

**TOWARDS ACTIVE MISSIONS INVOLVEMENT: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE
PREVAILING LOW CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS PARTICIPATION AMONG
BLACK EVANGELICALS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that "Towards Active Missions Involvement: An Investigation into the Prevailing Low Cross-Cultural Missions Participation among Black Evangelicals in South Africa " is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on a deep longing and desire to see Africans taking a leading role in the mission of God. For centuries Westerners missionaries have been taking the lead in missions and Africans have been followers.

Firstly a historical analysis of missions disengagement in Africa is undertaken. This will take us on a journey to discover where the church in Africa started. The history of missions participation in Africa will be reviewed and the missions disengagement discussed. This will followed by a study of a few Africans groups that are actively involved in missions. Thirdly an analysis of the various African success stories is done to seek to discover the African mission normative. In this section the biblical basis of missions participation are reviewed. With few involved in missions the research attempts to discover if the bible really requires even Africans to be involved in missions.

The study ends with recommendations and suggestions on factors that are necessary for missions participation as discovered through the research. The researcher hopes that these recommendations will help challenge black evangelical churches find their place in missions.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	-	Apostolic Faith Mission church
AIC	-	Africa Inland Church
AIM	-	Africa Inland Mission
CBCA	-	Central Baptist Church of Central Africa
CoP	-	Church of Pentecost
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EOC	-	Ethiopian Orthodox Church
FIFIM	-	Forward in Faith Ministries International
EECMY	-	Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus
IMB	-	International Mission Board
OM	-	Operation Mobilisation
SIM	-	Sudan Interior Mission, now, Serving in Missions
WEC	-	Worldwide Evangelization Crusade
YWAM	-	Youth with a Mission
ZAOGA	-	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Problem Statement	2
1.3. Aims and Objectives	3
1.3.1. Aims	3
1.3.2. Objectives	3
1.4. Rationale of Study	4
1.5. Hypothesis	4
1.6. Methodology and Limitations	5
1.6.1. Methodology	5
1.6.2. Data Collection	6
1.6.3. Limitations of Research	7
1.7. Definition of Key Terms	8
1.8. Research Structure	9
1.8.1. Chapter 1: Introduction	9
1.8.2. Chapter 2: A Historical Review of Missions Disengagement amongst Africans	10
1.8.3. Chapter 3: Africa Initiated Missions	10
1.8.4. Chapter 4: Towards An African Mission Normative	11
1.8.5. Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations	12
2. CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF MISSIONS DISENGAGEMENT AMONGST AFRICANS	13
2.1. Introduction	13
2.2. Christianity In Africa: A Historical Overview	14

2.2.1.	Missional Influence of African Church Fathers	16
2.2.2.	What Crippled the Church?	18
2.2.3.	European Outreach Mission to Africa	19
2.3.	Silencing Of The Church Through Islamic Invasion And Slave Trade	20
2.3.1.	Islamic Invasions of Africa	20
2.3.2.	Slave Trade	21
2.3.2.1.	Impact of Slavery	22
2.4.	Colonial Impact on The African Church	23
2.4.1.	Impact of Colonialism and Apartheid	24
2.4.2.	The West Still Setting the Agenda for Missions	24
2.4.2.1.	Africans as Objects of Mission	26
2.4.2.2.	Use of Money as a Strategy for Control	28
2.4.2.3.	Africans Not Ready	29
2.4.3.	African Voicelessness in Missions	30
2.4.3.1.	Voicelessness As A Result of Inferiority Complex	30
2.4.3.2.	Voicelessness Could Be Because Of Apathy	31
2.4.3.3.	Voicelessness Because of Paternalism	31
2.5.	A History of Mission Organizations Operating In Africa	32
2.5.1.	Africa Inland Mission (AIM)	34
2.5.2.	Sending Strategies	37
2.5.2.1.	Denominational Funding	39
2.5.2.2.	Support Raising or Partnership Development	41
2.6.	Impact On African Involvement In Missions	41
2.7.	Summary	42
3.	CHAPTER THREE: AFRICA INITIATED MISSIONS	44
3.1.	Introduction	44
3.2.	Africans Doing Missions	46
3.2.1.	Case Study 1: The Calvary Ministries - CAPRO Story	46

3.2.1.1.	Historical Background	46
3.2.1.2.	CAPRO Missions Engagement Strategy	49
3.2.1.3.	CAPRO Financial Policy	49
3.2.1.4.	CAPRO Growth Factors	50
3.2.2.	Case Study Number 2: The Church of Pentecost	51
3.2.2.1.	Historical Background	51
3.2.2.2.	The CoP Mission Engagement Strategy	52
3.2.2.3.	The CoP Financial Policy	57
3.2.2.4.	CoP Growth Factors	58
3.2.3.	Case Study 3: Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA) or Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI)	59
3.2.3.1.	Historical Background	59
3.2.3.2.	ZAOGA Missions Engagement Strategy	60
3.2.3.3.	ZAOGA Financial Policy	61
3.2.3.4.	ZAOGA Growth Factors	61
3.2.4.	Case Study 4: The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)	62
3.2.4.1.	Historical Background	62
3.2.4.2.	Missions Engagement Strategy	64
3.2.4.3.	EECMY Financial Policy	65
3.2.4.4.	Growth Factors in the EECMY	65
3.3.	The Role of Migration In Missions Participation	66
3.3.1.	Migration in Scripture	66
3.3.2.	African Christians and Migration	67
3.3.3.	Distinct Characteristics of African Migrant Churches	68
3.4.	African Pentecostalism	69
3.4.1.	Pentecostalism	69
3.4.2.	What is Pentecostalism?	69
3.4.3.	Distinct Characteristics of African Pentecostalism	70
3.4.4.	History of Pentecostalism	70

3.4.5.	Pentecostalism and Missions Participation	71
3.4.6.	Factors Leading to the Growth of Pentecostalism in Africa	73
3.5.	CONCLUSION	75
4.	CHAPTER FOUR: TOWARDS AN AFRICAN MISSION NORMATIVE	78
4.1.	Introduction	78
4.2.	Reaching the Lost Prioritized	80
4.2.1.	Matthew 28:18-20	82
4.2.1.1.	Who is a Disciple?	82
4.2.1.2.	Implication of Discipleship on Missions Participation	83
4.2.1.3.	Obedience	84
4.2.1.4.	All Nations	86
4.2.2.	Motivation for Mission Participation	86
4.2.2.1.	Biblical Motivation for Missions Participation	87
4.2.2.2.	Paul’s Motivation for Missions Participation	87
4.2.3.	The Unreached Not Prioritized	89
4.3.	Migrant Africans As Missionaries	91
4.3.1.	The Church in Antioch	91
4.3.1.1.	Acts 11:19-21	92
4.3.1.2.	Acts 13:1-3	94
4.4.	Reaching Out: A Natural Expression of Faith	98
4.5.	Partnership Not Paternalism	100
4.5.1.	Calvary Ministries - CAPRO	100
4.5.2.	The Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus - EECMY	102
4.5.3.	Paternalism and Finances	102
4.6.	Prosperity Gospel Incentivizing Gospel Outreach	104
4.6.1.	Implication on Missions Participation	107
4.7.	Conclusion	108
5.	CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	111

5.1. Introduction	111
5.2. A Historical Review of Missions Disengagement amongst Africans	112
5.2.1. History of the Church in Africa	112
5.2.2. Africans Side-lined in Missions	113
5.3. African Initiated Missions	114
5.3.1. Migration	115
5.3.2. African Pentecostalism	116
5.3.3. Priesthood of All believers	117
5.3.4. Prosperity Gospel	117
5.4. Recommendations	118
5.4.1. Mission Must Be Prioritized in the Church	118
5.4.2. Prioritizing Outreach to the Unengaged and Unreached	119
5.4.3. Focus on Discipleship	120
5.4.4. Lay Ministry Should be Given Prominence	121
5.4.5. Churches Should Be at the Forefront	121
5.4.6. Encourage African-Western Partnership	122
5.4.7. Ride on the Wave of Migration	123
5.5. Future Work	123
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY	125

1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

According to the 2018 population estimates by Statistics South Africa (2018) the population of South Africa is 57, 73 million. Out of that number 46, 68 million are black. Furthermore, the Operation World (2020) estimates that 21.1% of the South African population is evangelical. This means that out of the whole population there are 12, 18 million evangelicals in the country and out of those 9, 85 million are black. These statistics show us that the majority of the South African evangelical church is black. Even though that is the case there are only a handful involved in Cross Cultural missions.

