supposed to follow. Christian love intercedes for one’s enemies (for a renewal of their hearts towards God) and not to persecute them. Matthew 6:12 reads: “And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.” This may also mean that Christians are to show love and compassion towards others who may not necessarily seem to work towards their good so as to attract God’s forgiveness also.²⁶⁹ A further reading of the Bible in John 15: 12 reads “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

Love is not set over against justice but leads to a community-oriented affirmation of justice.²⁷⁰ For instance, in the Old Testament, we are told that God loved David so much as a man after God’s own heart but when David sinned against Uriah by committing adultery with Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba, God justly punished David (2 Samuel 12:7-14). The book of Amos also (among some others) demonstrates God’s love not being set over against justice. In Amos 5:21-24 God told the Israelites (who thought God’s love was always on their side irrespective of what they did) that “I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-ending stream!” (Amos 5: 21-24).

²⁶⁸ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 327.

²⁶⁹ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 340.

²⁷⁰ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 331.

The above passages points to the fact that the spirituality of Christians must not be divorced from their just (fair) attitudes towards others they live with. The Bible never treats justice as a lesser order than that required by love, but as the objectification of the spirit of love in human and divine relationship.²⁷¹ Love and justice must be seen as complementing virtues because when one loves one's neighbor they tend to be just towards them by not denying them their due. These principles are of great relevance to this work. Stassen and Gushee also share the view that love means that we value all persons in the same way, irrespective of their qualities, actions, merits or what they can do for us.²⁷²

The Bible also clearly demonstrates that: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (Philippians 2: 3-4). This may seem to be a difficult task for some Christians to do; valuing or loving others over oneself. This means one giving up one's selfish desires and considering other peoples wellbeing in the decisions one makes.²⁷³ Jesus Christ demonstrated this selfless love so all humanity may be saved and in like manner Christians are to follow suit, that is, considering other people's wellbeing in one's strive for the best in life.²⁷⁴ In this sense if one can minimize the loudness at which one prays or if they still want to pray aloud, find a suitable location where others are not unduly affected, then they are demonstrating Christ-like love and justice as the Bible encourages Christians to do.

²⁷¹ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 331.

²⁷² Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 332.

²⁷³ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 45.

²⁷⁴ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 333.

3.3.3 Justice as a Moral Principle in Christian Ethics

The second moral virtue or principle that we want to discuss in Christian ethics has to do with justice (even though we had mentioned it earlier). According to Fedler, “Justice is the virtue of acting in such a way as to give persons their due. This can take two forms on the social level: retributive and distributive justice. Retributive justice is the institution of punishment for wrongdoing.”²⁷⁵ When, for example, a murderer goes to prison or a thief is fined for stealing, retributive justice is being served. Distributive justice involves the means by which the resources of society are allocated: money, jobs, land, and the like.²⁷⁶ Judith A. Boss shares similar assertion of distributive justice to refer to the “fair distribution of benefits and burdens in a society”²⁷⁷. Justice is a virtue not only on the communal level; it also involves the personal level.

On the personal level, just persons are generally considered by their ability to see beyond the narrow limits of their self-interest. They are willing and able to weigh the interests of others in their moral consideration.²⁷⁸ “Just persons have developed the moral skill of seeing the effects of an action or policy on all persons involved and then acting in a way that is fair.”²⁷⁹ In other words, to be just is not to consider one’s interest at all times but also considering other peoples interest in taking a moral decision. If one decides for instance, to shout in the name of prayers in a residential area or close to libraries to the disadvantage of others, then one must find out whether one is being just to others or not.

²⁷⁵ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 44.

²⁷⁶ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 45.

²⁷⁷ Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, 29.

²⁷⁸ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 45.

²⁷⁹ Fedler, *Exploring Christian Ethics*, 45.

In the Bible, justice forms another central concept in Christian ethics. It deals with honesty, fairness, judicial righteousness and all that must be done to ensure peace and harmony in society.²⁸⁰ Genesis 4:3 reads: "In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast." Though the Bible is not so clear on why Abel's offering will be much pleasing to God, than that of Cain, one can deduce that the Bible mentions that Abel brought "fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock while Cain is described to have brought "some of the fruits of the soil."²⁸¹ This demonstrates that Abel brought the best of his yield as compared to that of Cain and that could account for God taking delight in one over the other. Therefore right from the Genesis stories God shows the need for justice, where He rewards those who gave Him the best of what they had as offering to Him.

Stassen and Gushee note that some Christians skip over the biblical emphasis on justice for their personal gains. Unfortunately the Bible is used to keep the oppressed at where they are so that they feel it is God's plan for their lives. God is said to be interested in justice and for that matter, God punishes the wicked and rewards the righteous.²⁸² Genesis 37 throws light on the story of Joseph and his brothers and how they envied him because Joseph was loved most by their father (Jacob) and also because of his dreams that one day, he was going to be greater than all of them. Out of jealousy, they sold Joseph out to a strange land, in a way to oppress his dreams, since he was the youngest among his brothers. Eventually, God turned it good for Joseph as he became the prime minister of

²⁸⁰ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 346-7.

²⁸¹ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 345-6.

²⁸² Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 345-6.

Egypt, where his brothers eventually sold him. In that manner, working to achieve the common good should be worked at as a Christian and not necessarily working towards the good of an individual. It can be shown from Scripture that Jesus' identification with the prophets, his attack on the temple system and his proclamation and practice of the reign of God all linked him inextricably to a content-rich proclamation and practice of justice.²⁸³

3.3.4 Community Ethics as a Principle in Christian Ethics

The word 'community' usually refers to a group of people living together in one locality who reside a culture of shared values.²⁸⁴ Christians are encouraged to be an example to the world by showing love, be just to others and live in community with others just as the apostles did. In Acts 2: 42-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Christians should be seen as the light and salt of the world so that others may follow suit but if others see that Christians care only about themselves, they do not portray a positive image to others. Christ came to die for all humanity and not for some group of people. Therefore, Christians must work for the common good of all.

According to Atkinson and Field, 'In making humanity God states, "Let us make man in our image" (Gn. 1:26). We are made in the image of a trinitarian God who is three persons in one Godhead. In being made in the image of God we reflect a God who is person in community. God is love because within the Trinity God is both the subject

²⁸³ Stassen & Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics*, 346.

²⁸⁴ Atkinson & Field, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics & Pastoral Theology*, 108.

and the object of love.²⁸⁵ This is to suggest that there is some sort of community between God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and there are no contradictions between them. In like manner humans also live in relationship with others and there should be some sort of harmony and sense of community between them. When there is sense of community between humans, some of the issues that arise as a result of individuality will be taken care of such as causing nuisance in community in the name of religion. God is a God of justice, and his justice defines the nature of human community. It is not that we decide what justice is and measure God up to our own criteria, but that God's character provides the framework for our life together.²⁸⁶

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher discussed some foundations for Christian theological and ethical decision-making such as deontological ethical theories, utilitarianism and virtue ethics and their correlations with Christian moral decision-making. The goal of this discussion was to explain some of the moral foundations for Christian ethical decision-making that are pertinent for assessing the morality of loud prayer among Christians, in this case among Christian students of the University of Ghana campus, Legon. From the above discussion of some of the ethical standards by which humans, particularly Christians, make their moral decisions, the next chapter discusses how these ethical standards and frameworks correlates with prayer activities of Christian students in an academic and multi-religious community such as the University of Ghana, Legon, using data collected from the University campus.

²⁸⁵ Atkinson & Field, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics & Pastoral Theology*, 111.

²⁸⁶ Atkinson & Field, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics & Pastoral Theology*, 112.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSING LOUD CHRISTIAN PRAYER ON THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA CAMPUS AS A THEOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUE

4.1 Introduction

Loud Christian prayer on the University of Ghana campus could be described as the practice of voicing out one's prayer at a high pitch, usually to the hearing of and discomfort to other members of the University community, within hearing distance. These are prayers usually accompanied with loud songs, clapping, jumping and shouting, which have come to characterize neo-Pentecostal/Pentecostal way of worship because of the emphasis on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Song ministration plays a major role in the prayer sessions of both AGCM and PENSA groups under study, for some members believed that songs, in themselves, are also prayers to God as they contain the right words for one to speak to God or God speaking back to His people. During the AGCM and PENSA prayer meetings that were visited, there was much concern for each other's needs and were seen interceding for each other during times of loud prayers.

It is worth noting that the loudness of the prayers on the University campus is to the extent that people complained of the nuisance and oppression that comes with such loud prayers.²⁸⁷ This is because people are not able to study or sleep. It also became a heated debate on the university's website on how loud prayers have become nuisance to other members of the University community.

²⁸⁷ Helen Lauer, 'Potential perpetrator in guise of evangelizer' 12 September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon. See also Helen Lauer, 'Application for appointment to discuss security matter with you' 20 September 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

Against this backdrop, this chapter discusses Christian prayer as a religious practice, and the response of some members of the University community to loud Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus. Sources of information include Christian religious group leaders, members of staff and some members of the student population. Notices, meeting agendas as well as official complaints by some occupants of the University have also served as a means of information. The researcher also interviewed and made use of questionnaires to obtain some of the information. The purpose of this chapter is to find responses on the theological and ethical views on loud Christian prayer, as a phenomenon on the University of Ghana campus.

4.2 Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) of the University of Ghana

The Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) of the University of Ghana is a branch of the Assemblies of God institutional campus ministries (nationwide) and the Assemblies of God Church, Ghana. It comprises largely of students of the University of Ghana who belong to Assemblies of God churches nationwide and who, as a result of proximity, meet to have fellowship in a similar way their mother churches (Assemblies of God Church, Ghana) do. Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) is also an organized Christian group on the University of Ghana, which meets on regular basis. The Church of Pentecost is their mother church. The AGCM members meet on Sundays, from seven o'clock to eight o'clock in the morning to have Bible Studies while the main service continues to about half past ten o'clock in the morning. This takes place in the Volta dining hall of the University of Ghana. PENSA also meets on Sundays, from half past six o'clock to nine o'clock in the morning and on some other days within the week to fellowship.

Both churches have a lot of common activities such as the Sunday School or Bible Study Ministry, Music Ministry, Prayer Ministry, Women's Wing, Evangelism Ministry, and Ushering. Members are encouraged to join one or more of the ministries in which one has interest, as a way of contributing one's quota to the growth of the church. The churches have patrons and presiding pastors, who see to the growth of their churches. It is remarkable to see how these young people are able to manage their own church activities, without a superior directing them, although they may seek their advice in one way or the other. One could find so much of youthful exuberance like jumping, dancing and shouting, during the church services. However, some time is apportioned for some form of silence, especially during worship and before the word of God is ministered to the people present. In an academic setting such as this, one would have expected that religious activities play minimal role in the lives of people but it seems to be the opposite, as students patronize such religious activities on the campus.

4.2.1 Prayer in AGCM and PENSA at the University of Ghana

The Assemblies of God Campus Ministry- Legon, henceforth to be referred to as AGCM, just as the Pentecost Students and Associates, also henceforth to be referred to as PENSA, have prayer ministries that are responsible for prayer activities of the groups. Leaders of these groups organize prayer meetings for the whole church. There are also periodic prayer programs organized for members of both groups such as the "Higher Dimension Conference", "Examination Prayers", prayers organized for level 100s and the likes. All these programs are organized to ensure that members have a successful academic semester and social life on campus.

