

**HEALING AND DELIVERANCE IN CHURCH GROWTH:
THE CASE OF THE GLOBAL EVANGELICAL CHURCH,
GHANA FROM 1991 - 2011.**

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BY

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THE AWARD OF MPhil RELIGIONS DEGREE**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is not a reproduction in part or in whole of any work ever presented for the award of any degree. It is my own research work produced under supervision at the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana. All references to other existing works have been duly acknowledged.

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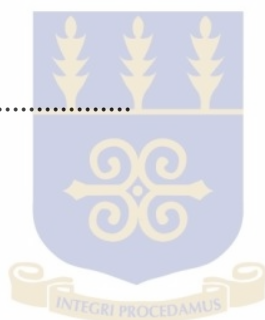
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ABSTRACT

Healing and deliverance has become very common and central to the activities of most churches in Ghana. The Global Evangelical Church (GEC) is one of the churches in Ghana that engages in the practice. The Church has since its inception in 1991 engaged in healing and deliverance as part of its theological orientation. This practice has been incorporated into the church with the aim of evangelizing people as well as responding to the needs of its members and the general society. Consequently, healing and deliverance is considered as playing a significant role towards the growth of the church. With specific focus on the GEC, this research, investigates the practice of healing and deliverance and the extent to which it has enhanced the growth of the (GEC). The purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between 'healing and deliverance' and church growth in the GEC. Employing phenomenological and historical methods, which include the use of scholarly and non-scholarly books on healing, deliverance and church growth, data was collected through interviews, focus group discussions and participants' observation from three congregations of the GEC. Using qualitative method of data analysis, views elicited from the field have been discussed in the light of scholarly perspectives on elements of healing and deliverance and principles of church growth. It was discovered that healing and deliverance, as a practice, is characterised by different activities. It is the effectiveness of these activities that contributes to the well-being of the 'healed' and 'delivered'. The practice has also been used as an evangelistic tool in winning many souls into the church and subsequently leads to numerical, conceptual, incarnational, financial and infrastructural growth of the church. This research has also found that healing and deliverance has contributed greatly to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church within the period under-studied. The study has discovered that healing and deliverance is a factor but not the only factor and does has positive correlation with the growth of the congregations studied.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Mrs. Joyce Adzo Ahiabu and my four children: Elizabeth,
Precious, Elijah and Israel Ahiabu



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The phenomenon of healing and deliverance has become very common and central to the religious activities of most churches in Ghana.¹ Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu explains healing and deliverance from a charismatic point of view as 'the deployment of divine power and authority in the name or blood of Jesus perceived in pneumatological terms as the intervention of the Holy Spirit to provide release for demon-possessed, demon-oppressed, broken, disturbed and troubled persons in order that victims may be restored to proper functioning order, that is, to health and wholeness and being thus freed from demonic influence and curses, they may enjoy God's fullness of life understood to be available in Christ.'² From this Charismatic Pentecostal perspective, healing and deliverance, is considered to be an avenue as well as the practice which employs certain Christian religious activities with the purpose of responding to the human existential needs.

According to Asamoah-Gyadu, 'the Pentecostal "healing and deliverance" ministry has become popular in African contexts such as Ghana because it takes the African worldviews of mystical causality seriously. This Christianity promises Christian alternatives to the search for security that drives people into the courts of other religious functionaries'.³ Contrasting the African nature of Charismatic Pentecostal churches with the western mission churches, Allan Anderson argued that the Charismatic Pentecostal churches are motivated by a desire to

¹ Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Of Sour Grapes and Children's Teeth: Inherited Cults, Human Rights and Processes of Restoration in Ghanaian Pentecostalism', *Exchange: Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research*, Vol. 33, (2004), 343. See also, Elom Dovlo, 'Healing and Religious Pluralism in Ghana', (Draft Paper Presented at Graduate Seminar, University of Stockholm, September, 2006), 10.

² Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), 165.

³ Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Christ is the Answer': 'What is the Question?' a Ghana Airways Prayer Vigil and its Implications for Religion, evil and Public Space', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 35 (2005), 93.

meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of Africans, offering solutions to life's problems and finding ways to cope with the threatening and anxieties of a hostile world.⁴ Some scholars have described Ghanaian Charismatic Pentecostal Churches as some of the fastest growing churches in the past three decades.⁵ This rapid growth, according to Anderson, is attributed to the churches' focus on making meaning of the contemporary existential problems that confront Christians through their contextualization approach.⁶ For these scholars, the Charismatic Pentecostal churches are experiencing this rapid growth because most of them are able to fashion out programmes that respond to the contextual needs of both members and non-members. The programmes, therefore, become the avenues by which most members of the church are attracted and converted to Christianity and the various Christian denominations they belong to. As a result, Anderson writes:

One of the reasons for the growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches may be that they have succeeded where western founded churches have often failed to provide a contextual Christianity in Africa. ...it is the ability of African Pentecostalism to adapt to and fulfil the religious aspirations that continue to be its main strength. An African style of worship and liturgy and a holistic Christianity that offers tangible help in this world as well as the next together form a unique African contextualization of Christianity. This contextual Christianity meets needs more substantially than the often sterile Christianity imported from Europe.⁷

From this point of view, Anderson does not only explain the rapid growth of the Charismatic Pentecostal churches, but it also indicates their African origin and the influence of African orientation on holistic view of religion.

One common practice in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches, which is fast spreading across Ghana and the continent of Africa, is healing and deliverance. The extensive practice of healing and deliverance by Charismatic and Pentecostal churches is asserted to be one of

⁴ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 199.

⁵ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 38, 104 & 115.

⁶ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 160, 199 & 201,

⁷ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 122.

the major contributing factors to church growth among these kinds of churches.⁸ Most of these Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches have been noted for exploring healing and deliverance as an evangelistic tool for the establishment and growth of their church denominations.⁹ The Global Evangelical Church (GEC) has also adopted appreciable levels of the Charismatic and Pentecostal features which are evident in the congregation of its religious activities.¹⁰ These activities include revival meetings, all-night prayer meetings, corporate prayer, Bible study, evangelism and mission, healing the sick, and casting out of demons.¹¹ Most congregations of the GEC have a specific day set aside for the practice of healing and deliverance.

A visit to most congregations and programmes of the Global Evangelical Church reveals the extent to which the practice has become part and parcel of the church's life. National, presbytery, zonal, district and local conventions hardly end without 'healing and deliverance' services. Evangelistic crusades, week- long revivals, fasting and prayer and end-of-year presbytery prayer festivals among others are characterized by 'healing and deliverance'. At the local levels, those congregations which consistently combine the practice with other ministry gifts seem to be growing faster, at least, numerically. Examples of such congregations include the Sogakope of the Sogakope presbytery, Kotobabi Trinity parish, Madina Adonai Chapel (in the Accra presbytery), Ho-Fiave and Aflao in the Ho and Akatsi presbyteries respectively, just to mention a few.¹² It therefore becomes necessary to explore

⁸ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 30.

⁹ Allan Anderson., 'Evangelism and the Growth of Pentecostalism in Africa', http://artsweb.bham.ac.uk/aanderson/Publications/evangelism_and_the_growth_of_pen.htm, [Accessed, 20 January, 2012].

¹⁰ Christian F. W. Gbekor, 'The Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship in the E. P. Church of Ghana', *MPhil. Thesis* (University of Ghana: Legon, 1998). 2.

¹¹ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 122

¹² This was a personal observation made by the researcher who has being in the church since 1979 before and after its split with the E.P. Church and has visited many congregations of the GEC during his twelve years of full- time pastoral ministry in the church.

the extent, to which the practice of healing and deliverance has contributed or not to the growth of the GEC in the past two decades of its existence.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Healing and deliverance has become very popular in Ghanaian Charismatic/Neo-Pentecostal churches in recent times, with large numbers of people attending these activities. Upon observation, one gets the impression that those churches that practice healing and deliverance seems to be growing faster than those that do not practice the phenomenon, thereby suggesting that there might be a link between the practice of healing and deliverance and church growth. Congregations within the Global Evangelical Church (GEC) are not exceptions because this researcher has observed that those congregations within the GEC which combine the practice with other ministry gifts or whose ministers encourage and promote the practice, seems to be growing faster, at least numerically. However, there seems to be the paucity or lack of evidence-based research carried out in Ghana to draw the link between this practice and church growth. It is against this background that this study seeks to explore the practice of healing and deliverance and its relationship to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church, using selected congregations as cases.

1.3 Research Questions

Against the background of the discussion above, the overriding questions guiding this research are:

- i. What are the concepts of ill-health, healing and deliverance and church growth?
- ii. What is the relationship between healing and deliverance and church growth?
- iii. What constitute the belief and practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC?

- iv. To what extent does the practice of healing and deliverance contribute to growth of the GEC?

1.4. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between 'healing and deliverance' and church growth in the GEC. This is against the backdrop of the growing and widespread nature of the phenomenon and a corresponding conspicuous growth and prominence of those churches that practice the act.

1.5 Research Objectives

Specifically, the research addresses the following objectives:

- i. Discuss the concepts of ill-health, healing and deliverance as well as church growth?
- ii. Examine the belief and practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC
- iii. Explore the relationship between healing and deliverance and church growth in the GEC.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Although there is no definite record on the extent to which healing and deliverance is being used by churches of different denominations, the practice is very common in the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches in Ghana. The research has been conducted in the Global Evangelical Church (GEC) in Ghana. The GEC has been observed to be one of the churches that continue to practise healing and deliverance as part of its activities in its various churches. Also the GEC has been chosen because as a member of the church, the researcher is familiar with its practices and has good rapport with members who are key informants

from whom data has been elicited. This study has been limited to three parishes in the GEC, which are designated as Hilltop, Hillcrest and Valleyland.

These parishes are chosen because they are some of the congregations where the healing and deliverance activities are practiced on regular basis. In addition, the research focuses on healing and deliverance practice in the churches between 1991 and 2011. The two decades interval has been chosen since it is the period between which the GEC was established and the time this research is conducted. The two decade period has also limited assessment of the church's practice of healing and deliverance over the twenty years.

1.7 Methodology

Phenomenological and historical methods have been used in this research. Phenomenological method which focuses on the essence or structure of an experience forms part of the historical method and uses observation as a tool for data collection. Phenomenology seeks to address the foundational question of, 'What is the meaning, structure, and essence of lived experience of a phenomenon by an individual or many individuals, and tries to gain access to the individual's life-world (his or her world of experience where consciousness exists)'.¹³ This approach has helped the researcher to discover the extent to which the phenomenon of healing and deliverance has been contributing to church growth in Ghana and in the Global Evangelical Church in particular. In its application, active participant observation approach has been used during the study. This is the approach in which the researcher attempts to be socially, personally and spatially integrated into the groups under study.¹⁴ The method which involves empirical observation of the church's activities has helped to gain first hand information about the practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC during the period in

¹³ Michael Tagoe, *A Hand Book for Writing Research Proposals* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2009), 53.

¹⁴ Kumekpor Tom, K. B., *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research* (Accra: SonLife Press and Services, 2002), 74.

which the research has been conducted. This has helped the researcher to gain insight into how GEC approaches healing and deliverance, the processes involved and the activities that constitute the practice.

Historical method has been employed in this study for two reasons. In the first place, the researcher examines secondary data consisting of existing literature on the concept and practice of healing and deliverance. These included published, unpublished books and journal articles and internet. This has helped to understand how the phenomenon of healing and deliverance became part of Christian practices, and why it has continued as an integral part of some Christian activities. Secondly, the historical method has been adopted in order to help examine the phenomenon of healing and deliverance within the GEC.

Studying the phenomenon from 1991 to 2011 has helped to unfold the extent to which the church has grown in the past two decades. Under the historical approach, scholarly and non-scholarly literature such as pamphlets, conference proceedings, unpublished and published books, journal articles, theses and dissertations on the Charismatic Churches' practices in general, and specifically on healing and deliverance in the GEC have been studied. The method enhances understanding into the history of the Charismatic Churches as well as the theological perspectives within which healing and deliverance is practised.

1.7.1 Sources of Data Collection

One method by which data has been collected was personal observation. Participant observation in which the researcher takes part in the research activity whilst at the same time critically observing the phenomenon has been used to study the practice of healing and deliverance of the selected congregations under study. Healing and deliverance is mainly an

observable phenomenon. The researcher has therefore used observation as one of his major tools for data collection, where healing and deliverance activities have been recorded as and when the practice unfolds during service. This also includes the use of cameras, recorders, among other devices, to document some research activities for analysis.

Another method of data collection the researcher has employed was focus group discussion. Focus group discussion engages carefully selected personalities in the field of study in a discussion on the specific issues under examination. This method has helped to gain a broader perspective on the issues being studied. The method brought out a lot of views which otherwise might not have been expressed by an individual informant.

Interviews were conducted with practitioners and participants of healing and deliverance. This interview was made up of both structured and unstructured interview procedures. The structured interview assisted the researcher to ask straight questions and restrict questions and answers to the issue under investigation. The unstructured interview on the other hand, assisted the researcher to explore the broad understanding of the interviewees on the topic. This has allowed the researcher to gain general and in-depth understanding into the practice. The data collected with these various methods have been analyzed to achieve the stated objectives.

1.7.2 Sample Size and Procedure

Furthermore, as part of the approach, an interview guide was used with the aid of tape recorders to gather information from 260 respondents about the subject matter under study. The interview guide has been structured to target six categories of people in the GEC branches selected for this study. The six category sample size has been selected to cut across

people who constitute the totality of membership of the GEC who have experience healing and deliverance in the church for a considerable period of time. This has helped to elicit views that represent the opinions of different functional groupings in the church about healing and deliverance in the church. In the first category, interview guide was used to examine the subject matter from some leaders (present and past moderators, pastors who practice healing and deliverance and non-practitioners, evangelists and catechist) in the GEC and some carefully selected (purposively sampled) persons noted for their in-depth knowledge about the church and its practices.

In the second category, interview guide was also used to solicit views from prayer warriors, students of the Global Theological Seminary, youth groups in the GEC and some church members who have benefited from the healing and deliverance practice. With the use of this approach, broader perspective has been gained about the issues that came under discussion. This has enabled the researcher to arrive at findings that represents the views of members across-the board.

1.7.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis was employed in the evaluation of data that was gathered during the fieldwork. This method relies on the quality of the information based on its relevance to the subjects being studied rather than on the quantity of responses to a particular issue. That is, instead of drawing from a large representative sample, the researcher sought to acquire in-depth and intimate information from relatively smaller group of persons.¹⁵ This method of data analysis is also employed since the researcher dwells largely on interviews and focus group discussions which are intended to elicit detailed information from individual

¹⁵ Barabra M. Wildemuth, 'Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research', *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 63 (1995), 881.

respondents.¹⁶ This method of data analysis has helped to understand the relationship between healing and deliverance and the growth of the Global Evangelical Church.

1.8 Literature Review

Healing, deliverance and church growth are major themes considered very central to this research. These main themes have received scholarly discussions in their distinctive senses but not in how they relate with each other into details. For the purpose of this thesis, literature on general and specific areas of healing, deliverance, church growth and the history of Charismatic Pentecostal Churches in Ghana are considered for review.

Allan Anderson's work¹⁷ is considered one of the fundamental works which provides historical background to understanding the origin of the Charismatic Pentecostal phenomenon in Christianity. It also illustrates how the movements started and their subsequent development into distinctive new Christian religious movements and independent churches worldwide. He asserts that the contemporary Charismatic Pentecostal phenomena defeats universally acceptable definition due to the diversity in the seemingly common Charismatic Pentecostal practices.¹⁸ However, he defines the Charismatic Pentecostal phenomenon broadly as one that describes 'globally all churches and movements that emphasize the working in of the gift of the Spirit, both on phenomenological and theological grounds'.¹⁹

Asamoah-Gyadu uses organizational structures to identify three categories of Charismatic Pentecostal churches in Ghana. These include the non-denominational groups which comprise individuals who belong to other established churches, the renewal movements that exist and operate within their mother churches, and the independently established

¹⁶ David Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, (London: Sage Publications Inc., 2005), 10.

¹⁷ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*,

¹⁸ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 14.

¹⁹ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

Charismatic churches.²⁰ Despite the diversity of their organizational status, these Charismatic Pentecostal religious groups, according to Anderson, have common practices and are similar in their approaches to religious activities. Among these practices are emphasis on the reliance on the Holy Spirit and the demonstration of his eminence in the activities of believers. Such activities include spontaneous praying, joyful singing, handclapping and dancing, periodic Bible study meeting, fast, public evangelistic crusades, healing and deliverance, prophesying, testimonies, and speaking in tongues.²¹

The history of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches in Ghana and the world is usually traced from America with reference to the Azusa Street experience of 1906. However, Anderson is of the view that, in recounting the Charismatic experience in Africa, and Ghana in particular, the influence of isolated activities of African prophets some of which became the founders of the African Instituted Churches cannot be denied.²² According to Anderson, the Charismatic Pentecostal churches 'are essentially of African origin and fulfil African aspirations, with a root in a marginalised and underprivileged society struggling to find dignity and identity in the face of brutal colonialism and oppression'.²³ Contrasting the African nature of Charismatic Pentecostal churches with the western mission churches, Allan Anderson argued that the Charismatic Pentecostal churches are motivated by a desire to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of Africans, offering solutions to life's problems and ways to cope with the threatening and hostile world.²⁴

²⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 27-28.

²¹ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 208.

²² Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 115-116 & 162.

²³ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 122.

²⁴ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 199.

Some scholars have described Ghanaian Charismatic Pentecostal Churches as the fastest growing churches in the past three decades.²⁵ This rapid growth, according Anderson, is attributed to the churches' focus on making meaning of the contemporary existential problems that confront Christians through their contextualization approach.²⁶ For these scholars, the Charismatic Pentecostal churches are experiencing this rapid growth because most of these churches are able to fashion out programmes that respond to the contextual needs of members and non members.

In addition to the dynamism of the Charismatic and Pentecostal churches' practices, which play very significant roles on their growth, Anderson identified faith healing and deliverance as one of their paramount practices. For him, among the different practices of the Charismatic Pentecostals, healing and deliverance is one of the most common which has been alluded to as having played tremendous role in the growth of the churches. This is inferred from the idea that most people become members of the church after they have been healed or delivered from one kind of ill-health or the other.²⁷ The idea where people become affiliates and members of religious groups commensurate with this position thereby lays the foundation for this research as it investigates the relationship between healing and deliverance and church growth.

Asamoah-Gyadu, offers the historical background to the emergence and practices of Pentecostal churches in Ghana.²⁸ In tracing the history of Charismatic and Pentecostal practices in Ghana, Asamoah-Gyadu considered what he calls the religious and theological

²⁵Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 104 &115. See also Anderson ,*Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 160,199 & 201.

²⁶Anderson ,*Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 160,199 & 201.

²⁷ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 211.

²⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics* 1.

contribution of the older African Independent Churches.²⁹ For him, the history of Charismatic Pentecostal churches is the continuity of the history of the African Independent churches. Apart from its general exposition on Pentecostals, the book is also considered to be very relevant to the current research due to its in-depth discussion on healing and deliverance, which are two concepts and practices classified as very central to this study. This literature, therefore, provides the grounds for understanding healing and deliverance in practical and conceptual senses and the role it plays in church growth.

The concept of deliverance is the focus of Atiemo's work.³⁰ In this study, the researcher examines the practice of deliverance in the history of the church as well as in contemporary Christian practices in the light of the *Akan* concept of *Mmusu* and *Mmusuyi*. The author defines deliverance as 'a form of ritual that seeks ostensibly, to actualize for the believer all the benefits of God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ. It seeks to provide the means by which the blessings - spiritual and temporal - of Christ's work may be attained by the believer.'³¹ The study reveals that at times humans become vulnerable in certain situations due to factors that can be explained from religious perspectives, and as a result, can only be resolved by reference to religious approaches. The research provides an understanding into the African conception of the human and demonstrates how the human can be restored through an elaborate method and practice of deliverance.

This literature does not only provide an understanding of the concept and practice of deliverance, but it also reveals some situations that interrupt the stability of humans and

²⁹Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 2.

³⁰ Atiemo's *Mmusuyi and Deliverance, a Study of Conflict and Consensus in the Encounter between African Traditional Religion and Christianity* is devoted to the concept and practice of deliverance among the Akans of Ghana and compares it to contemporary Christian practice of deliverance.

³¹ Abamfo O. Atiemo 'Mmusuyi and Deliverance: A study of Conflicts and Consensus in the Encounter between African Traditional Religion and Christianity', *MPhil Thesis* (University of Ghana, Legon 1995), 90.

hence the resort to deliverance. This work is very relevant to the current research in that its detailed engagement of deliverance as concept and practice in contemporary Christianity provides the background for explaining and analyzing the practice in the Global Evangelical Church. This is also to examine the extent to which deliverance as practiced in the church is responding to the human existential needs of people. The emphasis of this work is to assess the relationship between healing and deliverance and church growth.

In his research about Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship in the E. P. Church of Ghana, Christian Gbekor gives a historical background to the formation of E. P. Church of Ghana, now Global Evangelical Church.³² The study suggests that the activities of the Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship are one of the contributing factors that gave birth to renewal movement in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the subsequent split that led to the formation of the Global Evangelical Church.

In his study about renewal movements in the mainline church in Ghana, C. N. Omenyo indicates that the motive for their emergence was to stress renewal in the Spirit, the role and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual and the church.³³ These works indicate that healing and deliverance which was one of the preoccupations of the Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship has largely influenced the current practices of the GEC. This is because most of the current leaders and practitioners of healing and deliverance in the GEC happened to be members and leaders of the BSPF. This therefore provides the researcher with the insight about the influence of these individual leaders on healing and deliverance in the GEC. This work, therefore examines the impact of individual leaders of the churches under study on the healing and deliverance practice.

³² Christian F. W. Gbekor, 'The Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship in the E. P. Church of Ghana', *MPhil. Thesis* (University of Ghana: Legon, 1998). 2.

³³ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 9.

While Gbekor and Omenyo's works discussed above focus on renewal movements and their practices and how some of them have developed into distinctive churches, Morton T. Kelsey's work *Christianity and healing* gives an historical account of spiritual healing in Christianity. For Kelsey, the practice of spiritual healing in Christianity has become an issue of concern to Christians as that of achieving eternal life.³⁴ Kelsey's work gives an historical background to the contemporary Christian practices of healing and deliverance in the church. He traces the practice of healing from the activities of Jesus and his disciples. For Kelsey, contemporary practice of healing has become a matter of contention due to the varying perspectives from which different groups of Christians envisage it. On other hand, some Christians believe that apart from the provision of social services such as hospitals, the church has nothing to do with health and healing of sicknesses.³⁵ This perspective formed the belief pattern of Christians until the 1800s when the emergence of Pentecostal movement saw the need to engage healing as an important part of Christian practices.³⁶

Kelsey's work is very important to this study in that, it has provided the current research with basic historical information to the understanding of healing as a Christian practice and why some churches incorporate it into their religious practices. It also provided reasons why the practice seems to be common with the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches of which Global Evangelical Church can be identified.

Closely linked with the practice of healing and deliverance, as far as this study is concerned, is church growth. E. K. Gbordzoe defines church growth as

The bringing of people, into a personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit and into responsible church membership, such

³⁴Morton T. Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity*, Healing and Christianity: in Ancient Thought and Modern Times (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), 3.

³⁵ Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity*, 8.