What is clear is that black South Africans embraced the gospel in large numbers. However, they do not seem to have eagerly welcomed the call of Christ to make disciples of all nations (Mat 28:18-20). This is the main challenge that moved the researcher to seek to find ways to encourage missions participation amongst black evangelicals in South Africa.

This researcher is very passionate about seeing Africans involved in missions. He is very eager to see black South African playing a more active role in the mission of God. The statistics highlighted above show that black evangelical churches in South Africa have a huge potential to send many missionaries to the nations. Even though that is the case only a handful have been sent. The researcher has discovered in his interaction with the churches that very few are involved in missions. Of the few that are involved the bulk of them are engaged at a local level by reaching out to their locality. A few more are involved through sending their members on short term outreaches once a year. This research intends to find ways through which black evangelicals can be encouraged to play a more active role in missions.

This will be done through a review of African groups that are involved in missions. From this groups the researcher will seek to establish what is the African missions normative. In order to have a much broader picture of missions participation by Africans the researcher will examine the history of Christianity in Africa. The role of African Christian fathers in shaping Christianity as we know it will also be highlighted.

In his doctoral research Jonas Khauoe (2008) conducted a survey on black churches around Gauteng and his findings highlight that missions involvement is still very low amongst black South Africans. On the subject of financial giving towards missions he discovered that on average only between 3% and 5% of church funds are distributed towards missions amongst the evangelical churches in South Africa. The respondents mentioned that most of their church finances go towards their Pastors' salaries, church buildings, projects and conferences. In terms of sending missionaries to work outside South Africa he discovered that only 31% of those interviewed were involved in some way (Khauoe 2008:95). This is a clear sign that there is a below average involvement in missions. This research will seek to get answers as to why things are as they are.

1.2. Problem Statement

With very little missions participation amongst black evangelicals in South Africa there is an urgent need to find ways to encourage such participation. The urgency stems from the fact that the task of world evangelization is still incomplete. Many people across the globe are still waiting to hear that Christ died for them for the very first time. For these precious people to get to hear that Christ died for them every believer needs to take ownership of the vision to engage them. The responsibility to reach the lost has been given to every disciple of Christ (Fraser 2014). Disciples of Jesus Christ have an obligation to evangelize their generation and to this task they need to give their all. Failure to evangelize will mean that believers will lose out on the opportunity to see the task of world evangelization completed in this generation.

The aim of this research is to discover what is working across Africa as far as missions participation is concerned. To best understand what is working across Africa case studies of Africans doing missions will be reviewed. As we review them, we will offer some suggestions on what could help black evangelicals in South African to be more active in the mission of God. The hope is that the suggested solutions will help encourage missions participation in congregations and missions groups across Africa.

The research question is therefore;

How may we encourage Active Cross-Cultural Missions Involvement among Black Evangelicals in South Africa?

1.3. Aims and Objectives

1.3.1. Aims

The main aim of this research is to find ways through which the black evangelical churches in South Africa can be encouraged to play a more active role in Cross Cultural missions.

1.3.2. Objectives

- To find out what other researchers have discovered on the subject of missions participation amongst black evangelicals in South Africa.
- To locate scriptures that highlight the need for missions participation in churches.
- To discover what other Africans are doing in missions and determine if there are lessons that could be gleaned from them and passed on to black evangelicals in South Africa.
- To make suggestions on the best ways to get black evangelical churches involved in God's mission.

1.4. Rationale of Study

We embarked on this study as we are desirous to see more black evangelicals in South Africa and by extension Africa involved in missions. This research is important as it seeks to discover ways through which missions participation can be encouraged and enhanced. In order to discover that, the research will retrace the history of missions engagement in Africa. George Santayana once said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” (Joel 2018). We will look at what early African leaders achieved and also consider where they went wrong. This will put the African church in a better position to avoid the mistakes of the early African church fathers. Over and above the historical reflection we will seek to discover what the current African missions normative is. It is this African normative that we will propose to the wider body of Christ in South Africa and to the many that seek to see their churches and mission agencies sending more African missionaries.

1.5. Hypothesis

One of the main reasons often given for the lack of missions participation across Africa is the lack of money. This seems to have some element of truth to it. However, there are other factors that may be the main issues affecting missions participation. The researcher believes that the black evangelical church is not actively involved in missions because missions is not prioritized. The black evangelical church in South Africa has a huge potential to send many missionaries. For that to happen missions will need to be given a platform, churches will need to be continually informed on missions and leaders will need to actively advocate for missions in their congregations. The researcher is convinced that if this can be given the attention it deserves South African will send more missionaries than she has ever done before.

1.6. Methodology and Limitations

1.6.1. Methodology

The researcher used Marvin Gilbert's Four Phase model of missiological research (2016:27-19).

Phase 1: A literature review on what others have written on the lack of missions involvement among black evangelicals was undertaken. A deductive approach was employed to test the different opinions gathered against the findings from Case studies of churches and mission agencies already involved in missions across Africa. Through this the researcher sought to discover if there was a relationship between what the different researchers claimed are the issues affecting missions participation and what the researcher discovered through his research. In this phase the researcher also did a study on the history of missions participation in Africa. He highlights the history of the church in Africa and notes factors that led to the disengagement that brought about a research of this kind.

Phase 2: The researcher did a biblical exegesis of a few new testament texts. Through this the researcher sought to understand what the scriptures communicated to the original audience. This was necessary to ensure an in-depth understanding of what the authors intended to communicate. A deeper understanding of what the bible says will help define the churches' biblical obligations to missions involvement. This Researcher used Luther's Historical-Grammatical Method of interpretation. An inductive approach to the bible was employed.

Phase 3: In this phase a case study method of data collection was used to gather information on churches and mission agencies that are involved in missions across Africa. The case studies represent success stories of Africans doing missions. The groups under study represent churches and organizations that are involved in missions with some level of success. The groups are taken from the different regions of Sub Saharan Africa. The church groups are from West Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa. The groups are big and have been very successful in sending missionaries to different parts of the world. The researcher also profiled Africa's largest

indigenous sending organization that has been very successful in sending hundreds of missionaries across the world.

The case studies focused on the historical background of the church/mission groups, their missions engagement strategies, their financial policies and factors responsible for the growth of each of the groups. In order to determine on the sampling, the researcher focused on each groups' involvement in missions. All the groups highlighted are considered very successful in sending missionaries by many across Africa.

Phase 4: In this phase the researcher critically analysed the results of the first 3 phases and came up with a conclusion. The researcher offers suggestions on what may help enhance missions involvement among Black Evangelicals in South Africa.

The researcher conducted his work from a perspective of a participant observer. He has been a involved in mission work for the past 10 years and currently serves in one of the traditional missions organizations. He has previously served as a missionary for one of the groups highlighted in the case studies. He has endeavoured to be objective in this research however some of his own viewpoint, convictions and experiences may surface in the research.

1.6.2. Data Collection

The researcher collected data through in-depth analysis of literature and research data already conducted by others within the scope of the research. With a lot of information on the internet there is a need for careful scrutiny when selecting sources. In order to ensure the results of the research are credible the researcher used mostly reputable journals such as, *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Missiology* , *Conspectus: The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary*, *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi*, *Missiology: An International Review* and many other academic Journals. The researcher also used a number of doctoral thesis' and masters dissertations that

focused on some aspects of the research. A number of books on the various subjects captured in the research were also used.