AGCM and PENSA believe that one needs to have constant communion with God, in order to have a successful life everywhere one finds oneself. One who is exposed to a new environment, with a different way of doing things (diverse from what one is used to) may pray to God for wisdom and guidance to excel and also pray for the families and loved ones which one has left behind in their various homes or communities.²⁸⁸ This could mean that every new environment one finds oneself may come with its pro and cons and the need for one to resort to some spiritual powers for protection and excellence. They also believe in the Trinity and its essence in the prayer life of the Christian. Faith also plays a major role in the prayer life of members of these groups as members show so much faith and believe that God is able to do anything for them, if they ask in His name. This faith does not just believe God's words concerning their lives but also believes in continually going before Him in prayer, as they also study.²⁸⁹ Donald G. Bloesch and Richard Sibbes share similar view of the essence of faith in the prayer lives of Christians and the need to persevere in prayer as discussed in chapter two of this work.²⁹⁰

The AGCM and the PENSA prayer groups do not lose focus on their prime focus of being in school and it is evident on how series of prayer programs are organized on excelling academically. This is very typical of the African worldview where both the physical and the spiritual exist and for one to succeed one has to be conscious of both the physical and the spiritual under-pinning to life.²⁹¹ Prayer is therefore an important part of the activities

²⁸⁸ Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

²⁸⁹ Observation, Quansah, Agnes, University of Ghana, Legon, 30th April 2012, 2nd February, 2013 and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, 16th December 2012.

²⁹⁰ Bloesch, *Struggle of Prayer*, 19, 62. See also Richard Sibbes as cited in Bloesch's work, *Struggle of Prayer*, 19-20 and Hubert van Zeller, *Approach to Prayer* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), 7.

²⁹¹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Kucena. Damian: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), 8-9. See also Haar, ter Gerrie, 'Religion in the Development Debate: Relevance and Rationale', *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, 3 (2008): 2-3 and Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2003), 4.

of Africans as well as these groups under study. The AGCM, just as the PENSA prayer groups, can be categorized under Pentecostals because they emphasize so much on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and it is evident in their way of worship as one would find them praying in tongues, shouting, jumping, clapping, prophesying, dancing and performing other youthful forms of exuberance as a sign of them being empowered or filled with the Holy Spirit.²⁹²

Both prayer groups of AGCM and PENSA meet to pray on the Mensah Sarbah field on Mondays, eight to ten clock in the evening, close to the University Guest Center and between some portions of the Mensah Sarbah hall, Legon hall Annex B and Valco Phases 1 and 2. They meet in a circle form, sometimes holding hands together, to pray with the leaders in the middle of the circle, leading them through the prayer topics. The spirit behind this is for the group to pray with one spirit and with one voice unto God and also to show a sense of belongingness to the group.²⁹³ The prayer topics range from academic excellence, good future employments, good health and many other requests. Members are also asked to pray for their future jobs and finances because their present prayers or decisions they may take now, have great potential of affecting their future.²⁹⁴ These sections are usually characterized by prayers, clapping of hands, singing songs and many others, in very loud tones as mentioned earlier in the introductory remarks of this chapter.

²⁹² Paul Gifford, 'Ghana's Charismatic Churches', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Volume 24, Fasc. 3 (Aug., 1994): 241-265, 242. See also Rebecca Y. Ganusah, 'Community Versus Individual Rights In Africa: A Viewpoint', *Legon Journal Of The Humanities*, Faculty of Arts, University of Ghana, Volume X V (2004): 15-16.

²⁹³ Student D, Interview, 16th December 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

²⁹⁴ Observation, Agnes Quansah, Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA), University of Ghana, Legon, 22nd October 2012, and also confirmed by prayer secretaries of the two groups.

This researcher tried to find out from the AGCM about the University's position on loud Christian prayers near University residencies or hall libraries. The findings revealed that the position of the school authorities on the use of loud Christian prayers situated close to halls of residence and libraries, according to those praying, 'was neither in the right or wrong way'²⁹⁵ as respondents gave diverse opinions in relation to the University's position that one should not resort to loud prayers, especially on the Sarbah field after the hours of ten o'clock in the evening. The respondents mentioned that though the University authorities have the right to put certain measures to ensure the effective running of the institution, the authorities must not be seen targeting one group over other groups who may also resort to other forms of noise-making. They therefore felt that University seems to be concentrating so much on the possible effects loud Christian prayers could have on others than any other groups that are found making noise.²⁹⁶

Some prayer group leaders expressed the need to show love towards their neighbors who may not be praying at the same time by not disturbing them. On the other hand, some also thought that it was not safe for people to go far off since they could be prone to all kinds of insecurity issues. Both prayer secretaries of the AGCM noted that in as much as one needs to consider other people's wellbeing (out of Christian love and justice) when one is praying, praying out loud has biblical bases, as they were quick to give biblical references to show why one needs to pray aloud.²⁹⁷ They also noted that urging the group to pray aloud is to help the whole group to pray with one spirit and one voice to God. They however noted that the school authorities have expressed great concerns, with a number of

²⁹⁵ Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

²⁹⁶ Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

²⁹⁷ AGCM and PENSA prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

complaints that came from both students and other workers of the University concerning loud prayers at residencies and libraries. They were called for meetings with the chaplaincy board and the Dean of Student Affairs.²⁹⁸

Leaders of the prayer groups under study identified two broad classifications of Christian prayer, that is, private and public prayer. Some recognized that both are accepted before God but that God listens more to praying all out (loud prayers) than silent prayers.²⁹⁹ Silent prayers may look like one is not in dire need to receive something from God. One of the prayer leaders from PENSA noted for instance, 'if one gets a call from the house that one's mother is dying, one will pray with all seriousness and that involves praying out loud to cause God to save the mother, unlike when they are having morning devotion in their various rooms.'³⁰⁰ However, the consequences of an act of loud prayers cannot be left out completely in carrying out one's religious duty of prayer. They therefore seem to share the view that the situation one finds oneself in will necessitate the kind of prayer one will resort to. One of the prayer leaders from PENSA testified that he finds some joy anytime he walks through the Mensah Sarbah field, and seeing the sight of other believers praying on the field.³⁰¹

This researcher asked the PENSA prayer group leaders whether Christians need to consider other people's interest, when they are praying and the answers that came were diverse. Some thought that in relation to praying on the Mensah Sarbah hall and field where they organize their Sunday services, they need to consider other people's interest. It

²⁹⁸ AGCM and PENSA prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

²⁹⁹ AGCM and PENSA prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

³⁰⁰ Student A, Interview, 16th December 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³⁰¹ Student B, Interview, 16th December 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

is however, because they would not want to disturb people in their rooms that, they usually move out of their rooms to the Mensah Sarbah field and other parts of the University, which are a little far off from residencies and libraries. Some also argued that if other people are affected by their prayers, then those affected can also do themselves good by using the 24 hour reading room of the University Balme library. Others also said there was the need to demonstrate love to others by not distracting them from whatever they are doing, when they are praying and that this could be done without necessarily shouting.

Both the PENZA and AGCM prayer group leaders noted that the level of concern the school authorities show, in relation to noise made by their groups is not with the same seriousness leveled against other religious groups. The PENZA prayer group leaders, for instance, noted that the Commonwealth hall is known for all kinds of noise, yet the University authorities did not pay keen attention to addressing such concern either because of fear that students could harm them or their assets would be destroyed, as reported to have happened to the Dean of Student Affairs, when he went to ensure some level of silence in the Commonwealth hall.

Some also felt that Pentecostal groups, as well as all Christian groups had to do things in moderation or probably change the venues as a way of demonstrating their Christian love and being fair to others. Some, however, felt that they would pray as loud as they could as they were ready to be persecuted for their faith as other Christian martyrs did according to biblical narratives. In addition, it may appear that the University authorities may be showing so much concern towards noise made by religious groups than any other group but that may not be the case because anytime any group of students resort to noise and it

gets to the authorities, frantic efforts are made to curb the practice as confirmed by a Security head and the secretary to the Dean of Student Affairs.³⁰²

It is common to see students and Christian groups (in the majority) resorting to loud Christian prayers at designated places on the University premise. This assertion does not also mean that one would find all students praying out loud for, some may resort to a more silent way of prayer. One is likely to find some students praying silently before and after studying at the libraries by just mimicking their prayers or putting a holy cross sign on their forehead or just covering their faces with their hands.³⁰³ Some Christians shared some sort of relief they had when they poured their hearts all out to someone who is willing to listen and able to grant them their wishes. It is like laying one's inner most needs to a being that is believed to meet one's needs adequately though it may not necessarily come in the same manner one may expect it. It brings some sort of relief and hope in one's circumstance.

Some of those praying also believed that there is a psychological dimension to praying aloud, as one becomes aware of one's needs and realities of life. As discussed earlier in chapter one of this thesis, Paul E. Johnson discusses the psychological reasons why people pray and why they usually voice out, when praying. Johnson's work talks of prayer as the natural language of religious experience. Primitive men preface prayers with rudimentary sounds, such as whistling, clicking, or wailing, which reveal pre-linguistic backgrounds. People of our day are likely in moments of stress to ejaculate, ñO God! Help me!ò as a

³⁰² AGCM and PENSA prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

³⁰³ Observation, Agnes Quansah, Balme Library, University of Ghana, Legon, 29th January, 2012, 2nd February, 2012.

spontaneous expression.³⁰⁴ As the student identifies his or her short falls in studying, he or she seeks spiritual as well as physical strength to do better.

Some believed that some situations one may find oneself in necessitate the need to call all out to God in prayer than going about talking to people, who may not necessarily have one at heart. Others expressed the view that it is better to speak to a higher being, who is all loving, able to grant their needs than speaking to human beings who could not be trustworthy in handling issues that are dear to them.³⁰⁵ Some Christians shared some sort of relief they had when they poured their hearts all out to someone who is willing to listen and able to grant them their wishes. It is like laying one's inner most needs to a being who is believed to meet one's needs adequately though it may not necessarily come in the same manner one may expect it. It brings some sort of relief and hope in one's circumstance.

4.3 Presentation of Findings on Loud Christian Prayer on University of Ghana Campus

The University of Ghana, Legon community does not comprise of only students but also other workers such as lecturers, researchers, administrative staffs, security officials and many others. All these groups of people come together to ensure the effective functioning of the University as a citadel of knowledge. Staff is used here to mean a group of people who work for a particular institution and in this case, work for the University of Ghana,

³⁰⁴ Paul E. Johnson, *Psychology of Religion* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 2004), 112.

³⁰⁵ AGCM and PENSA prayer group leaders, Interview, University of Ghana, Legon, 16th December 2012.

Legon. The findings from staff revealed that loud prayer creates adverse effects on academic work and on their right to privacy.