³⁶Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity*,4.

that the membership of the local congregation will increase in faith, holiness and other spiritual and material qualities while at the same time increasing in number, and also opening and multiplying other branches.³⁷

According to Gbordzoe, the church grows when its activities are in line with the purpose for which it is established. This purpose, he explains is to fulfil the biblical mandate of the Great Commission.³⁸ The emphasis in church growth from the perspective of the Great Commission narrows Gbordzoe's yardstick in measuring church growth largely to quantitative and qualitative growths. He explained that among the activities stated in the Great Commission, the underlying factor is to make disciples.³⁹ He, further, indicates that growth in holiness, human relations, and physical wealth are other crucial perspectives from which the growth of the church can be viewed. For Gbordzoe, since all other instruction such 'go', 'baptize' and 'teach' in the Great Commission are but helping verbs to the imperative verb 'make disciples.' For Gbordzoe, 'going, baptizing and teaching are helping verbs and are the means to the end of making disciples.'⁴⁰

In addition, Gbordzoe identifies what he describes as five dimensions of church growth. These dimensions include holiness, human relations, numbers, power of the Holy Spirit and physical wealth. He explained that a growing church must have its members ready to live a holy live and have good relationship with God and with one another. The growing church must also be increasing in number of membership and in the physical wealth of the church. Gbordzoe explain growth in the power of the Holy Spirit as believers' ability to identify and utilize the gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁴¹ He stresses that a growing church must demonstrate an appreciable level of these elements to be described as such. In the light of these dimensions, this research investigates how healing and deliverance affect these dimensions of growth in

³⁷ E. K. Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth: A Practical Model* (Accra: GEC Press, 2010), 61.

³⁸ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 63.

³⁹ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 64.

⁴⁰ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 64.

⁴¹ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 81-90.

the GEC. The research also examines the place of prayer in the healing and deliverance process. This is because Gbordzoe, in his work attributes church growth to persistent and intense prayer. According to him, a church that does not pray ever grows but eventually dies.⁴²

In addition, Roy Pointer discusses four dimensions of church growth.⁴³ These include numerical growth, organic growth, conceptual growth and incarnational growth. Pointer describes numerical growth, as the recruitment of individuals to active membership of the church. They are incorporated into the fellowship of believers and share its corporate life of worship and witness. Under the numerical growth, Pointer further identifies ways through which members are recruited for its realisation. The four way of recruitment are biological, transfer restoration and conversion growth.⁴⁴

Pointer identifies another dimension of church growth known as conceptual growth. This dimension of growth he describes as the personal and corporate development of Christian understanding of his faith. Costas defines conceptual growth as the degree of consciousness that a community of faith has with regard to its nature and mission to the world. This idea is similar to Gbordzoe's proposition that the church grows only when its activities are aimed at fulfilling the Great Commission which is making disciples for Christ.⁴⁵

Organic growth is yet another dimension identified discussed by Pointer. He affirms that while becoming and being a Christian are entirely dependent upon an intimate and personal relationship to Christ, the Christian faith can only be lived in a relationship with and in

⁴² Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 14-15.

⁴³ R. Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* (Great Britain: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984), 25

⁴⁴ R. Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 26-27.

⁴⁵ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 63.

service to others. Commitment to Christ includes commitment to a community and organic growth describes the formation and functioning of this communal life of the local church. This perspective is similar to Gbordzoe's dimension of church growth, which he referred to as growth in human relationship.⁴⁶ Pointer refers to Costa's, definition of organic growth as:

the internal development of a local community of faith (that is, the system of relationships among its members), its form of government, financial structures, leadership and types of activities in which its time and resources are invested.⁴⁷ Organic growth is concerned with such issues as depth of fellowship; quality of worship; training of new members; discovery of gifts and the exercise of ministry; appointment and role of leaders; practice of corporate prayer; celebration of the ordinance or sacraments-all that relate to the corporate organization and activity of the local church.⁴⁸

The church, according to Pointer also has another dimension of growth referred to as incarnational growth.⁴⁹ Costas defines this as the degree of involvement of a community of faith in the life and problems of her social environment. That is her participation in the afflictions of her world; her prophetic, intercessory and liberating action on behalf of the weak and destitute; the intensity of her preaching to the poor; the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind and the oppressed.⁵⁰ This exposition has thrown more light on the subject matter of church growth and the extent to which the practice of healing and deliverance can be explained to have a role to play in the growth of the church.

It is significant to point out that the reviewed literature is significant to the subject matter under study. This is because it serves as secondary source of information and in addition provide the framework for this study.

⁴⁶ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 85-87.

⁴⁷ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 28.

⁴⁸ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 28.

⁴⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth & the Whole Gospel: A Biblical Mandate* (New York: Harper & Row: 1987), 14.

⁵⁰ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 29.

1.9 Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarity, consistency and better understanding of this thesis, the following terms and concept are given the following working definitions and explanations.

Healing and deliverance: In this research, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu's, definition of 'healing and deliverance' is adopted. He defines 'healing and deliverance' as

the deployment of divine resources, that is, power and authority in the name or blood of Jesus - perceived in pneumatological terms as the intervention of the Holy Spirit - to provide release for demon-possessed, demon-oppressed; broken hearted, disturbed and troubled persons, in order that victims may be restored to proper functioning order, that is, to health and wholeness; and being thus freed from demonic influence and curses, so they may enjoy God's fullness of life understood to be available in Christ.⁵¹

Although healing and deliverance are sometimes used as distinctive terms (plural sense), for the purpose of this work, it is used to mean one operational term (singular sense). This is because, in practical sense, most Charismatic/neo-Pentecostal Churches consider the two practices (healing and deliverance) as inseparable.⁵² In this work, the researcher uses 'healing and deliverance' in singular sense.

Church growth: The term shall be used to mean 'the bringing of people into a personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit and into responsible church membership, such that the membership of the local congregation will increase in faith, holiness and other spiritual and material qualities while at the same time increasing in number, and also opening and multiplying other branches.'⁵³

Charismatic/neo-Pentecostal Churches: Many scholars have tried to assign one definition or the other to the Charismatic Pentecostal churches. Whereas some scholars define

⁵¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 164-200.

⁵² Asamoah-Gyadu, 'Of Sour Grapes and Children's Teeth', 340.

⁵³ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 61.

‘Charismatic’ and ‘Pentecostal’ variously, others define the two collectively.⁵⁴ These definitions are mainly based on certain features characterizing them as distinctive churches among the cluster of Christian religious organizations. For instance, Patrick Johnston and Jason Mandryk define the Charismatics as ‘those who testify to a renewing experience of the Holy Spirit and present exercise of the gifts of the Spirit’. They, however, define the Pentecostals as ‘those affiliated specifically to Pentecostal denominations committed to a Pentecostal theology usually including post-conversion experience of a baptism of the Spirit’.⁵⁵

Asamoah-Gyadu, however, collectively defines Charismatic Pentecostals as

Christian groups which emphasize salvation in Christ as transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit and in which pneumatic phenomena including ‘speaking in tongues’, prophecies, visions, healing and miracles in general perceived to be standing in continuity with the experience of the early church and found especially in the Acts of the Apostles, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as signifying the presence of God and experience of his Spirit.⁵⁶

These notwithstanding, Allan Anderson contends that ‘the term ‘Pentecostal’ is appropriate for describing globally all churches and movements that emphasize the working of the gifts of the Spirit-both on the phenomenological and on theological grounds - although not without qualification’.⁵⁷ Regardless of their inclusive and exclusive approach, one thing that cuts across in defining Charismatic Pentecostal churches is the fact that they are the Christian denominations that affirm the phenomenon of the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and its subsequent transformative effects on the believers. The Charismatic churches are also referred as neo-Pentecostals (new Pentecostals) in the sense that they emphasize the working

⁵⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 1.

⁵⁵ Patrick Johnston and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World: 21st Century Edition* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2001), 3, 21, 755, 757 & 762. See also Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 11.

⁵⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 12.

⁵⁷ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

of the gifts of the Spirit-both on the phenomenological and on theological grounds - although not without qualification' as the Pentecostals.⁵⁸

In Ghana, the term 'Charismatic movement' or Charismatic Renewal is used to describe the Christian renewal movements that sprung up in the various mainline churches.⁵⁹ These were initially non-denominational fellowships which latter grew to become distinct independent denominations with their leaders assuming clerical titles.⁶⁰ These Charismatic churches are said to be the expression of the Pentecostal types of Christianity which emerged on the Ghanaian Christian religious scene during the early 1970s. Cephas N. Omenyo observed that though these churches seemed to be on the periphery of Christianity in the 1980s, they are currently moving gradually to the centre.⁶¹ This link between 'Pentecostal' and 'Charismatic' lie in their common belief in the working of the Holy Spirit. This explains why some prefer to describe all Christian religious denominations that express the belief in the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit either in thought or in Practice as Charismatic Pentecostal churches or movements.⁶² In this research, the term 'Charismatic Pentecostal' churches have been used in collective sense and has simply been referred to as Charismatic churches.

1.10 Significance of the Study

- This research helps to understand the phenomenon of healing and deliverance from the African Christian religious perspective.
- This thesis provides guiding principles for both researchers and practitioners of healing and deliverance; particularly in the Global Evangelical Church and the

⁵⁸ Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

⁵⁹ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 90

⁶⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism*, 38.

⁶¹ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (London: Hurst and Company Ltd., 2004), 23.

⁶² Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 13.

Christian faith in general. Thus, the knowledge discovered can be practically applied to the conduct of their Christian religious activities.

- The research has added to the existing knowledge about the practice of healing and deliverance by shedding light on why some churches have considered healing and deliverance as an evangelistic tool in Christian mission⁶³.
- This study also helps to understand the elements of the healing and deliverance process that contribute to church growth; the importance of healing and deliverance to Charismatic churches.

1.11 Research Ethical Considerations

This research is conducted using the case of three congregations of the Global Evangelical Church. However, pseudo-names are used to represent these congregations and some informants for the following reasons:

The first reason is to ensure anonymity of some respondents whose views may be considered as having the tendency of undermining other practices of the church. The second reason is to ensure confidentiality of informants who may be associated with certain responses. For this reasons, certain names that do not exist in the GEC have been used to represent the names of the congregations studied.

1.12 Chapter Organization

The research has been organized under five broad chapters which divide as follows; Chapter one gives a general background to the whole study which includes an introduction, problem statement, aims and objectives, methods of data collection employed in the research as well as the scope of the study. This chapter also reviews some literature relevant to the research. In

⁶³ Anderson, Allan 'Evangelism and the Growth of Pentecostalism in Africa', [Accessed, 20 January, 2012].

addition, it gives the significance of the study and explains certain terms that need clarification.

Chapter two examines concepts such as ill-health, deliverance, and church growth within the contexts of church history and missions in general, as well as African Charismatic Christian practices in particular. The chapter examines the scientific, African indigenous and Christian religious views of ill-health. It also discusses deliverance from African Charismatic Christian point of view.

Chapter three concentrates on a brief history of the Global Evangelical Church. This delves into the emergence of the church, its core teachings and some practices with emphasis on healing and deliverance practice in the church. It also discusses the growth of three congregations of the Global Evangelical Church as case studies. These congregations are pseudo-named as Hilltop, Hillcrest and Valleyland. It must however, be stressed that in reality there are no congregations in the Global Evangelical Church known by these names.

Chapter four analyzes views solicited from some members of the Global Evangelical church about the healing and deliverance practices discussed in the third chapter. These views are interpreted and analyzed in the light of scholarly perspectives in order to determine the how deliverance is related to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church. The fifth chapter, which is the concluding chapter, summarizes the findings of the whole research. Recommendations and suggestions are also given in this final chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

HEALING, DELIVERANCE AND CHURCH GROWTH

2.1 Introduction

It is an undeniable fact that not many things in this world interest humans quite as much as health. People do not only talk about health in public and in private, but also spend a great deal of resources and energy on it in one way or the other. It is not surprising that many governments allocate huge chunks of their resources for providing good healthcare systems for their citizenry. According to Morton T. Kelsey, United States of America alone spends billions of dollars to preserve health and prolong life.⁶⁴ This observation is evident in the resources that individuals and corporate social organizations invest in ensuring wellbeing through health care delivery in their respective societies. This assertion therefore demonstrates the importance of health not only to secular societies but also to religious organizations such as Christian churches.

Throughout church history, there seems to be the practice of healing in one way or the other. Although the processes and approaches to the practice of healing may take different forms, one can hardly deny the need of the practice in the church. The practice has since been identified as a key component of the ministries of Jesus Christ and has continued to make its strong presence in contemporary Christian practices.⁶⁵ In Ghana, the practice is not only found in Charismatic churches but it is also fast spreading in some mainline churches. An example is Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a Christian renewal movement in the Roman Catholic Church in Ghana.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Morton T. Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 3.

⁶⁵ Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity*, 6.

⁶⁶ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 109.

This research, which examines the relationship between healing and deliverance and church growth, is loaded with three important and frequently used concepts healing, deliverance and church growth. The centrality of the concepts therefore necessitates a research into these terms in order to clearly shape the focus of the study. This chapter is therefore structured under two sub-sections. The first part explores ill health, healing, deliverance and church growth. The chapter also discusses some scholarly views from African indigenous, Christian religious, scientific and socio-cultural perspectives from which the three concepts are studied. It considers their meanings, original applications as well as their usage in contemporary Christian practices. The purpose is to locate the context within which the contemporary healing practice in the GEC can be understood and to consider the ways in which the practice of healing and deliverance forms an integral part of the church's religious activities.

The importance of this chapter to the research is that, it provides a foundation for understanding the concepts examined in this study and provides a historical account on how the practice of healing and deliverance formed part of Christian mission. This will enable the analyses of healing and deliverance as a practical ministry in the church and the extent to which its practice effects the growth of the Global Evangelical Church.

2.2 The Concept of Ill-Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.⁶⁷ Unlike the traditional system of healing, biomedical healing, which is usually termed as curing, relies so much on scientific methods of investigation. A very brief discussion of the scientific perspective on ill-health will suffice.

⁶⁷ World Health Organization, *definition of health*, <https://apps.who.int/aboutwho/en/definition.html> [accessed, 12 July, 2012]

2.2.1 Scientific Perspective on Ill-Health

Scientifically health and healing are explained from many philosophical points of view. Among these perspectives is reductionism.⁶⁸ Reductionism is a philosophical position which holds that intricate phenomena are derived from a single fundamental principle. In this context health is regarded in terms of biological processes and explained by fundamental laws of chemistry and physics.⁶⁹ This scientific method of reductionism in medicine has come to be known as ‘bioreductionism’.⁷⁰ Basically, bioreductionism understands that unless there have been injuries caused by external circumstances, the cause of a disease can be reduced to a ‘specific micro-organism’.⁷¹ Reductionism explains health and disease concepts (within biomedicine) in scientific terms. Thus from the biomedical perspective health is a theoretical concept which is understood basically to be the absence of diseases.

Christopher Boorse argues that the chief components of health are biological and statistical normality (the ability to perform physiological functions which are typical of humans).⁷² Accordingly health is understood to be ‘functional normality’.⁷³ He further argues that because health is normal functioning an ‘organism is healthy at any moment in proportion as it is not disease’.⁷⁴ Diseases therefore in this model are perceived as deviations from the norm of health - they are internal states which depress functional ability.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ Jubilee Centre, *Biblical Perspectives on Health and Health Care Relationship* (Cambridge, Jubilee House, 1998). 8-9.

⁶⁹ Engel, G. ‘The Need for a New Medical Model: A Challenge for Biomedicine’ in A. Caplan *et. al.* (eds), *Concepts of Health and Disease* (Town unknown: Addison Wesley Co, 1981), 589.

⁷⁰ R. Laura, and S. Heaney, *Philosophical Foundations of Health Education* (London: Routledge, 1990), 6.

⁷¹ Laura and Heaney, *Philosophical Foundations*, 6.

⁷² C., Boorse, ‘Health as a Theoretical Concept’, *Philosophy of Science*, 44, (1977), 542.

⁷³ Boorse, ‘Health as a Theoretical Concept’, 554.

⁷⁴ Boorse, C. ‘What a Theory of Mental Health Should Be’, *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour* 6, (1976), 62.

⁷⁵ Boorse, ‘Health as a Theoretical Concept’, 542.

As a result, healing is mostly limited to the kinds of sicknesses that are identified through scientific investigations. The reliance on scientific causes of ill-health therefore narrows scientific systems of healing to measures that aim at restoring only scientifically proven causes of ill-health situations. These measures include scientific diagnoses of the cause of sickness, dispensation of biomedicine proven to be efficacious in curing a specific ailment and other forms of treatments such taking rest; doing exercise and regulating ones diet.

2.2.2 African Indigenous Worldview of Ill-Health

A comprehensive discussion of ill-health cannot be done without examining health and the compelling circumstances that necessitate them. Dovlo observes that although there are modern medical facilities in the form of hospitals and clinics in Ghana, there is much recourse to religion for the purpose of the sustenance and restoration of good health.⁷⁶ African traditional concept of health and well-being is a holistic one and for the African, health is wealth.⁷⁷ In this respect, Awolalu and Dopamu write that ‘societies whose ideal and functions are not known should be discouraged, and every religious society should exist only for the well being of the community and its members and not for the disruption of people’s well-being.’⁷⁸

Elizabeth Amoah noted that health, for the African, comprises everything that makes life worth living. These include physical and metaphysical or spiritual and material well-being.⁷⁹ It consists of being at peace and harmony within oneself, with the spirits world and the community at large. Health in the African context therefore refers to the total well-being of

⁷⁶ Elom Dovlo, ‘Healing and Religious Pluralism in Ghana’, (Draft Paper Presented at Graduate Seminar, University of Stockholm, September, 2006), 1.

⁷⁷ Raymond Kwaku Awadzi, ‘From Syncretism to Enculturation: Changing Approaches to African Indigenous Elements in the African Instituted Churches (the Case of the Apostle Revelation Society)’, *M. Phil. Thesis* (University of Ghana, Legon, 2011), 57.

⁷⁸ Omosade J. Awolalu & Adelumo P. Dopamu, *West African Traditional Religion* (Ibadan: Onibonoje Press & Books Limited, 1979), 239.

⁷⁹ Elizabeth Amoah, *African Traditional Religion and the Concept of poverty* in Peter J. Paris, (ed.), *Religion and Poverty: Pan- African Perspective* (Durham& London: Duke University Press, 2009), 111-13.

the individual. It includes material resources and has both external and internal dimensions. Amoah explains that the external comprises material blessings while the internal has to do with the psychological and spiritual aspects of life.⁸⁰

Kofi Appiah-Kubi sees ill health as ‘a state of disharmony in the whole body and even in the whole society.’⁸¹ This definition resonates with the definition of the Nigerian scholar Idemudia when he opines that the common element in the African belief system is simply that physical and mental illness is the result of distortions or disturbance in the harmony between an individual and the cosmos, which may mean his family, society, peers, ancestors or a deity.⁸² In discussing ill- health among humans, two major things come to mind. These are the nature of humans and the factors that account for ill health.

Africans generally believe that the human being is a composite of three elements, which the Ewe presents as, *gbɔgbɔ* (spirit), *luvɔ* (soul) and *ɲutila* (body).⁸³ *Gbɔgbɔ* and *luvɔ* are invisible parts while *ɲutila* is visible. Adjakpey explains that each person has two souls: *luvɔ-agbetɔ* (life soul), and *luvɔ-kutɔ* (death soul). He was, however, quick to add that in reality, humans have only one soul in Ewe thought although perceived from two perspectives.⁸⁴ Essentially, the human is composed of physical and spiritual elements. None of these elements lives in isolation of the other. The health of one affects the others and vice versa. That is to say that there is an interaction between the spirit components with the

⁸⁰ Amoah, *African Traditional Religion and the Concept of poverty*, 111-13

⁸¹ Kofi Appiah-Kubi, *Man Cures, God Heals: Religion and Medical Practice among the Akans of Ghana* (New York: Friendship Press, 1981), 71.

⁸² Erhabor Sunday Idemudia, ‘Mental Health and Psychotherapy “through” the Eyes of Culture: Lessons for African Psychotherapy’ http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/02_7/idemudia15.htm [Accessed, 23 July, 2012]

⁸³ Ted Nelson-Adjakpey, *Penance and Expiatory Sacrifice among the Ghanaian- Ewe and their Relevance to the Christian Religion* (Rome: Giovanni Canestri, 1982), 62.

⁸⁴ Nelson -Adjakpey, *Penance and Expiatory Sacrifice*, 63.

physical components of humans.⁸⁵ For the Ewe, this interaction between the visible (natural) and the invisible (the supernatural) has serious implication for the well being of humans.

Similarly, the Akan of Ghana also conceive man to be composed of body and soul but the soul is tripartite in nature and is presented as *Mogya* (blood), *Okra* (soul) and *Sunsum* (spirit).⁸⁶ Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi explains that the human being in the traditional Akan concept is made up of body and soul, and that the spirit is tripartite in nature consisting of the *mogya* (blood of the mother), *kra* (life-soul) and *susum* (personality soul).⁸⁷ Larbi further argues that any disharmony between the two leads to sickness or ill-health.⁸⁸ This then points to the fact that ill-health from both Ewe and Akan traditional perspectives has a spiritual dimension of causation and falls in line with what Appiah-Kubi discussed when he notes that there are two major sources of ill health which he described as natural and preternatural.⁸⁹

This view is further supported by Kofi Asare Opoku when he writes;

It is generally held in West Africa that man is a compound of material and immaterial substances. In other words, man has a body, which is tangible and spirit, which is intangible. The body is the part which perishes when a man dies, but the spirit survives, and links him with the creator. These two parts may be further divided into a complexity of material and immaterial substances by different West African Societies; but, in spite of this, there is a fundamental assumption among all of them concerning the unity of man's personality. The idea that there must be complete harmony between the body and spirit is basic to West African thought; for it is believed that either part, when damaged, will have effect on the other. In case of illness, for example, attention is not paid exclusively to the physiological aspect but to the spiritual causes as well, for good health and well-being can only be attained when both body and spirit are taken care of.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 91.

⁸⁶ Appiah-Kubi, *Man Cures, God Heals*, 10. See also, Evelyn Efua Arhin-Sah, *Ghanaina Pentecostal Medical Doctors in Faith Healing*, *M. Phil Thesis* (University of Ghana, Legon, 2011), 46.

⁸⁷ Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism; the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001), 5.

⁸⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 6

⁸⁹ Appiah-Kubi, *Man Cures, God Heals*, 2.

⁹⁰ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 91.

For Appiah-Kubi, the multi-dimensional understanding of causes of diseases explains the adoption of multi-dimensional approaches to healing methods among the Akan traditional society in Ghana.⁹¹

However, Amegashie in his study discovered that in whatsoever form that ill-health assumes, among the Ewe of Ghana, the cause can generally be classified into three main categories. According to him, the Anlo Ewe of Ghana identifies evil spirits, manifestations of the anger of the gods, and degenerated social relations as some of the causes of ill-health in the African traditional societies.⁹² In general, Africans believe that good morals enhance fellowship with the Supreme Being, the gods, ancestors and foster good health. Bad morals are considered sins and separate the community from the Supreme Being leading to disruption in the well-being of both the individual and the community in which he or she lives. All these positions boil down to one strongly held view in Africa that biology alone does not explain disease causation. And as such, any attempt to find remedy to ill-health in the form of healing must take into consideration the multi-dimensional method considered as a holistic approach to healing-a process that scholars in contemporary times advocate.⁹³

The inextricable nature of the relationship between religion and other aspects of life in Africa give reasons why Africans seek understanding into both the known and the unknown from the supernatural. Due to this spirit-centeredness, the traditional African uses divination to know causes of ill health, degree of damage, process of healing and duration of healing from the supernatural. Prayer is another commonly used method of healing in African traditional societies. During sickness, the traditional African prays by pouring libation believed to be a means by which the Supreme Being, the gods, ancestors and other familiar spirit beings are

⁹¹ Appiah-Kubi, *Man Cures, God Heals*, 2 & 71.

⁹² Amegashie 'The Concept of Renewal', 9-10.

⁹³ Amegashie 'The Concept of Renewal', 9-10.

invoked to intervene in solving a particular health problem at hand. In addition, the use of herbal medicine has been known to the traditional African since time immemorial. This includes the use of parts of plants which may either be used in their raw states or processed into different kinds of forms before they are applied for curative purposes.⁹⁴

In certain situations, sacrifices are offered to the supernatural as part of the healing processes in the African traditional society. This is done to appease the spirit beings with the aim of paving way for a smooth healing process. Ritual bath is another means by which health is restored to the sick in the African indigenous religious society. The practice involves the use of certain selected items such as plants of different kinds as indicated by the supernatural through divination. These are mashed in water and used for a bath. At the end of the healing process, a thanksgiving ceremony is held. This is usually organized after healers declare their clients healed, and the healed is also satisfied with the services provided by the priest. The main objective of this ceremony is to offer the healed and their relatives an opportunity to show appreciation to healers on the day they are officially discharged from healing centres.