1.6.3. Limitations of Research

- The main limitation of this research is that the data is not based on primary research. We used secondary data which may be limiting on the results we got. Primary and secondary are the two main methods of data collection. Primary data is when the data is collected for the first time by the researcher. Primary sources include surveys, observations, experiments, questionnaire and personal interviews. This kind of data is very original and is designed for a specific end in mind. On the other hand secondary data is the data that is already collected by other researchers (Choudhary 2020). The reason for choosing to use secondary data was mainly due to the fact that it was extremely difficult to collect primary data from across Africa. The researcher sent through emails to various church groups and mission bodies across Africa but got no positive responses. With no response from the major African sending groups researcher chose to use secondary data, This data was found in books, journals and various internet posts and articles. In order to reduce the error in the data we used mostly recent journal articles by Afrocentric scholars. Various primary data sources were consulted to ensure all the claims made can be corroborated by others.
- The second limitation is that the researcher was not able to sample many groups from the African Para-church structures. There are many of such groups in Africa that are sending missionaries from Africa with some level of success. The main challenge however was that many of them do not have their stories recorded. The researcher would have had to collect primary data in order to use most of their stories. Unfortunately, none of those contacted for data collection gave a positive response to the researcher. Using information from only a few of the much smaller groups would have not given a much bigger picture of what is happening across Africa. This lack of information from para-church mission groups potentially gives an impression that only church groups are involved in missions.

- The last limitation is that the research records stories of mostly African Initiated groups that are involved in missions. What it does not capture is stories of missions participation amongst Mission initiated churches. There has not been much research on that that the researcher is aware of hence their omission in this research.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

- Black: Any dark-skinned person of South African origin.
- Church: An assembly of disciples who know and reflect their identity in Christ expressed through corporate worship and mission (AIM International 2008).
- Cross-Cultural Missions: The carrying of the gospel of Christ to people of a different culture.
- Discipleship: It is a life-long process, whereby a Christian truly seeking Christ voluntarily surrenders his life to the Lord Jesus Christ for a systematic and cumulative learning to become like Christ through the instrumentality of God in various life experiences. Khauoe (2008:5) defines discipleship as:

..the practice of winning people to Christ, and building them up for Christ. A disciple is a person who has accepted Christ as his/her Saviour and Lord, a person who is being taught and trained in the way of living for Christ and serving Him in continuing the process of winning, building and sending (1 Timothy 2: 2). Ultimately, the disciple is being conformed to the image of Christ.
- Evangelical: Evangelicals are “followers of Jesus Christ who generally emphasise 3 main things; a). The Lord Jesus as the sole source of Salvation through faith in him, b). Personal faith and conversion with regeneration by the Holy Spirit, c). Commitment to biblical preaching and evangelism that brings others to faith in Christ” (Joshua Project 2019).

- Mission: According to (Bosch 2011:n.n.) mission refers to the *missio Dei* or God's mission on earth. This mission is to reconcile lost humanity back God (van't Slot 2018:7, Johnstone 1998:12).
- Missions: According to van't Slot (2012:10) missions refers to the carrying out of Jesus' great commission to make all peoples his disciples. As believers embark on this important task of making disciples of all people or nations they are doing missions. This definition is corroborated by Johnstone (1998:12) who defines missions as any activity in which Christians are involved in for world evangelization. This basically means that the activities may be different and of various forms but as long as such activities help advance the task of world evangelization they can be referred to as missions. As Horner (2011:3) notes "missions is not really biblical missions until it strategically and comprehensively embraces a plan to reach all those areas with the message of salvation through Jesus Christ".
- Missionary: According to Fuller (2001:79) a Missionary "is one sent across geographical and/or cultural boundaries to proclaim the Gospel.
- Prosperity Gospel: "as the teaching that believers have a right to the blessings of health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions of faith and the "sowing of seeds" through the faithful payments of tithes and offerings" (Lausanne Theology Working Group).
- Unreached People Groups: "A people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelise the people group without outside help" (www.joshuaproject.net 2019).

1.8. Research Structure

1.8.1. Chapter 1: Introduction

The researcher firstly gives the background of the research, followed by information on its relevance. The problem statement is highlighted together with the aims and objectives of the research.

The central theoretical argument or the hypothesis of the research and the methodological approach employed are discussed. A list of definitions of key words used in the research are noted and the structure of the dissertation briefly discussed.

1.8.2. Chapter 2: A Historical Review of Missions Disengagement amongst Africans

This chapter reviews the historical missiological disengagement amongst evangelicals in Africa. An overview of Christianity in Africa will be given. A few examples of African leaders who played a key role in African Christianity will also be highlighted. The chapter also notes the factors that led to the decline of Christianity in Africa and by extension missions engagement amongst Africans.

A brief history of missions organizations serving in Africa will be noted and their contribution to the growth of Christianity in Africa and their role in killing the African missionary mindset will be discussed. The chapter also discusses the role of slave trade, colonialism and Islam in the crippling of the church in Africa. The main book used in this chapter was Thomas Oden's *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christian*. The book takes us through the journey of discovering the real history of the church in Africa and clearly highlights the role of Africa in shaping Christianity as we know it today.

1.8.3. Chapter 3: Africa Initiated Missions

In Chapter 3 the research looks at some success stories of churches and agencies from Africa that are involved in sending missionaries. The research will give a historical overview of each of the groups and highlight factors that led to their founders establishing the groups. The main issue will be to note that Africa is no longer just a mission field but a mission force that could impact many nations for God.

The chapter will highlight the following groups.

- Calvary Ministries CAPRO, for the story of CAPRO the main book used was Festus Ndukwe's 2019 book, *From Africa to the World: The CAPRO Story*. The book was commissioned by the organization and the editor has been a missionary with the organization for over 20 years.
- The Church of Pentecost, for this story the main book on the church's missions vision is Amos Jimmy Markin's 2019 book, *Transmitting the Spirit of Missions*. The researcher also used Daniel Walker's 2010 doctoral thesis titled, *The Pentecost Fire is Burning: Models of Mission Activities in the Church of Pentecost*. The author is a leading figure in the church and currently serves in the executive leadership of the Church of Pentecost.
- The Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA), for this case study the researcher used Ezekiel Guti's *History of ZAOGA: Forward in Faith: How it Began and Where it is Going*. Ezekiel Guti is the founder of the church and quiet an authority to talk on the church.
- The Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus (EECMY), for this case study the researcher used Temesgen Shibru Galla's 2011 Masters Dissertation titled, *The Mission thinking of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)*. The author is a member of the EECMY and wrote more as an insider.

1.8.4. Chapter 4: Towards An African Mission Normative

In this chapter we take a closer look at key factors noted in Chapter 3 that are essential for missions participation. We will be taking a closer look at the following factors

- Reaching the Lost Prioritized: We will also do an exegetical analysis of Matthew 28:18-20 to highlight how a deep appreciation of the great commission is key in getting churches involved in missions.
- Migrant Africans as missionaries: We will in this part highlight the fact that Africans are able to maximize on migration and use it as a vehicle to go as missionaries. In this section we will also do an analysis of Acts 11:9-21 and Acts 13:1-3 to highlight the biblical basis of ministry by migrants.

- Reaching out a natural expression of Faith: In this section we will highlight that Africans are able to go out into almost any place and make impact by taking the initiative to engage the lost. African churches have been able to copy biblical approaches and have successfully indigenized missions as a natural expression of their faith in God.
- Partnership not Paternalism: In this section we will make suggestions on the need for partnership and the kind of partnerships that will enable Africans to step out there and impact nations for Christ. On the other hand we will highlight the dangers of paternalism and how it kills the African missions creativity.
- Prosperity Gospel Incentivizing Gospel Outreach: In this section we note that associating the gospel to individual prosperity incentivised and practicalized the faith approach. Those in the prosperity gospel are more than willing to take risks and go where other Christians will not be able to. We also note the dangers that come with following this expression of Christianity.