4.3.1 Interviews with Some Staff

According to four of the respondents, there is no difference between noise made by religious groups and that of other groups (in terms of the effect it could have on them) because both are deemed unnecessary or unwanted at that particular point in time.³⁰⁶ Such prayers could be very distracting to what others might be doing at a particular time. Some of the staff said, loud prayer in itself is not bad, however, the prevailing circumstances or environment in which one may resort to loud prayers could make it bad or good. For instance, it is wrong for one to resort to loud prayers in residencies and near libraries, which are meant to facilitate academic work even if one needs to have some sort of constant communication with one's object of worship.³⁰⁷

In relation to the adverse effect on academic work, some examples were given. According to Staff A, excessive noise can cause hearing impairments depending on the intensity of the sound.³⁰⁸ The hearing impairment does not occur at an instance but can be a slow process where some people tend to have mild or intense hearing problems, depending on the intensity and that could also lead to complete hearing loss. It also causes insomnia (sleeplessness): not having enough sleep³⁰⁹ before the next day's work. This can cause one

³⁰⁶ Staff B, Staff C, Staff A, Staff D. These are pseudo-names the researcher has given to staff respondents because respondents have not permitted the use of their names for this work and it is only ethical to use names that do not in any way suggest any linkage to them.

³⁰⁷ Staff A, Interview, 16th October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon. Staff E, Interview, 16th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon. Staff D, Interview, 18th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³⁰⁸ Staff A, Interview, 16th October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon. See also Gladys Kwadzo, 'Noise Pollution', *Ghanaian Times*, February 18, 2004, 5.

³⁰⁹ Interview, Staff A, 16th October 2012. See also Tom K. Alikoo, 'One Noisy Church in Town', *Daily Graphic*, November 8, 2004, 9.

to have headache. Staff A continued by saying that “when one goes to school or to work it will have effect on one’s productivity as a student or worker. It has effects on one’s temperament because one was not able to sleep and it could have psychological effects on the person whereby the person easily gets angry because one didn’t have enough rest.”³¹⁰

In curbing the menace of the effect loud prayers have on others, Staff A said, “I have had the occasion to give a whole public lecture on it”³¹¹ (in relation to the effect of noise) and this “was telecast, published so it can reach a wide range of people.”³¹² For Staff A, educating the general populace on the effect of loud prayers could be a possible solution.

Staff B also said that he got dizzy after being exposed to noise for some time. Staff B noted how noise made by others can affect the productivity of other users of the University community like himself. Staff B said when it came to reading that involves thinking, especially in calculations and working out a formula to something, he was not able to do any kind of reading. He sometimes had to increase the volume of his radio or television set so that he was not so much affected by the noise.³¹³ His major concern had been people who would use megaphones to make noise and, according to him, he did not think religious groups are the worse culprits of noise making on the University campus though one cannot completely leave religious groups out of this menace. When the researcher enquired about the possible solutions to loud prayers on the campus, Staff B said he had complained to the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Dean of Student Affairs, the Chaplaincy board, some Christian leaders, University Guest Center management and all interested parties. He

³¹⁰ Interview, Staff A, 16th October 2012.

³¹¹ Interview, Staff A, 16th October 2012.

³¹² Interview, Staff A, 16th October 2012.

³¹³ Staff B, Interview, 17th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

also noted how he sometimes walked up to the people who were making noise with mega phones and though they would agree to lower them, he realized they would turn them on as soon as he left the place. He also demonstrated to the researcher how he used sound absorbers any time he was disrupted by noise in order to do any serious academic work.³¹⁴ Staff B further said that anytime there was noise around his office, he either relocated to another office far from where the noise was emanating from, or put some sound absorbers in his ears to minimize the effect the noise could have on his studies.

Staff D shared some of the tension that some religious practices could create or bring when people feel their religion is superior to other people's religion, forgetting that they live in a pluralistic state of Ghana, where there are diverse religious believers. Staff D noted that when he was doing a program at the undergraduate level, there were some groups of Christians who played loud gospel music especially at dawn, forgetting that they were in a pluralistic community, where not everyone could belong to the faith they profess. Sometimes at dawn, one would find some groups of Christians praying, preaching or evangelizing. One day, a Muslim man decided to play loud Muslim music and the Christians started complaining that the Muslim guy was making noise, forgetting that when they were playing loud Christian music or evangelizing, they were also disturbing others. Staff D shared how some Christians see their religion to be superior to that of others and thereby in practicing their religion, do not care about other people's religious background.³¹⁵ Staff D further added that they forget that in as much as religion can be projected in a positive light, it can also be destructive when not handled well.³¹⁶ Staff D further said he had the opportunity to sack a student who was praying and preaching

³¹⁴ Interview, Staff B, 17th October 2012, University of Ghana Legon.

³¹⁵ Staff D, Interview, 18th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³¹⁶ Interview, Staff D, 18th October 2012.

before the start of his class and the student told him he was wrong in stopping him from doing the work of God. Staff D however indicated that he insisted the student get away with his primitive way of projecting his religion.³¹⁷

According to Staff F, Christian religious groups are fond of noise-making on the University campus as they resort to night prayers on the Mensah Sarbah field, close to Legon or Sarbah halls. He also noted that areas close to lecture halls are no exceptions to this act of loud prayers and thereby, affect concentration, quiet time, sleep, teaching and learning. And this gives the impression 'That we do not use our time wisely. That our productivity is low. That our priorities are wrong.'³¹⁸ In attempting some solutions to loud prayers, he complained to friends and colleagues.³¹⁹ Staff F also proposed that acts like loud prayers should not be condoned with but leaders must be advised to relocate to the outskirts of the University. They should enforce the existing laws without fear or favor.³²⁰

In the case of Staff G, the researcher made use of an official complaint she addressed to the Dean of Student Affairs as some members of staff made reference to her in relation to the topic under discussion. In the letter to the Dean of Student Affairs, Staff G complained about how unbearable loud prayers could be; 'This morning the voice was booming so loud it woke up people in the University of Ghana Guest Center one quarter of a mile away.'³²¹ Again, in the letter addressed to the Dean of Students' Affairs, she stated that:

It appears since we are very reticent to encroach on individuals' rights to worship, we are not only imposing on people's rights to privacy, undermining the ambience of quietude and calm that is conducive to study and typical of any university campus, disturbing our

³¹⁷ Interview, Staff D. 18th October 2012

³¹⁸ Staff F, Interview, 18th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³¹⁹ Interview, Staff F, 18th October 2012.

³²⁰ Interview, Staff F. 18th October 2012.

³²¹ Staff G, 'Potential perpetrator in guise of evangelizer' (12 September 2012), University of Ghana, Legon.

foreign guests at the University Guest Centre-we are now leaving ourselves open to potential miscreants taking advantage of our policy of *lasser faire* tolerance.³²²

This could imply that the intensity of the sound has great effect on others and plays a critical role in the efficiency (or rather inefficiency) of a person, either in studies or in research work. Staff G sometimes went to places of loud prayers to talk to the people but sometimes to no avail.³²³ Staff G sometimes called on the Security Chief to maintain some level of sanity on the University precincts.

According to a Secretary to the Dean of Student Affairs, Staff E, several meetings were held with University Christian Fellowship (UCF) executives and religious group leaders. Staff E also said the Dean of Student Affairs occasionally seized megaphones from students who used them to disturb others and said some of such megaphones were kept at the office.³²⁴ Staff E also handed over to the researcher some samples of notices of noise making from the office of the Dean of Student Affairs. These notices have been in circulation as far back as 2005 when she started working in the Dean's office. Staff E said the content is the same but the only difference has to do with the dates on which they were issued out to the various halls. Staff E also noted that it is not only the students who came to make complaints on noise making but other members of the University also come to complain. Staff E however stated that the Mensah Sarbah field is not patronized only by students of the University of Ghana campus but outsiders also patronize the place because of the free range movements of people in and out of the University community.³²⁵

³²² Staff G, 'Potential perpetrator in guise of evangelizer'

³²³ Staff G, 'Potential perpetrator in guise of evangelizer' This assertion was also confirmed by Staff C, Interview, 1st October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon, Staff E and Staff H (a former Chaplaincy Board Chairman).

³²⁴ Staff E, Interview, 16th October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³²⁵ Interview, Staff E, 16th October 2012.

According to the Security Chief of the University, the issue of noise-making is of great concern to members of the University community, as students and staff complain bitterly about it and the University authorities are so much concerned. This includes the Vice-Chancellor. To him it is student religious groups who make so much noise and not necessarily churches that come once in a month or occasionally. He said that worship does not mean worshipping God at the expense of other people's peace of mind. He also said freedom does not mean endless freedom or freedom without limit because where one's freedom begins, is where the other's freedom ends.³²⁶

The Security Chief noted that noise-making on the University of Ghana campus is not related only to religious groups but also to hall week celebrations, football matches, political campaigns and the like. However, to him, these are occasional and one does not find students engaging in such nuisance as religious groups do always. According to the Security Chief, for instance, at one time when the Commonwealth Hall was having its hall week celebration and had exceeded the time given to it to celebrate it, the Dean of Student Affairs, together with the Security Chief went to the Commonwealth hall to stop the students. After several agitations, the students yielded but when he was returning with the Dean of Student Affairs, some of the boys had gone to hide and destroyed the Car of the Dean of Student Affairs. It was therefore not the case that they do not attach same amount of concern to noise that other groups also make on campus.³²⁷

The Security Chief also said he did not want to use force or violence to minimize loud prayers that cause discomfort to other members of the University community, though he

³²⁶ Staff C, Interview, 1st October 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³²⁷ Interview, Staff C, 1st October 2012.

asked his men to go round and stop people any time they were found engaging in loud Christian prayers that were destructive. This is because he did not want to be named as anti-God or Christian. He noted that the chaplaincy board had a role to play in ensuring that Christian religious groups moderate whatever they do so that other people can carry out their normal activities. He noted that although students are fond of noise making, the most culpable are Christian religious groups who resort to shouting, clapping, dancing and the like. Nonetheless, when other religious groups like the Muslims call to dawn prayers, Christians are the same people who complain, showing how intolerable they are to other people's religious practices.

According to the Security Chief, anytime his attention was drawn to excessive noise by any group of people on campus, he personally went there to intervene and in his absence, asked his men to restore an enabling environment for academic work. He said that some of the Christian groups have moved to Limann Hall area to indulge in loud prayers and upon complaints by the Hall tutors and interested parties, he asked his men to be around the halls and stop people from indulging in loud prayers in and around the halls. Staff G, he noted, called on him when there was excessive noise on campus.³²⁸ The researcher observed that any time any group of students were about to pray or preach around the Jubilee hall, especially at dawn, one was likely to see security men asking the people to stop because of the residential nature of the place. In a recent development, security men were found patrolling the Mensah Sarbah field and environs around the hours of ten o'clock in the evening and beyond to ensure that loud prayer activities do not take place on the field. Upon interrogation with one of the PENSA prayer members however, she

³²⁸ Interview, Staff C, 1st October 2012.

said that she saw no sense in that and said ‘they can’t stop us from praying’³²⁹ I realized that although steps are being taken to address this issue of loud Christian prayers, people think that their rights to worship are being infringed upon and they are being sidelined by the University authorities, to this regard.

Staff I, a secretary of the Chaplaincy Board, asserted that a lot of people had made both formal and informal complaints concerning loud Christian prayers as practiced on the University of Ghana campus and the Chaplaincy Board has had several meetings with the Christian group leaders on campus to try and resolve this issue.³³⁰ ‘At the meetings, it was suggested noise making should stop and prayer sessions and instruments should be controlled to avoid noise.’³³¹ She further stated that a vigilante group was formed by the University Christian Fellowship (UCF) to control noise made by Christian religious groups. She mentioned that suggestion was made to train groups or leaders on avoiding noise at prayer sessions. She said the Chaplaincy Board uses the UCF extensively for the control of noise, by holding meetings with Christian groups and the Dean of Student Affairs.³³²

Staff J, a former President of the University Christian Fellowship (UCF), also noted that after several meetings with the school authorities and the chaplaincy board, some measures were taken to address the issue of noise making. He pointed out that the University Christian Fellowship (UCF) formed a vigilante committee to see to it that Christian groups who go to pray on the Sarbah field do it in moderation. He said the

³²⁹ Student C, Interview, 19th March 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³³⁰ Staff I, Interview, 1st October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³³¹ Interview, Staff I, 1st October, 2012.