2.2.3 Biblical Perspective of Ill-Health

One cannot understand and explain the Christian perspective of ill-health without thoroughly examining the Christian concept of man. This is because the Christian believes that when ill-health occurs, it affects certain aspect of the human person. There are divergent Christian views about the composition of the human person. On one hand, the Christian believes that humans are composed of three basic elements: soul, spirit and body.⁹⁵ Others believe in the

⁹⁴ Ruby Y. Dei-Fitih, 'Herbal Medicine in Christian Spiritual Healing in Ghana: A Study of the African Independent Churches and the Charismatic Renewal Movement', *M.Phil Thesis* (University of Ghana, Legon, 2011),

28.

⁹⁵ Sinclair B. Ferguson *et. al.* (ed), *New Dictionary of Theology*, (Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1988) 28 & 29.

bipartite nature of humans.⁹⁶ Alluding to the biblical account on the creation of humans, Stephen Fraser asserts that humans were created from an existing physical matter.

However, it is the bringing in of the spiritual component, which is the breath of God (Spirit dimension) by God that makes humans living beings. The spirit element of humans is identified with God and serves as the divine element and the source of life for human existence. According to Fraser, the physical element known as the body serves as the embodiment of the spiritual component. This is based on the assumption that the two components of the human person do not function in isolation of each other.⁹⁷ This means that anything that affects one aspect including ill-health will consequently affect the other component.

From the Christian worldview, sin (which is explained as disobedience to commandments of God) is considered as one of the causes of ill health. From the biblical point of view, a research conducted by *Jubilee Centre* contends that maintaining a right relationship with God and fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law has a causal link with health. It is, for instance, believed that people were sick and some died prematurely because they did not participate in the Lord's Supper in a proper manner (1 Corinthians 11:29-30). In another case, Jesus was reported of warning the man beside the pool of Bethesda to stop sinning or something worse may happen to him (John 5:14). These cases are indication of the belief that some people become sick as a result of the consequence of sin.⁹⁸ This does not mean sin is believed to be the only cause of sickness. Neither is every ill-health situation linked to sin according to the Christian point of view.

⁹⁶Stephen Fraser, 'The Orthodox Christian Concept of Man'
http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/dogmatics/fraser_concept_of_man.htm [Accessed 25/7/2012]

⁹⁷ Fraser, 'The Orthodox Christian Concept of Man' [Accessed 25/7/2012]

⁹⁸ Jubilee Centre, *Biblical Perspectives on Health*, 21.

Closely related to the concept of ill health is health. In the Old Testament, health was understood in terms of longevity and strength.⁹⁹ Moreover, it has been found that the words ‘health’ and ‘life’ in biblical thought were used interchangeably and synonymously and implies survival and well-being.¹⁰⁰ Thus the biblical view of health could be construed primarily as physical in nature although this is pursued in the broader context to mean human well-being. This understanding of health is similar to African traditional religions view that health is also associated with material concepts such as life, fertility, plenty, prosperity, rain and the possession of cattle.¹⁰¹ These views on ill health and health support the argument that the Bible has a holistic view of health, revolves around the concept of shalom which appears to be the nearest word to health. Scholars such as Wilkinson use this in turn to confirm that the Old Testament concept of health is holistic and indeed ‘not only related to the state of the body’.¹⁰²

However, the New Testament texts contain no dynamic equivalent to the word health but content themselves with terms for healing. As such, these texts limit instances of healing to three areas which are tangible physical healing, the casting out of demons and the raising of the dead.¹⁰³ In the light of these, it could be argued that the New Testament understanding of health comprises physical and mental well-being, the absence of illness, physical disability and the expulsion of demons or evil spirits which could have an effect upon the physical and mental health of persons (Luke 8:26ff; Mark 9:14ff).

⁹⁹ Jubilee Centre, *Biblical Perspectives on Health*, 16.

¹⁰⁰ Jubilee Centre, *Biblical Perspectives on Health*, 16.

¹⁰¹ J. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Ibadan: Heinemann, Educational Book Inc.), 60.

¹⁰² J. Wilkinson, *Health and Healing: Studies in New Testament Principles and Practice*, (Edinburgh: Handsel, 1980), 5.

¹⁰³ Wilkinson, *Health and Healing*, 7.

2.2.4 African Charismatic Christian Worldview of Ill-Health

The Charismatic churches are said to have been an expression of the Pentecostal types of Christianity which emerged on the Ghanaian Christian religious scene during the early 1970s.¹⁰⁴ Some scholars are of the view that Pentecostalism emerged as the most exciting and dominant stream of Christianity in the twenty-first century not only in the West but also in the non-Western world such as Africa, Asia, and Latin America.¹⁰⁵ In their theology and practice, the Charismatic Churches have consistently carved their activities to meet the needs of their members. Charismatic Churches share certain characteristics with Pentecostalism, the most globalized form of what Asamoah-Gyadu describes as pneumatic-Christianity which belongs to the larger protestant family. They also share the traditional evangelical theological emphases on the authority of the Bible, the centrality of the cross, regeneration as the way to Christian salvation and a call to holiness as the outflow of a new relationship with Christ.¹⁰⁶ However, the charismatic movement has become 'a third force' in Christendom at the beginning of the twentieth century because of the additional emphasis it has placed on the experience and the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu argues that today the major heartlands of the Christian faith have shifted from the northern to the Southern continents with Africa being a major hub of world Christianity.¹⁰⁸ From the above discussion, there is a sense in talking about African Charismatic Christianity and its underlying worldview particularly in relation to ill-health. Generally, the essence of religious practices among Africans is to preserve life and ensure the wellbeing of human society. For them, there is only one life, one world of sunshine and sweet pleasures, and it is natural that man should cherish it and seek to preserve and prolong it. This is because no sacrifice is too high for life. Life in

¹⁰⁴ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (London: Hurst and Company Ltd., 2004), 23.

¹⁰⁵ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: interpreting from An African Context* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2013), 1.

¹⁰⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, 2.

the African sense includes health, abundance of food and a happy environment.¹⁰⁹ This assumption of life from the African traditional point of view appears to have influenced the perspectives of charismatic churches in Ghana and Africa in general.

According to Asamoah-Gyadu, the Charismatic churches especially in Ghana take into consideration the indigenous worldview of the people.¹¹⁰ The recourse to respond to the contextual needs of the indigenous people also informed the churches understanding of ill-health. Thus in addition to the general view about the causes of ill-health, Charismatic churches in Ghana also take into consideration the African Indigenous worldview about the causes of ill-health. Some of these causes include 'breach' of a taboo or customs, disturbances in social relations, hostile ancestral spirits, spirit possession, demonic possession, evil machination and intrusion of objects, 'evil eye', sorcery, natural causes and affliction from gods.¹¹¹

Asamoah-Gyadu explains that generally, Charismatic churches in Ghana believe that the cause of ill-health may be natural or instigated by sin or evil forces represented ultimately by the devil. Some manifestations of ill-health believed to be instigated include reproductive disorders, fibroids, diabetes, hypertension, barrenness, recurrent sexual dreams, mental disorders, epilepsy and sudden death.¹¹² It must however be stated that these cases of ill-health are not always explained from spiritual causalities. This is because like many other African churches, Charismatic churches also believed that certain ill-health or sicknesses are caused by natural or organic factors such as fatigue, malnutrition, taking food that one's

¹⁰⁹ Justice, M.Y., Amegashie, The Concept of Renewal, *B.A. Long Essay* (University of Ghana: Legon, 1976), 55.

¹¹⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 166.

¹¹¹ Idemudia, 'Mental Health and Psychotherapy' [Accessed, 23 July, 2012]

¹¹² B. M. Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion, Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), p 116.

system is allergic to and other physical damages that occur to the body through accidents.¹¹³

The African Charismatic churches' view about what constitute ill-health is similar to what

Brigit M. Sackey observes with the AICs. For Sackey, healing is the:

amelioration or relief of problems in all aspects of everyday life as well as great afflictions, so that a cure from toothache, stomach pain, mental illness, infertility signifies healing, as do making profits in commercial activities, defeating an opponents in any event such as litigations, repossession of a fortune or a job, passing an examination or an interview for a job, obtaining visa to travel, winning political election or improving human relationship.¹¹⁴

In the same vein, the Charismatic churches in Africa in general and Ghana in particular believe that the persistence of these, as identified by Sackey, is an indication of ill-health.

Owing to their view about what constitute ill-health and the causes there of, the Charismatic churches in their practice of healing and deliverance designed it to appropriately respond to ill-health needs of the adherents

2.3 Healing and Deliverance from the Biblical Perspective

This section briefly discusses healing and deliverance from both the old and new testament perspectives and how the practice fared after the death of the last apostle who had been with Jesus. It is very important to consider healing and deliverance from biblical point of view since the Bible is believed to be the Christians' guide to faith and practice.

A survey of the Bible shows several records of healing and deliverance incidences. The earliest trace of healing in the Bible recounts the story about Abraham who was reported to have prayed and Abimelech and his household were healed (Genesis 20:17a).¹¹⁵ In all these accounts of healing reported in the Old Testament, it is used not only in reference to the healing of humans but it also includes natural phenomena from which humans derive their

¹¹³ Kekesi, 'Traditional and Christian Healing in Ghana', 34.

¹¹⁴ Sackey, *New Direction in Gender and Religion*, 111. See also Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context* (Oxford, Regmun Books International, 2013), 55.

¹¹⁵ *The Holy Bible, Revise Standard Version*.

existence and livelihood. For instance 2 Kings 2: 21 states; ‘Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, ‘this is what the Lord says: I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.’ And the water has remained wholesome to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken.’¹¹⁶ In some cases, the mention of healing in the Old Testament applies to the totality of people in a whole nation. The Bible gives account of how the nation of Babylon needed to be healed as recorded in Jeremiah 51: 9. This states that; ‘We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to his own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the clouds.’¹¹⁷ What is evident, in all these cases, is the fact that healing is being employed either to deal with ill health in the lives of individuals or restore the well being of the society in general. These show that the old Testament usage of healing does not only mean physical sickness of people but also has to do with the immediate environments in which people live and derive their existence and livelihood.

The account of Matthew chapter four, verses 23 through to 25 summarizes Jesus’ ministry practice in Galilee and its environs. A quick look at the verses in question will help drive the point home.

And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.¹¹⁸

Matthew 9: 35 and Mark 1: 34 further strengthen this biblical point and suggest that healing and deliverance was one of the obvious characteristics of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. The teaching and preaching of what Jesus describes as the gospel or good news went hand-in-

¹¹⁶ *The Holy Bible, Revise Standard Version.*

¹¹⁷ *The Holy Bible, Revise Standard Version.*

¹¹⁸ *The Holy Bible, Revise Standard Version.*

hand with the healing of the sick and the casting out of evil spirits from people suspected to be under demonic control. It is also evident that the Gospels do not only show evidences of Jesus' practice of healing and deliverance, but they also recorded the fact that Jesus commanded his disciples to do same.¹¹⁹ The Gospel according to Mathew, for example, portrays Jesus not only as a teacher and preacher; but also a healer who was portrayed to have practically and clearly demonstrated divine power in his early ministry by casting out devils, healing the sick and raising the dead.¹²⁰ After his death and ascension, the early disciples obeyed the command to heal the sick as part of their ministry which called on them to spread the gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:20). In some biblical instances examined in Jesus' and the Apostles' era, there have been other dimensions of healing apart from bodily healing, an aspect space and time will not allow me to discuss in this thesis.

2.3.1 The Post-Apostolic View of Healing and Deliverance

In discussing faith healing, W. E. Warner argues that the post-apostolic church continued the tradition of first-century believers by teaching and practicing a healing ministry to the sick.¹²¹ He maintains that Irenaeus, Justin Martyr and Tertullian viewed passages such as Mark 16:15-18 and James 5:14-16 as the church's mandate to pray for the sick in expectation of their healing. Warner notes that in the third century, Gregory Thaumaturgus or "Wonder Worker" (c. 213-c. 270) was credited with many miracles, among which was healing.¹²² However, Warner was quick to add that, evidence indicates that by the ninth century prayers for the sick had fallen from regular practice but by the twelfth century in Italy the

¹¹⁹ Matthew 10:1 of the Holy Bible for instance records: 'And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. Mark 3:13-14; 6:7; and Luke 9:1 give further support

¹²⁰ P. J., Achtemeier et al., *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publication Company, 2001), 99.

¹²¹ W. E. Warner, 'Faith Healing', in Daniel G. Reid, et al.(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), from Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²² W. E. Warner 'Faith Healing', in Daniel G. Reid, et al.(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), from Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5

Waldensians were practicing faith healing, while the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation brought with it a revival of prayers for the sick. Luther himself believed in praying for the sick and later Protestant groups continued this apostolic practice¹²³.

The Catholic Church has maintained the Sacrament of *Anointing of the Sick* since the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with healings reportedly taking place. However, in popular medieval thinking, the sacrament was regarded as a preparation for death (extreme unction) rather than a sacramental means of healing grace¹²⁴. Other means of miraculous healings have been recognized by the Catholic Church, whether they take place by means of sacraments such as prayers or blessings, by healing power associated with places such as Lourdes, France, or as a result of prayers to a saint. Certain individuals within the Catholic tradition, such as Francis of Assisi, Bernard of Clairvoux and Patrick of Ireland were credited with their spiritual gift of healing.¹²⁵

According to W. E. Warner, reports of healings have accompanied revivals and awakenings throughout the history of the Christian church, the present-day faith-healing movements look to the late nineteenth century for their immediate antecedents.¹²⁶ The practice of faith healing and deliverance particularly associated with the charismatic movement is based on the belief that Jesus' promise of healing recorded in Mark 16:18 is for every generation of believers. This new wave of interest in faith healing eventually influenced the American revival tradition.¹²⁷

¹²³ Warner 'Faith Healing', Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²⁴ L. S. Cunningham, 'Extreme unction, the sacrament of' in Daniel G. Reid, *et al.*(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), from Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²⁵ Warner, 'Anointing' Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²⁶ Warner 'Faith Healing', Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²⁷ Warner 'Faith Healing', in Daniel G. Reid, *et al.*(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

By the late nineteenth century, religious figures such as Charles Cullis, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Maria B. Woodworth-ETter, A. B. Simpson, A. J. Gordon, R. A. Torrey, John Alexander Dowie and R. Kelso Carter were teaching and practicing faith healing in America.¹²⁸ But among these practitioners there were differences in interpretation and practice of healing. While some taught that healing is part of the atonement and as readily available to believers as salvation, others reasoned that healing is a mercy available as a result of Christ's atonement, but not a guarantee of physical well being. The latter group looked to the resurrection for the fullness of healing. On the other hand, conservative theologians, particularly those of a dispensationalist persuasion, maintained that the gift of healing and deliverance had ceased with the apostolic age.¹²⁹ This explains why the practice of healing and deliverance seemed to be absent in the activities of some protestant churches, a tradition that was left with the churches they have founded generally in Africa and Ghana in particular.

Despite these divergent views on faith healing and deliverance, some religious individuals like J. A. Dowie, an emigrant from Australia, held the most radical view of faith healing. He went further, teaching that medicine and faith healing were incompatible. As a result his theocratic community of Zion, Illinois, banned the medical profession including veterinarians from practicing within the city.¹³⁰

In the case of Africa, the period of silence on faith healing continued with the type of Christian tradition presented to the Africans until the practice of evangelization and spiritual healing and deliverance resurfaced through the initiatives of some African prophets.

¹²⁸ Warner 'Faith Healing', Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹²⁹ W. L. Walker, 'Anointing' in Daniel G. Reid, *et al.*(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

See also W. E. Warner, 'Faith Healing', in Daniel G. Reid, *et al.*(eds), *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Town: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), Discovering Collection Database, PC Study Bible V5.

¹³⁰ Walker, *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, Discovering Collection Database.

Asamoah-Gyadu observes that although healing and deliverance is no longer new to indigenous Pentecostalism, the ministry has enjoyed an enormous resurgence within Ghanaian Christianity in the last three decades.¹³¹

2.3.2 The African Charismatic Churches View of Healing and Deliverance.

Healing and deliverance is one of the core activities in the belief and praxis of most charismatic churches in Ghana. As earlier indicated, healing and deliverance is used to mean

the deployment of divine resources, that is, power and authority in the Name or Blood of Jesus-perceived in pneumatological terms as the intervention of the Holy Spirit to provide release for demon-possessed, demon-oppressed; broken hearted, disturbed and troubled persons, in order that victims may be restored to proper functioning order, that is, to health and wholeness; and being thus freed from demonic influence and curses, so they may enjoy God's fullness of life understood to be available in Christ.¹³² The word 'healing' in context of this definition relates to the regaining of health through prayer which may be accompanied by some form of touch or laying on of hands and/or anointing with oil.¹³³

This is based on the prevalent world-view that the causes of ill-health may be natural or instigated by sin or evil forces.¹³⁴ For the African charismatic Christian, healing and deliverance finds expression in the salvation of God. This is because salvation must be experienced and the goal thereof be the realisation of 'transformation and empowerment', 'healing and deliverance', and 'prosperity and success' in the lives of believers.¹³⁵ Some scholars explain that in the experiential, the emphasis on 'personality transformation' underlying the spirituality of the charismatic churches is evident in these soteriological goals.¹³⁶

Charismatic churches believe that the realisation of these soteriological goals must begin with calling the world to repentance from sin and conversion to God such that those who respond

¹³¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 165

¹³² Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 164-200.

¹³³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 166.

¹³⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 166.

¹³⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 133.

¹³⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 133.

and become members of the body of Christ may be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be of service to others.¹³⁷ Thus, the African charismatic conceives salvation in terms of freedom from sin, from one's spiritual enemies (that is the devil, evil spirits, witchcrafts, and other such inimical forces) whose main duty is to 'steal, kill and destroy' the children of God (John 10:10).¹³⁸ The situation is not different from the Ghanaian proponents of healing and deliverance who believed firmly in the causal relationship between sin, the work of demons and ill-health. This is why healing is tied to deliverance among the charismatic churches.¹³⁹

This understanding partly explains why charismatic churches believe in and practise healing and deliverance as a pastoral care for the flock of God. This practice which now exists as a subculture in Ghanaian Christianity is fast-spreading throughout traditional Western mission churches in response to demands put forth by some of their members.¹⁴⁰ In respect of this demand, some of the traditional Western mission churches run courses for their pastors to alert them of the need for integrating healing and deliverance into their pastoral responsibilities.

As part of the healing and deliverance processes, Asamoah-Gyadu explains that candidates are prepared through confession of sin by the candidate and the renunciation and breaking of all covenants. This process also involves the burning of all emblems and materials associated with non-Christian religion. In the practice of healing and deliverance, persistent prayer and anointing with olive oil are sometimes employed.¹⁴¹ The healing and deliverance practice also involves consultation with gifted experts in the field to determine the cause of ill-health

¹³⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 133.

¹³⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 134.

¹³⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 167.

¹⁴⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics* 165.

¹⁴¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 188.

(which take the form of counselling) and domesticating spirits through ritual process of 'binding' and casting out the spirits with a loud words of command.¹⁴²

It is important to state that in all the processes and practices of healing and deliverance, the Charismatic churches believe that the authority to engage in it is derived from Jesus Christ. However, it is also believed among Charismatic Christians that, successful deliverance processes depend on the level of anointing of the practitioner.¹⁴³ The more anointed and gifted the practitioner, the more effective the practice of healing and deliverance serves as a pastoral care and the more it attracts people to the practitioner's churches.

2.4 The Concept of Church Growth

Growth is understood generally to mean an increase in size, number and significance.¹⁴⁴ When used in reference to the church, scholars have identified several dimensions with which the idea of church growth can be envisaged. According to J. B. Leonard, the Christian church is a community founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ and strove to bear witness to Christ's gospel in its worship and faith, work and memory. Theologically, the church is a spiritual communion of the whole people of God. It is rooted in the ancient covenant with Israel and the divine promise to deliver God's people. Alluding to the imagery of Apostle Paul, the church is the body of Christ, and Christ is the head of his body. Without Christ there is no church. The church, therefore, is defined as an incarnate community of those who receive the word of God, believe in Jesus Christ and seek to express that word in their own lives through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Asamoah-Gyadu *African Charismatics*, 187.

¹⁴³ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 188.

¹⁴⁴ Catherine Love Collins *English Dictionary* (Glasgow: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), 725.

¹⁴⁵ J. B. Leonard, *Church in Dictionary of Christianity in America*, (Intervarsity Press, 1990), Electronic Copy.

The New Testament, which informs the Christian understanding of the church, speaks of it as a living organism of persons closely related to Christ and to one another. It also provides important images by which the church has come to understand its life. As a living organism, the church must grow as is the case with every normal living organism.¹⁴⁶ Paul's address to the Corinthian church points to the fact that church growth is possible through the combination of human and divine efforts when he writes 'I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth (1cor. 3: 6)'.¹⁴⁷ Hence, there is sense in talking about church growth as well as the means by which people create its nurturing.

According to Gbordzoe, church can be defined as 'the bringing of people, into a personal relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit and into responsible church membership, such that the membership of the local congregation will increase in faith, holiness and other spiritual and material qualities while at the same time increasing in number, and also opening and multiplying other branches'.¹⁴⁸ The British Church Growth Association also defines Church Growth as having to do with an investigation of the nature, function, structure, health and multiplication of Christian churches as they relate to the effective implementation of Christ's commission to go then to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples (Matt 28:19-20).¹⁴⁹ The question which comes to mind is what are the dimensions in which the growth of the church can be measured?

¹⁴⁶ E. K. Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth: A Practical Model*, (Accra: GEC Press, 2010), 63.

¹⁴⁷ The Holy Bible, *Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Online Publishing Inc., 2002), <http://www.powerbible.com>

¹⁴⁸ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 61.

¹⁴⁹ Roy Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* (Basingstoke, Hants: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984), 17.

2.4.1 Dimensions of Church Growth

The growth of the church by the addition of new converts is the fundamental dimension of growth, but there are obviously many other areas of growth that relate to the nature, function, structure, health and multiplication of Christian churches. Roy Pointer notes that church growth embraces more than an interest in numbers and includes a concern for quality. According to Roy Pointer, Orlando Costa suggests ‘holistic expansion’ as a suitable term to describe the multidimensional growth of the body of Christ, and defines four dimensions. According to him, in order for church growth to be considered ‘holistic expansion’, it must encompass four major areas namely the numerical, organic, conceptual and incarnational.¹⁵⁰

The numerical growth has to do with an increase in numbers of the membership of the church. This according to Pointer can occur through biological, transfer, restoration and conversion. Firstly, the biological growth occurs when the children of Christian parents come to a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and join the church, usually by a rite that recognizes their status as responsible members. This may be by confirmation, believers’ baptism, putting on and any other means by which converts are identified with the community of believers.¹⁵¹ Some scholars are of the view that even though biological growth is good and biblical, it can sometimes be very slow and often not equal the population growth since non-Christian part of the world seems to be growing faster than that of Christians.¹⁵²

The second is transfer growth which Costa identified as the recruitment of members who are already committed Christians, by transfer from other congregations. This may be due to movement of Christians from one area to another but occasionally may be as a result of social or doctrinal reasons. The third is restoration growth. This describes the phenomenon where

¹⁵⁰ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 25-29.

¹⁵¹ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 26.

¹⁵² Richard Foli, *Toward Church Growth in Ghana* (Accra: Trust Publishers, 1996), 52.

some Christians who have withdrawn their active participation in religious activities are successfully brought to fellowship with Jesus Christ and into active church membership. The successful bringing and restoration of these inactive Christians to active membership is considered as a form of growth.¹⁵³

The fourth dimension of numerical church growth is conversion growth. Pointer describes this kind of growth as *growing more in number*.¹⁵⁴ This takes place when those outside the church are brought to repentance and faith in Christ and join a local church as responsible members. Although this dimension of church growth comes from obedience and commitment to the Great Commission, it only materializes after the evangelized have become responsible and committed members of the Christian community- the church of Christ.¹⁵⁵ The point of emphasis here can be linked to the task of evangelization. Scholars point to the fact that there are several ways numerical growth can occur in the church of Christ.