1.8.5. Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

In the final chapter, the main findings of the research are summarised. Recommendations will also be offered for black evangelical church's across South Africa, and all who may be interested in finding a solution to the low missions participation. The chapter will end with recommendations for further research and studies.

2. CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF MISSIONS DISENGAGEMENT AMONGST AFRICANS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the historical missiological disengagement amongst evangelicals in Africa. Disengagement suggests that there was engagement at some point. It may be difficult to fully understand the missional disengagement if we do not highlight when that disengagement happened and what could have caused it.

The chapter will start by looking at the historical overview of Christianity in Africa. We will highlight the fact that the church in Africa has a much bigger history than has been reported. This history of the role of Africans in Christianity as a whole has been concealed and not told and as a result Christianity is understood to be a religion brought by Western colonizers who used it as a strategy to rob, steal and oppress the Africans (Ward 2019).

Key African leaders who played a critical role in the establishment of Christianity as we know it will be briefly discussed and their contributions highlighted. We will also note some of the factors that contributed to the decline of the church in Africa. It was during this season of the African church's decline that Western missionaries came to Africa to reach some parts of Africa that were unreached. The coming of Western missionaries coincided with colonialism. The Western missionary enterprise and its role in colonialism and impact on mission participation will be reviewed.

Today missions still continues but to a very large extent at the exclusion of African believers. We will look at why Africans are still on the side-lines and not at the fore-front of mission's participation. How did the early leaders in Christianity become mere spectators when they should be the leaders and the ones modelling how missions should be done? Where did the Africans get it wrong or should the question be what

hurt the African creativity as far as missions participation is concerned? This chapter will attempt to answer these questions.

2.2. Christianity In Africa: A Historical Overview

Christianity is often referred to as the white man's religion brought to Africa by the Europeans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This classification is a fallacy and a complete distortion of history. An examination of the facts point to a different reality altogether. Christianity as we know it today was largely shaped by the intellectual contributions of early African believers and leaders. Any attempt to study the history of Christianity while ignoring the history of African Christianity makes the history questionable and leaves it wanting (Oden 2007:n.n.).

The cover-up of the history of the church in Africa has led many Africans to be raised to hate Christianity as it was seen as a religion brought by white colonizers in the 19th century. Thus, Christianity is associated with oppression, pain and exploitation that came with the colonization of Africa. As a result of that many have been taught that "to be truly African is to resent Christianity and the West". Malcolm X goes on to state that;

Christianity is the white man's religion. The Holy Bible in the white man's hands and his interpretations of it have been the greatest single ideological weapon for enslaving millions of non-white human beings (Williams II 2019:94)

But what if the truth is that the West is more indebted to Africa than we have been made to believe?

The exclusion of Africa from Christian history will make the biblical salvation story incomplete. Many biblical historical pieces are found here in Africa therefore the African story needs to be told in full so that we can all have a much broader appreciation of all that the Lord has done (Oden 2007:n.n.). Key geographical locations mentioned in the bible are found in Africa and not Europe. Egypt alone has

been mentioned more than hundred times in the bible whilst Ethiopia has been mentioned over forty times. Believing that Africa was just introduced to Christianity by Europeans is a clear neglect of facts that are visible to all (Uskup 2018).

Right from the beginning of Christianity there were Africans who embraced the Christian message and believed in Christ. The bible mentions Apollos of Alexandria and also mentions Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus Christ carry the cross (Fatokun 2005; Oden 2007:n.n.). In the book of Acts Chapter 8, the Bible mentions an Ethiopian Eunuch who had an encounter with God. It is believed that he took the gospel to his people in Africa. He was from the Kingdom of Nubia which is located at the present-day Egypt and Southern Sudan. We also note in the book of Acts 2:9 -11 that on the day of Pentecost there were Jews from Egypt and Cyrene present (Wedepohl 2012:17). The assumption is that some of them must have gotten saved as Peter was delivering his sermon on the day.

Further in the book of Acts when Paul and Barnabas were sent out as missionaries at least one of the leaders in the church in Antioch was from Africa. This man was Lucius of Cyrene. It is also believed that Simeon called Niger (a dark-skinned man) was also African (Acts 13:1). The church in Antioch, which is a key church in the history of the church outside of Jerusalem, had an African as one of the key leaders mentioned in the bible (Wedepohl 2012:19). From the bible we also learn that the gospel only reached Europe later as recorded in Acts Chapter 16. The biblical examples give an indication that Christianity among Africans goes as far back as the beginning of Christianity itself. From the biblically recorded African encounters with the gospel, it is safe to say that Africans were introduced to Christianity way before it reached Europe.

Legend identifies John Mark, the author of the gospel of Mark, as the founder of the church in Alexandria. This is also supported by the BBC¹ who note that Christianity was brought from Jerusalem to Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist from 60 AD and that was before the gospel was taken to Europe. Oden (2007:n.n.) puts the dates of Mark's mission to Alexandria between 47 and 74 AD. The belief that the Alexandria church was planted by Mark is contradicted by some who believe that some

¹ https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section8.shtml

unidentified Jews planted the church. All however agree that Mark was key in the establishment of the church. Alexandria went on to be one of the four key Christian cities (Wedepohl 2012; Fatokun 2005).

The number of Christians in Egypt grew so fast that by 300 AD the bible was translated into the Coptic language. Prior to that, Christian literature was only found in the Greek language. The translation of the bible into the Coptic language helped spread the message of Christianity. By the fourth century there were over eighty church districts each with its own bishop and an Archbishop based in Alexandria (Fatokun 2005:359). Christianity continued to grow and by the fourth century an Ethiopian King, Ezana made Christianity the official religion of his kingdom². In the same period the church in North Africa had over 250 Bishops.

Even though the church was clearly growing, the major challenge in North Africa was that the majority of the church was not indigenized with the exception of the churches in Egypt and Ethiopia. The church was very Roman and the official language used in all literature was Latin (Fatokun 2005:360). The failure to have the bible translated into local languages and the gospel message contextualized made it difficult for the local Berber people to fully embrace it. Christianity ended up being a religion of mostly the Roman elites (Wedepohl 2012:21). As majorly elitist as it was in some parts of North Africa the church continued to grow but at a slower pace than in Egypt and Ethiopia.

That withstanding Oden (2007:n.n.) notes that:

Africa is not a non-Christian continent today, nor was it in the nineteenth or fifteenth centuries, nor in the fifth century. For no time in the last two thousand years has the Christian witness been absent from the African matrix of cultures. God has not left himself without witness.

2.2.1. Missional Influence of African Church Fathers

² https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section8.shtml

As clearly noted above Christianity in Africa was not founded with the help or involvement of Europeans but it rather goes back to the mission of the early Apostles (Van der Merwe 2016:562). It is impossible to separate the story of Christianity from the history of the church in Africa. The earliest theologians such as Augustine of Hippo, Origen and Athanasius of Alexandria were Africans and so were the earliest Christian communities (Ward 2019).

The clear neglect of the contribution of African fathers and scholars to the Christian theological formations leaves Africa without a sense of distinguished intellectual competency. History shows that it was Africa that provided leadership and intellectual contribution to most of Europe in the early years of Christianity (Oden 2007:n.n.). There is therefore a need to unlock this history and tell it to many Africans so that the African accomplishments can be noted, celebrated and hopefully emulated by young African scholars (Oden 2007:n.n.).

Below are stories of four of the most influential Africans who played a key role in the shaping of Christianity as we know it. Their intellectual and academic capabilities were well sort after in their times but what has often been hidden from us is that these men were African. These men have been regarded as either Greek or Roman and not African. The wrong telling of their story has robbed us of the pride and confidence of knowing how deep Christianity runs in Africa (Oden: 2007:n.n.).

Tertullian: He was born in Carthage in North Africa and was one of the most influential early Christian leaders. He is well known for his theological writings and his apologetics work against Gnosticism. He is also known for being the first to introduce words like 'New Testament' and was the first person to use the word "Trinity" in writing arguing that God exists as one "substance" in three different persons (Ward 2019).