³³² Interview, Staff I, 1st October 2012.

committee agreed that after ten o'clock in the evening, loud prayers should not be encouraged and even where people want to pray they should do it in moderation, since around ten o'clock in the evening the little noise one makes could travel far and disturb other people. He noted that the hours before ten o'clock in the evening could not have so much impact on others as after ten o'clock in the evening or mid-night or at dawn where a lot of people were asleep. He also added that when people are asleep they are in an unconscious state and the little noise could wake the person up but when the person is awake he or she can exercise a little restraint as to what to do during such times.

The researcher enquired whether the Mensah Sarbah field was appropriate for loud Christian prayers and he said though it may not be the best, it is only patronized in the evenings and that the Miracle Center (around New N BLOCK) is used during the day for the prayers. He however felt that the evenings were not safe to go to the Miracle Center or the Botanical Gardens to pray because the place had no lights and it was far off from residencies and students who go there to pray could easily be attacked by wicked people such as armed robbers and rapists.³³³ He also said the vigilante group went to the field to advise their fellow Christians to pray in moderation but they met opposition because they were seen as being allowed to be influenced by the school authorities and were also seen as being anti-Christians to their praying loudly on the field.³³⁴

Staff J advised the security officials to take up this task in order to ensure that religious groups do everything in moderation. Staff J further said that usually individuals who go to the field to pray do not make so much noise like groups who gather there to pray. He also

³³³ Staff J, Interview, 1st October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

³³⁴ Staff J, Interview, 1st October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

said that outsiders also came to the Mensah Sarbah field to pray and though the students' groups are found culpable, outsiders who use the place are equally guilty because the University does not effectively regularize what outsiders come to do on campus. He shared his personal experience during his level 400 days on campus when he resided in Mensah Sarbah hall, a place very close to the praying grounds, and how he experienced the inconveniences loud Christian prayers could have on other people who may not be part of the group praying.³³⁵

4.3.2 Opinions of Some Students of the University of Ghana Campus

This section discusses the opinions of a section of students' population, on the issue of loud Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus. Since students form an integral part of the University precinct, their opinions are equally crucial to this research. I have put this interaction in a graphic form since greater numbers of respondents were involved.

Table 1. Places of Residence for Students' Respondents

Residence	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Mensah Sarbah Hall	26	29.2
Legon Hall	19	21.3
Valco Trust Phase One	17	19.1
Akuafio Hall	14	15.7
Valco Trust Phase Two	10	11.2
Alex Kwapong Hall	1	1.1
Evandy Hall	1	1.1
Jean Nelson Hall	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012

³³⁵ Staff J, Interview, 1st October, 2012, University of Ghana, Legon.

Questionnaires were administered to 89 students. Question 1 to 4 of the questionnaire had to do with the biographical information of the respondents (Sex/Gender/Status of Students (Level)). Out of the number, 43 or 48 percent were females and 46 or 51.7 percent were males. Of the general student respondents, 17 or 19.1 percent were from Valco Trust Phase One, 10 or 11.2 percent were from Valco Trust Phase Two, 14 or 15.7 percent were from Akuafo Hall, 26 or 29.2 percent were from Mensah Sarbah Hall, one (1) or 1.1 percent was from Alex Kwapong Hall, one (1) from Evandy Hall, one (1) or 1.1 percent was from Jean Nelson Hall and 19 or 21.3 percent were from Legon Hall. These halls were chosen because they are close to places that are noted for loud prayers and some of the respondents were available during the time the questionnaires were administered.

Table 2. Level of Education of Respondents

Level of Education	Number (%)	Percentage (%)
Undergraduates	62	69.7
Graduates	27	30.3
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2012.

As indicated in Table two above, 27 respondents or 30.3 percent of the respondents were graduate students and 62 respondents or 69.7 percent of the respondents were undergraduate students. They were chosen from different halls but they responded to the same questionnaire because they were under the same category of students. Therefore the student population in this context refers to both graduate students and undergraduates.

Table 3. Awareness of Code of Conduct for Students' respondents

Awareness of Code of Conduct	Undergraduates	Graduates	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Yes	59	25	84	94.4
No	3	2	5	5.6
			89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked to identify whether they were aware the University has a code of conduct for students; and a significant number of 84 respondents, representing 94.4 percent answered in the affirmative while 5 respondents or 5.6 percent of the respondents responded in the negative. This implies that since most students were aware of the code of conduct, they would not go contrary to or disregard what the code of conduct says or what is expected of them. The researcher took the opportunity to show those who were not aware of it where they could find these regulations, guiding the conduct of students in the University's handbook.

Table 4. Category of members of the University community, most culpable of noise-making

Category	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Students	84	94.4
Outsiders with promotion programs	2	2.2
No response	2	2.2
Both students and outsiders	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked to identify which category of users of the University community is most culpable of noise-making. In response a majority of 84 respondents, representing 94.4 percent identified students as the most culpable category of members of the University precincts fond of noise-making, 2 respondents or 2.2 percent identified outsiders with promotion programs, one (1) or 1.1 percent of the respondents also

identified that both students and outsiders are fond of noise-making on the University precincts and 2 respondents or 2.2 percent of the respondents did not give any response to the question. One would note that an overwhelming number of some student respondents identified students as the worse culprits of noise making on campus and this might be as a result of their large population on campus as compared to any other group.

Table 5. Christian religious groups and noise-making.

Christian religious groups and noise-making	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Yes	63	70.8
No	25	28.1
Not all of them	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked to ascertain whether Christian religious groups of the University are fond of noise-making; 63 respondents or 70.8 percent of the respondents think that Christian groups of the University are fond of noise-making while 25 respondents or 28.1 of the respondents answered in the negative with one (1) respondent stating that not all Christian groups are fond of noise-making. This indicates that Christian groups are fond of noise-making on the University campus but not all of them; while some are found praying silently, others will be praying aloud. It will therefore be inappropriate for one to assume that all Christian groups on the University campus indulge in loud acts, when praying.

Table 6. Christian Denominations and Noise-making

Christian Denominations and Noise-making	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Pentecostals/Charismatics	48	53.9
All Christian groups	11	12.4
No idea of the exact group	11	12.4
Pentecostals/Charismatics and Orthodox	6	6.7
None of the above	5	5.6

With the exception of Catholics & SDAs	3	3.4
No answer	2	2.2
Orthodox	1	1.1
Specific individual prayer groups	1	1.1
Those mid-night prayer warriors	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked to pinpoint which Christian religious groups are fond of noise-making; 48 respondents or 53.9 percent identifies Pentecostals/Charismatics as the worse culprits of noise-making on campus. Again, one could note that some respondents representing 12.4 percent of the total respondents noted that all Christian groups, and some respondents, representing 6.7 percent identified Pentecostals/Charismatics and orthodox. These responses indicate that on the University of Ghana campus, though Pentecostals/Charismatics are noted for loud praying to God, one would also find other mainline churches resorting in this way of prayer. Another 11 respondents, representing 12.4 percent said they had no idea of the exact group.

Table 7. Venues for Loud Christian Prayers

Venue	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Mensah Sarbah field	49	55.1
Halls (Mensah Sarbah dining hall/ Akuafo) and Mensah Sarbah field	16	18.0
Mensah Sarbah field and the Miracle Centre	7	7.9
No answers	5	5.6
Hall chapels, Mensah Sarbah field, botanical gardens	2	2.2
Mensah Sarbah field and Central Cafeteria (CC)	2	2.2
the venues for loud Christian prayers starts from rooms to lecture halls	2	2.2
Central Cafeteria (CC)	2	2.2
Cc, Mensah Sarbah field, libraries and various halls	1	1.1
Central Cafeteria (CC), NNB and Mensah Sarbah field	1	1.1

Mensah Sarbah field, miracle center and NNB	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

In table 7 respondents were asked to identify the venues that Christian groups use to make loud prayers and the responses are shown as follows: 49 respondents or 55.1 percent of the respondents indicated the Mensah Sarbah field as the main venue Christian religious groups gather to make noise as they pray. 16 respondents or 18 percent identified Halls (Mensah Sarbah dining hall/ Akuafu) and Mensah Sarbah field. From the information gathered it became clear that the Mensah Sarbah field is the most patronized for loud Christian prayers. Mensah Sarbah field is a large open field and therefore becomes suitable to accommodate large groups of people who gather there to pray.

As shown in Table seven above, 16 respondents or 18 percent of the respondents identified the various dining halls of the halls as well as the Mensah Sarbah field. This therefore demonstrates that though the Mensah Sarbah field can be identified as the main venue for loud Christian prayers, other venues like the dining halls of various halls and hall chapels are also used for loud prayers. It is therefore not surprising that 2 of the respondents felt the venues for loud Christian prayers run from rooms to lecture hall (almost everywhere on campus). This therefore does not limit loud prayers to just one venue but anywhere students find suitable to meet to pray, becomes their venue of prayer.

Table 8. Forms of Christian Noise-Making

Christian noise-making	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
all of the above	34	38.2
Loud prayers	19	21.3
loud prayers and clapping	12	13.5
Loud music	9	10.1

loud prayers and loud music	8	9.0
Clapping	3	3.4
No answer	3	3.4
Loud music and clapping	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Students were asked to identify some of the ways in which Christian religious groups make undue noise to the disadvantage of other people; The respondents identified several ways in which Christian religious groups are fond of making undue noise to the disadvantage of other people and these included loud prayers, loud music, and clapping, as ways to worship God. From table 8, 34 respondents or 38.2 percent of the respondents identified that loud prayers, clapping, loud music are all ways in which Christians make undue noise when praying.

Table 9. Time of Loud Christians prayer

Time of the Day	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Evening	50	56.2
Morning and Evening	21	23.6
At all times	12	13.5
Morning	4	4.5
Afternoon and Evening	1	1
Christians do not make noise with reference to any time of the day	1	1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Though 12 respondents, representing 13.5 percent said Christians are fond of making noise at all times, the effect of the noise can be felt during the evenings and early mornings, more than any other time, a time people may want to have some rest after a day's work or to start their day.

Table 10. Members of the University community, affected Most by Loud Christian Prayers

Most affected	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Both students and staff	44	49.4
Students	41	46.1
Workers	3	3.4
Do not know	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked to identify which groups of people were affected most by loud prayer of Christian religious groups only. The results show that 44 respondents or 49.4 percent of the respondents identified both students and staff of the University. 41 respondents or 46.1 percent identified students, 3 respondents or 3.4 percent said workers and other users of the University campus and (one) 1 respondent or 1.1 percent said he or she does not know. Students and staffs of the University may resort to more thinking in their work and when there is undue noise by Christian groups, they may not have the suitable environment to carry on such tasks. Also, because the respondents were students, they could easily identify students as the most affected by noise made by Christian religious groups and that could mean they were also speaking for themselves as students.