Pointer, for example, identifies another dimension of church growth known as conceptual growth. He also calls it *growing up in maturity*.¹⁵⁶ This dimension of growth describes the personal and corporate development of the Christians' understanding of his or her faith. Pointer defines conceptual growth as the degree of consciousness that a community of faith has with regard to its nature and mission to the world.¹⁵⁷ This idea is similar to Gbordzoe's proposition that the church grows when its activities are aimed at fulfilling the Great Commission which is making disciples for Christ.¹⁵⁸ For Pointer, the Great Commission includes the teaching of disciples as a fundamental activity and offers the opportunity of

¹⁵³ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 26.

¹⁵⁴ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 26

¹⁵⁵ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 27.

¹⁵⁶ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 27

¹⁵⁷ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 27

¹⁵⁸ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 63.

learning the faith as first duty. The early fellowships of believers were constituted on the basis of the Lord's teaching through the Apostles.

He further stresses that the local church is a community formed and nurtured by the preaching and teaching of the word of God. The progress of preaching the gospel and the growth of the church are even described as the increase of the word. This is to say that the key factor in conceptual growth is the word of God. How much knowledge has the Christian about the word of God? To what extent is the believer able to apply the word of God to practical life situations? Conceptual growth points to the Christians' ability to interact with the word of God meaningfully in order to discover the will of God for their lives and order their lives accordingly. Therefore the progress of a Christian or church in every age and all cultures may be measured against this yardstick of scripture. Taking into account variations of illumination, interpretation and culture we may gauge the maturity and ministry of every Christian and church throughout history.¹⁵⁹

Organic growth, described as *growing together in community* is another dimension identified by Pointer.¹⁶⁰ He notes that while becoming and being a Christian are entirely dependent upon an intimate and personal relationship to Christ, the Christian faith can only be lived in a relationship with and in service to others. Pointer strongly argues that commitment to Christ includes commitment to a community and organic growth describes the formation and functioning of this communal life of the local church. He, thus, defines organic growth as the:

Internal development of a local community of faith (that is, the system of relationships among its members), its form of government, financial structures, leadership and types of activities in which its time and resources are invested.¹⁶¹ Organic growth is concerned with such issues as depth of fellowship: quality of worship; training of new members; discovery of gifts and the exercise of ministry;

¹⁵⁹ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 27-28

¹⁶⁰ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 28.

¹⁶¹ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 28.

appointment and role of leaders; practice of corporate prayer; celebration of the ordinance or sacraments- all that relate to the corporate organization and activity of the local church.¹⁶²

The church, according to Pointer, also has another dimension of growth referred to as incarnational growth.¹⁶³ Pointer explains that incarnational growth describes ‘the degree of involvement of a community of faith in the life and problems of her social environment’. That is the church's participation in the afflictions of the world in which the church finds itself; it's prophetic, intercessory and liberating action on behalf of the weak and destitute; the intensity of its preaching to the poor; the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind and the oppressed. This kind of growth describes the development of the ministry of a local church as an extension and continuation of Christ's ministry.

For Pointer, a local church should engage in a healing ministry even if many within the church rejects the miracle that underlines the messages and the wonders that signify the Lord is with his people. While the church believes in the progress of modern medicine, it also believes in the extraordinary intervention of God in the healing process. The church, therefore, must learn to tap by prayer the unlimited spiritual resources available for the progress of God's mission. It is in respect of this that, Christians are called to stand against the forces of evil and the rebellion of men.¹⁶⁴

One can say that the churches ability to discover the various spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit among the members of the Christian church and their mobilization, development and the subsequent utilization of these gifts to the benefit of the members of its community is a crucial factor for incarnational growth. Pointer's exposition then throws more light on the

¹⁶² Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 28.

¹⁶³ C. Peter Wagner, *Church Growth & the Whole Gospel: A Biblical Mandate* (New York: Harper & Row: 1987), 14.

¹⁶⁴ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 30.

subject matter of church growth and the extent to which the practice of healing and deliverance can be explained to have a role to play in the growth of the church.

2.4.2 Factors for Church Growth

Several scholars discuss various factors which account for church growth and under varying headings. Donald A. McGavran and Winfield C. Arn, for example, in discussing the concept of church growth, identify ten dynamic but which the authors point at as ‘far from exhaustive’ growth principles.¹⁶⁵ This is because the authors, McGavran and Arn, believed that new church growth principles were yet to be discovered and called for further search for such yet to be discovered growth principles.¹⁶⁶

The researcher restrains himself from any detailed discussions of these factors since doing so may lead to writing another whole thesis. However, mention is made of them since that is crucial for the analysis of this research. For McGavran and Arn, any attempt to achieve the growth of the church must follow these principles. These growth principles may also be described as factors for growth or steps to take when considering how to growth a church.

In their work, McGavran and Arn consider these factors and discuss them under the heading, ‘Steps for Church Growth’. These steps include discovering church growth principles, respecting biblical principles, yielding to God’s unswerving purpose, giving priority to effective evangelism, rightly discerning the body, rightly discerning the community, finding

¹⁶⁵ Donald Anderson McGavran and Winfield C. Arn , *Ten Steps for Church Growth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 15.

¹⁶⁶ McGavran and Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth*, 15.

new groups and ways to disciple, churches reproducing themselves through Planned Parenthood, structuring for growth and risking for growth.¹⁶⁷

Pointer discusses similar factors under the heading: 'Signs of Growth'.¹⁶⁸ He identifies constant prayer, respect for biblical authority, effective leadership, mobilized membership, continuous evangelism, community life, compassionate service, openness to change and released resources as 'signs of growth'. Pointer discusses them as signs because they are observable phenomena that accompany genuine church growth.¹⁶⁹ Like McGavran and Arn, Pointer indicates that these signs are not exhaustive and explains that though a growing church may exhibit several of these signs; it may not necessarily exhibit all of them.¹⁷⁰ He argues that churches grow when they pray constantly, respect the authority of the Bible, appoint effective leaders, mobilize their membership, worship God in eventful services; engage in continuous evangelism and compassionate service, develop genuine community life; allow spirit-directed change and release the resources of God for God's mission.¹⁷¹

On discovering church growth principles, McGavran explains that a church growth principle is the universal truth which, when properly interpreted and applied, contributes significantly to the growth of churches and denominations. However, to discover a church growth principle, one must observe where the church is growing, where God is blessing the efforts of his servants with factual, actual church growth, where the number of members is increasing and new congregations are being born and where men and women are introduced to Jesus Christ, committing their lives to him, and becoming responsible members of his Church.

¹⁶⁷ McGavran and Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth*, 15. McGavran and Arn in this book discuss what they termed as Ten Steps for Church Growth.

¹⁶⁸ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 55-88

¹⁶⁹ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 58

¹⁷⁰ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 58

¹⁷¹ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?*, 88

Thus, to know how to grow a church, one must critically study churches which are growing so as to discover the biblical principles which account for the carefully observed growth.¹⁷²

When one sees where God is blessing the church with growth, it is important that one investigates why and how the growth is occurring.¹⁷³ Thus when one observes and studies the various factors, efforts, prayers, witness, passion, teaching, education, biblical base and outreach from which this growth emerges and then carefully analyzes and truthfully describes the findings, one is bound to find one or more church growth principles.¹⁷⁴

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to examine some major concepts relevant to this research. Among them are ill health, healing, deliverance and church growth. From the discussions, it has become obvious that several factors account for ill-health in human society. Both physical and spiritual factors have been identified as two major causes of ill-health among humans. The chapter also examines the concept of healing and some of the approaches that are adopted by different religions in the society to achieve it. It has become clear from the discussions that one major requirement for holistic and total healing and deliverance is to discover the cause of a particular ill-health situation so as to apply the most appropriate healing methods. The chapter further looks at some factors of church growth and the various dimensions from which it can be understood. This chapter is very relevant to this research in the sense that it has thrown light on the extent to which the various perspectives of ill-health, healing and church growth have influenced the contemporary practices in the GEC.

¹⁷² McGavran identified four questions which should preoccupy a generation of church scholars. These are What are the causes of church growth?, What are the barriers to church growth?, what are the factors which can make the Christian faith a movement among some populations? And what principles of church growth are reproducible?

¹⁷³ Norman A. Horner & James M. Phillips (eds), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1994), 516.

¹⁷⁴ D. A. McGavran and Winfield C. Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 16.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EVOLUTION AND PRACTICE OF 'HEALING AND DELIVERANCE' IN GLOBAL EVANGELICAL CHURCH

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we tried to examine some concepts considered to be very central to this research. These are ill health, healing, deliverance and church growth. The chapter further looks at some factors of church growth and the various dimensions from which it can be understood. This chapter presents a brief historical survey of the Global Evangelical Church and discusses some of its fundamental and theological teachings. This is aimed at helping understand how these fundamental teachings and theological perspectives shape the practice of 'healing and deliverance' within the Global Evangelical Church. This will be done by discussing how the practice of 'healing and deliverance' is designed and practiced in three selected parishes of the Global Evangelical Church. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an insight into the practice of 'healing and deliverance' and the role it plays in church growth.

3.2 Global Evangelical Church: History, Beliefs and Practices

The Global Evangelical Church is one of the churches established in Ghana in 1991 which exhibits some level of Pentecostal and Charismatic features. This follows a split from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church due to certain unresolved administrative and doctrinal differences in the church. Prior to this period, the E. P. Church operated as a mission instituted church with administrative, doctrinal, liturgical, and theological structures inherited from her Western European Missionaries, the North German Missionary Society in Hamburg, which became the Bremen Mission.¹⁷⁵ The two factions which had emerged from the split were identified with the names: Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana with its

¹⁷⁵ W. E. Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church- 1847-2011* (Accra Global Evangelical Publishing Services, 2012), 1.

headquarters located in Ho and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana headquartered in Accra. Thus the punctuation mark (,) and the preposition (of) differentiated the two factions in terms of name. The similarity in the names again led to some legal scuffles resulting in a change of name by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana to Global Evangelical Church during the 62nd Synod in August, 2003.¹⁷⁶

After her attainment of autonomy as an independent church from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, the Global Evangelical Church has undergone some reforms which affect the generality of its religious activities including leadership structure, theological orientation and liturgy. The present status of the Global Evangelical Church is summarized in the church's handbook entitled 'Corporate Identity',¹⁷⁷ which states that GEC is Presbyterian by governance, Evangelical and Pentecostal by faith and Charismatic by expression.¹⁷⁸ The GEC is Presbyterian by governance in the sense that the administration of the church follows the leadership patterns of the Presbyterian churches. Thus, the administration of the church is through sessions, districts, presbyteries and Synod with its agents designated as teachers, evangelists, catechists, presbyters and Pastors.

The church is evangelical by faith because it affirms the gospel of Jesus Christ, all the central beliefs of the Christian faith and accepts the Bible as the infallible word of God to guide the faith and conduct of its members. Members of the Global Evangelical Church also express their faith through hymns, songs of praise, drumming, dancing, lifting and clapping of hands in adoration to God. In other words, worship in the Global Evangelical Church varies from the traditional missionary-oriented to contemporary to Charismatic forms. The church is also

¹⁷⁶ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 109.

¹⁷⁷ This is a Booklet that spells the fundamental beliefs and identity of the Global Evangelical church as an Independent Church.

¹⁷⁸ E. K. Gbordzoe, *The Corporate Identity of the Global Evangelical Church* (Accra: GEC Press, 2007), 14-21.

described to be liturgical by expression. This is explained to mean that its church services are guided and ordered in accordance with a designed pattern of activities.¹⁷⁹

With regard to her liturgical expression, the church identifies itself with the Charismatic and Pentecostal kinds. To the GEC, Charismatic and Pentecostal identity is demonstrated the church's belief about the Holy Spirit and the expression of his gifts and fruits. This Charismatic and Pentecostal identity of the Global Evangelical Church is demonstrated in activities such as intensive individual and corporate fasting accompanied by the practice of extempore praying. Other Charismatic practices in the church include speaking in tongues, singing of songs (accompanied by musical instruments, hand clapping and dancing), 'healing and deliverance' through prayers and the laying-on of hands. The church is not only charismatic in practice, but it is also a member of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Council of Ghana (PCCG).

3.2.1 Theological Orientation of the Global Evangelical Church

The theological foundation of the church is grounded in the Bible. This is captured in the church's statement of faith as:

We affirm all the central beliefs of the Christian faith such as the Sovereignty of God, The Trinity, Jesus Christ and his work of salvation, The Bible as the infallible word of God which is a guide to our faith and conduct, the fallen state of man and our redemption only through grace alone which is given through Christ to which we must respond by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit; the need for a personal encounter with Christ in conversion in which one is born again, sanctification, priesthood of all believers, the importance of Prayer, preaching, and the urgency of mission, etc.¹⁸⁰

As has been identified with charismatic and Pentecostal churches, the theological perspective of GEC is practically demonstrated in the emphases on personal and corporate experience of

¹⁷⁹ Gbordzoe, *The Corporate Identity*, 14

¹⁸⁰ Gbordzoe, *The Corporate Identity*, 14.

the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸¹ The many activities designed in the church for the purpose of ensuring that members' acceptance of Christ is practically evident in the holistic transformation of their lives. Personal and cooperate prayer, regular bible study, teaching members to respect biblical authority, social action, belief in and dependence on the Holy Spirit in dealing with life situation as well as the practice of 'healing and deliverance' are some ways in which holistic transformation is encouraged in the church.

The church also demonstrates its theological orientation in a manner in which individual members are encouraged not only to accept and confess Jesus Christ as their saviour but, also to practically avail themselves for the manifestation of the power, gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. According to Gbordzoe, the church lays great emphasis on practical Christian life (such as holiness, love, personal commitment to God and fellowman among others), which is believed to be possible through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit available to all who believe in Christ.¹⁸² As it is common with most charismatic churches, members are encouraged to see salvation beyond water baptism, confirmation ceremonies, attending churches of parents or being born into the church of one's parents, to a decisive transition leading to personal transformation - 'new life with new lifestyle'.¹⁸³ The church, therefore, explores these beliefs not only in preparing members for eternity but, also to ensure that humankind attains 'holistic salvation' which includes liberating people from their human existential needs.¹⁸⁴ It is against this background that the church has designed many activities including 'healing and deliverance' in order to work towards holistic salvation of the believer. This theological orientation is in line with that of the Charismatic and Pentecostal kinds of churches.

¹⁸¹ Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), 138.

¹⁸² E. K. Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth: A Practical Model* (Accra: GEC Press, 2010), 82.

¹⁸³ Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 138.

¹⁸⁴ Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 203.

The GEC's emphasis on the belief in the manifestation of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit marks it as one of the Charismatic and Pentecostal kinds of churches. This belief is demonstrated in almost every aspect of the church's practices. Members believe in the presence and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in their midst and do expect personal encounters with the Holy Spirit. Although the belief in the Holy Spirit is not limited to only either the Charismatic or Pentecostal churches, according to Dovlo, there are varying degrees of manifestations of the Holy Spirit in these churches.¹⁸⁵ Members of the Global Evangelical Church like other Charismatic or Pentecostal churches are not only desirous of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in their meetings, but they also desire practical manifestations and experience of the Holy Spirit in their Christian life for a total transformation. It is from this dimension of experience and power manifestation of the Holy Spirit which is believed to result in 'healing and deliverance' among charismatic and Pentecostal believers.

3.2.2 The Genesis of 'Healing and Deliverance' Practice in GEC

The yearning for spiritual revitalisation by some members of the E.P church led to the emergence of certain groups and individuals who attempted to introduce activities such as regular prayers and fasting, Bible study, healing, deliverance and many other practices purported to bring spiritual growth into the church. The introduction of a renewal movement known as Bible Study and Prayer Group (BSPG) in the church in 1960 was as a result of this spiritual yearning.¹⁸⁶

The Bible Study and Prayer Group, which started in Amakom-Kumasi Congregation and later spread across many other congregations in the E.P. Church, also continued with similar practices as was the case with previous movements. Considering the purported benefits of the

¹⁸⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 27.

¹⁸⁶ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 45.

activities being embarked on by the BSPG to the church, some members suggested to the church leadership for its formal institutionalisation. The church leadership thereafter invited a BSPG member to address synod on the activities of the group. After much deliberation on the issue, the position of the church was summarised by Rt. Rev. C. K. Dovlo, the then Moderator of the E. P. Church as follows; ‘If Christians come together to study the Bible and to pray, there was nothing wrong with it. That used to be the practice in the church.’ The group was therefore formally inaugurated during a convention programme organised at Peki Blengo in 1978.¹⁸⁷

During the leadership of Rev. Prof. N. K. Dzobo as the Moderator of the E P. Church (1981-1991), the name of the Bible Study and Prayer Group was changed to Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship (BSPF). At this point, Rt. Rev. Dzobo relinquished his responsibility as the constitutional patron of the group to Rev. H. Y. Ofori due to his busy schedules. Three other ministers Rev. G. K. Atimpo, C. F. A. Gbedi and Rev. E. S. Ofori were charged to provide pastoral oversight to the fellowship.¹⁸⁸ The activities of the BSPF is said to have provided a lot of spiritual support to the church in diverse ways. It was reported that in the absence of the BSPF, most members of the E. P. Church were leaving the church for existing “Spiritual” churches and other Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in search for spiritual assistance and nourishment.¹⁸⁹

The operations of the BSPF, which was fast gaining grounds in many congregations after its official inauguration, was considered by some members of the leadership of the church as a new dawn of spiritual reawakening of the E. P. Church. Consequently the church leadership

¹⁸⁷ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 49.

¹⁸⁸ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 52.

¹⁸⁹ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 52. Also in a Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

also recognised the impact of the Fellowship on the spiritual growth of the church by commending it during the Synod held in 1985.¹⁹⁰ However, the fellowship was again criticised on the grounds of being too close to Pentecostal churches in their mode of worship and practices. They were therefore entreated to refrain from clapping hands while singing, praying aloud, emphasizing baptism by emersion and not using hymns from the *Ewe hadzigbale* (the Ewe hymnal).¹⁹¹ Subsequently, the fellowship was banned at the 49th Synod held in Ho between 22nd and 26th August in 1990 and the BSPF executives were excommunicated from the Church leading to protracted leadership conflicts which later resulted into the split in the E. P. Church in 1991.¹⁹²

Most of the excommunicated leaders and members of the fellowship came together with other groups to form the E. P. Church of Ghana, now Global Evangelical Church and have since continued with their approach to religious activities. It can be said from this historical account that the current approach to Christian practices especially in the area of 'healing and deliverance' in the Global Evangelical Church is partly as a result of the influence that BSPF had on the church. It can also be explained from the fact that most of the leaders of the Global Evangelical Church since her inception were once either leaders or members of the BSPF.

3.2.3 The Volta Evangelistic Association (VEA) Factor

The Volta Evangelistic Association (VEA) is another renewal movement whose activities had direct or indirect effect on the formation of the Global Evangelical Church. VEA is an interdenominational renewal movement formed in 1965 by some individual Christians from different church denominations with the objective of evangelising the Volta Region.¹⁹³ The

¹⁹⁰ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 52.

¹⁹¹ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 52-53.

¹⁹² Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 67.

¹⁹³ Ashigbie (ed), *The History of the Global Evangelical Church*, 53.

group, of which majority were members of the E. P. Church, embarked on many evangelistic crusades in the Volta Region and in some cases upon invitation of some ministers of the E. P. Church. As part of their activities, the group also used intensive loud prayers and fasting, singing, hand clapping, laying-on of hands, and casting out demons from people believed to have been under the influence of evil spirits. In no time, 'healing and deliverance' constituted one of the main preoccupations of VEA in their evangelistic activities. It is significant to state that during an interaction with the leadership of the GEC, it was discovered that the past three moderators of the church and the current one were all members of VEA.¹⁹⁴ It, therefore, becomes evident that the present practice of 'healing and deliverance' in the GEC is partly as a result of the effect that members of VEA have had on the church during and after its split.

3.3 The GEC's Theology of Healing and Deliverance'

Though the genesis of 'healing and deliverance' in Pentecostalism in Ghana is linked to the activities of Apostle Anim, there are other bases or grounds in the Bible, particularly in the new testament for which Charismatic churches practice 'healing and deliverance'.¹⁹⁵ As it is common with other Charismatic churches, the GEC teaches belief in, and practice of the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit with strong emphasis on the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.¹⁹⁶ In practice, the Global Evangelical Church considers Jesus Christ as the ultimate model in its approach to 'healing and deliverance'. Gbordzoe notes with great emphasis that, 'Jesus practically engaged in 'healing and deliverance' in his ministry on earth'. He further explained using Luke 4:33 that at the start of His ministry, Jesus cast out many demons from people and healed them.

¹⁹⁴ E. K. Gbordzoe, Interviewed, Oyibi-Accra, 7th October, 2012.

¹⁹⁵ Evelyn Affua Arhin-Sam, 'Ghanaian Pentecostal Medical Doctors in Faith Healing' *M. Phil Thesis*, (University of Ghana, Legon, 2011), 77.

¹⁹⁶ Arhin-Sam, 'Ghanaian Pentecostal Medical Doctors in Faith Healing,' 77.

For example, He cast demons out of two men in the Gaderenes (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:20); delivered the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21; Mark 7:20); cured a demonized man (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-36); and cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene as well as some other women followers (Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).¹⁹⁷ It has, therefore, been observed that except for discussion about miracles in general, Jesus spent more time healing and casting out demons than preaching.¹⁹⁸ The ministers in the Global Evangelical Church though may learn from other practitioners of healing and deliverance such as Gbordzoe, and Kwami, most of them also draw their inspirations from these biblical evidences in their 'healing and deliverance' practice. However, the Scripture Union's annual workshop at Aburi on 'healing and deliverance' also played a major role since Gbordzoe and Kwami themselves were part of the scripture Union workshop.

Healing in the Global Evangelical Church, according to Rev. E.Y. Awumee, implies restoration to health, marriage, business and total well-being. This denotes the state of having peace within oneself, with God and with others that leads to psychological, emotional and social stability of a person. Awumee sees this as the goodwill of God for humans and includes both the spiritual and physical aspect of life. He explains that the sin of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, has serious effects not only on human person, but also on all aspects of human life and desperately need redemption and restoration.¹⁹⁹

This redemption, the GEC believes is made possible through the death of Christ on the cross such that anyone who believes in him will not only receive forgiveness but will also have access to the life of God and to be in fellowship with Him. At new birth, According to S.Y. Kwami, the believer, having been washed with the blood of Christ, has a body ready and

¹⁹⁷ E. K. Gbordzoe, Interviewed, Oyibi-Accra, 7th October, 2012.

¹⁹⁸ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 76.

¹⁹⁹ E. Y. Awumee, Interviewed, GEC Aflao Parish, Aflao, 20th December, 2012.

prepared for God's habitation and use for the salvation and benefit of other humans²⁰⁰. As the believer grows in faith and in the knowledge of the things of God, he is empowered to lay hand on people through exercising his God given benefits received by virtue of the new birth and fellowship with God. Kwami explains further that once peace is established between God and man, the effect of the fall of man is removed. He, however, maintains that the believer has to appropriate faith not only in Christ as the Saviour of his life, but also in what Christ's death has accomplished for all believers

This perception about circumstances that necessitated 'healing and deliverance' in the Global Evangelical Church is in line with the African understanding of the inseparable nature of religion and other aspects of life.²⁰¹ Deliverance is also conducted in order to ensure members live and do the will of God, to overcome the challenges of this world such as the temptations of life, the temptation of the flesh, spiritual attacks, evil charms, magical and juju powers.