Origen of Alexandria: Origen was born in Alexandria to Christian parents. He was appointed the head of the Didaskaleion in 203 AD. It was under his leadership that the school reached its peak. He was only 18 when he was pointed to the position of head of the institute and he went on to become the 'father of theology'. He became one of the first leaders to attempt to write Christian doctrine. He wrote more than 6000 commentaries on the bible (Olivier & Madise 2014:10). Origen's writing set a stage for

much later theological works by others. He also wrote a lot against many ancient heresies (Ward 2019). Origen was also a well sought after teacher travelling across Europe and parts of Asia to teach (Oden 2007:n.n.).

Athanasius of Alexandria: He was the Bishop of Alexandria and led the church at one of the most difficult times. As a theologian his most famous work was on the incarnation. He argued that if Jesus was not fully the Son of God then he could not redeem humanity. He also resisted teachings by one Arius who argued that Jesus was a created being rather than the son of God. His position and opposition to Arius' teachings got him exiled a number of times and was persecuted a lot by Roman emperors who supported Arius. The Council of Nicaea in 325 AD stated his teachings as Christian doctrine (Ward 2019).

Augustine of Hippo: he is probably the most popular of early African Christian theologians. He was born around 354 AD. His family is believed to have been converted to Christianity for at-least a generation before he was born. He was a native of Carthage. His mixed racial background made his African lineage to be questioned a lot with many believing that since his name was Roman sounding, he was therefore not African. His popular autobiography *The Confessions* highlights his conversion and his teachings (Oden 2007:n.n.). It is worth noting that Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk and his life and teaching greatly impacted by that of Augustine (Snell 2014).

The Catechetical School in Alexandria was the centre for academic excellence. The theological writings, mostly originating from the school, have played a huge role in shaping theology. The Catechetical School (The *Didaskaleion*) is credited with being the first to develop a system of Christian theology. The school is also credited with developing the allegorical method of bible exegesis. The school could be said to have been the first theological university in the world. Therefore, Africa could be referred to as the 'mother of theology and Rome the daughter'. (Olivier & Madise 2014:9-10).

2.2.2. What Crippled the Church?

The fact that the bible was not translated into local languages in most of North Africa made the church very vulnerable. The gospel never took root as the indigenous people

could not easily connect with a God who spoke a foreign language. As a result of the failure to translate the bible into local Berber languages when the Arabs invaded North Africa around 640 AD most of the region was Islamized. The only church that survived was the Egyptian and Ethiopian churches because they had scripture in their own language (Wedepohl 2012:21).

The Nubian church was also able to resist Islam because the gospel was largely contextualized, and indigenization was achieved. This continued until 1504 when they were overcome by the influence of Islam. From the experiences of North Africa, it is clear that the church in Ethiopia and Egypt survived majorly because indigenization was achieved, as a result of that they were able to resist Islam and the church in the places is still growing till today (Fatokun 2005:362).

2.2.3. European Outreach Mission to Africa

What has been repeatedly told is that Christianity cannot be said to be traditionally from Africa as it was only brought to Africa by Europeans. However, as Oden (2007:n.n.) rightly asks if twenty centuries of presence do not make a religion traditional then how do we define tradition? How long should a religion be practiced before it can be considered traditional? Akey (2016) defines tradition as the passing down of beliefs, traditions and customs from one generation to another. Based on this definition it may be accurate to say that Christianity is traditionally African.

As already noted in this research the spread of Christianity in Africa was slowed down at some point. By the time European missionaries came there were much fewer Christians than was the case before the 7th century. Considering the circumstances then, the Europeans refused to acknowledge the Christian heritage of Africa as it was hard to reconcile that with the fact that most of Africa at that time was not Christian (Reddie 2007). This sounds rather rational, but it clearly was peddled by people with a very limited understanding of the African situation. Africa is huge and diverse and a missionary going to Point A of Africa may have concluded the circumstances are the same in Point B and C. The question will therefore be, was that claim by European missionaries based on research or their limited experience and exposure? Evidence shows that by the time the Europeans came to Africa there was a thriving church

especially in Ethiopia and Egypt. So, the European position was clearly not based on proper research on their part (Fatokun 2005:363).

The Europeans were therefore unjustified in calling Africa the dark continent because as noted there was a thriving church in Africa during the time they came. Fatokun (2005:363) claims that the classification of Africa as a dark continent came from frustrated European explorers who could not penetrate Africa due to the harsh conditions and the lack of development that could help facilitate their travels. The question will be, how is lack of infrastructure a sign that the gospel has not penetrated a place?

The first recorded attempts by Europeans to engage the Africans were in the 15th century. The initiative was aimed at reaching out to West Africa and that initiative was spearheaded by the Portuguese. The Portuguese were subsequently given the monopoly to appoint Catholic clergy and missionaries in West Africa. This became a strategic way they started reaching out to Africans. Every trading ship by the Portuguese also carried missionaries and the first church was planted in Elmina (Gold Coast) in 1482 (Fatokun 2005:364). By the 15th century the church in Africa had been existing for hundreds of years. Believing the Europeans were the first to bring the gospel to Africa is clearly unfounded and misinformed.

2.3. Silencing Of The Church Through Islamic Invasion And Slave Trade

2.3.1. Islamic Invasions of Africa

In 632 AD North Africa was invaded by Arabs. Egypt was the first to be taken over by the invaders. From Egypt, Islam spread in three ways, across the Nile river towards the Sudan, through the Red sea to the eastern coastlines and across the Sahara to the Maghrib. In the process of these Islamic invasions Christians populations slowly disappeared in the most parts of North Africa. The Coptic Egyptians however survived in small numbers and were reduced to a minority (around 15%) but still remain till today (Shakur 2014). The Nubian Christians managed to resist Islamization for six

centuries but lost ground to the Muslims in the twelfth century. The Ethiopians were able to resist the Islamic advances and remained a Christian state. This was mainly due to the fact that Muslims were denied the right to own land and were excluded from influential positions in government (Levtzion & Pouwels 2000)

With most Christian communities pushed out Muslims dominated trade in North Africa. Political dominance was also considered to be the same as being a Muslim. Conversion to Islam became a pre-requisite for participation in commerce. Conversion also meant an even wider access to goods and credit (Levtzion & Pouwels (2000). Due to the difficulty in accessing trade and credit for non-Muslims it is believed that some converted to Islam or at-least pretended to be for trade purposes (Cartwright 2019).

The Islamic preachers often followed the merchants and their focus was mainly aimed at local rulers. This was a strategic move aimed at using leaders as enforcers of Islam in their communities. Muslim clerics also used natural disasters as way to gain trust with the community leaders. They provided social relief in times of disasters and in the process, they won the hearts of the leaders who were key in winning their communities to Islam (Cartwright 2019).

With many African communities practicing African traditional religion which almost always had very feared ancestral powers it was difficult for them to embrace Islam. The fear was that if they accepted Islam they might be hurt by the fetish. The strategy of Islamic clerics was therefore then for Muslim clerics to offer services similar to those of African traditional priests. This strategically placed these clerics within the socio-political systems of the communities (Levtzion & Pouwels (2000). This strategies by Muslim Clerics ensured that Islam found its way into the fabrics of many African communities. Soon many countries in North Africa were declared Islamic nations and Christianity forbidden.

2.3.2. Slave Trade

Slavery was first tried in Iraq from 869 AD and was later on exploited in other places of the world (M'bokolo 1998). The Arabs for the most part were the ones controlling

slave trade and were instrumental in institutionalizing it. By the time most Europeans came to Africa they mostly concluded slave trade was a huge part of the African continent (Reddie 2007).