Table 11. The Effect of Loud Christian Prayers on the Productivity of Members of the University Community.

Effect on Productivity	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Yes	61	68.5
No	28	31.5
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

As to whether the noise made by Christian religious groups through loud prayers can in any way affect productivity of members of this community, 61 respondents or 68.5 percent

said that the noise Christian religious groups make can affect the productivity of other users of the University community and 28 respondents or 31.5 percent said it cannot affect the productivity of others.

Table 12. Ways by Which Productivity of Members of the University Community can be Affected By Loud Christian Prayers.

Ways by Which Productivity is Affected	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
No response	30	33.7
Loss of Concentration	27	30.3
Lack of good rest	21	23.6
Destructs whatever you are doing	4	4.5
Students must be able to condition themselves under such conditions	3	3.4
Irritating	1	1.1
Student involved in praying will have less time to study	1	1.1
Students who cannot study at such locations may have to relocate	1	1.1
Students will be affected depending on the magnitude	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

When respondents were asked to identify ways by which productivity of members of the University can be affected by loud Christian prayers; 27 respondents or 30.3 percent said they lose concentration when studying. Twenty-one (21) respondents or 23.6 percent said it prevents one from having a good rest, 4 or 4.5 percent said it distracts whatever one is doing, 3 respondents or 3.4 percent of the respondents said students must be able to condition themselves so that they can survive within any environment, one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent said students who cannot study at such locations may have to relocate, one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent said it is irritating, and 30 respondents or 33.7 percent of the respondents did not give answers to this question. This shows that people have various ways in which they respond to noise; some cannot concentrate on their studies, others may not be able to sleep and others will be distracted.

Table 13. Ensuring the compliance of the University rules

Duty	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Duty of all (Dean of Students Office, Students themselves, Hall tutors/management, security authorities and every individual).	50	56.2
Dean of Students office	13	14.6
Students themselves	8	9.0
Dean of Students Office and Security authorities	5	5.6
Hall tutors/management	3	3.4
No response	3	3.4
Dean of Students Office and hall tutors/management	2	2.2
Dean of Students office, students themselves and security authorities	1	1.1
Dean of Students office, students themselves and hall tutors/management	1	1.1
Hall tutors/management and Security authorities	1	1.1
Dean of Students office and students themselves	1	1.1
Security authorities	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked whose duty it is to ensure the compliance of University rules by its numerous users, to ensure an enabling environment for academic work; 50 respondents or 56.2 percent of student respondents noted that it was the duty of all (Dean of Students Office, Students themselves, Hall Tutors/Management, Security Authorities, and every individual) to ensure the compliance of the University rules in order to ensure an enabling environment for academic work. Five (5) respondents or 5.5 percent of the respondents said it was the duty of the Dean of Students Office and Security Authorities, one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent of respondent said it was the duty of the Dean of Students Office, Students themselves and Security Authorities to ensure that all are law abiding in order to promote academic work.

Responding the same questions one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent of respondent mentioned Dean of Students Office, Students themselves and Hall Tutors/Management,

one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent of respondent mentioned Hall Tutors/Management and Security Authorities, 2 respondents or 2.2 percent said the Dean of Students Office and Hall Tutors/Management, 13 respondents said the Dean of Students Office, one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent of respondent said the Dean of Students Office and Students themselves, one (1) respondent or 1.1 percent mentioned the security authorities, 8 respondents or 9.0 percent said it was the duty of students themselves, 3 respondents or 3.4 percent said it was the duty of Hall tutors/management and 3 respondents or 3.4 percent did not respond to this question.

Table 14. Opinions on Loud Christian Prayers situated close to Halls of Residence and Libraries

Opinions	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Disrupting academic work	31	34.8
Relocate venues of loud prayers	18	20.2
Minimize praying loudly	16	18.0
No response	13	14.6
Not affected as far as it's not close to halls/libraries	6	6.7
Chaplaincy complex should be built	2	2.2
educate leaders of the groups	1	1.1
Microphones should not be used when not necessary	1	1.1
The Sarbah field is the best location because it's not close to halls of residence or libraries	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Respondents were asked, their opinions on loud Christian prayers situated close to hall of residencies and libraries; 31 respondents or 34.8 percent said loud Christian prayers affect academic work, while 18 respondents or 20.2 percent said people who resort to such prayers must relocate to the outskirt of residencies and libraries. 16 respondents or 18

percent said people who pray loudly must minimize the loudness at which they pray. One would note that though the respondents had several opinions on the resort to loud prayers around halls of residencies and libraries, a high percentage of students made reference to the disruption of academic work, which seems to be the core function of the institution of the University.

Table 15. Opinions on Minimizing Loud Prayers on the University of Ghana campus.

Opinions	Number (#)	Percentage (%)
Existing laws must be enforced	31	34.8
Negotiate (talk at length)/educate	16	18.0
No response	12	13.5
Time limit of such activities	11	12.4
Ban	8	9.0
The university should provide a place of prayer	8	9.0
There should be noise limit	1	1.1
Fining	1	1.1
They should allow them to pray	1	1.1
Total	89	100.0

Source: Field Work 2012.

Responding to the request for general comments on what the University of Ghana authorities can do to minimize noise-making on campus, some respondents had these to say: “negotiate or educate the general populace on the effects of noise,” “existing laws must be enforced without fear or favor,” “there should be time limit for such activities like loud prayers”. Some other comments read, “the activities of loud prayers should be

banned, ò ñpeople who engage in loud prayers close to libraries and residencies should be fined.ò

By and large, those who saw loud prayers as hindrance to their academic work had some of these comments to make; 16 or 18 percent said the University authorities should negotiate (or talk at length) with interested parties like the religious groups or educate the general populace of the effects of noiseï making. 31 or 34.8 percent said the existing laws on observing some level of silence on the University campus must be enforced, while 11 or 12.4 percent of the respondents said there should be a time limit where people can have their activities. 1 or 1.1 respondent said ñThey should allow them to prayò. This could imply that some felt it was unchristian or sinful to criticize religious beliefs and practices and they need to be accepted the way they are without having any sort of academic discourse on them and especially when it is located in residencies.

4.4 Observation on Students' Reaction to Loud Christian Prayers

From the research it was obvious some of the students did not have much knowledge on how to control this practice of noise-making as some of them did not even know of the rules and regulations of the University on noise making let alone talk of the sanctions, or in the broader context relate it to the Constitution of Ghana, and what it says about noise-making.

They were also unaware of the Consolidation of the Criminal Code, 1960, Act 29, Section 296, which makes reference to Nuisances and Obstructions in Streets, and the like.

296. whoever does any of the following actsô shall be liable to a fine not exceeding ¢200,000 namely-

(2) in any town commits a nuisance in any public place or open space, or in any place being an appurtenance of or adjoining a dwelling house; or

(7) in any town willfully or wantonly, and after being warned to desist, makes any loud or unseemly noise however caused to the annoyance or disturbance of any person; or

(8) in any town, without a license in writing from the Minister or a local authority beats or play any drum, gong, tom-tom, or other similar instrument or music between eight o'clock at night and six in the morning; or³³⁶

In a similar vein the 1992 constitution of Ghana talks about the fundamental rights of people to worship (or not to worship) as stated in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. "Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, color, religion, creed or gender shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest."³³⁷ This implies that people have the right to worship (or not to worship), wherever they find themselves. The problem arises where one has to respect the rights and freedoms of others in one's bid to exercise one's rights to worship.

In addition there are bye-laws from the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) and regulations on noise pollution by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The AMA bye-laws on noise (Local Government Act 1993) as contained in the Local Government Bulletin, No. 19, September 1, 1995: 190 unequivocally state: "a person conducting a religious service shall not play or cause music to be played so loudly so as to cause a nuisance to the public and residents in the area." Any person who contravenes this provision of the Bye-law commits an offence liable to a fine of imprisonment.³³⁸

From the above discussion on the issues associated with loud Christian prayers, one can say that many people are agitated by loud noise that comes particularly from religious groups that pray close to hall of residencies and libraries. This is understandable as it disrupts sleep and other quiet moments that are needed for academic and other forms of wellbeing on the campus. Indeed quality sleep is essential to human health. Sleep is a state of unconsciousness from which one can be aroused. More than a periodic rest condition for the body and nervous system, it is a phase during which the body and nervous system

³³⁶ Criminal Code, 1960, Act 29, Section 296, 108-9.

³³⁷ Freedom & Justice: 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, (Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedom, Article 2 sub section 2: 1996) 11.

³³⁸ Brigid M. Sackey, "Business, Entertainment and Lawlessness: Contemporary Religion in Accra and Ghana," *Institute of African Studies Research Review*, 22 (2006): 63-71, 68.

can recuperate.³³⁹ Sleep disturbance or deprivation may lead to daytime sleepiness and decreased mental acuity and thus negatively affect normal growth and the ability of adolescents to learn in school.³⁴⁰ Some studies have shown that poor sleep quality is associated with social factors such as difficulty in dealing with problems, increased anxiety and tension, and behavioral problems, and has a negative effect on academic performance.³⁴¹

Sleep deprivation may also result in lapses of attention, indifference, loss of empathy and reduced motivation.³⁴² In a research conducted by Chen et al, adolescents who obtained this shows that a good sleep is very critical to academic work whereby one's mind is renewed to study well. It also prevents certain diseases that could affect the heart.³⁴³ When one is in good health, one is able to study well. Also as the popular adage goes, a sound mind resides in a sound body. Academic work is such that it requires some level of concentration especially when it involves intense reading or work and any obstructing sound of any kind could disrupt studies. One could lose concentration and begin to pay attention to what is distracting the person by listening to the words of the person or follow the tune of the person's music in prayer.

The researcher also observed that some Christians felt it was sinful to even deliberate on a Christian practice such as prayer. They would want to quote biblical texts to support loud prayers, the kind we quoted in Chapter Two. For example, that the walls of Jericho broke down as a result of loud shout (Joshua 6: 1-20), yet, they forget to understand the fact that doing things that are offensive to the neighbor and which, therefore, do not show the kind

³³⁹ Mei-Yen Chen, Edward K Wang and Yi-Jong Jeng, "Adequate Sleep Among Adolescents Is Positively Associated With Health Status And Health-Related Behaviors", *BMC Public Health*, (2006): 6:59.

³⁴⁰ Chen et al, "Adequate Sleep" 5.

³⁴¹ Chen et al, "Adequate Sleep" 6.

³⁴² Chen et al, "Adequate Sleep" 6.

³⁴³ Chen et al, "Adequate Sleep" 6.

of love expected of Christians, is not to show love to God Himself. This is because, and as we quoted earlier in chapter three, the greatest commandment given to Christians is for them to love God and their neighbors (Matthew 22:36-40). God also demands an ethical expression of justice in our relationship with one another. The freedom to practice a person's religion therefore has to go along with a show of love and a demonstration of fairness in all of our dealings with our neighbors. Christian ethical theories in decision-making such as love, justice and community ethics should guide in some of the excesses that come with loud Christian prayer. To put it in Professor John E. Ribera's words "Excessive loudness in worship is not always better; just the opposite."³⁴⁴

4.5 Discussion on responses from the Student population on Loud Christian prayers

From table six (6), 48 respondents, representing 53.6 percent of respondents identified Pentecostal or Charismatic denominations in relation to loud activities that cause noise on campus. Eleven (11) respondents or 12.4 percent of the respondents said they didn't know the exact group that engaged in loud prayer activities. This is because when prayer groups or sometimes individuals go to pray, it becomes difficult for one to know which exact Christian denomination the person may belong to and the best one could do is to infer from what one denomination is noted for and apply it to a given context. It could also be that respondents are aware of Christian groups that resort to loud prayers because they are privy to such information.