The practice of 'healing and deliverance' in the Global Evangelical Church is an elaborate one involving a number of spiritual activities such as prayer, fasting, counselling, interpretation of the Bible, singing songs of praises and worship, laying on of hands, use of anointing oil in some cases, positive confession, confession of sins and wrongs done to either oneself or others, and the like. The impression one gets after carefully observing the practice of 'healing and deliverance' is that it does not only apply to humans but also to places (such as cities, towns, villages, markets), relationships (husband-wife, would be couple, parent-children), business, job placement, employment, academic success, infertility, land litigations, visa acquisition and other human existential needs.

²⁰⁰ S.Y. Kwami, interviewed, GEC, Powerland, Tema, 8th November, 2012.

²⁰¹ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Inc; 1975), 1.

Apart from these elaborate activities, most ministers of the church and practitioners explained further what can be described as prerequisites for 'healing and deliverance'. These prerequisites are considered to be collective responsibilities between the 'practitioner' and the 'client'. On the part of the minister, Rev. Emmanuel Yao Awumee explained that not all ministers can do 'healing and deliverance' effectively. This is because although certain activities have been identified as components of the 'healing and deliverance' practice, 'healing and deliverance' go beyond ordinary adherence to these principles.²⁰² Rev. Awumee and Rev. E. K. Gbordzoe agree that as a 'healing and deliverance' minister, one must be prayerful, live a holy life, have faith, and must be well versed in the word of God. One must also apply the gospel to the conduct of 'healing and deliverance'.²⁰³ On the part of the clients, they must as well have faith in God, be committed to living holy lives as well as being committed to praying.²⁰⁴

Despite the general trend in the practice of 'healing and deliverance' in the GEC, ministers in the church have developed diverse but similar approaches to it. The dynamism in the approaches to the practice of 'healing and deliverance' among ministers is believed to be the result of different impartation by the Holy Spirit on the lives of the ministers. This could be observed from the varying levels of experiences and encounters the ministers have had in the course of their ministrations in the various congregations. At this juncture, it would be crucial to review the 'healing and deliverance' practice in some selected congregations of the GEC designated as 'Hilltop', 'Hillcrest' and 'Valleyland'.

²⁰² E. Y. Awumee, Interviewed, GEC Aflao Parish, Aflao. 20th December, 2012.

²⁰³ E. K. Gbordzoe, Interviewed, Oyibi-Accra, 7th October, 2012

²⁰⁴ A pastor, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest Parish. 20th December, 2012.

3.4 Practice of Healing and Deliverance at GEC 'Hilltop' Parish

Healing and Deliverance as a practice at Hilltop Parish of the Global Evangelical Church started with the branch since its establishment as an independent church after the 18 early members separated from the E. P. Church. According to some of these members interviewed at the branch, the activities that constitute healing and deliverance for which they were disallowed place of worship continued to be one of the core practices of the congregation. The church services comprised periodic fasts with spontaneous praying, singing and dancing, hand-clapping, laying-on of hands, speaking in tongues, and any other activity considered to be a process of delivering members from any form of spiritual problems.

Factors that shaped healing and deliverance at the formative stages at the Hilltop Parish of the GEC include the Scripture Union (SU) annual workshop at Aburi on healing and deliverance, Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship's special ministries training programme. Others include the use S. Y. Kwami's work on procedures of deliverance, the experiences of some ministers and the influence of deliverance workers, such as Rev. Gbordzoe in the church. One of the first ministers of the church for example, explained that he had personally organized his lay leaders at Hilltop to attend the January 1992 edition of the SU workshop on healing and deliverance.²⁰⁵ This was because members who engaged in the practice did not receive any formal training as a preparatory process to become practitioners of healing and deliverance. According to one of the early members of the church who acted as a lay leader of the church during the formative stage and currently an accountant and a presbyter of the Hilltop congregation, they had little experience regarding the practice of healing and deliverance apart from what they observed from some emerging Charismatic Church ministers.²⁰⁶ This shows that at the formative stages, there was no deliberate plan and process for what was

²⁰⁵ One of the first ministers of the church, interviewed, GEC, Hilltop Parish, 2 December, 2012

²⁰⁶ One of the early members, interviewed, GEC, Hilltop Parish, 2 December, 2012

described as the practice of healing and deliverance.²⁰⁷ This notwithstanding, one of the early members asserted that their activities provided solutions to the spiritual problems of their members.²⁰⁸ Following the group's decision to be independent of the Bethel branch of the E. P. Church, they continued to take responsibility of all religious activities at their newly founded place of worship. Wanting to carve a sense of belongingness and affiliation with existing churches with a similar approach to Christian activities, they requested for a minister who would take charge of the administration of the Hilltop congregation. Their request was granted the necessary consideration and a pastor was posted to become the first minister of the Hilltop branch of the church. Subsequently, the Hilltop church opted to be part of the 'breakaway' faction in other congregations in Ghana and therefore, accepted E. P. Church of Ghana as its parent name.

The arrival of the first minister to the Hilltop Parish may be described as a significant development in the life of the church. This is based on the fact that the pastor was not only posted to fill the vacuum created as result of the unavailability of a Minister for the church, but he was also believed to have been endowed with the gift of healing and deliverance that is necessary for continuity in the activities with which the church was established. The pastor, by virtue of his experience in the healing and deliverance ministry, brought much expertise to bear on the practice. This resulted in many people in and around the Hilltop community trooping into the church for solution to their existential needs.

According to a respondent who is a member and currently serving as a catechist of the congregation, the three successive ministers of the congregation have all embraced the

²⁰⁷ One of the early members informant, interviewed, GEC, Hilltop Parish, 2 December, 2012

²⁰⁸ One of the early members of the church, interviewed, GEC, Hilltop, 2 December, 2012

healing and deliverance practice in the church.²⁰⁹ He explains that from his point of view, the continuous engagement of the church in the practice appears to have significantly affected the church in three major ways. Firstly, the practice continues to serve as an attractive tool that draws people into the church with some becoming registered members of the church. Secondly, the continuous observance of the practice of healing and deliverance keeps members who might have gone to other churches in search of similar services in the church. Thirdly, the practice of healing and deliverance has become a nurturing ground where some members of the church are groomed to become practitioners in the healing and deliverance activities of the church.²¹⁰ This is confirmed by some respondents who stated that they developed their spiritual gifts and maturity in prayer through their continuous participation in the healing and deliverance service.

The practice of healing and deliverance has become one of the main factors that accounts for the rapid increase in the population of the Hilltop church.²¹¹ He was however quick to say that the practice of healing and deliverance is done in combination with other factors such as sound and biblical teachings about the Christian faith, effective corporate leadership, personal and corporate prayers, regular fasting, house to house evangelism, testimonies, well-organized church welfare, effective practice of home cell system as well as good pastoral care.²¹² In effect, there are several factors which have directly or indirectly contributed to what may be described as growth of the church at Hilltop. For instance, the church which started with a group of 18 in 1991 now has 3937 registered members (excluding those who relocated to other branches of the GEC due to accommodation problem) by the end 2011. The informant explained that the church since its beginning has established two congregations in

²⁰⁹ The current catechist, Interviewed, Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²¹⁰ The current catechist, Interviewed, Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²¹¹ The current catechist, Interviewed, Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²¹² The current catechist, Interviewed, Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

Accra, and two in the Volta Region.²¹³ Also, the church at the beginning stage used to worship in tent but within the period of 20 years, they now worship in a chapel with a 3000 seat capacity. The church has also established a basic school for its members and those living in the immediate vicinity of the church. These responses do not assume that it is only healing and deliverance which necessarily grows the church but that it is a factor.

3.4.1 The Process of Healing and Deliverance at Hilltop GEC

As stated earlier, healing and deliverance as a practice at the Hilltop congregation of the E. P. Church of Ghana, now the Global Evangelical Church, Hilltop Parish, did not follow any well planned procedure. The practice was part of the day to day religious activities of the church. From the initial stages, Thursdays was set aside for healing and deliverance. But there were evangelists and prayer warriors in the chapel who prayed for people daily. Some week- long revivals were also used for healing and deliverance. Sunday services were not used for deliverance except to crown revivals.²¹⁴ As time went on, the church leadership decided to have healing and deliverance service on weekly basis. The church has since held healing and deliverance service on every Thursday. The service is named ‘Miracle Service’. A regular participant in the healing and deliverance services explains that this name is given to the weekly programme owing to the believed phenomenal incidences that occur, usually described as miracles.²¹⁵ According to the current catechist, the coming in of series of deliverance ministers including the current the resident pastor of the church has brought a degree of expertise to bear on the healing and deliverance practice in the church.²¹⁶ The healing and deliverance service at Hilltop Parish involves a number of activities. These are discussed in turns.

²¹³ The current catechist, Interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²¹⁴ One of the first pastors, Interviewed, Global Theological Seminary, Adenta, Accra, 25th April, 2013

²¹⁵ A regular participant, Interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²¹⁶ Current catechist, Interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

Counselling

Counselling, here, is the process of interrogating people with problems of ill-health for the purpose of knowing and understanding the causes of their problems. During counselling, an investigation is made into the person's life through questioning. The questions are meant to help the minister understand the possible source or sources of the problems confronting people who participate in the healing and deliverance services. A popular deliverance minister, for instance, stated that some people before conversion have had some kind of relationships with certain divinities and it is through counselling that this background information is known about the people concerned. For him, interrogating these people does not only enable the minister to understand the cause and the source of their problems, but it also serves as a guide to which approach to use in providing the most effective solution to the person concerned.²¹⁷

According to one of the early members of the church, although counselling was not part of the healing and deliverance practice at the start of the Hilltop church, it later became very significant as it enhanced the healing and deliverance process in the church.²¹⁸ He stated that when counselling became part of the service, participants consulted the minister on the day of the deliverance service. However, due to the large number of participants that had to be attended to in the course of the service, the church decided to set every Tuesday aside for exclusive counselling prior to the Thursday service. This arrangement is to ensure that the minister has enough time with participants; best understand their problems and give the most appropriate advice and guidance.

²¹⁷ A popular deliverance minister, interviewed ,GEC, Powerland, Tema, 8th November, 2012

²¹⁸ One of the early members of the church, interviewed , GEC, Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012

For an informant, counselling has become very significant because it affords ministers the opportunity to assess whether or not the problems of the participants require only prayers or some other spiritual and physical approach to solving such problems.²¹⁹ One of the early ministers made this clear when he explained that although all problems need prayer and the intervention of the Holy Spirit, in some cases, the spiritual approach must be supported with physical solutions in order to overcome the problem of ill health. Consequently, when it becomes clear during interaction with participants that they need medical attention, the ministers do not hesitate to refer them to hospitals.²²⁰

Praise and worship

Praise and worship are very significant in the practice of healing and deliverance in the Hilltop Branch of the GEC. During the Miracle Service, the participants engage in singing, hand-clapping, dancing, praying and laying-on of hands. Singing is done together with hand-clapping and dancing. This helps to create an atmosphere for the participant to pray effectively with concentration and expectation. This event, which is usually referred to as praise and worship among the Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches serve as a prelude to intensive prayers and is marked with phenomenal spontaneity. One of the early deliverance ministers of the church explained that the main reason for praise and worship prior to prayers for the healing and deliverance of people is to invite the Holy Spirit into the midst of worshipers.²²¹ The motive behind this is not different from what C. G. Baeta discovers with African Instituted Churches that they ‘engage in various activities which are either meant to invoke the Holy Spirit or are to be interpreted as signs of his descent upon the

²¹⁹ Current catechist, Interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish. 2nd December, 2012.

²²⁰ One of the early ministers, interviewed, GEC, Powerland, 8th November, 2012

²²¹ Interview with one of the early deliverance ministers, GEC Hilltop Parish, Accra. 29th November, 2012.

worshippers.²²² Apart from this reason, a respondent stated that for her, the songs sang during healing and deliverance services are not only songs with lyrics that edify her, but also serve as therapy in healing emotional weaknesses.²²³

Preaching of the Word of God

Preaching the word of God is one of the main activities of the Miracle Service. Usually, ministers conducting the services exhort the participants with the word of God using biblical passages that are carefully chosen for the service. According to the evangelist, the preaching of the word of God during the Miracle Services is very significant for several reasons.²²⁴ Firstly, the word of God is preached in order to build the faith of the people to believe in God not only as the creator of the world, but also as a healer and as the one who provides solution to the problems they bring to the service. This is based on the belief that it is through faith in Christ that one can please God and receive any benefit thereof. Secondly, the word is also preached to serve as a guide to how the people should pray and receive answers to their prayers. This was demonstrated when the researcher observed members being asked to recite certain biblical passages as a form of prayer when participating in one of the miracle services.²²⁵ Another reason for which the word of God is preached is to help the people understand and believe in God as the source of solution to their problems and to whom all prayers must be directed. When the participants are well prepared, the service continues with singing, hand clapping and dancing and praying.

²²² C.G. Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Study of Some 'Spiritual' Churches* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962), p. 1.

²²³ A respondent interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, Accra, 2nd December, 2012.

²²⁴ An evangelist interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²²⁵ Participant Observation, GEC Hilltop Parish. 2nd December, 2012.

Loud Corporate Prayer

After the song ministrations, the Minister leading the service begins to call out prayer topics with which the participants pray. It was observed that during the prayer sessions, the people pray over several topics including thanking God, asking for forgiveness of sin, calling for out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on the participant, asking for healing, job security and employment, protection against spiritual attacks, promotion at work places, travelling opportunities, court litigations, marriage, fertility and what have you. In short, prayers are said on topics covering all life endeavours where the well-being of the people is confronted with challenges. One of the female leaders of the church, explained that prayer forms a crucial part of the deliverance service because members of the church believe that through prayers to God, most of life's problems can be solved.²²⁶ During the prayer session, the leaders break in intermittently with songs after which new prayer topics are introduced with reference to some biblical passages which best fit the situation for which prayer is offered.

It was observed that during the prayer session, some people spoke in tongues, screamed loudly, some fell and rolled on the ground, stamped their feet, raised their hands in the air and employed many other humanly incomprehensible gestures. According to the current pastor of the parish who is also a deliverance pastor, these unusual behaviours by the participants are described as manifestations of the Holy Spirit. For him these manifestations do not only demonstrate the presence of the Holy Spirit in the gathering of the worshipers, but also serve as an indication to the minister to give such persons a special attention.²²⁷

Another observation made during the work for this study has to do with utterances made by people purported to have certain spiritual problems and have come to the miracle service to

²²⁶ A female church leader interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 2nd December, 2012.

²²⁷ The current Parish Pastor interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish. 29th November, 2012.

be delivered of their situations. When prayers were offered for these persons individually, some of them began to make certain utterances indicating the source of their predicaments. For instance, one of the women (during the prayer) started saying these words in a loud voice; 'I have bought her long ago. You cannot buy her from me, she is mine'.²²⁸ This, the current parish pastor explained, was an indication that the person was either dedicated to a deity or has a problem usually described as spiritual marriage. The pastor added that some people during prayers do not scream or talk but make movements such as sexual gestures, crawling like a snake as they fall on to the ground. These movements, according to him, are some indications that the person is either possessed by or is under the influence of an evil spirit.

With these manifestations, the minister invites his assistants known as prayer warriors²²⁹ to pray together over persons with the problem. An intensive prayer is offered with the invocation of the name 'Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit'. This invocation accompanies almost every command given to the spirit believed to be behind the manifestation to leave the victim alone and come no more. At the 'miracle services', it was observed that the Minister and prayer warriors prayed to deliver one of the participants with declarations and commands such as 'We bind you in the name of Jesus;' 'I command you to come out of her in the name of Jesus!' 'Holy Ghost fire;' 'Receive your healing in the name of Jesus!' 'Leave this body in the name of Jesus!' These and many other commands were directed towards the spirit behind persons believed to be under demonic influence for several minutes until the person regains a calm disposition.

²²⁸ Observation made by researcher during healing and deliverance service at Hilltop on Thursday 29th November, 2012.

²²⁹ Prayer Warriors in a group of spiritually matured youthful men and women devote themselves to prayer and supplication in support of the deliverance minister. See Opoku Onyina, *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Dorset: Deo Publications, 2012), 187.

Ministering to the People

When asked in an interview, 'How significant is the healing and deliverance practice among the other activities in the Global Evangelical Church? Gbordzoe answered with an explanation as follows: 'Healing and deliverance is very significant among other activities such as the preaching of the word of God, fasting, praying, giving, evangelism, music and worship because it provide opportunity to combine all these others in solving the practical and existential need of humans.'²³⁰ As was the case with people having issues for deliverance, prayer is offered for participants with various sicknesses such as headache, abdominal problems, heart pains, waist pain, and any other bodily ailment. Usually the minister asks the people who come for help to place their hands on the affected parts while prayer is said for them. The Holy Spirit is invoked to set the people free from their sicknesses.²³¹

Unlike prayer for deliverance where the invocation of the Holy Spirit is directed toward demonic spirit that may have inhabited the person, prayer for healing the sick is directed towards the sickness. For instance, during one of the miracle services, the minister and his prayer warriors were heard uttering statements such as 'I command every sickness to come out of you in the name of Jesus'. 'You spirit of headache, I command you to lose your hold on this daughter of Abraham in Jesus' name!' The ministers do these as they move among the people laying hands on some of them. Sometimes the minister shouts 'Receive your healing' and the people respond 'I receive it'. It was observed that ministers always direct the participants to place their hands at parts of their bodies where they have problems. For instance, when the minister saw that a woman had placed her hand at her abdomen, the prayer was centred on abdominal pain. Healing and deliverance is believed to be attained when the

²³⁰ E. K. Gbordzoe, Interviewed, Oyibi-Accra, 24th June, 2013.

²³¹ Participant observation, Hilltop parish, 29th November, 2012.

persons regain their calm disposition or when the people have testified that they no longer experience the pain they experienced prior to the prayers.²³²

Use of Anointing Oil

The use of oil in the healing and deliverance practice can also be described as a later development in the church's healing and deliverance practice. Anointing oil, according to the current parish pastor, is ordinary olive oil consecrated for use in the church.²³³ The use of anointing oil, according to a respondent, became part of the healing and deliverance practice in the church as a result of what some of them have observed from some Charismatic ministers whose prayer meetings they patronise.²³⁴ On the part of the current Pastor, the practice is not new to Christianity, but it is an application of a biblical approach to healing as stated in James 5: 14.²³⁵ Anointing the sick as part of the process in healing and deliverance practice does not always apply to every situation. A former deliverance minister explained that anointing is used when the person's situation proves difficult with aggressive manifestation.²³⁶ A respondent explained that the main reason for using anointing oil is to further draw the Holy Spirit toward the people concerned to facilitate the healing and deliverance process.²³⁷

Testimonies

Giving testimonies forms another component of the healing and deliverance process at the Hilltop branch of the Global Evangelical Church. This is the practice whereby at the end of prayers for healing and deliverance, participants are allowed to testify about their experiences

²³² Participant observation, Hilltop parish, 29th November, 2012.

²³³ Current parish pastor, interviewed GEC Hilltop Parish, 29th November, 2012

²³⁴ A respondent interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, 29th November, 2012

²³⁵ Current parish pastor, interviewed GEC Hilltop Parish, 29th November, 2012

²³⁶ A former deliverance minister, Interviewed, GEC, Powerland),, 8th November, 2012.

²³⁷ A respondent, interviewed GEC Hilltop Parish, 29th November, 2012

in the course of praying. Sometimes, invitation for testimony is granted by the minister to persons who believed their problems have been solved or have realised a positive change in the conditions they had prior to prayers. At other times, persons who believed their problems have been solved or their situations have improved request that they tell their stories. Such persons are then asked to tell their experiences which usually follow a trend. The narration often begins with an elaboration on the past problem. It ends with explanation of how prayers, singing, or the laying on of hands has helped set such person free of problem²³⁸. The current parish pastor explains that the reason for which participants are encouraged to give testimony is to boost the faith of the people to trust in God for their healing and deliverance. Giving of testimonies also encourage the ministers and reveals the extent to which the Miracle Service is impacting the participants' lives.²³⁹

One significant aspects of testimony sharing is the stage where participants declare their resolution to become members of the congregation. This occurs in two ways. In the first instance, the minister advises the participants who are not Christians to gain salvation by accepting Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and also find a bible-believing church where they can fellowship and build up their faith²⁴⁰. The minister also throws invitation to the people to fellowship with them in the Hilltop congregation or look for any other branch of the Global Evangelical church if they so wish. These people most often respond to this call while sharing their testimonies by accepting to fellowship with either Hilltop congregation, a different congregation of the GEC or any other church apart from the GEC. In the second instance, many people, during testimony times, voluntarily declare their decision to become members of the church. What is important here is the fact that through healing and deliverance, people become converted and continue to fellowship with the congregation,

²³⁸ Participant observation GEC Hilltop Parish Accra, 29th November, 2012

²³⁹ Current parish pastor, interviewed GEC Hilltop Parish Accra, 29th November, 2012

²⁴⁰ Participant observation, GEC Hilltop Parish Accra, 29th November, 2012

Sometimes people who are already in fellowship with other churches, especially those outside GEC; decide to move to the Hilltop congregation thereby leading to an increment in the numerical strength of the church and its related effects²⁴¹. Some people also pledge to support the church in diverse ways in appreciation to God for delivering and healing them.

3.5 The ‘Hillcrest’ Parish of the Global Evangelical Church

The Hillcrest branch of the Global Evangelical Church was founded as a result of the schism that occurred in the E. P. Church in 1991. The group of 20 members who left the E. P. Church began to hold church services in the residence of a member who happened to be a catechist and a member of the BSPF in 1991. The group at this time of relocation no longer saw itself as BSPF but a distinct church and came to accept the name E. P. Church of Ghana.²⁴² This was the name other congregations who had separated from the E. P. Church, Ghana had prescribed. The church also established relations with the correspondent head office of the E. P. Church of Ghana at Accra.

According to the respondents, the church relocated to another place of worship due to the large number of members they won to their side in a period of one month. As a result of the increase in numbers, the member’s house could no longer accommodate them. A new hall located in the town became their new place of worship.²⁴³ The use of this vast space as place of worship illustrates how the Hillcrest Parish of the GEC has transitioned to its present state as a church that has experienced rapid growth. The church which was led by leaders of the BSPF held church services with practices not very different from the liturgy of their former

²⁴¹ A male catechist, interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish Accra, 25th April, 2013

²⁴² Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church- Hillcrest Congregation, Aflao, 20th December, 2012.

²⁴³ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church- Hillcrest Congregation, Aflao, 20th December, 2012.

church. However, the group continued to organise activities such as periodic Bible studies, fasting and prayer meetings, hand clapping and other practices that were identified with the activities of the BSPF for which they were banned from the E. P. Church.

According to the respondents, the continuous engagement in activities such as healing and deliverance services endeared the church to many people, both Christians and non-Christians, to the church. The church continued to welcome new members on each occasion of the services until the need arose to relocate to another place due to the lack of enough space to accommodate them. At Hillcrest, membership of the church continues to increase. In order to satisfy its ever increasing numerical strength, the church has started building a 2500 seat capacity chapel. In a focus group discussion with some presbyters at the Hillcrest congregation, the respondents assert that the practice of healing and deliverance is largely responsible for its rapid growth of the church. For instance, the church which started with 20 members in 1991 now records 2403 members in 2011.²⁴⁴ For them, most people who attend the healing and deliverance services continue to participate in the church's regular services till they become registered members of the church. The respondents made reference to the GEC annual calendar which provides statistics of the rate at which the Hillcrest church has grown numerically since its establishment.

As time went on, the church petitioned the head office for a minister to take charge of the congregation. Responding to this petition the church's headquarters posted a visiting pastor who later became a resident pastor of the church, while former catechist was sponsored for full time pastoral training.²⁴⁵ The pastor who served the Hillcrest congregation for eight (8) years also encouraged the BSPF practices and facilitated their absorption as routine practices

²⁴⁴ *Global Evangelical Church 2012 Calendar* (Accra: GEC Publications, 2011), 94.