The early European explorers themselves used the bible as the highest book on all matters. Their favourite scriptural reference was found in Genesis 9:24–27. The scripture notes that Ham was cursed for seeing his father's nakedness. One of the descendants of Ham is Cush and the Cushite's are known to be from North Africa. The Europeans then interpreted the scripture to mean that as Africans were descendants of Ham, they could be slaves. That was their main justification for owning African slaves (Reddie 2007; M'bokolo 1998).

2.3.2.1. Impact of Slavery

Many Africans were exported as slaves to many parts of the world. In the process some of Africa's best sons and daughters were taken in the millions to help build Europe, America and many Muslim countries in the East. Slave trade affected Africans quite significantly as it paved the way for Colonialism and many other ills suffered later on like apartheid and racism (M'bokolo 1998).

Christianity was later used as an excuse for slavery. The excuse given was often that as Africans were taken as slaves, they had a better chance of getting the gospel. Taking non-Christians as slaves was seen as something to their benefit as they were the heathen now having a chance to become Christians.³ The reality was that there was very little evangelization happening (amongst slaves) at that time so enslaving people for the sole role of evangelization was just an excuse peddled by those who were pursuing their money-making schemes. The slaves were coerced to submit to the harsh treatment of slave owners, since that is what the slave owners claimed the bible recommended for them to do (Reddie 2007). The belief was that Christianity made Africans very submissive slaves.

³ <https://www.pbs.org/thisfarbyfaith/print/journey1.html>

The fact that the bible does not clearly criticize slavery has been used a way to further exert slavery on Africans. Reddie (2007) notes that the fact that Paul's New Testament letters failed to condemn slavery but just encouraged slave owners to treat them fairly is not very helpful. The Old Testament texts also tend to criticize slavery in some instances and not slavery in general. The seeming silence of the bible on the subject meant that even Christians were involved in slave trade.

Slavery became a well-established market that even gave others permits to trade on humans. Many African chiefs and leaders became complicit in the trade as they were deceived to believe they could benefit from the trade by sending some of their own as slaves. The African leaders were often given rifles in exchange for many sent into slavery. The rifles were seen as the best of what the chiefs could get in exchange for their subjects sent into slavery (M'bokolo 1998).

Many Christians did not see any conflict in being slave owners and slave traders. The bible was their greatest defence for that and was used to support their actions (Siliezar 2019). At the height of slavery many who practiced it saw slaves as part of their personal property. Those who could afford a slave had a right to own one (M'bokolo 1998). How then do Africans embrace the very religion that was used to enslave them? By the time the African liberation movements came Christianity was shunned and Marxism embraced. Christianity was seen as the evil used by Europeans to exploit, use and degrade many Africans and therefore needed to be rejected.

2.4. Colonial Impact on The African Church

Colonialism is when an external force imposes itself over another nation. This process leads to exploitation of the occupied country⁴. When Africa was colonised Africans had no right to negotiate anything. There was no negotiation of terms and conditions of occupation. What is therefore clear is that colonialism was an illegal occupation of

⁴ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

African nations by richer, military stronger Western nations for the purpose of exploitation (Okon 2014:193).

2.4.1. Impact of Colonialism and Apartheid

The focus of missions has shifted from the Global North to the Global South. This has been happening for many years now. Despite these clear changes and shifts colonialism still exists at a very large scale. This is frustrating all good intentions to see more liberation and ultimate freedom from colonialism. It is also impacting missions participation across Africa. It has caused such a slow change in missions thinking and practice.

2.4.2. The West Still Setting the Agenda for Missions

The question of who sets the missions agenda has been debated a lot. Even though there are debates around it, facts point to the conclusion that Africans do not set the agenda for missions. This sentiment is shared by among others Kgatle (2017:6) who shares on the Apostolic Faith Mission Church (AFM). He notes that the church had a missions committee for the black part of the church. 50% of the members of this black missions committee were white and every decision taken by the committee had to be approved by the white executive council. The minority white people made decisions for the majority black people in the church. This meant that if a decision not in the best interest of the black people was taken by the white executive it could not be reversed (Kgatle 2017:6). The Apostolic Faith Mission church (AFM) was established by American missionaries in 1907. All executive positions in the church were only reserved for the Western missionaries and the black South Africans were not allowed to be in any leadership structures of the church (Kgatle 2017:1).

One might even ask why they should bother to have a committee that had no power to make their own decisions. It must have been such a hard thing making decisions that may just be overturned by the executive that had no black people in. There is no

how such a committee could be said to be setting the agenda for missions. This is further indicated by the fact that with time the whites in the AFM church further exerted their influence and control over the black people. Only white people were allowed to hold important positions in missions. The result of this was that only a handful of blacks were involved in missions. They had no authority to set any agenda and had to embrace whatever the whites considered as right for them (Kgatle 2017:6).

The West still set the agenda for missions despite the fact that they have become the minority. They are still able to set the agenda mostly because of their financial might. With the majority of the Global South missionaries coming from poorer nations with much smaller resources this is easy to achieve (Van der Water 2015:11). We do note that in any setting there are always the rich and the poor. What is needful is for measures to be put in place to avoid a situation where one calls the shots simply because he has deeper pockets. Unless such measures are put in place there is a risk of financial dependency and paternalism which is unhealthy (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:389).

Missions agenda often takes the shape of whoever is setting it. Therefore, the fact that the minority are setting the agenda means that missions becomes either unattractive or just impossible for the ones who are in the majority who did not get to set the agenda. The context of those who set the missions agenda go a long way in shaping how the agenda will look like. The fact that the location of the headquarters of main mission and church bodies are still in the West works against any well intended efforts by the leadership in the Global South to set what van der Water (2015:11) calls the agenda for post-colonial mission. As long as the headquarters are in the West, the West and those within that context will continue to set the mission agenda that will inevitably take the shape of their context.

There is therefore a need for recognition and acknowledgement that mission is no longer a sole occupation of passionate and zealous “white men” who want to civilize the “heathen world”. Mission needs to become more non-western in outlook if we are going to finish the task of taking the gospel to all nations. For us to be able to see

missions becoming more non-western a lot of drastic steps need to be taken to ensure that happens. Top in that list is to purge missions of arrogant attitudes, colonial means and intimidating methods of Western missionaries. Purging missions of all these will really go a long way in ensuring we have a more inclusive mission that will help enhance the mandate to evangelise the world (Clarke 2014:197-201).

Henry (2011:123) brings in another angle to the debate on the impact of colonialism on missions today. He notes that Africa has experienced so many coups post colonialism and as a result of that many nations in Africa are very unstable and are struggling financially. As a result a good number of African nations are themselves dependent on foreign aid to run their affairs and poverty is the order of the day. In these situations, missions is never at the core of what they think about as their number one goal is survival. Even though that is the case many African Initiated Churches (AIC's) have continued to grow with very little income. This a clear example to Mission Initiated Churches (MIC's) that there is no need to be financially dependent on the West in order to successfully plant churches (Henry 2011:124).

Colonialism is a constant hindrance in Africans going out and developing their means of doing missions and planting churches. The continued dependence on the West takes away the African creativity and opportunity to create means to send and establish churches among the unreached. As long as Africans continue to be seen as 'kids' needing guidance and provision by Western missionaries they will never grow and take responsibility.

2.4.2.1. Africans as Objects of Mission

Africa has been the centre of missions engagements for over two centuries. Many missionaries came to Africa when it was considered a dark continent and laboured until Christianity was established. This was not an easy exercise as many Western missionaries died trying to bring the gospel here. Though many died trying to bring the gospel to Africa that was not a deterrent as many more came and paid the price to

ensure the task of evangelizing Africans is completed. Today Africa looks totally different from what it looked like two centuries ago. There is a thriving church and Africa boasts of over 182 million evangelicals (Operation World 2020). One would think Africa particularly Sub Saharan Africa should no longer be seen as an object of mission but rather a subject of mission. But has that changed? Is Africa seen in a different light considering the clear growth that has happened over the last 2 centuries?