In table eight (8), one will realize that these various forms of prayers identified require some sort of vigorous energy and loudness and that may resort in some noise. For instance

³⁴⁴ Professor John E. Ribera's Symposium- Loud Worship Forms: Merits and Demerits, 22nd April, 2013, Accra.

if people have to clap when praying, they may resort to loud clapping based on their prayer topics or understanding of prayer. In the case where people may be praying for a breakthrough, for instance, they may resort to louder forms of prayer. Singing and praying to God may be loud when people are in a group praying as a prayer or song of a group may sound louder than an individual act. Also, because they are praying in a group the charisma of the prayer leader(s) can influence the loudness at which they perform their prayers.

In table nine (9) respondents were asked to state the time of the day Christians make noise and the responses are shown in the table above. The time of the day might be the underlining cause for the ethical issues involved. Many of the respondents (56.2%) said the noise was usually made in the evenings. This is understandable since by this time students would have been done with academic work and could have time for fellowship. Early in the mornings could also be convenient since most academic work starts after half past seven in the morning, so some students can make time for early morning prayers to start their days work. During the evenings, most students would have been done with lectures and personal studies and make some time for fellowship.

In table 9, 50 respondents, representing 66.2 percent of the respondents said Christian groups on the University of Ghana campus resort to loud Christian prayers in the evenings and 21 respondents or 23.6 percent of the respondents said it was during the evenings and morning. This is because most people may have retired to solitude, the little noise one makes travels far as compared to the day where they could easily adjust and resort to something else. The respondents who said at all times could also refer to late in the night and at dawn as one would find Christians praying at all times.

In table ten (10) students and staffs of the University may resort to more thinking in their work and when there is undue noise by Christian groups, they may not have the suitable environment to carry on such tasks. Also, because the respondents were students, they could easily identify students as one of the most affected by loud Christian prayer and that they were speaking for themselves as students. Again, in table 10, 44 respondents, representing 49 percent of respondents identified both students and staffs of the University. This is because of students and staffs, may require some quietude to carry out their tasks.

Respondents were asked whether they were affected by the effects of loud prayers in table eleven (11). This shows that a sizeable number of people are affected by the noise made by Christian religious groups and thereby affect their productivity or outcome, while some others carry on their normal task without being affected by noise made by Christian religious groups. This assertion is also expressed by other members of the University community as they are not able to concentrate on their academic work.

From the responses given in table thirteen (13), one would note that a significant number of the respondents, 50 or 56.2 percent said it was the collective duty of all to ensure the compliance of the University rules in order to promote an enabling environment for academic work. This is because one of the interested parties cannot work alone to achieve an enabling environment for academic, especially when others are not complying with the University rules. Also, the answer or response of the office of the Dean of Student Affairs seems to run through almost all of the answers given by the respondents and this could be

as a result of the office being seen as one in charge of the general wellbeing and affairs of students and the need for it to ensure that students comply with the University's rules.

The resort to Christian ethical principles by Christian religious groups has a possible way of resolving the problems related with loud Christian prayers. Some of these problems were identified as lack of concentration during studies, lack of rest; thereby affecting people's health, among many others. These problems can be dealt with if Christians who resort to loud prayers, in and around residencies will apply what Jesus said in Mark 12:29-33, when one of the Scribes came to ask Jesus which is the first commandment of all.

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Loving God and loving the neighbor from the above text points to the fact that the commandments given to Christians can be summarized into two basic commands. The Bible admonishes one loves his or her neighbor as oneself and this implies that, one would not treat others the way they would not want to be treated. God takes delight in loving one's neighbor than offering of burnt offerings when one does not have love.

During the research it was observed that when people are part of a prayer group, they seemed not to be affected by the loudness of the prayer because at that moment they are engaging in some spiritual exercise or warfare that involves the massive participation of all members as the leaders instruct them to. On the other hand people who live close to where this type of prayer is practiced are the direct recipient of the noise that emanates

from the prayer. The challenge of this comes in various forms such as sleeplessness (restlessness), irritation, headache and loss of concentration.

In this instance, the biblical passage asking one to love one's neighbor as oneself can be of essence because if one is disturbed when one is not part of a group of people praying aloud, then in that same manner, others (and in this sense, the majority) will be affected when they are not part of the group of people praying. When Christian groups who resort to loud Christian prayers, close to residencies and libraries also apply those sayings of Jesus Christ, they will learn to love others who may not be praying at the same time as they have chosen to pray or may not even share their religious beliefs, to be considerate in whatever they do so others may carry out other schedules of their lives. When one demonstrates love to another, one does not consider one's interest solely in dealing with others or in decision taking but one also considers other people's interest. God is said to be just and in like manner, Christians must be just in their dealings with others. The Bible also clearly demonstrates that: Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others (Philippians 2:3-4).

This may seem to be a difficult task for some Christians to do; valuing or loving others over oneself. This demonstrates one giving up one's selfish desires and considering other people's wellbeing in the decisions one makes. Jesus Christ demonstrated this selfless love so all humanity may be saved and in like manner Christians are to follow suit, that is, considering other people's wellbeing in one's strive for the best in life. In this sense if one can minimize the loudness at which one prays or if they still want to pray aloud, find a

suitable location where others are not unduly affected, then they are demonstrating Christ-like love and justice as the Bible encourages Christians to do. A further Bible reading in this regard is: My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you (John 15:12)

One could argue that members of these prayer groups show so much love to members as they intercede for one another in prayers. This love and concern is not shown to only members of this prayer groups but also to others who may not necessarily be around at the time of prayer, as those present are used as points of contact to intercede for others. However, if the people one is intervening for are the same people who are being offended by the disturbance of loud prayers, then one may say that the love being shown through intercessory prayers is meaningless to those on whose behalf the prayers are being made.

Love, justice and living in community should not be relegated to the background as Christians continue to live in a secular world where other people who do not share the same faith as they do must also be considered as some of the Christian principles to follow. One cannot underestimate the psychological underpinnings of some of the prayers in preparing students for their examinations. Students stand in a better position to go and write their examinations with the belief and hope that they have cast all their fears unto a being who is able to grant them success. As the Bible clearly states in James 1:5 that anyone who wants wisdom should ask from God: 'If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.'

The Bible also encourages Christians to ask and they shall be given (Matthew 7:7) and in this manner when such religious acts are done, then Christians are of the hope that God

will grant them success in their examination, good health and success in life. In some instances, students are not only anointed to excel in their examinations but they are also given symbols of their success over examinations through anointed pens that are prayed over and shared to all to use in writing their examinations. One cannot underestimate the psychological implications such prayers have on people who resort to them as they also fervently pray to destroy any spiritual forces working against their success.

However, it is equally important that Christians demonstrate Christ-like virtues in the communities they find themselves by minimizing the loudness at which they pray or find a distant place to pray. Furthermore, the Bible also contains teachings, as we discussed in chapter two on how Jesus managed certain kinds of prayer that may be loud cries unto His Father, God. For instance, the Bible demonstrates that any time Jesus wanted to pray, He withdrew from the crowd and went to a solitary place like the mountains to pray fervently to God. Inferring from Matthew 26:36-39 and Luke 22:39-44, and juxtaposing it to the context of the University of Ghana campus, a location a little distant from residencies and libraries could be regarded as “withdrawing from the crowd” as in the case of Jesus’ example³⁴⁵ in order to express their inner-most feelings unto the God such as crying, laughing, jumping, and dancing to the glory of God. Christians must also realize that in as much as some may argue that noise permeates every aspect of African lives: from naming ceremonies, puberty rites, marriage rites and even funerals our African traditional values also promote a sense of community building where not just the individual’s interest is promoted, but the good of the community is also taken into consideration.

³⁴⁵ This assertion was also noted by Dr. Ben-Willie Golo, Symposium, “Loud Worship Forms: Merits and Demerits”, 22nd April 25, 2013, University of Ghana, Legon.

As argued by Professor Brigid Sackey, that these activities such as marriage rites, puberty rites, naming ceremonies, the market scene and many other activities that take place in Africa, happen during the day and when such unusual sound are heard during the night then it means something strange or awkward might have happened or about to happen.³⁴⁶ Therefore, it does not make this assertion grounding enough for anyone to use it to support loud Christian prayers, especially in residencies and places close to libraries. Even if Africans are found to be loud in all spheres of their lives, in an academic context such as this, this act cannot be accepted as it does not seem to promote the core aim of the University, in promoting academic excellence and general wellbeing of the community.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the position and opinions of users of the University precincts concerning noise-making through loud prayers. All the categories of people surveyed admitted that prayer is essential to every religious being but many also said that it can be destructive when practiced in a 'selfish' way of not being mindful of how it affects others who do not belong to the group. There were suggestions as to how to control the menace of noise on campus. We move to the next chapter (chapter five), which gives a summary and recommendations to those who care.

³⁴⁶ Sackey, 'Business, Entertainment and Lawlessness' 69.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This conclusion discusses the main findings of the thesis and the extent to which the objectives have been met. Recommendations that are believed to ensure the responsible resort to loud Christian prayers in residencies and close to libraries, on the University of Ghana, Legon are also discussed.

5.2 Summary

The study concerned itself with the what, why and how loud Christian prayers can be controlled on the University of Ghana campus. This was based on the fact that despite the core aim of the University to promote academic excellence, people who come to this University come along with their various backgrounds, among which is religion; which plays a vital role in the lives of most Africans. Prayer, as started earlier is one of the means by which Africans portray their religiosity and can be found in all aspects of their lives and plays crucial roles in their lives. However, it also comes with its consequences that need to be addressed. One stated the objectives of the research as determining for oneself; find out why some Christian groups pray the way they do on the University of Ghana campus, find out the attitudes and views towards loud prayers by some Christian groups, finding out how loud public prayers affect academic work and people who live on the University of Ghana campus and finally, to attempt finding solutions to problems that are raised through the use of Christian moral norms.

Chapter two sought to look at Christian understanding of prayer as a religious practice in order for one to be informed about the theological under-pinning to some of the religious practices that go with Christian prayer. The Trinity plays a dominant role in some Christian prayers and for the groups under study, the emphasis on the Trinity played a crucial role in their prayers as much emphasis was placed in the continuous mentioning of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Each of these was given special recognition in prayers. Faith was very instrumental in the prayer forms of the group under discussion as they prayed in the hope that whatever they have asked from God, they shall receive.

The two major forms of Christian prayer were also looked at, that is public prayer and private prayer, places where these prayers are performed and how prayer is performed. Jesus's teachings on prayer were also looked at to inform the current work on the theology and ethics of prayer and the chapter concluded with the essence and role of prayer in the lives of Christians. Prayer, as said earlier on, gives some sort of hope to the person(s) resorting to it as they subject their supplications to a being who is known throughout history and through His word that He listens to the cries of all who call on Him.