²⁴⁵ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

of the GEC. It became clear, from the discussions, that among the practices of the BSPF, healing and deliverance became very paramount in the activities of the Hillcrest branch of the Global Evangelical Church.²⁴⁶ According to the respondents, this may be due to two reasons. First, many people in and outside the church visited the church with problems that required healing and deliverance for solutions. Secondly, the minister was identified to be one endowed with the gift of motivation and teaching which respondents described as 'healing and deliverance ministry in disguise'.²⁴⁷ The current catechist noted that the then pastor's gift of healing and deliverance lie in his motivational teaching and sense of humour and leads to psychological and emotional healing for his audience and thus laid a strong foundation of the healing deliverance practice in the Hillcrest congregation of the GEC.²⁴⁸

3.5.1 The Practice of Healing and Deliverance at the GEC-Hillcrest Parish

The practice of healing and deliverance which used to be part of Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship (a group in the church) has been incorporated into the church. Under the leadership of the then pastor, the church selected Thursdays of every week for healing and deliverance service instead of Sundays. This was to afford both the minister and participants enough time and place to concentrate on solving the problem of ill-health among members and other visitors. The church has since continued to hold healing and deliverance services every Thursday.²⁴⁹ Since the time of the pastor, the church has experienced the tenure of minister who served the church for nine (9) years and another minister who has served three

²⁴⁶ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁴⁷ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁴⁸ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁴⁹ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

years as current Parish minister of the church.²⁵⁰ These successive ministers were all into the practice of healing and deliverance but without neglecting other areas of ministry especially prayer, teaching and evangelism. This partially explains why the Hillcrest congregation of the GEC has become one of the renowned branches where healing and deliverance is practised and thus justifies its selection for this study.

3.5.2 The Process of Healing and Deliverance at the GEC-Hillcrest Congregation

Since its incorporation as one of the routine activities of the church, the practice of healing and deliverance has followed certain laid down patterns and processes. According to some respondents, there are certain activities that constitute the core elements and are followed during healing and deliverance services.²⁵¹ Just as observed at Hilltop, these core activities include preaching the word of God, intense supplication, petition and intercessory prayers at times with fasting, singing of song accompanied by hand clapping and dancing, laying-on of hands, use of anointing oil, counselling, and giving testimony giving.²⁵² The explanation given as reasons for exploring the various activities were also similar to those views expressed by respondents at the Hilltop branch of the GEC.

One element seemed to differentiate the practice of healing and deliverance in the Hillcrest Parish from that of the Hilltop Parish. This is connected to the strict adherence to the activities constituting the healing and deliverance practice. Whereas responses from and observations of the practice at the Hilltop congregation appears to have followed the procedures stated earlier, the spontaneity that characterises the practice at Hillcrest makes a difference. For instance most respondents explained that although the activities mentioned

²⁵⁰ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁵¹ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁵² Participant observation, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December, 2012

constitute the healing and deliverance practice, not all of these are followed during services.²⁵³ The current minister reiterates that ‘the practice of healing and deliverance is not a scientific formula which when followed rigidly, must produce a common result. It is rather a work inspired and driven by the Holy Spirit. That is why not all activities that generally constitute the practice of healing and deliverance are brought to bear on every case’.²⁵⁴ These assertions were later demonstrated in an observation made during the healing and deliverance service.²⁵⁵ This is described in the following paragraphs.

The healing and deliverance service observed at Hillcrest started at 9: 00am and was led by an evangelist who was supported by few prayer warriors and members of a group in the church known as the deliverance team.²⁵⁶ The service began with the singing of songs accompanied with the clapping of hands by the whole congregation led by another a team of singers and instrumentalists known as the praise and worship team. These songs were interspaced with intensive prayers on various topics. This continued until the current pastor was introduced and took over from the evangelist.

When asked why the service started with prayers, praises and worship, the pastor explained that the purpose was to invite the presence of the Holy Spirit since it is only by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that effective healing and deliverance can take place. This opinion further confirms the reason provided by members of the Hilltop congregation regarding the emotional singing of song amidst praying. It also reaffirms C. G. Baeta’s assertion of how

²⁵³ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012.

²⁵⁴ The current pastor, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest Parish, 20th December, 2012.

²⁵⁵ Participant observation, Hillcrest Parish, 20th December 2012

²⁵⁶ Deliverance team is a group of selected individuals from among the prayer warriors who assist the minister during deliverance service. The current pastor explained that he made this distinction between prayer warriors and deliverance team because not every prayer warrior can engage in deliverance. This is because as a practitioner of healing and deliverance, one must identify it as a gift a well as worked on it with much commitment and seriousness.

spiritual churches are assured of the eminence of the Holy Spirit in their services.²⁵⁷ He stated in addition that the preliminary activities of healing and deliverance service prepare participants, especially those seeking some solution to their problems to be expectant in receiving wellbeing.²⁵⁸

The minister's entrance saw another stage of the healing and deliverance process in the service. The minister stood before the congregation and made a call by describing a particular situation believed to be a problem which someone had brought to the service. By the time he finished the descriptions; many people had come out for special prayers and the laying on of hands. He then walked to the participants, one after the other as he prayed and laid hands on them. This he did with the assistance of six members of the healing and deliverance team.²⁵⁹

Characteristic of the healing and deliverance practice at Hillcrest is the identification of the particular problems of some of the participants and the spontaneity with which the people move out to be prayed for. For instance, it was observed that as the minister was heard describing a particular ill-health issue people begin to walk out of the crowd signifying that they are the people with such problems. Some of them had to be carried out by the prayer warriors. This is because some of them could not stand on their feet as the minister mentioned their problem due to falling of what the minister described as 'heavy anointing' on them.

After the people with such problems had come forward, the minister either laid hands on them and asked his healing and deliverance team to also pray and lay hands on them or instructed the person to perform one thing or the other. Sometimes, he asked them to place

²⁵⁷ Baeta, *Prophetism in Ghana*, 1.

²⁵⁸ Current pastor, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest Parish, 20th December, 2012.

²⁵⁹ Participant observation, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December 2012.

their hands where they have the problem and asked them to repeat certain words of prayer after him. In some cases, the minister instructed two or three members of the healing and deliverance team to anoint the people after they have been prayed for. The process of calling different problems brought by the participants continued until all of the people who have come for special prayers have been prayed for.²⁶⁰

With regard to the process of calling and the manner in which the issues are dealt with, the pastor identified two main features. The first part of the process which involves the act of calling is characterised by what he referred to as ‘word of knowledge’. This, he explained, comes to him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who makes him to perceive that there exist persons with such problems among the congregation. The second part of the process, on the hand, is characterised by the use of ‘word of wisdom’. This is the inspiration that directs the minister on what to do about a particular problem. The pastor pointed out that ‘word of wisdom’ seems to have become common knowledge due to the recurrence of problems that call for a particular directional approach. But he was quick to add that in certain instances, the approaches to dealing with the common problems of different persons is always not the same. This is because the Holy Spirit may give a different word of wisdom altogether. Apart from relying on the word of wisdom, the pastor also added that counselling sessions which are held on Tuesdays (ahead of the healing service on Thursdays) affords him the opportunity to know and understand the people’s problems.

As was the case with the Miracle Service at Hilltop, The pastor also allows for the giving of testimonies. As stated earlier, it is not all the activities constituting the healing and deliverance process that are followed through and through at every deliverance service. It is

²⁶⁰ Participant observation, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December 2012.

against this background that the giving of testimonies is not observed at every healing and deliverance session at Hillcrest branch of the Global Evangelical Church.

3.6 The ‘Valleyland’ Congregation of the Global Evangelical Church

This congregation started as a new congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, in 1997 and held church services in the assembly halls of a popular centre in which it was established. This congregation was established to ensure access and comfort for those who lived far from the existing branches. The new branch was under the leadership of ‘lay members’ of the existing branches and visiting ministers for almost three years. The church's headquarters later posted a pastor to take full charge of the new branch in 1983. The pastor saw it necessary to incorporate the activities of the Christian movements of the Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship (BSPF) and the Volta Evangelistic Association (VEA) into the routine practices of the church.²⁶¹ As a result, the Valleyland congregation became identified with activities such as intense loud prayers with speaking in tongues, fast, singing with hand clapping, laying on of hands, and periodic healing and deliverance services were organised through the initiatives of the pastor. These activities attracted a lot of other members and non-members of the E. P. Church in and around the immediate locality leading to the rapid increase in the membership of the branch.²⁶²

After their stay at the YMC premises for three years, the church was challenged from using the place by the authorities of the centre in 1986 with the reason that the church's activities were loud. Also, the leadership of the E. P. Church was also not in favour of the Charismatic initiatives in the church. Faced with some internal difficulties, the then pastor was compelled to stop the healing and deliverance practices but to restart organising the healing

²⁶¹ A former female catechist, interview, Valleyland, 10th November, 2012.

²⁶² A former female catechist, interview, Valleyland, 10th November, 2012.

and deliverance services in his residence. This continued until the residence of the pastor could not contain participants in the programme anymore. The church, therefore, relocated to the present location of Valleyland as a new place of worship. The present location stands a 2000 seat capacity chapel and other offices of the church. The church has since incorporated healing and deliverance into its regular Sunday religious services and Thursdays which are set aside for exclusive healing and deliverance services. This activity appeared to have placed the Valleyland congregation, under the leadership of the then pastor, as a key congregation of regular healing and deliverance practice in the Global Evangelical Church.

Consequently, the introduction of activities such as periodic prayer meetings, studying of the Bible, healing and deliverance services, considered to be innovative in the worship style of the Valleyland congregation as a branch of the E. P. Church, to some extent curtailed the massive drift of church members to 'spiritual' churches for prayer services.²⁶³ The practice also prevented many Christians from visiting African Indigenous religious practitioners in search for solutions to their human existential problems. According to a respondent, the healing and deliverance practice has to a large extent contributed to the rapid numerical growth of the church.²⁶⁴ The Valleyland congregation which started with sixty (60) members at the time of their relocation, at the time of this research, the congregation has increased to 2,013.

3.6.1 The Practice of Healing and Deliverance at the GEC, Valleyland

The practice of healing and deliverance at the Valleyland congregation started when the pastor took charge of the YMC congregation of the E. P. Church, Ghana as a minister. Although the pastor was later transferred from Valleyland, the practice of healing and deliverance continued

²⁶³ A Former female catechist, Interviewed, Valleyland, 10th November, 2012.

²⁶⁴ A respondent, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013

to be an integral part of the church's activities. This was due to the fact that the minister who succeeded him was also endowed with the gift of healing and deliverance among others and did not hesitate to explore it so as to reach out to members and many others who seek spiritual assistance from the church.²⁶⁵ The minister who came after the first pastor was said to be a gifted teacher who encouraged the practice though it was not his focussed ministry area.²⁶⁶ The practice has since remained in the church under the current resident minister who has been transferred from Hillcrest. He is being assisted by an evangelist and a team of prayer warriors and a healing and deliverance team.

3.6.2 The Process of Healing and Deliverance at the Valleyland Parish

Although explained as an activity believed to be largely based on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, healing and deliverance at Valleyland has been designed to follow certain trends. As identified with the practice at the Hilltop and Hillcrest congregations, the minister at Valleyland also recounted activities such as praying and singing of songs, preaching the word of God, laying-on of hands, anointing, counselling, and testimonies. Despite the mentioning of the same activities as events that constitute healing and deliverance, the minister at Valleyland also approached the service differently.

In the morning of the Thursday on which healing and deliverance services were held, a group of men and women congregated and prayed for about an hour before the service was called to start. These, the researcher was told were prayer warriors and members of the healing and deliverance team.²⁶⁷ This preliminary prayer was done in order to prepare the teams both spiritually and psychologically for the healing and deliverance task to be undertaken. The

²⁶⁵ An informant, Interviewed, GEC Valleyland Parish, 10th January, 2012.

²⁶⁶ An evangelist, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland parish, 10th January, 2013.

²⁶⁷ A respondent, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland parish, 10th January, 2013.

actual service then started with intensive introductory prayers after which there was song ministration by the praises and worship team. This, according to a presbyter and member of the deliverance team, was aimed at inviting the Holy Spirit to take dominion over the service.²⁶⁸ The minister in charge then preached to the participants the word of God. Issues raised were backed with passages from the Holy Bible which linked up with the many prayer topics that would be raised during the service. The explanation given for sharing the word of God with participants was not different from those given in the other congregations visited.²⁶⁹

However, an evangelist and a member of the deliverance team further stated that the significance of sharing the word of God with participants was not only to aid their understanding of the idea that God is the source of solutions to their problems but it also served as learning ground where participants are well grounded in knowing the will of God as revealed in Scripture and applying them to their lives. The healing and deliverance service then becomes another ground for learning the word of God.²⁷⁰ It was therefore not surprising when all the evangelists revealed that they gained their training as deliverance team members not at any training institution but at the healing and deliverance services organised by the church.²⁷¹

After the preaching, the minister then started mentioning issues believed to be some problems confronting the people and for which they have come to be delivered. These people were prayed for and hands were laid on them by the minister and members of the deliverance team. As they prayed with those who came out, statements such as ‘come out of him in the name of

²⁶⁸ A presbyter and a member of deliverance team, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

²⁶⁹ A presbyter and a member of deliverance team, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

²⁷⁰ An evangelist and a member of the deliverance team, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013

²⁷¹ An evangelist and a member of the deliverance team, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

Jesus’! ‘I command you to leave this body in Jesus’ name’! And ‘I set you free by the power of the Holy Spirit’ were made.²⁷² As the minister and his team said these prayers, they sometimes accompanied them with making gestures with their hands as if they were gestures intended to scare something away from a person. According to one of the early ministers of the church, these processes of invoking the Holy Spirit, commanding demonic spirits believed to inhabit or torment people and the use of gestures are collectively described as the casting out of demons.²⁷³

In another instance, instead of calling a particular kind of health problem, the minister asked people who had dreamt about being at a funeral, cemeteries, seeing dead family members, being chased by a snake, pig, or dog to come forward. Expecting that the minister would lay hands on them, he instead asked them to lift up their hands and repeat a prayer after him. He then started reciting ‘I will not die, but I will live and proclaim what the Lord has done’,²⁷⁴ which the people also repeated after him again and again. This type of prayer was what the evangelist referred to as positive confession.²⁷⁵ Another category of people came out when the pastor asked those people who were sick in any part of their bodies to step forward. These people were asked to stretch their hands towards the minister as if they were receiving a thing from him. The minister then said in a loud voice while he also stretched his right hand towards the people, ‘receive your healing in the name of Jesus!’ and each of the people responded, ‘I receive it!’.²⁷⁶

In all these varying processes of healing and delivering the people, some fell, shouted, stamped their feet and while others cried. These movements described as manifestations are

²⁷² Asamoah-Gyadu *African Charismatics*, 187.

²⁷³ One of the early ministers of the church, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013

²⁷⁴ Psalm 118: 17

²⁷⁵ An evangelist, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

²⁷⁶ Observation, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

explained as the supernatural out-working of the Holy Spirit on the problems of the people.²⁷⁷

Some of the people who continued to manifest aggressively were given further attention and some were carried into one of the offices of the chapel. The healing and deliverance service came to an end when all the people had been attended to.

According to the evangelist, the service sometimes includes the giving of testimonies, which are usually observed at the start of the programme. He explained that the service starts with testimonies in order to encourage all participants to believe that their requests shall also be granted as in the case of others who have given their testimonies. He also explained that counselling which is one of the events in the healing and deliverance practice is usually conducted on Tuesdays prior to the Thursday services. This was to offer the minister and his team an opportunity to understand some problems brought by the participants for effective approaches to addressing them. The explanation provided by the evangelist at Valleyland was not different from those given by the respondents at the Hilltop and Hillcrest congregations of the GEC.²⁷⁸

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the historical accounts of the formation of the Global Evangelical Church and its relation with the healing and deliverance practice. The discussion has shown that though the healing and deliverance practice existed in the E.P. Church and precedes the formation of the Global Evangelical church, then E.P. Church of Ghana; it was an activity of only certain individuals and a particular group within the church. However, the practice by these individuals and group partly accounted for the split of GEC from the E.P. Church, Ghana. It has also been discovered that the practice of healing and deliverance among

²⁷⁷ A former deliverance minister, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

²⁷⁸ An evangelist, interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

Charismatic and Pentecostal churches partly influenced the introduction and the practice of healing and deliverance by these individuals and the group in the E.P. Church, and have also shaped its latter practice in GEC. The study has shown that the practice started concurrently with the church and laid the foundation of some congregations of the GEC.

To some extent, the practice of healing and deliverance appears to be very central to the core values of the GEC due to its several contributions to the church. Firstly, healing and deliverance has been used as a tool for winning souls for the church. Secondly, it has become the means by which members are retained in the church. Thirdly the practice has provided avenue for training some members who desire to become practitioners in the healing and deliverance ministry. In so doing, healing and deliverance in the GEC has become a tool that helps to nurture these individuals for leadership in the church. The chapter also discovers that the practice of healing and deliverance as an activity is the same in congregations selected for this study. However, the approach to the practice differs from one congregation to another. This variation in approach was attributed to the leading and direction given by the Holy Spirit as regards the problem at stake.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPACT OF HEALING AND DELIVERANCE ON CHURCH GROWTH

4.1 Introduction

This fourth chapter discusses the impacts of healing and deliverance on the growth of individual congregations studied and the GEC in general. The objective is to examine how the impact of healing and deliverance on individuals and the church translates into church growth. The chapter, therefore, employs qualitative research method of data analysis in evaluating observations that have been made, using the various responses from key informants and other church members about the practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC. This evaluation dwells largely on the data elicited from two hundred and sixty (260) persons who have responded to questionnaires, interview guides and during focus group discussions. Out of the total number of respondents, one hundred and fifty (150) of them are persons who have either served or are serving in one form of leadership position or the other in the church. These include past and present moderators, reverend ministers (some of which practice healing and deliverance), and early members of GEC in general and at the selected congregation in particular.

In addition, fifty respondents were chosen from among prayer warriors, healing and deliverance team, students from Global Theological Seminary (GTS), presbyters and other members who play certain roles during healing and deliverance services at various congregations. Finally twenty people from each of the three selected congregations also responded to research questions. This number includes those who have benefited from healing and deliverance in one way or the other. The discussion of views expressed by these categories of people is done against the background of existing theories and principles of church growth opined by scholars such as Donald Anderson McGavran, Peter C. Wagner,

Roy Pointer, Orlando Costa, Richard Foli and Emmanuel K. Gbordzoe among others.²⁷⁹ This is to help examine the impact of the current practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC and its role in the growth of the church.

The phrase ‘church growth’ is used to describe and to emphasises development of the church of Christ. Several factors are considered by scholars in discussing the growth of a church. Depending on the central focus and aspiration of each and every scholar at a point in time, different factors may be stressed in respect of measuring the growth of a church. According to Donald McGavran, any attempt to evaluate church growth must be done taking into consideration the environment within which the church is found and the underpinning mission of the church.²⁸⁰ This implies the growth of the church cannot be attributed to one particular factor; that is to say in a given environment, different issues may be considered in measuring the growth of a particular church. This notion is similar to the view expressed by Peter Sarpong when he explained that for successful evangelism to take place, the context of each and every given culture must seriously be considered.²⁸¹

In effect, in measuring church growth within the African context in general and that of the Ghanaian in particular, one needs to examine the prevailing situations that inhibit the fundamental progress of Christian mission and the growth of the church. It is also necessary to study and understand the prevailing demands of a given Christian community in order to fashion out activities to appropriately respond to them. Thus, the church can be said to be

²⁷⁹ D. A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (California: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), Gbordzoe, E. K., *Prayer and Church Growth: A Practical Model* (Accra: GEC Press, 2010) McGavran D. A., and Arn, Winfield C., *Ten Steps for Church Growth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) and Wagner Peter, C., *Church Growth & the Whole Gospel: A Biblical Mandate* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987) are some literature on church growth principles.

²⁸⁰ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 123.

²⁸¹ P. K. Sarpong, *Peoples Differ: An Approach to Inculturation in Evangelisation* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publisher, 2002), 16-18.

experiencing growth when it has been able to respond effectively to the demands and needs of its people.

4.2 Contextualising Healing and Deliverance in the GEC.

Apart from responding to prevailing circumstances of the church, the introduction of healing and deliverance into the GEC is believed to have certain effects on the lives of those who constitute the membership of the church at individual and group levels. These individual members and groups, whose views were elicited during data collection, include ministers, prayer warriors, and members of healing and deliverance team, pastoral students of Global Theological Seminary (GTS), presbyters and some beneficiaries from the healing and deliverance practice. Responding to the question of what constitute healing and deliverance, eighty percent (80%) of respondents explained that healing and deliverance is a holistic Christian religious practice in which members participate so as to achieve total wellbeing. This view about the practice indicates that healing and deliverance services as observed in the GEC is fashioned not only for those who are physically sick but also for anyone who aspires to attain what they refer to as holistic wellbeing.

For these respondents, ensuring their wellbeing goes beyond being physically healthy. They explained that humans can really be said to be well if all other aspects of their lives including marriage, children, employment, good harvest in the farm, promotions at work places, protection against physical and perceived spirit powers, success in job interviews, absence of bad dreams, success in examinations, victory over court ligations, peace of the family and the community, successful journeys, protection against evil spirits and many other life situation

of humans are without problem.²⁸² This explains why most participants, although, not physically sick, continue to participate in the healing and deliverance services in order to ensure health and wellbeing in all aspects of their lives.

In a group discussion with some participant at Hillcrest congregation, respondents explained that although they were not sick, it was important for them to attend the deliverance service. They explained that so long as one continues to live, one may encounter challenges of one sort or the other. The service, therefore, serves as a significant medium for dealing with both spiritual and existential needs of people. The above reason also points to the extent to which religion has found expression in all other aspects of life, thereby confirming John Mbiti's postulation that religion permeates every aspect of life of the African.²⁸³ This understanding became evident in the responses provided by most interviewees that they were not at the healing and deliverance service because they were sick physically but to ensure wellness in all other aspect of their lives. In this regards, healing and deliverance practice as it is being observed in the GEC has to some extent responded to the African understanding of health and wellbeing.

This finding falls in line with the theology of salvation of Charismatic churches which they believe transcends assurance of being converted to the Christian faith and being saved for eternal life.²⁸⁴ For Charismatic churches, true conversion must permeate the total lives of members including overcoming challenges of the physical world. Thus conversion among the Charismatic churches implies not being a slave to life situations such as inability to overcome

²⁸² Focus Group Discussion, some beneficiaries of healing and deliverance at Global Evangelical Church-Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

²⁸³ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Inc; 1989), 1. See also Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publication Company, 2003), 3.

²⁸⁴ Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), 132-133.

sin, sickness, poverty, childlessness, drunkenness, joblessness, unsuccessful marriage, and any others that trample on living fulfilled lives as humans.²⁸⁵ It is against this that healing and deliverance services are designed to help members overcome these human existential challenges through activities such as studying scriptures, prayers and songs of praises, laying on of hands, counselling and others in order to achieve total and holistic salvation.

Ninety-five (95) percent of twenty (20) ministers interviewed explained that healing and deliverance practice enables the Christian realization of total salvation. They contended that healing and deliverance is designed to continue with the mission of Jesus Christ. The ministers argued that Jesus did not only preach the message of salvation for eternity but also attended to the very needs of people he encountered on his mission. One of the popular texts used by healing and deliverance experts is Mt 4:23 to 25 which read:

And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.²⁸⁶

From the above, some of these healing and deliverance ministers argue that healing was one of Jesus' practical earthly ministries. They maintain that Jesus effectively combined teaching, preaching and healing to meet both the spiritual and physical needs of his audience. This approach to ministry, they stress, attracted a lot of followers to him. This understanding of the practice of healing and deliverance is common among the ministers of GEC as the case might be with other ministers of charismatic churches. According to Rt. Rev. Edem Tettey, this understanding positions the ministers of the gospel to continue with the mission of Jesus Christ which aims at bringing holistic salvation to humans. The practice is also considered to

²⁸⁵ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 132-133.