When Western Missionaries came to Africa to bring the gospel, they also imposed their ways on the African people. The Africans had no input to the gospel message and were always seen only as receivers. Nothing they had was considered a worthy addition to the gospel message. They were not seen as those that can play a role in missions but those that have to be reached. They never seem to graduate from being receivers of the gospel to taking a more leading role in sharing the gospel with the lost. The West believed they had the best things to offer and that included everything from the model for church and the sharing of the gospel. The impact of these impositions by Western missionaries was that the Africans lost confidence in what they possessed and started believing that they had no contribution to make (Kighoma 2019).

As a consequence, they put all their confidence in the Western missionary methods and resources. This took away the creativity, solidarity and material possessions the Africans could have used for World Evangelization. They started believing that they did not have that which was needed to fulfil the call of God to take the gospel to the nations. This painfully paralysed efforts that would have made a phenomenal difference in World Missions (Kighoma 2019).

In the AFM church the white minority made it even clearer by being the ones making all the major decisions at the exclusion of the black majority. The message such actions sent was that the Westerners were the most qualified and the only ones with the prerogative to make decisions for the less important and qualified blacks. The most interesting thing was that the Westerners were also appointed to oversee churches started by black pastors. Due to the fact that only whites were in the executive leadership of the church, decisions were made on behalf of the black pastors. Black people were not even considered members of the church and only considered to be

adherents. This was the case until 1991. The system was designed in such a way that it promoted monopoly of the minority group over the majority (Kgatle 2017:1).

In 1909 it was decided that the overseer over the blacks or “natives” as they were called will be white. All these practices perpetuated by missionaries and passed down to the local white South Africans created a deep problem in the Apostolic Faith Mission church. The result was that Apartheid became a poison that paralysed black leaders who may have had any call of God in their lives. It is even inconceivable that any black missionaries would have been sent out by the church as missionaries. Such sending would have had to be approved by the minority white executive (Kgatle 2017:3).

Over the last few decades there has been a clear vision to reject and to purge mission of all the colonial means in order to enhance the mandate to evangelise the world (Clarke 2014:201). But will such efforts bare any fruit when the majority in missions circles are still from the West? Well, that will be the beginning of the change of tides when Africans take their rightful place in missions as leaders and not as spectators and mere followers.

2.4.2.2. Use of Money as a Strategy for Control

Dependency on external financial support has been highlighted as one of the major challenges in South Africa and by extension Africa. This dependency has been a stumbling block in ensuring that Africans become owners and leaders in the missions discourse. This unhealthy problem was caused by Western missionaries who brought in resources from outside Africa and in the process failed to empower Africans to find ways of raising their own resources. All this could have come from a good place of not wanting to give the Africans a huge burden of raising money. At the same time, it could have been a strategy to ensure control and power over Africans (Duncan 2018:370). Left unchecked money has the power to be the one that sets the agenda for missions. The one that controls the purse inevitably also ends up setting the agenda of all that the mission is all about (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:389).

Getting Africans dependent on the Westerners has certainly become a way of ensuring ongoing control by Western missionaries. The opposite of dependence is independence. Getting Africans to be independent would have meant that the Western missionaries needed to step back and allow Africans to set the agenda and execute such with no interference. From all the available data it seems there has been very little efforts made to ensure that happened.

Paternalism continues to raise its head especially in missions organizations. As long as Africans do not find a solution to the money issues Paternalism will continue to thrive and establish itself in mission (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:389). Paternalism has certainly become a hindrance and a stumbling block in Africans being masters and leaders in the missions discourse. Even if one has a clear destination in mind it is almost impossible to reach that destination if they do not have the requisite resources to make that a reality. So, when you are travelling on someone else's vehicle they are free to make as many detours as they want and your opinion does not really count much. Part of Africans rising above colonialism is owning the missions discourse and taking charge. If that does not happen, they will continue to be followers.

2.4.2.3. Africans Not Ready

The biggest excuse given by Western missionaries on why they are still taking the lead on mission is that Africans are not ready. That lack of "readiness" amongst Africans means that Western Missionaries continue to call the shots and set the agenda for missions (Duncan 2018:371). The issue of lack of readiness has been thrown around a lot. Anderson (2001:155) writes about the resistance he faced from missionaries in Africa Inland Mission (AIM) when he suggested they needed to hand over their schools and hospitals to Africans. The response from the Western missionaries in charge was always that the Africans were not ready, and it will take long before they were. What was interesting to note however was that most Africans were running schools and hospitals successfully all across Kenya but somehow, they were not fit or ready to run institutions established by Western missionaries. These same attitudes have ensured that Africans remained in the background of everything with their Western counterparts running the show and deciding on what they see as the best thing to do. At the very

best Africans have become stooges who simply take instructions from their Western masters.

In 1898 some Africans seized to be part of the Free Church of Scotland as a protest at the way Africans were treated. They protested at the huge disparity between the stipends of black and white Missionaries. They also protested against control of money and domination by Western missionaries (Duncan 2018:372). This did not stop the Western missionaries from their attitudes towards Africans as later on in 1923 when the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa had their first general Assembly a Western missionary was appointed as their Moderator. This was despite the fact that by that time it had been over 50 years since the ordination of the first black minister (Duncan 2018:372). It is a real wonder how a people could not still lead themselves after 50 years of being in ministry. This is definitely one of the major impediments to missions participation among black evangelicals. Many African leaders must have believed they are not good enough to lead or set any missions agenda.

2.4.3. African Voicelessness in Missions

It is not a secret that Africans are very voiceless as far as missions is concerned. For the longest time Africans have been on the side-lines only as objects of mission and not as subjects and authorities in missions. There are a few things that have rendered Africans voiceless in missions and they will be outlined below.

2.4.3.1. Voicelessness As A Result of Inferiority Complex

It is difficult for one to contribute in a conversation when they are in the same room with people, they consider more superior than them. This could also be because they have been bullied in some way by the dominating group and hence the inability to express themselves. That being noted, people become voiceless when the people in the room are intimidating to them (Kritzinger 2012:234-235). The reality is that many Africans as a result of colonialism and apartheid were raised to believe that the Westerners were better than them. No wonder it will be difficulty for most to express

themselves in a room with the very same people they were raised to believe are superior over them.

2.4.3.2. Voicelessness Could Be Because Of Apathy

People tend to be busy pursuing their dreams and goals and often don't feel responsible for missions. Missions participation is often seen as a field they are not qualified to participate in and would rather devote their energy to things they feel competent to do. Voicelessness in this case comes from the lack of sympathy towards the plight of other people. Missions passion often grows out of a sense of sympathy towards the plight of those without the gospel. When one does not feel that it is difficult for them to move to a place of active participation (Kritzinger 2012:235). Could be it that that apathy flows also from a lack of intimacy with Christ? As Henry Martyn once said "The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become".

2.4.3.3. Voicelessness Because of Paternalism

One of the very thorny issues has always been money. Duncan (2013:53) highlights that money is a representation of power and control. Whoever controls the money has the final say in almost all matters. Issues of finances have caused a lot of tensions between Africans and their Western missionary counterparts. On many occasions money has become a tool for power and control instead of serving as a means to liberate the people of God. Money which has a potential to be a blessing became the very vice that has divided and continues to divide Africans and their Western missionary counterparts (Duncan 2013:54).

In light of the above it is evident that one of the errors of the early missions movements was the sense of dependency that was created by the missionaries. Instead of empowering Africans to utilise whatever resources they had for missions they brought in resources from outside and covered all the costs (Duncan 2013:54). This open-handedness of the Western missionaries crippled Africans and totally made them dependent on the Western missionary benevolence and generosity. In the process the African missionary lost his voice. Africans did not get the chance to find ways to create

means through which they can support the work of ministry. It seems rather inconceivable that one would be consumed with finding a solution to a problem they are not experiencing. With many African missionaries paid from the West they wouldn't bother trying to find home grown solutions to missionary support.