Chapter three dealt with ethics, theology and loud Christian prayer. The chapter discussed some moral decision-making principles and theories, as well as Christian ethics. The ethical theories include deontology, teleology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. Virtues of love, justice and community ethics were discussed as Christian principles in addressing some of the issues associated with loud Christian prayers.

Chapter four discussed the positions and opinions of the University authorities, the student population and Christian religious groups on the use of loud prayers around residencies and libraries. Varied opinions were sampled from University authorities and staff, some Christian religious groups and some students. Issue of security of those who go to pray farer from residencies was raised, as they increase their risk to be prone to all kinds of attacks and rape. However, problems such as sleeplessness, lack of concentrations and many others were identified as affecting the academic work of users of the University of Ghana campus. Problems such as sleeplessness, loss of concentration, and many others were identified as affecting the academic work of users of the University of Ghana campus.

5.3 Major Findings

The work found out that Christian groups of the University of Ghana are fond of loud prayers which results in noise-making as shown in table 5, where 70.8 percent of the respondents agreed to this view. 53.9 percent of the respondents said that Pentecostals or Charismatic Christian denominations were the worse culprits of noise-making on the University of Ghana campus and 12.4 percent of the respondents said all Christian groups of the University of Ghana, are fond of loud prayers which results in noise-making, as shown in table 6. Opinions from table 7 suggest that Mensah Sarbah field is the most patronized venue for loud Christian prayers, with 55.1 percent of the respondents agreeing to this view. 18.0 percent of the respondents made mention of the various halls as one of the most patronized venue used for loud prayers.

About 56.2% of the respondents mentioned that the evenings were mostly used for loud prayers, 23.6 percent said the mornings and evenings were used loud prayers and 13.5

percent said Christian groups resorted to loud prayers at all times. In table 10, 49.4 percent of the respondents said both students and staff of the University of Ghana are affected most by loud Christian prayers and 46.1 percent of the respondents said students are the most affected by loud Christian prayers. Opinions suggest in table 11 that loud Christian prayers affect the productivity of members of the University community, with 68.5 percent of the respondents supporting this view.

Identifying the ways in which productivity of members of the University can be affected by loud Christian prayers in table 12, 30.3 percent of the respondents said they lose concentration when studying and 23.6 percent of the respondents said they were not able to rest. In table 13, 56.2 percent of the respondents said it was the duty of all (Dean of Students Office, students themselves, hall tutors or management, security authorities and every individual) to ensure the compliance of the University rules. This is to ensure the compliance of the University's rules and regulations, to promote an enabling environment for academic work and 14.6 percent said it was the duty of the dean of students office, 9.0 percent said it was the duty of students themselves and 5.6 percent said it was the duty of the dean of students office and security authorities.

Opinions on minimizing loud prayers on the University of Ghana campus as shown on table 15 suggests that 34.8 percent of the respondents said the existing laws regulating noise-making on campus must be enforced, 18.0 percent said all interested parties must negotiate or talk at length on this issue in order to arrive at a possible solution, and 12.4 said there should be a time limit for such activities.

5.4 Fulfilling the objectives of the study

This study set out to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Investigate why some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers.
- ii. Examine its impact of on academic work and social life on campus and the responses of members of the University of Ghana community towards loud Christian prayers on campus.
- iii. Explore some Christian theological and moral interventions towards organized Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus.

The researcher attempted fulfilling these aim/objectives by answering the following questions:

i. Investigate why some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers

Some of the reasons why some Christian groups engage in loud Christian prayers have been discussed in chapter two and four, where the Christian view and understanding of prayer plays a crucial role in how they perform their prayer; to either make it silent or loud. Biblical references are also important to this remarks as one would find respondent given biblical reasons for the type of prayer they practice and especially in this case, loud prayers as practiced on the University of Ghana campus. Other social reasons that were given was to pray in unison and also striving before God in prayer, so one's needs are meet. One of the respondents mentioned that 'if one gets a call from the house that one house that one's mother is dying, one will pray with all seriousness and that involves praying out loud to cause God to save the mother, unlike when they are having morning devotion in their various rooms.'³⁴⁷

³⁴⁷ Student A, Interview, 16th December 2013.

ii Examine the impact of loud prayer on academic work and social life on campus and the responses of members of the University of Ghana community towards loud Christian prayers on campus.

This question has been lengthily addressed in the fourth chapter. Chapter three dealt with ethics, theology and loud Christian prayer. The chapter discussed some moral decision-making principles and theories, as well as Christian ethics. The ethical theories include deontology, teleology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. Virtues of love, justice and community ethics were discussed as Christian principles in addressing some of the issues associated with loud Christian prayers.

Chapter four discussed loud Christian prayer on the University campus. Varied opinions were sampled from University authorities and staff, some Christian Pentecostal groups and some students. Issue of security of those who go to pray farer from residencies was raised, as they increase their risk to be prone to all kinds of attacks and rape. However, problems such as sleeplessness, lack of concentrations and many others were identified as affecting the academic work of users of the University of Ghana campus. Problems such as sleeplessness, loss of concentration, and many others were identified as affecting the academic work of users of the University of Ghana campus.

iii Explore some Christian theological and moral interventions towards organized loud Christian prayers on the University of Ghana campus.

The work also explored some Christian theological and moral interventions in regards to this phenomenon. Christian love, justice and community building were proposed to be used in alleviating this issue on the University of Ghana campus.

In a nutshell, the objectives of this thesis have been met because the interview with these Christian Pentecostal groups have prompted them on the adverse effect loud prayers have on other members of the University community and also provided an alternative way of the application of Christian moral principles to the effect of loud Christian prayers. Christian groups may have to look at the time, place and when to practice the type of prayer in order to create an environment that is conducive for all members of the University community.

5.5 Recommendations

For easy consideration of the recommendations of loud prayer, it has been categorized. They are: The use of Christian ethical principles by Christian religious groups, recommendations to staff of the University of Ghana campus and General Students's population. Other areas involved collaborate efforts of the school authorities, general students population, Christian religious groups, institutions-in charge of educating on noise pollution, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other areas where cooperative efforts of Christian leaders and churches are needed in order to maintain an enabling environment for peaceful coexistence, especially in the communities where such groups are located. One upholds that all these groups have a part to play in their bid to devoid their societies of excessive noise pollution, specifically those associated with loud Christian prayers.

This is also not to suggest that religious groups and in this instance, Christian religious groups are the worse culprits in various communities in relation to noise pollution as this research has indicated that there are other forms of noise that exists especially on the University of Ghana campus. This may result from noise emanating from football

matches, political campaigns, advertising products to be sold and the like. One will also realize that what happens on the University of Ghana campus is a miniature of what happens in various communities in Ghana, so it is presumed that this work does not influence what happens on the university of Ghana campus only but also what happens in some communities in Ghana.

5.5.1 Recommendations to Christian groups of the University of Ghana

Christian prayer groups, and in the context of this work, the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry (AGCM) and Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) have special roles to play in helping to reduce problems associated with loud Christian prayers. Christian groups should be encouraged to use chapels that are a little enclosed with sound proof systems to absorb the loudness at which they pray, especially when they want to pray in the evenings and at dawn so that the effect is not so much felt by people who are not part of the group.

One would note that sometimes, even when the prayer group is small and does not need loud speakers or public address systems, leaders are found using them. This practice should be discouraged. In instances where the public address system is necessary to be used, it can be lowered to the hearing of the people being addressed and not to the hearing of others who are not part of the group. All these can be done away with when people understand prayer to be the communication between one and one's object of worship and no matter how persistent one is before God in prayer, God becomes the object to be addressed and not to the hearing of people who are not partaking in such prayers at that point in time.

Jesus clearly demonstrated where we can pray all out especially when it comes to loud prayers as he constantly withdrew from the crowd. This can be shown from the passage where Jesus goes to pray on the Mount of Olives; Luke 22:39-44. This demonstrates that Jesus who is the central theme surrounding Christianity saw the need to pray privately to God, especially when he had to express his inner most needs to God. In like manner Christians should also try to withdraw from the crowd if they need to pray out loud as a means to express their frustrations, anguish and disappointments before God. On the other hand if one would want to shout for joy or laugh as a result of God granting one's wish, and where this may be uncontrollable, then this can also be done a little distant from residencies and libraries so one can express one's inner most gratitude towards God.³⁴⁸

Christian religious groups must also bear in mind that even if it is a few people who can openly talk about the effects loud prayers have on them, they must be listened to. It will be improper to cause undue discomfort to others who seem to be in the majority and cannot openly voice out their frustrations as a result of the loud prayer. Christian religious groups should not see people who objectively talk about their religious practices that affect them negatively. They should rather re-think about it how to live right within society. One must bear in mind that some of our African values such as community ethics or a sense of community living, should not be done away with completely no matter how one interacts with other disciplines and religions. This is not to suggest that African cultures do not do away completely with the rights of individuals to life, religion and any others as the individual is also recognized.

³⁴⁸ Dr. Joseph Osafo, Symposium- Loud Worship Forms: Merits and Demerits, 22nd April, 2013, Accra.

5.5.2 Recommendations to the University Authorities

The University authorities can help to reduce the problems associated with the use of loud Christian prayers near residencies and libraries in several ways. First, the University authorities can work hand in hand with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other interested bodies to educate members of this community on the need to maintain some silence, especially in relation to an academic environment such as this. This could also be demonstrated in a form of drama by the Theater Arts department of the University of Ghana and could also be shown on national television to educate the whole nation, as this menace is not only limited to the University of Ghana, Legon. The University's Radio Universe could also be used as a medium to educate not only members of this community but also the general population. The print media could also be used to educate people on the demerits of Loud Christian Prayers and other forms of noise pollution that have become a crippling societal norm that is gaining grounds in Ghana. As people read what is in print, they become better informed and are able to take informed decisions. This assertion is emphasized by Professor John Pobbee that education influences the future of the nation.³⁴⁹

The University authorities can provide a place of worship so people do not have an excuse that the University has denied them a place of worship, especially in relation to the Mensah Sarbah field. A structure with sound proof systems, a little distant from residencies and libraries could be put up for such religious activities. This could be done hand in hand with the various churches involved in contributing resources towards such a good course for the benefit of all.

³⁴⁹ Pobbee, John, PHD Oral Defence (by Grace Sintim), University of Ghana, Legon.

The University authorities can keep on dialoguing with interested parties until this issue is resolved. As earlier on noted, because those under discussion are Christians, resolving this issue cannot be completely done away without the engagement of Christian bodies. When one is educated on an issue, one becomes informed and is able to take informed decisions that do not necessarily benefit one alone but for the benefit of the whole of society.

During the field work, the researcher realized that some of the students had no knowledge of University's code of conduct for students. Some did not have the idea of even how the University's handbook looked like though they all had copies in their possession. I think the authorities in charge of disseminating information are doing a good job but I also think that some platform could be provided for students to have interactions with authorities as to why they must obey laid down rules. In this regard I think more education and awareness should be created on good conduct among people.

5.5.3 Recommendation to Students

As part of educating students, students have to take keen interest in knowing about the regulations of the University of Ghana in particular, and the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana in general, without necessarily relying on others. For instance, the handbook for the Bachelor's degree: 2009-2011 of the University of Ghana has the following guideline in relation to noise making, in order to regulate the conduct of students as far as the University is concerned. Article 17, sub section 1 clause VII of the University handbook states that 'It shall be an offence for a Junior member to: é make undue noise within the University precincts. In particular, the hours between 10.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. are to be regarded as hours of quiet, provided that this rule shall not apply where permission to

organize a function has been granted by the Head of Hall or Dean of Students.³⁵⁰ As stated earlier in chapter one, various notices have also been posted to the various halls to educate students on how to conduct themselves in relation to noise-making.