²⁸⁶ The Holy Bible, *Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Online Publishing Inc., 2002), <http://www.powerbible.com>

be in fulfilment with the mission of Christ to which he has commissioned his disciples to heal the sick and cast out demons (Luke 9:1-2; and Matthew 10: 8).²⁸⁷

Owing to its significant role in the ministry of Jesus Christ, according to some students at GTS, the practice of healing and deliverance has become one ministry which every prospective minister would want to be trained in.²⁸⁸ To these students, training in the ministry of healing and deliverance is very important for all upcoming ministers of the GEC and the church of Christ in general. For them, a minister can impact positively on the lives of his/ her members and others when he/she develops a holistic approach to ministry as that of Jesus' to meet both spiritual and physical needs. This, they believed, is possible through the practice of healing and deliverance. This is because it is through this ministry that many lives can be transformed and people are helped to achieve total and holistic salvation.²⁸⁹ The view, as expressed by most pastoral students, does not only indicate a shift from being trained mainly only to teach the word of God and administer sacraments but also to practically demonstrate the saving power of God through healing and deliverance in meeting the spiritual and physical needs of people.

4.3 Healing and Deliverance and Growth the GEC the Case of the Three Congregations.

The church as a social institution has been affected severally by the activities of healing and deliverance. The effect of the practice of healing and deliverance since its incorporation into the church has brought about different dimensions of growth in the GEC. The impacts of healing and deliverance on the growth of the GEC in particular as evident in the three parishes chosen for this research are discussed as follows.

²⁸⁷ Edem K. Tettey, Interviewed, GEC Head Office, Tesano, 15th January, 2013.

²⁸⁸ Focus group discussion, GTS, Adenta 20th January, 2012

²⁸⁹ The response was given by some students of Global Theological Seminary during an interview and focus group discussion at their school premises in Accra.

In the first place, healing and deliverance practice leads to numerical growth of the church. Pointer describes numerical growth as the recruitment of individuals to active membership of the church. This is where people are incorporated into fellowship of believers and share its corporate life of worship and witness.²⁹⁰ According to a pastor informant, 'the best of disciple one can have in our African context in particular and the contemporary world is the one who have real and personal spiritual encounter with Jesus Christ.'²⁹¹ For him, when people are touched by the preaching of the word of God under the power of the Holy Spirit, resulting into transformation in an aspect of their life, they get more committed to Christ and his church than others who do not have such encounters.

The impression one gets from this is that because such individuals have real personal life experience, a reference point and see their lives as practical witness to the transforming power of the gospel of Christ, they get that committed. For instance, in Hillcrest, most of the leaders interviewed confirmed that many people came and added to their number at each and every miracle service. This, they explained, led to the church's rapid numerical growth which compelled them to relocate on three occasions in an attempt to finding a place of worship spacious enough to contain their ever increasing population.²⁹² Explaining this further in an interview with the minister at the Valleyland congregation, he affirmed that the rapid growth of the congregation can partly be attributed to the healing and deliverance programmes they continue to organise in the church.²⁹³ A pastor, for instance, cited the situation where most people who received healing and deliverance through the church have become permanent and committed members of the congregation. He further maintained that some of these have served the church in various capacities as prayer warriors, deliverance team members,

²⁹⁰ R. Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* (Great Britain: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1984)26.

²⁹¹ A Pastor informant, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December, 2012.

²⁹² Focus group discussion, GEC, Hillcrest 20th December, 2012

²⁹³ A Pastor, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December, 2012.

evangelism team members and evangelists among others. This is because 'they want to sustain and improve on their wellbeing' since they have been made to know that healing and deliverance is more of a process than a onetime event.²⁹⁴

The activities involving healing and deliverance and its relationship with numerical growth of the church are further buttressed by some members who had benefited from the practice in the three parishes studied. These benefactors of healing and deliverance were individuals, some of which were Christian in other churches while others were non Christians who only come to the services for help. Most of these persons have eventually become members of the GEC at their respective congregations where they had received solutions to their problems. The shift from other religious traditions to Christianity and from one church denomination to another explains the increase in the number of membership of the GEC of the three congregations studied in particular and GEC in general. This is due to the fact that at counselling, there is enormous opportunity for contact between the minister and the clients for the presentation of Christ as the saviour of mankind which is effectively utilized by most ministers.²⁹⁵ This confirms Asamoah-Gyadu's finding when he said 'experts like evangelists Vuha and Kanco insist that the victim must always be led through the process of accepting Christ before deliverance takes place.'²⁹⁶

It is important to state that the practice of healing and deliverance has tremendously influenced the numerical strength of the congregations studied. It is evident that during the periods in which the practice was carried out these congregations have experienced increase in their membership, whereas in its absence the congregations have recorded membership

²⁹⁴ A Pastor, Interviewed, GEC Hillcrest, 20th December, 2012.

²⁹⁵ S. Y. Kwami, interviewed, GEC, Community Four(C4), Tema 8th November, 2012

²⁹⁶ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 188.

decline. The statistics of the membership of each of the congregations are shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Numerical Record of GEC, Hilltop for 1999, 2005 and 2011

Year	Men	Women	Children	Total
2000	610	1,225	950	2,785
2006	867	1,713	1,050	3,630
2012	1,002	1,799	1,136	3,937

Source: GEC 2000, 2006 and 2012 Calendars

From table 1, Hilltop has recorded constant numerical growth in its membership. According to the respondents from this congregation, the growth was possible due to the role played partly by healing and deliverance practice in the church. The practice, according to the respondents, has been carried out throughout the period, notwithstanding change of Ministers of the church. As already discussed, all the ministers who were at the Hilltop congregation were identified as people who have the gift of healing and deliverance and have practiced it. The trend in the statistics is not different from that of the Valleyland. The table below illustrates the statistics.

Table 2: Numerical Record of GEC, Hillcrest for 1999, 2005 and 2011

	Men	Women	Children	Total
2000	180	340	430	950
2006	350	600	560	1,510
2012	522	1,038	843	2,403

Source: GEC 2000, 2006 and 2012 Calendars

From table 2, Hillcrest has experienced an increase in its membership from 950 people in 1999 to 1,510 people in 2005 and now at 2403 people. According to the respondents and as already stated, though the congregation once had a minister who is identified as not having the gift of healing and deliverance, the practice was carried out throughout the period under study. The Minister in question is said to have engaged in his congregation the services of other Ministers who have the gift. In Valleyland, however, the membership fluctuated during the period under study. See the table that follows.

Table 3: Numerical Record of GEC, Valleyland for 1999, 2005 and 2011

Year	Men	Women	Children	Total
2000	464	1,054	850	2,368
2006	225	742	900	1,867
2012	450	813	750	2,013

From table 3, the membership of the Hillcrest declined from 2,368 people in 1999 to, 1,867 in 2005. This decline, according to the respondents, was due to decline in the practice of healing and deliverance in the congregation. Unlike in Hillcrest, the Minister referred to was inclined more to teaching and physical assert development (a thing which the previous ministers were equally doing) than he was in the practise of healing and deliverance. Respondents explained that what made things worse was the fact that those gifted evangelists who were assisting the previous ministers had all joined full-time pastoral ministry and were posted to other stations as pastors. This development thus negatively affected the healing and deliverance ministry in the church. Nevertheless, the Minister who was transferred to the congregation later, according to the respondents, has the gift of healing and deliverance and practised it in the church. This led to increase in the membership of the congregation to 2,013 in 2011.

The respondents alluded to the practice as largely responsible for the numerical growth of the church. In a focus group discussion with some presbyters at the three congregations studied, they explained that ministers with healing and deliverance gifts appear to draw more people into the church than those without the gift. Linking the numerical growth of the churches with vibrancy of the practice in the church, most members concluded that the minister's ability to continuously and effectively practise healing and deliverance affects the numerical growth of the church. This statistics show how the population of the GEC has progressed at the three congregations studied. Thus, the shift, whether inter or intra religious, indicates the extent to which the activities of healing and deliverance has contributed to the numerical growth of the church.

The growth of any organisation such as churches need some level of financial independence which Gbordzoe describes as growth in physical wealth.²⁹⁷ In effect, the growth of the church can also be measured by its income level. Since its establishment as an independent Charismatic church in Ghana, the GEC has shown some level of progress in its avenues of fund generation to support the administration of the church. Healing and deliverance practice have several impacts on the lives of church members and non members which consequently affect the financial stability of the church. In a discussion with some members of the church, reference was made to the growing membership of the church as a factor that continues to influence its financial fortunes. For some members, the larger the membership of the church, the higher the probability that, its income level will increase. Healing and deliverance which serves as a conduit and draws people into the church in turn raises its income level.

²⁹⁷ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 82.

Financial growth of the church is not only explained from the large membership of the church but also from the willingness of these members to provide the church with financial resources in the running of its administrative activities. As already discussed, healing and deliverance is not only limited to addressing problems of physical health, but it also seeks to provide solutions to other aspects of life such as unsuccessful marriage, lack of employment, business failures and what have you. A respondent, for instance, explained that he had problem regarding promotion at his work place solved after he was made to understand the need to pay tithe. For this respondent, he continued to pay tithe ever since he was made to know its significance which probably has been the avenue through which he had solution to his problem.²⁹⁸ This instance, in the first place, testifies to the significance of preaching the word of God and counselling clients as part of the healing and deliverance process. In the second place, although, tithing in this case was used as a means to solving the client's problem of not being promoted at his workplace, the persistent giving of tithe for job security has indirectly added to the financial fortunes of the church.

Another way in which healing and deliverance contributes to financial growth of the church is through thanks-giving offerings. As part from giving testimonies, which is a key component of the healing and deliverance process, members and clients further give certain things including money to seal their appreciation to God. In this case, although, giving of testimony is meant for appreciating God for his goodness in the lives of people as well as encouraging other clients to trust in God for receiving solutions to their problems, the activity further serves as a source of revenue generation for the church. It must be noted that monies offered as thanks-giving to God for healing and deliverance is not a demand being placed on clients after they have been healed.

²⁹⁸ A respondent, interviewed, GEC.

This experience confirms the finding of Peter C. Wagner when he recorded that 'then he probed to find out what God had done to motivate Radio Station owner. Lo and behold, Aguirre discovered that the man had recently been healed through prayer by a member of Aguirre's congregation! He was so grateful for renewed health that he wanted as many others as possible in Guayaquil to have it as well'.²⁹⁹ Wagner was talking about someone who had been healed supporting an evangelistic program! In similar way, according to ministers of the Hilltop, Hillcrest and Valleyland congregations of the GEC, most clients usually return to give something substantial in appreciation to God for intervening in their life situations. On the part of clients, most respondents explained that being well in both physical and spiritual dimensions directly and indirectly affects their means of income generation. For them, it is therefore appropriate to give back part of what God has provided them with through offering to the church.

The practice of healing and deliverance influences the growth in physical wealth of the church. The growth of the church can again be measured in its physical wealth and hence ability to provide infrastructure to meet the demands of its growing membership.³⁰⁰ Infrastructure here refers to ability to build a sizeable place of worship for its members, office spaces for workers in of the church and all other logistics necessary for running the church in its administrative and spiritual dimensions.³⁰¹ Most of the laity and clergy interviewed in the GEC seem to suggest that healing and deliverance serves as an effective tool for mobilizing material and human resources for infrastructural development of the church.³⁰² These resources are derived from pledges and donations clients sometimes voluntarily make towards the development of the church.

²⁹⁹ Wagner, *Spiritual Power and Church Growth*, 117.

³⁰⁰ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 88-90

³⁰¹ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 89.

³⁰² During the field work, about 80% of respondents were of the view that the practice contributes to human and infrastructural development of the church.

A presbyter and treasurer of the GEC at Valleyland, for instance, explained that some people in appreciation to God for having intervened in their life pledged to give certain amount of money towards some ongoing projects while others initiated new ones that the church had intended to execute. The presbyter, in addition, noted the present chapel of the church and the minister's residence are some of the projects that have been developed through supports received from many people in appreciation for what God has done for them through the healing and deliverance practice.³⁰³ A pastor also illustrated this point with their 5000 seat capacity chapel which is near completion. He also showed the researcher 5000 pieces of tiles which a woman who claimed that God had answered her prayers by solving her problem had donated in support for the chapel project.

At Hilltop branch of the GEC, it was revealed that one woman voluntarily donated her personal pickup to the church for running its administrative activities. This woman for instance stated that her gesture was in appreciation to God for the fulfilments she has gained through attending healing and deliverance services. The healing and deliverance practice is not particularly fashioned to develop the infrastructure of the church; however, the practice indirectly affects the lives of people who also use their resources to improve upon the infrastructural growth of the church.

Growth of the church can also be measured in the number of congregation it has within a period of time. This form of growth may be referred to as holistic expansion.³⁰⁴ As an evangelistic tool, healing and deliverance is used at various programmes of activities organised with the purpose of winning many people to faith in Christ. Thus apart from the routine healing and deliverance services observed weekly at most branches of the GEC, the

³⁰³ A presbyter, Interviewed, GEC Valleyland Parish. 10th January, 2013.

³⁰⁴ Pointer, *How do Churches Grow?* 25.

practice also forms one of the integral activities organised in the church for evangelism purposes.

At different points in time, programmes such as crusades, annual national conventions, and periodic religious revivals at congregational, presbytery and national levels usually saw inclusion of healing and deliverance to help transform the lives of people and to enhance their faith in Christ. In an interview with Rt. Rev. Dr. Edem Tettey, the current moderator of the GEC, any activity worth pursuing by the church must first address the question of whether it is and will promote the mission of God to which all Christians have been called.³⁰⁵ For him, healing and deliverance as practiced in the GEC is in continuity with the ministry of Jesus. He noted that the ultimate goal for the mission of Jesus was to reconcile humanity to God. Tettey further explained that Jesus on this mission, did not focus only on the conversion but he also demonstrated his power in solving the human and physical needs of his people through healing those who were sick, casting out demons from those who were possessed, feeding those who were hungry, as well as even raising some people from the dead. He really cared for the whole person. One can therefore argue that the impact of Jesus' ministry on the physical lives of humans has contributed to the conversion of many people to the faith.³⁰⁶

The organisation of healing and deliverance programmes in the GEC is considered to be in continuity of the ministry of Jesus and the fulfilment of the charge he gave his disciples. It is one of the ways of responding to the Great Commission which is being understood gradually as *Missio Dei*- 'God's Mission'.³⁰⁷ Just as it was the case with Jesus (Matthew 4:23-25), the practice of healing and deliverance in combination with other ministry gifts can be argued to

³⁰⁵ Edem K. Tettey, Interviewed, GEC Head Office, Tesano, Accra, 15th January, 2013.

³⁰⁶ Tettey, Interviewed, 15th January, 2013.

³⁰⁷ David Bosch, *Transforming Missions: Paradigm in Theology of Missions* (Mary knoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 389.

have attracted people to faith in Christ, leading to expansion of the GEC. At national level, the church which stated as an offshoot of the E. P. Church, Ghana has established about 675 congregations with total numerical strength of 103,087 people (excluding the congregations which have not been officially recorded in the church calendar) over two decades.³⁰⁸ For instance among the branches selected for this study, both the Hillcrest and Valleyland branches have establish three additional branches within limited space among many already existing churches. The establishment of these branches is to ease congestion at the main branches as well as ensure nearness of places of worship to the people and leadership development.

A pastor, in respect of the factors affecting the growth of the one of the congregations explains that several factors such as biblically sound preaching, well organized cooperate prayer, regular fasting, notable testimonies from members, healing and deliverance, personal and cooperate evangelism and effective pastoral care account for the growth. He also noted that 'power ministry' especially prophetic, healing and deliverance ministries have great impact on the conversion of many people to Christ, thereby increasing the number of Christians and lead to establishment of many other congregations.³⁰⁹

Healing and deliverance extends beyond the services to include activation and promotion of cooperate prayer life among Christians. The ability of a church to mobilize, train and to develop its members in the habit of prayer is another mark of its spiritual growth.³¹⁰ The healing and deliverance practice which has prayer as one of its strong components strengthens Christians to pray at different levels. As noted in chapter three, prayers are said at varying levels of the healing and deliverance programme. Although these prayers are said

³⁰⁸ Global Evangelical Church, 2012 Annual Calender (Accra: GEC Publications, 2012), 143.

³⁰⁹ A pastor, Interview with, GEC Hillcrest Parish. 20th December, 2012

³¹⁰ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?*59.

with the aim of inviting the Holy Spirit to intervene in the affairs of people, these regular and persistent prayers indirectly develop in participants the desire and ability to relate with God both at individual and collective levels. The continuous prayer habit at the healing and deliverance services does not only develop members to respond appropriately to life situations but it also further equips some of them to take up responsibilities of becoming ministers and others servants whose services are needed in the house of God. In addition, corporate prayer helps to unearth spiritual gifts of Christians which Aubrey Malphurs considers very important and critical for ministry development.³¹¹ Through corporate prayer as it is normally done by prayer warriors as well as healing and deliverance team members before, during and after healing and deliverance services, members further identify their spiritual gifts which when developed prepares them to be more useful spiritual resources to the church.

Healing and deliverance also promotes church growth through discovery, development and utilisation of spiritual gifts. One of the theological orientations of the Global Evangelical Church is rooted in the belief about priesthood of all believers. This is the theological position which presupposes that all believers have the same privilege and are all qualified to work in one capacity as priests in the house of God. The belief is also based on the assumption that each and every believer is endowed with one gift of the Holy Spirit or the other which when explored can be used to the benefit of the church. It is against the background of this belief that the GEC endeavours to create avenues for recruiting members, identifying their gifts of the Holy Spirit, developing these gifts so as to explore them for the benefit of the church.³¹²

³¹¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: a comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those desiring Renewal* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2004), 84.

³¹² E. K. Gbordzoe, Interviewed, Oyibi-Accra, 23rd June, 2013.

Directly or indirectly, as the research has unearthed, the adoption of healing and deliverance practice in the GEC has become an avenue through which this process of recruitment, identification of spiritual gifts, developing the gifts and their utilisation occur. As stated earlier, many members of the healing and deliverance ministry have become minister and others as administrative personnel within the church. The church, since its establishment has developed many of such spiritual gifts as word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in diverse kinds of tongue and interpretation of tongues. Healing and deliverance by its nature demands these spiritual gifts to be effective. The discovery, development and use of these gifts by individuals in the church have in diverse impacted many people in the church leading to growth in various dimensions. This confirms the fact that, spiritual gifts can help a church to grow.³¹³

Healing and deliverance also offers opportunity for leadership training and human resource development of the church. Many leaders of the GEC interviewed in this research explained that their attainment of their leadership status is influenced by their day to day experience they have gained through regular participation the healing and deliverance services. For instance, seven out of every ten members representing 70 percent of those who are currently serving as ministers claimed that their calling into ministry of Christ was inspired and shaped by the various activities they had undertaken during healing and deliverance services.³¹⁴ For instance, out of 50 healing and deliverance team members interviewed from the three congregations, 48 of them representing 96 percent stated that they became members through their regular participation in the miracle services organised by the church.

³¹³ Peter C. Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (California: Regal Books, 1994), 17.

³¹⁴ This analysis is derived from information obtained from Focus Group Discussion, a number of ministers at pastor and evangelist annual prayer and fasting programme held at Global Evangelical Church-Ho-Fiave, Ho, 10th November, 2012.

In addition, most prayer warriors interviewed attested to the indispensable role they play in the church, particularly during healing and deliverance services. This they maintained was possible as a result of the informal training they have had through participation in the service for a considerable number of years.³¹⁵ An important aspect of the leadership training avenue created by the healing and deliverance practice in the church is the recourse by most beneficiaries of the practice to serve in one leadership position or the other. During interview with most participants selected from the groups identified in the church, 50 percent of respondents stated that they became members of praises and worship team, deliverance team, prayer warriors or ministers due to their personal experience in healing and deliverance services.³¹⁶ The situation where healing and deliverance practice offers opportunity for training people to take up responsibilities in the church is what Costa describes as organic growth.

Organic growth is concerned with such issues as depth of fellowship; quality of worship; training of new members; discovery of gifts and the exercise of ministry; appointment and role of leaders; practice of corporate prayer; celebration of the ordinance or sacraments- all that relate to the corporate organization and activity of the local church. This is growing together in service and witness to the faith community.³¹⁷ Thus, while on the one hand healing and deliverance practice provides means for people to overcome the problems of ill health, on the other hand it creates avenue for developing human resources for the church who provide services to other members of the community in which the church is situated.

³¹⁵ Focus Group Discussion, Deliverance Team Members during healing and deliverance at Global Evangelical Church-Valleyland, 10th January, 2013

³¹⁶ Focus Group Discussion, Deliverance Team Members during healing and deliverance at Global Evangelical Church-Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

³¹⁷ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 28.

It has been discovered that the various activities which constitute the healing and deliverance practice distinctively have some form of impact on church growth. In the practice of healing and deliverance the activities which include preaching the word of God, singing and praying, counselling, have variously and collectively affected lives of many participants in the miracle services. They in one way or the other have brought about some form of transformation into the lives of the generality of persons who attend the healing and deliverance services. As part of the healing and deliverance practice, the word of God is shared with participant through preaching, teaching, counselling and exhortation. The rationale behind this is to acquaint worshipers with knowledge about God and the provisions he has made to respond to all human situations through application of the scriptures. This, many clients have acknowledged that apart from its potency of enriching their faith for receiving healing and deliverance, it also helps them gain in-depth understanding about the word of God and how to practically apply scriptures to their own life situations. The ability to of Christians to develop some level of understanding of the word of God and apply it to their daily lives indicates a form of growth as described as conceptual growth by Roy Pointer.³¹⁸

The growth of a church is also marked by the level at which Christian are spiritually and morally inclined, an idea Gbordzoe describes as growth in holiness and human relations. He explains that a church that is growing must have its members ready to live holy live and have good relationship with one another.³¹⁹ Spiritually, the healing and deliverance service which lays much emphasis on prayer provides worshipers with the opportunity to confess their sins and ask for forgiveness. To enjoy God's forgiveness, believers are encouraged to forgive one

³¹⁸ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 27.

³¹⁹ Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 81-90.

another even as God has forgiven them through Christ.³²⁰ The result then is restoration of the worshipper to faith and growth in fellowship with God and fellow human being.

Growth in holiness then implies growth in relationship with God which is the essence of biblical prayers. To be effective in prayer does not only imply that the Christian relates with God but also an indication of the extent to which the Christian is able to engage God and spiritual resources available in Christ in confronting anti-life forces. Healing and deliverance experts stress persistent moral uprightness because they believe that the effectiveness of a person's anointing depends on moral uprightness and enhanced spirituality through fasting, Bible study and prayer.³²¹ In this sense Gbordzoe attributes church growth to persistent and intense prayer among others. Since prayer forms an integral part of healing and deliverance, there is sense in saying that the practice enhances growth spiritually and in holiness. A church that does pray never grows but eventually dies.³²²

In addition, the counselling services offered clients during healing and deliverance practice promote their spiritual lives. Counselling, which forms part of healing and deliverance activities, creates avenue for the minister to best understand issues that confront members and thus inform him on what measures to take in dealing with the people's challenges. However, in the course of the counselling, members are not only made to understand their problems in the light of Christian teachings but they are also provided with alternative approach to dealing with similar life situations so as to prevent future occurrences. In some cases, those whose challenges may have resulted from their own misconducts are given precautionary measures to overcome these challenges as well as to live morally upright life. Gbordzoe describes this

³²⁰ Ephesians 4:31 and 32 of the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible says 'Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.'

³²¹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charimatics*, 155.

³²² Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth*, 14-15.

as holiness or sanctification.³²³ Thus, through counselling, members are challenged to live their lives in conformity with the teachings of the Bible, a phenomenon that facilitates and improves their lives as transformed Christians.

The church also grows when it has developed measures by which common challenges that confront its members and the generality of human society are either prevented or solved. It has been found that during counselling, ministers do not only gain knowledge about problems that confront their members but also become aware of each and every day physical and spiritual challenges that confront their members and the human society at large. It has also been observed that the church that is able to position itself against both material and spiritual problems of the society does not only become significant to the lives of people but it also demonstrates its preparedness to purge itself of problems which have the potential of drawing the church as a social and spiritual institution into disrepute. For instance, in a discussion with some church members (names withheld for ethical reasons) at Ho, one of the respondents confirms that it was through healing and deliverance that he was able to overcome the problem of addiction to alcohol and sex. To this respondent, these were some challenges he faced and had telling effects on him and other members of his family. However, his regular participation in the healing and deliverance services has provided him with the requisite measures to overcome his personal moral weakness.³²⁴

4.4 The Place of Healing and Deliverance in the Future of GEC

The practice of healing and deliverance has become a very integral component of religious practices of the GEC. It was discovered that 85 out of 100 congregations surveyed have a specific day set aside for the practice of healing and deliverance in the GEC. This, according

³²³ Emmanuel K. Gbordzoe, *Prayer and Church Growth: a Practical Model* (Accra, GEC Press: 2010), 82.

³²⁴ Focus group discussion, Deliverance Team Members, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

to most of the 100 respondents, is due to the significant role they think the practice plays in the lives of individual members of the church, and the entire church as a religious institution. In the first place, the practice, which has been part of the church can be said to have brought about some form of transformation to the church. This is because in its absence, some Christians resort to other forms of non-Christian worship in attempt to solving their human existential problems, particularly when the church seemed to have no solution to the problem in question. This shift from dual allegiance to keeping faith with the church does not only help members to be stable in the church but it also keeps them in the church and further strengthened their faith.³²⁵ In effect, the membership of the church is at least maintained, as Christians are not lost to other religious traditions which seem to have solutions to the challenges that confront them.

The practice of healing and deliverance also has become an evangelism tool being used to win many people to the Christian faith. Prior to its introduction into the church, most people according to some respondents such as a presbyter and an evangelist were not ready to get converted. The presbyter explained his action by giving two reasons why he thinks some people (including him) hesitate in accepting Christ. In the first place, the church did not appear to have had answers to the problems that made them keep faith with other religious traditions. In the second place, the question of what they would have done should they get converted and be faced with such human existential problems remained unsolved. These are the reasons why he believes that the incorporation of healing and deliverance as one of the routine practices in the church inspired some people to accept the Christian faith as they see

³²⁵ A respondent, Interviewed, Valleyland, 10th November, 2012.

the practical manifestations of the gospel through the liberating power of the Holy Spirit in action.³²⁶

A pastor informant explains that healing and deliverance is seen more as an effective evangelistic tool which, when used in combination with other ministry gifts such as prophecy, teaching, sound and biblical preaching, good administration makes a holistic evangelistic impact and consequently lead to growth.³²⁷ The understanding then is that, effective evangelism will translate into church growth or as Tom S. Rainer puts it 'true evangelism results in true church growth'. Hence, in the case of one of the congregations, new members have continued to be added to the church since the healing and deliverance practice has assured them of overcoming any challenge that might confront them as Christians without having to resort to other religious faith. This response demonstrates that people are not getting converted only for the salvation of their souls, but they also seek for salvation from present life situations.

This idea about justification for which people become Christian is in consonance with the theological foundation upon which some practices in the GEC is founded as discussed in chapter three. Thus the church, explores these beliefs not only in preparing souls for eternal glory in Christ, but also to ensure that humankind attains holistic salvation and total transformation of their lives, which include the liberation of people from their existential needs.³²⁸ This position, as taken by the GEC and shown in the healing and deliverance practice is in line Charismatic ethos. For Charismatic, salvation must be experienced. Asamoah-Gyadu explains that the key 'soteriological goals' of Charismatic Pentecostals

³²⁶ A presbyter, Interviewed, GEC, Valleyland, 10th January, 2013.

³²⁷ A pastor informant, interviewed, GEC, Hillcrest Parish, 20th December, 2012

³²⁸ Christian R. Gaba, 'The Religious Life of the People', in Frances Agbodeka (ed), *A Handbook of Eweland Volume I: The Ewes of Southern Ghana* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 1997),96-97.

include the realisation of 'transformation and empowerment', 'healing and deliverance', and prosperity and success in the lives of believers.³²⁹ Gbordzoe explains that the church must position itself to bring solution and hope to the people in the world and this informs the theological perspective of the church.³³⁰

The introduction of healing and deliverance can be said to have positioned the GEC as religious faith which aims at the well-being of its adherents as its goal. A presbyter and treasure of the church reasoned that one of the significant functional components of religion is its effect on the spiritual life of its adherents³³¹. He also noted that prior to the introduction of healing and deliverance practice, the church seemed to have lost this aspect of spiritual vitality and vibrancy which some consider as very significant in Christian practices.³³² The absence of this spiritual vitality and vibrancy, according to Rainer, reduces the church to a mere social organisation.³³³ The Basic and fundamental understanding of the church which must, first and foremost, be as a spiritual entity conceived by the Father (Eph. 1:3-6), built by Christ (Matt.16:18) and indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:19-22) was almost absent. Very few people saw the church as God's primary vehicle for the manifestation as the kingdom of God among all people.³³⁴

The healing and deliverance practice which involves a number of activities, including studying the word of God, does not only deepen individual members' understanding of the saving power of God, but also equips them with the ability to apply the scriptures to their daily lives. For instance, in discussing the impact of healing and deliverance on their lives,

³²⁹ Kwabena, J. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2005), 132-133.

³³⁰ E. K. Gbordzoe, Interview, Oyibi-Accra, 23rd June, 2013.

³³¹ A presbyter and treasure of the church, interviewed, GEC Valleyland, 10th January, 2013

³³², Interviewed, GEC Valleyland Parish. 10th January, 2013.

³³³ Tom S. Rainier, 'Strategist for Church Growth' in John Mark Terry, *et al.*, (eds), *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1998), 484.

³³⁴ Craig Ott & Gene Wilson in, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and best practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 5.

about 95 percent of respondents explained that it is through the healing and deliverance services that they have begun to understand the word of God and its practical application to life situations. Moreover, most of the lay members claimed that in the absence of healing and deliverance service, they did not even know the need for and how to pray on their own.³³⁵ On the part of ministers, they did read the Bible and explain its content to members; however, they had little knowledge of its practical application through prayers to the lives of the members of the faith community and outsiders which culminate into what is described as healing and deliverance.³³⁶

Respondents explained that devotion to prayer and effective ministration of the word of God in combination with the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit as it was in the days of the apostles was very rare. For these respondents, healing and deliverance, has helped and better prepared them for service to others and the community in which they find themselves as they visit homes and pray for others.³³⁷ Respondents claimed their zeal to share any new thing learnt at the healing and deliverance and the confidence with which others were invited attracted people to the church.³³⁸ This indicates how important prayer is to the healing and deliverance process which affects the growth of the church. It can therefore be said that there has been some level of transformation of Christian life (among both laity and ministers) through the activities of healing and deliverance.

³³⁵ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church- Hilltop Parish Accra, 29th November, 2012.

³³⁶ Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church- Hilltop Parish Accra, 29th November, 2012.

³³⁷ A presbyter, Interviewed, GEC Hilltop Parish, Accra. 2nd December, 2012.

³³⁸ Peter C. Wagner, *Spiritual Power and Church Growth* (Altamonte Springs, Florida: Strang Communication Company, 1986), 122. See also Donald A. McGavran & Winfield C. Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1977), 55. Note: Wagner quoted a Pentecostal pastor who explained that the 'object of healing for the unsaved as 'bait'. It attracts their attention to the power of Christ, who can also save'.

This spiritual transformation of the life of members and the church at large; the personal and corporate prayer life, conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit, practical involvement in the ministry of the Holy Spirit serve as indicators of church growth. This is what Pointer describes as incarnational growth.³³⁹ Pointer defines this as 'the degree of involvement of a community of faith in the life and problems of her social environment, that is her participation in the afflictions of her world; her prophetic, intercessory and liberating action on behalf of the weak and destitute; the intensity of her preaching to the poor; the broken hearted, the captives, the blind and the oppressed. Incarnational growth describes the development of the ministry of a local church as an extension and continuation of Christ's ministry'.³⁴⁰

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the impact of healing and deliverance as an instrument of church growth. The chapter takes into consideration the prevailing situation within the Christian religious milieu prior to the formation of the GEC which occurred concurrently with the introduction of healing and deliverance as a routine religious practice of the church. It argues that healing and deliverance since its introduction into the GEC has contributed immensely to the growth of the church as it has proven to be an effective tool in revitalising the church to its core religious responsibilities. In addition, the practice has proven to be an effective tool with transformational effect on the lives of individual members and non-members of the church.

This is made possible though the various activities that constitutes the healing and deliverance practice. The ability of the practice to bring about transformative effect on the

³³⁹ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 29.

³⁴⁰ Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* 29.

lives of individuals, consequently has affected the numerical, conceptual, incarnational, organic growth and hence the physical wealth and infrastructural development of the church. It is discovered that healing and deliverance as a routine practice of the GEC is not only an instrument of church growth but it is also a mechanism by which new churches can be born. Thus, the effective practice of healing and deliverance when combined with other ministry gifts can regenerate the church which in turn develops healing and deliverance to strengthen and revitalises itself.

This research has found that healing and deliverance has contributed greatly to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church within the period under-studied. The study has discovered that healing and deliverance is a factor but not the only factor and does has positive correlation with the growth of the congregations studied.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

In chapter four, attempt has been made to draw a relationship between the practice of deliverance, and church growth. This chapter concludes the study by throwing light on how the Global Evangelical Church has employed the deliverance practice in dealing with some felt needs of its members. As a concluding chapter to this research, it summarises the study, provides some recommendation and suggestions for both practitioners and scholars in Christian missions.

5.2 Summary

Healing and deliverance is one of the practices designed by the Global Evangelical Church to effectively respond to the contextual needs of people in order to facilitate its missionary activities. The practice has partly been identified as the precursor to the formation of the church among other things such as the theological and administrative factors that brought the split in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the subsequent formation of the Global Evangelical Church in 1991. This phenomenal beginning appears to account for how most branches, especially those studied in this research, were established. In the situations where the churches were established through evangelistic activities of the church, healing and deliverance has been employed extensively in reaching out to people. The relevance of the practice to the church and individuals who constitute the church is indicated in several ways.

Firstly, the deliverance practice is employed as a tool for spiritual renewal in the lives of Christians. It is obvious that through the deliverance practice, many Christians have been rejuvenated towards living a life of commitment to the Christian faith. This is because prior

to its introduction into the church, most Christians had lost commitment to the Christian faith, leading to what Opoku Onyinah described as religious dual allegiance.³⁴¹ This is the situation where Christians consult traditional religious practitioners in search for spiritual remedies to their life problems. In effect, most people have lost their commitment to the Christian faith while some had reverted to idolatry. However, through the practice of deliverance, the church appeared to have positioned itself for responding to the existential needs which compelled some Christians to engage in idolatry. This idea was expressed by most respondents who had received deliverance through the practice. According to them, their faith in Christ has been strengthened as they have solution to problems that compelled them to leave the church for African Indigenous religious practitioners.³⁴²

Secondly, the deliverance practice has been employed as an evangelistic tool for winning people for the GEC in particular and Christianity in general. Since its introduction as a routine practice in the GEC, healing and deliverance has been used in converting many people to the church. This is the situation where many non Christians who come to the church with problem become converted to the Christian faith after their problems have been solved through the deliverance practice. This has turned healing and deliverance into an indispensable activity during the organisation of crusades, conventions, revivals and any other programme of the church aimed at evangelising people. In addition, healing and deliverance is not only used to win souls to the Christian faith, but it is also employed to ensure that people who are won do not revert to their old life style. This is the situation where continuous organisation of the programme which has become weekly activity provides an opportunity for members to have their day to day problems solved thereby retaining them in

³⁴¹ Opoku, Onyinah, *Pentecostal Exorcism: Witchcraft and Demonology in Ghana* (Dorset: Deo Publishing, 2012), 106.

³⁴² Focus Group Discussion, Presbyters of the Global Evangelical Church-Hillcrest Congregation, 20th December, 2012

the church. The practice, therefore, brings about growth of the church in the sense that, it is used to bring many people to the church as well as to keep them in the church.

Thirdly, the deliverance practice creates an avenue for solving problems that confront members of the church. The practice which is not only aimed at healing people with physical ill health, but also aimed at solving any other problem that affects the wellbeing of people, has been used by the church to help its members overcome diverse challenges of life. The practice, therefore, enables members to live normal lives which in turn affect other aspects of their lives including marriage, employment, education, travelling opportunities, child bearing, and any other way in which human lives are promoted and improved upon. In effect, many people return to the church with offerings of thanksgiving and many other pledges of services to God in appreciation for their wellbeing. These offerings and services also become useful in the development of the church in various ways including its infrastructure.

Moreover, the many activities that constitute the healing and deliverance process affect the growth of the church in a number of ways. The use of regular and persistent prayers, studying and preaching of the word of God, counselling of clients and songs ministrations have positively affected the life of members especially by reshaping and nurturing their lives for good Christian living. This aspect of the healing and deliverance practice has created avenues for identifying, recruiting and training many new members who have also become useful in taking up leadership positions, thereby to fill gaps created through the lack of human resources necessary for pasturing the ever growing numbers of the church. It is interesting to know that many of the current ministers of the church identified their pastoral ministries through their involvement in the healing and deliverance programmes.

5.3 Suggestions and Recommendations

This study provides many recommendations for both practitioners, the public who desire to receive such services from churches and researchers in mission studies. Firstly, healing and deliverance in this study is identified as an evangelism tool meant for winning people to faith in Christ. As a result, the research highly recommends that the practitioners employ biblical principles and ensure that activities constituting the practice do not defeat the purpose for its incorporation into the church. It is against this background that it is recommended that any initiative of such nature takes into consideration the tendencies for excesses and irregularities involving human right abuses. This will ensure that health and wellbeing is restored and the dignity of the Christian and his or her faith is promoted. This will enable many people to seek the truth about Christianity and finally long to be part of it.

Secondly, the study seems to be pointing to Christian theological concept of contextualisation as one of the important approaches to effective evangelisation. It has been discovered that many strands of missionary groups that emerged at different phases of church history tried to meet the life needs of the people they evangelised to. This shows that for evangelism to be effective and result oriented, missionaries of contemporary churches must endeavour to learn and understand the felt needs of the people to whom the gospel is preached in order to respond to them effectively. For instance, in the contemporary era of Christian mission, the GEC has identified healing and deliverance as a means of touching people with the gospel of Christ by responding to the daily needs of people to whom the gospel is preached. This implies that attempts must be made to know people's needs and address them with the gospel at the time the gospel message is transmitted.

Thirdly, healing and deliverance in this research is seen as a programme of activities that serve as a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The many activities that constitute healing and deliverance are meant to help transform Christians and non Christians to become people who are totally committed to the Christian faith. It is against this background that ministers of the gospel who intend using healing and deliverance and any other means of responding to the needs of people do so not only for its sake, but with the ultimate goal of leading them to Christ.

Also, it must be borne in mind that the practice of healing and deliverance is a process and not a one day wonder. It was discovered in the study that apart from the varying stages that ministers lead their client through, total healing and deliverance is said to be attained only through continuous devotion to Christ. Based on this, the study recommends that healing and deliverance ministers make their clients aware of the need to continue in their established good relationship with God by walking in biblical principles so as to make their healing or deliverance permanent. This recommendation is made because during field work many people who patronise healing and deliverance services confirmed that their attendance at the service was not because they have identified any problem of ill health. For them, it is important to attend deliverance services because so long as one is alive there is the need to be in close relationship with God in order to achieve total well being.

Ministers must also ensure that they emphasize salient hidden elements of the healing and deliverance process which were identified as prayer, gifts of the Holy Spirit and faith of both the Minister and the client. This study discovered that the practice of healing and deliverance must consider the centrality of these elements in order to help position the client for effective healing and deliverance. It is believed that when these measures are put in place, Christian mission will be most prepared to effectively respond to the needs of people. This will then translate into the growth of the church.

5.4 Conclusion

This research about the relationship between deliverance and church growth investigates the role of deliverance practice in the growth of the Global Evangelical Church over the past two decades. The deliverance practice, which started concurrently with the church after its split with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, forms an integral part of the church's regular religious activities especially during crusades and other evangelistic programmes. The GEC continuously explore the deliverance practice as an evangelistic tool in winning many converts and strengthening the faith and commitment of existing members. Consequently, the deliverance practice is discovered as one of the major contributing factors to the rapid growth of the church. This is indicated in several impacts the practice had on the growth of the church. Thus through the various activities constituting the deliverance practice, (counselling, discussing the word of God, singing and praying for deliverance) numerical, conceptual, organic progress has been made in the church in addition to the physical wealth (financial and infrastructural growth) of the GEC.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

I am an M.Phil student in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana who is researching into the **relationship between the practice of healing and deliverance and church growth**. I would be grateful if you could provide honest responses to these questions. As required by the ethics of research at the University of Ghana, you are assured of utmost confidentiality as the research is meant for academic purpose only. Please tick or write appropriate answers in the spaces provided.

Questionnaire for ministers, elders, evangelists and other members of the Global Evangelical Church

Background Information of Respondent

Gender: (i) Male (ii) Female

Age: (i) 18-40(ii) 41-60 (ii) 61 and above

Educational qualification: (i) JHS/GCE 'O' (ii) SHS/ GCE 'A' level

(iii) Professional Edu. HND. (iv) Degree and above

Duration of membership (i) 1-5yrs. (ii) 6-10yrs. (ii) 11-15yrs. (iv) 16 and above.

How did you become a member of the GEC? (i) Birth (ii) Personal Conversion (iii) Due to the Split

If 5 (ii) If true in your case, at what event did you become a member? (i) Crusade (ii) Radio/ TV program (iii) Individual evangelism. (iv) Annual convention

What is your position in the church? (i) Member (ii) Elder (iii) Prayer Warrior

(iv) Evangelist (v) Catechist (vi) Pastor (vi) Seminarian (vii) Others

Name of your branch/ congregation

The Global Evangelical Church and the Practice of healing and Deliverance

9. Where do you place the Global Evangelical Church among the Christian expressions in Ghana? (i) Charismatic (ii) Pentecostal (iii) African Instituted

(iv) Prophetic (v) Mainline/Orthodox (vi) Neo-Prophetic

10. Can you identify some practices/ministries that distinguish the Christian expression of your choice from others in the list above?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)

11. Which of the practices/ministries identified above is very common in the Global Evangelical Church?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

12. Do you see healing and deliverance as one of the practices in the Global Evangelical Church? (i)Yes (ii)No.

Explain.....

13. How long has this practice being in the Global Evangelical Church?

(i) 1-5yrs. (ii) 6-10yrs. (iii) 11-15yrs. (iv) 16-20yrs.

14. How was the practice of healing and deliverance introduced into the Global Evangelical Church?

.....

15. Does the Global Evangelical Church train its ministers for the practice of healing and deliverance in their theological education?

(i) Yes (ii) No (iii) Not Sure

Healing and Deliverance and its Relationship with Church Growth

16. Does your church engage in the practice of healing and deliverance as part of its regular activities? (i) Yes (ii) No

17. How often is healing and deliverance organized in the church?

- (i) Once a Week (ii) Once a Month (iii) Once in three Months
(iv) Once in six Months (v) Once a Year

18. Can you name some activities that form part of the healing and deliverance practice in the church?

- i.
ii.
iii.
iv.

19. On what basis do you practice healing and deliverance? (i) Ministers' professional experience (ii) Individual ministers experience (iii) The Bible (iv) Inspiration by other ministers (iv) It forms part of the church's liturgy

20. Will you like to fellowship with a congregation where healing and deliverance is practiced?

- (i) Yes (ii) Not sure (iii) No.

Explain.....
.....

21. Have you identified any challenge(s) confronting the healing and deliverance practice in your church?

- (i) Have not observed it with keen interest (ii) Yes (iii) No

22. If you responded yes to question 21 above, can you state any three of them?

- (i)
(ii)
(iii).....

23. What three things do you think can be done to meet the challenges stated above?

- (i)
(ii)
(iii).....

24. Do you think healing and deliverance ministry should be practiced in all congregations?

- (i) Yes (ii) No (iii) Not so sure

25. If yes, give reasons.

.....

.....

26. Can you identify some features or signs of growth in a church?

- (i).....
- (ii).....
- (iii).....
- (iv).....
- (v)
- (vi).....

27. In what ways do you think the healing and deliverance ministry is affecting the church.

- a) It brings many people into the church
- b) It make people leave the church
- c) Any other

28. Can you say that healing and deliverance activities are contributing to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church? (i) No (ii) Not sure (iii) Yes

If answered yes to the above question, please state some of the ways by which the practice leads to the growth of the Global Evangelical Church.

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii).....
- (iv).....
- (v)

30. Would you want healing and deliverance to continue in the church?

- (i) Yes (ii) No

31. Can you give reason for your answer in question 27 above?

.....

.....

.....

32. As a Pastor/ an Elder/ Evangelist of the Global Evangelical Church, would you like to practice healing and deliverance in your church? (i) Yes (ii) No

33. Give reasons for your answer to question 32 above

.....

.....

.....

34. (a) What are some scriptural bases for which healing and deliverance is practiced in the Global Evangelical Church? Give quotation where possible.

.....

.....

.....

(b) Do you think healing and deliverance has any future in the Global Evangelical Church?

(i) Yes (ii) No. explain.....

.....

.....

35. Kindly give any general comment on the healing and deliverance ministry in the global Evangelical Church.

.....

.....

.....

Contact Numberor Email.....

God Richly Bless You.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

I am an M-Phil student in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana who is researching into the **relationship between the practice of healing and deliverance and church growth**. I would be grateful if you could provide honest responses to these questions.

Interview Guide for Leaders (the national executive, past and present) of the Global Evangelical Church

Background Information of Respondent

1. Gender: (i) Male (ii) Female
2. Age: (i) 18-40 (ii) 41-60 (iii) 61 and above
3. Educational qualification: (i) JHS/GCE 'O' (ii) SHS/ GCE 'A' level
(iii) Professional Edu. HND. (iv) Degree and above
4. Duration of membership (i) 1-5yrs. (ii) 6-10yrs. (iii) 11-15yrs. (iv) 16-22yrs.
5. How did you become a member? (i) Birth (ii) Personal Conversion (iii) Due to the Split
6. If you ticked 5 (ii) for question 5, at what event did you become a member? (i) Crusade
(ii) Radio/ TV program (iii) Individuals evangelism.
7. What is your position in the church? (i) Member (ii) Elder (iii) Prayer Warrior
(iv) Evangelist (v) Catechist (vi) Pastor (vii) Seminarian (viii) Others
8. Name of your branch/congregation

The Global Evangelical Church and the Practice of healing and Deliverance

9. What are some of the fundamental theological teachings of the Global Evangelical Church?
10. How and when did healing and deliverance become part of the practices in the Global Evangelical Church and why was it introduced into the church?

11. What are the theological bases for the practice of healing and deliverance in the Global Evangelical Church?
12. What in your view constitutes healing and deliverance?

Healing and Deliverance and its Relationship with Church Growth

13. How significant is the healing and deliverance practice among the other activities in the Global Evangelical Church?
14. What in your view are the parameters in measuring church growth?
15. How does healing and deliverance relate with the defining factors stated above?
16. Considering the significance of the healing and deliverance ministry, what regulatory measure is the church putting in place to ensure its continuity?

Thank you.

APPENDIX 3: SOME PICTURES OF RESEARCH FIELD

A: The researcher in a focus group discussion with some participants of Healing and Deliverance Service at Hillcrest.



Source: Field Work, 20th December, 2012 at Hillcrest.

B: Some Participants who came forward to be ministered to.



Source: Field Work, 20th December, 2012 at Hillcrest.

The minister at Hillcrest ministering to participants



Source: Field Work, 20th December, 2012 at Hillcrest.

D: Packets of Floor tiles donated to the Hillcrest Congregation by a benefactor of the healing and deliverance programme.



E: Some Participants who came forward to be ministered to



Source: Field Work, 10th January, 2013 at Valleyland.

F: An evangelist ministering to some participants at Valleyland.



Source: Field Work, 10th January, 2013 at Valleyland.