Students should be able to review what their peers do: whether positively or negatively. From the research, students were found to be the worse culprit in noise making that comes in various forms and since they form a large portion to this community, they should be able to use proper ways to address people who resort to it. Peer review is also important because issue of noise pollution happens around areas close to where students reside and study and therefore the need to talk to their peers. Students should come out to address their concerns to the right authorities and not resort to physical attack or violence. This is an academic community (and society expects educated people to know better, especially things written in black and white) and violence should not be used in any way to resolve an issue. This is as a result of sayings that people, who go out to pray or evangelize, are subjected to some form of attacks such as being chased out by others who are affected.³⁵¹

5.6 Recommendation on Areas for further Research Work

The researcher thinks that since noise pollution is not limited to only Christian groups, scientists, with special reference to the audiology department can also look into the scientific effects of loud forms of noise on the human being and help in contributing towards the eradication of noise in the community. Further research could also be done on noise-pollution by other religious.

³⁵⁰ University of Ghana- Handbook for the Bachelor's Degree (Humanities): 2009-2011. August, 2009, 40-1.

³⁵¹ Dr. Anim-Sampong, Symposium- "Loud Worship Forms: Merits and Demerits", University of Ghana, 22 April 2013.

5.7 General Conclusion

This thesis focused on the theological and ethical reflections on loud Christian prayers as pertaining to areas close to residencies and libraries, on the University of Ghana, Legon. Making reference to the working definition in chapter one, loud Christian prayers are used in this context to mean, a strong sound made to cause some form of discomfort or unbearable situation to the recipients of the sound, some of who may not even be part of the group of prayer. One cannot underestimate or deny the significance of Christian prayers in the life of a Christian. It was found through the research that loud Christian prayers can be said to have many good sides. Among which are: loud Christian prayers give some sort of hope that one's condition will be improved after one has gone fervently before God in prayer. Some also expressed some sort of relief any time they poured their hearts out to a being who listens and is able to grant them their requests. On the other hand, when people who resort to it do not do it in an environment that is conducive, it becomes a nuisance to others who are not part of the group and may not necessarily share their religious beliefs.

In chapter four of the research for instance, most of the respondents noted that loud Christian prayers result in lack of concentration when studying. This means that one will use more hours to read or use more hours to do a task that could have been done in less time and that could affect academic excellence. When people cannot concentrate on their studies or work, they tend to use that time unproductively on things that demand less concentration at the detriment of their studies. In this regard, the University authorities need to organize programs to educate students on the demerits of noise pollution in order to make them more informed in the decisions they take and the possible consequences.

One may underestimate the importance of sleep to academic work, yet sleep is very crucial in one's life.

It was indicated in chapter four that application of strict Biblical rules without exercising love to the other was not helpful. It was realized that the University authorities are doing their best to create an enabling environment to promote academic work. However, not much education has been made in light of the demerits of loud Christian prayers and other forms of noise that exist on the University of Ghana campus. One also observed that some Christians felt they had been picked on though they may not necessarily be the worse culprit of noise on campus and therefore suggestions have been made to address the issue of noise holistically and not picking on one of the groups. Christian exercise of their duties such as prayer cannot be devoid of the consequences that come with it in decision-making. One believes the above recommendations, when considered, will go a long way to rectify the solution.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON OPINIONS OF STAFF, PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN GROUPS AND GENERAL STUDENTS ON LOUD CHRISTAIN PRAYERS

A. STAFF

Agnes Quansah is researching on a theological and ethical study on loud Christian prayer on the University of Ghana campus, particularly on the problems associated with loud public prayers and would be grateful if you could spend some time to respond to the following questions. You are kindly requested to express your candid opinion on each question. Since this work is for academic purpose, strict confidentiality is assured.

MODE OF ANSWERS

1. Please tick appropriate answers where answers are provided.
2. Please give brief answers where answers are not provided.

Sex: Male [] Female []

1. Age:
2. Religious Affiliation:
3. Status:
4. Are Christian groups found guilty of noise-making on the University of Ghana campus? (a) Yes (b) No
5. Please explain your answer to question 4 above

[illegible]

6. What places do they patronize most in making noise?

[illegible]

7. In what ways do they make noise?

[illegible]

8. If they make noise is it an issue of concern to other members of the University community?

17. Please explain your position as in question 16 above?

18. Are you aware of some problems associated with loud public prayers among members of the University of Ghana community?

19. Please mention those you are aware of as in question 18.

20. Is there a need to control loud public prayers among Christian groups and why?

[illegible]

21. Whose duty is it to control Christian religious activities on the University campus?

22. Do you share the view that with ethics and proper theology of prayer, Christian religious groups who resort to loud prayer can do it in moderation so other people can carry on their normal activities on campus?

23. Is it necessary to back University rules with Christian moral norms such as love and justice and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

24. What is your opinion of religion, as a means for noise-making?

[illegible]

25. What is your position on the use of loud Christian prayers situated at where they are on the University of Ghana campus?

[illegible]

26. Do you think people who resort to loud Christian prayer should consider the interest of other people, who may not necessarily be part of the group? (a) Yes (b) No

27. Please explain your answer to 29 as above

[illegible]

28. What do you think the University authorities can do to ensure that members of the community moderate whatever they do so that they do not affect the productivity of other people?

2. Age:
3. Religious Affiliation:
4. Status:
5. Does the chaplaincy board organize meetings with Christian groups?
(a) Yes (b) No (c) sometimes (d) other (please specify)é é é é é é é é é é é é .
6. If Yes, what are some of the issues that are raised in relation to noise-making on the University of Ghana campus?
7. How often issues of noise-making by Christian do groups come up for discussion at Chaplaincy Board meetings?
(a) Often (b) Not often (c) Not at all
8. What measures have been designed by the Chaplaincy board to check the problems associated with loud public prayers by Christian groups?
9. What role does the chaplaincy board play in communicating University rules to Christian religious groups especially in relation to noise-making?
10. What role can the University Chaplaincy board play in ensuring that prayer activities organized by Christian groups are done in a favorable way, thereby promoting academic work?
11. Why do Christian groups usually patronize the Sarbah field for prayer activities?
12. What is your position on the use of loud Christian prayers situated very close to halls of residence and libraries?
13. Do you think loud Christian prayer activities disturb other members of the University campus and why?
14. What is your opinion of religion, as a means for noise-making?

15. Do you think Christian groups who indulge in loud public prayers on the University of Ghana campus should consider the interest of other people who may not necessarily be members of the group?
- (a) Yes (b) No
16. Please explain your answer as in 14 above
17. Whose duty is it to ensure the compliance of University rules by its numerous members, to ensure an enabling environment for academic work?
18. What do you think the University authorities can do to ensure that members of the community moderate whatever they do so that they do not affect the productivity of other people?
19. Please make suggestions on how the problems associated with loud prayers by Christian groups can be checked.

APENDIX C

III. CHRISTIAN GROUPS

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age é .

3. Christian Denomination:
 é ...
4. Your participation in church activities (a) Active (b) Inactive (c) Moderate
5. Does Christian moral norms help you to promote peaceful harmonious living among people (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Certain
6. Please mention some Christian moral norms you are aware of
7. What happens to anyone who breaks these values?
8. Why do some Christians pray loud?
9. Is making loud prayer biblical/theological and why?
10. Do you think that by following Christian moral norms, one should be able to live in a harmonious environment without having any problems?
 (a) Yes (b) No
11. Please explain your answer
12. Do you pray loudly? (a) Yes (b) No
13. Why do religious students usually patronize the Sarbah field?
14. How long do you pray loudly on the Sarbah field? (a) 1 hr (b) 2 hrs (c) 3 hrs (d) other é é é é é é
15. Why do you pray loudly? (a) Biblical bases (b) Situational bases (c) both a and b
 Other(s)
 Specify é
 é
16. State your place of prayer meetings

- (a) Sarbah field (b) University's Botanical garden (c) At the back of Balme library (d) Chapel/ Church (e) other specifyé é

17. What motivates you to pray loudly?

18. Do you pray quietly? (a) Yes (b) No

19. What situation necessitates your praying quietly?

20. Is it necessary to consider other people's interest, like whether it affects them when you are praying? (a) Yes (b) No

21. Please explain your answer to question 20 as above

22. What factors necessitate Christian groups's patronage of specific places for loud public prayers on the University campus?

23. Do loud public prayers affect you psychologically and why?

24. What are some of the needs does your prayer address?

- (a) Academic (b) getting gainful employment after school (c) marital (d) otheré é é é .

25. Do you study alongside your prayer life? (a) Yes (b) No

Please explain the choice of your answer

26. Do you think something should be done to minimize effects of loud praying?

27. Do you pray about private issues when you are in group prayer meetings? (a) Yes (b) No

Please explain the choice of answer

28. To which prayer groups are you a member?

.....

29. What are your reasons for choosing the prayer group?

30. What type of prayer do you practice?
31. Why have you chosen this type?
32. Do you get satisfaction in praying loudly? (a) Yes (b) No

Please explain your answer

33. Do you think praying aloud may disturb others who may not be part of the group and why?
34. Are you aware that the University code of conduct for students in the University handbook talks about students moderating whatever they do, especially in relation to noise making? (a) Yes (b) No

Please explain your answer

35. What role can Christian groups play in creating and promoting a conducive environment for academic work for all its users?
36. What can the University do in providing a place for prayer activities that is conducive?
37. If No, please provide alternative places for such activities?
38. What is your opinion of religion, in relation to noise-making?
39. What is your position on the use of loud public prayers situated very close to halls of residence and libraries?
40. Make suggestions on how the problems associated with loud public prayers by Christian groups can be overcome.

12. Which Christian groups are fond of noise-making?

(a) Pentecostals/Charismatics (b) Orthodox (c) others (please specify)

13. Which venue(s) do Christian groups patronize the most for loud prayer activities?

14. In what ways are Christian groups fond of making undue noise to the disadvantage of other people?

(a) Loud prayers (b) Loud music (c) clapping (d) all of the above

15. During what time of the day are Christians found of making noise?

(a) Morning (b) Afternoon (c) Evening (d) All times

16. Which groups of users of the University are affected most by the noise religious groups make?

(a) Students (b) Lecturers and Researchers (c) both students and staff of the university (d) workers and other users of the University campus.

17. If Christian groups make noise, can it in any way affect productivity of users of this community? (a) Yes (b) No

18. If yes, in what ways can it affect productivity of members of the University community?

19. How do loud public prayers affect students who are not part of the group?

20. What is your opinion of religion, in relation to noise-making?

21. In your view, whose duty is it to ensure the compliance of University rules by its numerous members, to ensure an enabling environment for academic work?

(a) Dean of Students office (b) Students themselves (c) Hall tutors/management (d) security authorities (e) all of the above

22. What is your position on the use of loud public prayers situated very close to halls of residence and libraries?

23. What do you think the University authorities can do to ensure that members of the University of Ghana community moderate whatever they do so that they do not affect the productivity of other people?
24. Make suggestions on how the problems associated with loud public prayers by Christian groups can be checked.