Writing about the Bantu Presbyterian church in South Africa, Duncan (2013:61) states that black ministers were denied most of the privileges enjoyed by their white colleagues and often felt undervalued. They were paid way lower than their white colleagues even though they had the same job descriptions and, in some cases, had more workload. In the church only the white missionaries could make decisions concerning money. The black ministers were unable to speak out against such injustices because of the financial benefits they got from the Western missionaries. Had they raised their voices they would have risked losing the money they got from the missionaries. Losing the finances would have forced them to find their own ways of being funded or perhaps even forced some of them out of ministry. His factors highlighted above are some of the ways through which Africans have been rendered voiceless.

2.5. A History of Mission Organizations Operating In Africa

When Jesus recruited his first disciples, he seemed to have ignored all the things mission agencies pay attention to today. He had no plan for medical insurance, retirement packages or even basic accommodation planned for those men who were leaving all to follow him. The men were also not the typical dream team gathered around with a task as huge as evangelizing the whole world. How then did this clearly poorly supported, theologically wanting and socially unattractive disciples start a movement that turned the world up-side down? What is very clear is that Jesus' dream team of early disciples could not make the criteria for acceptance into many of the mission organizations in the world today. However as poorly qualified as they, they became the very vessels God used to start a movement that has impacted billions of people across the globe (Bonk 1989:428).

The question one may ask is how is the missions movement in our time similar or different from the first missions movement as recorded in the bible? History shows that the 19th century missions enterprise in Africa was rather different from the early missions movement. Whereas the first missions movement was often opposed by the rulers of the day the 19th century movement had the support and blessing of the rulers. It was very much connected to colonialism. Missionaries came to Africa alongside European traders and colonial administrators. They had a three-phase mission to introduce commerce, civilization and Christianity to Africa (Okon 2014:198).

It is the connection between missionary work and Western colonialization and imperialism that brings a lot of questions on the integrity and motive of the Western missionaries in the 19th century. Some have called mission work “imperialism at prayer” (Sanneh 1998:88). Some like Emmanuel Ayendele (1968 cited in Okon 2014:199) described missionary work as the “spiritual wing of secular imperialism”. The early missionaries are also credited with hurting the African self-esteem. Anything that is inherently African was also seen as unimportant and not worth following (Okon 2014:205). This was a clear colonial way of thinking and assessing things and it clearly rubbed well on the missionaries.

The suspicion of the early missionary motives is not helped by a letter attributed to King Leopold II of Belgium. In the letter the King gives the missionaries instructions to twist the bible to suppress, divide and rule over Africans. The letter instructs the missionaries to use the women for labour and not compensate for such labour rendered (Nobles and Okoro 2005). Instructions are also given to tax the Africans and use the money to build business empires. Any differing voice by Africans was to be quashed and silenced and the missionary hailed and praised. The African man was to remain poor and scripture was well used to ensure that happens. The King called for the Africans to be taught to read but not to reason. The African intellect was therefore to be suppressed so they can continue to serve the missionaries without any question or revolt (Nobles and Okoro 2005). These are sad realities of the 19th and 20th century mission enterprise in Africa.

It is however worth noting that the church in Africa owes a lot to the sacrifices of many early missionaries. Many of those early missionaries died whilst bringing the gospel to Africa and their contribution needs to be highlighted and celebrated (Okon 2014:206). Below the researcher does a historical overview of one of the earliest missionary sending agencies to come to Africa, the Africa Inland Mission (AIM).

2.5.1. Africa Inland Mission (AIM)

AIM is a missions sending organization founded in 1895 by Peter Cameron Scott. It was founded in Pennsylvania in the United States of America. The vision was spurred by an experience the founder had whilst visiting the grave of David Livingstone in Westminster Abbey in England. There he found an inscription from John 10 verse 16 that challenged him to come to Africa and reach the African peoples who were still unreached with the gospel inland Africa (Anderson 1994:17; Karanja 2009:8). AIM's vision from her inception was to engage Africans who were not yet touched with the gospel deep in the inlands. The first crop of missionaries led by Peter Scott left New York on the 17th of August 1895 with a brief stop in England to get a few more people to join that party on its way to Africa. The missionary party landed in the Mombasa coast on the 27th of October 1895 (Young III 2017:35). From Mombasa they started their journey inland on the 12th of November 1895 (Anderson 1994:20; Young III 2017:35).

Interestingly enough from Mombasa, Peter Scott was escorted by a group of 250 Africans who carried the missionaries' luggage and offered security (Anderson 1994: 20). Certainly not a humble and quiet way of entering a new place. Their coming was facilitated by the colonial government that ensured this group of British and American citizens were well looked after. The missionaries shortly established themselves in Kenya and started working. Peter Scott's life was however cut short as on the 4th of December 1896 he died from haematuria. He had been in Africa for just over a year at the time of his death (Young III 2017:35).

The organization has grown significantly from those early days. This year (2020) it celebrates 125 years of reaching the African peoples with the gospel. However, 125 years later less than 5% of her missionaries are of African origin. In 1943, AIM formally started the Africa Inland Church (AIC) in East Africa and has gone on to be one of the largest denominations in Kenya (Young III:2017:1). The question then is if the AIC has been in existence for more than 75 years why is it that its founding agency AIM has not taken some of the church members as missionaries in their fold? If the AIC is the largest denomination in East Africa why is it that not reflected by the number of missionaries serving in AIM today?

In the history of AIM in Africa many breakaway churches were started by Africans in protest to the way the AIM Missionaries were doing things. The earliest protests were about AIM's position on female circumcision. Her rejection of the female circumcision and the expulsion of those that embrace it from AIM churches created lots of tension between the AIM missionaries and African believers (Prill 2019:85). The other hostile issue was AIM's policy on education. AIM was accused of using schools as a platform to spread the gospel and not doing enough to educate the local Kenyans. The Kenyans demanded that AIM put together proper curriculums that were educating and empowering to the locals or leave their communities. AIM's schools did not have curriculums that were very educational but they rather focused on literacy and sharing the gospel with the people. This led the African communities where they were working to the conclusion that the missionaries were not making any difference in their lives. The missionaries resisted any pressure to start proper schools and repeatedly said they came to Africa to preach and not teach. With the backing and support of the colonial government they managed to stay put and continue preaching. The result of such positions by AIM led many people to leave AIM Churches. Some of those who left founded independent churches that also started schools to educate their own people (Young III 2017:43-46).

AIM experienced a lot of growth between 1895 and 1938 and spread from Kenya to Tanzania, the Congo, Uganda and parts of the French Equatorial Africa. In 1918 the then leader of AIM, Charles Hurlburt saw the need for AIM to handover her work in

Kenya to African leaders. That move was severely opposed by many members in AIM who felt there was still a need for the churches to be strengthened and educated. Even though many were against that Hurlburt went on to relocate the headquarters of AIM from Kenya to the Congo. All that created more tension forcing Hurlburt to resign from the mission in 1925. With his resignation the plan to handover the work to Africans was abandoned (Young III 2017:38).

In the 1930's out of the over 100 churches AIM planted in Kenya 90% of them were a direct result of the work of African Evangelists (Young III 2017:42). If only 10% of the churches planted in Kenya were planted by Western missionaries that meant the Africans were very capable of running their own affairs. Why then did AIM not hand over the churches to a people that were clearly very competent and able to do ministry? This lack of trust in the African leaders crippled a great opportunity for an indigenous African mission movement to rise and thrive. The perpetual control of Africans by Western missionaries, a clear colonial mentality hurt Africans significantly. What happened with the Africa Inland Church was a wasted opportunity for a massive African indigenous missions movement to be born.

In the late 1960's there was much pressure from the AIC for AIM and the church to merge but AIM had her own concerns. AIM was willing to handover the churches to the AIC as long as it retained control of missionaries, mission money, missionary housing, a hospital, a missionary kid's school and a guest house. The AIC also demanded that all the missionaries needed to submit to their leadership and that made AIM uncomfortable (Young III 2017:38). With the missionaries not willing to work under the Africans it made it impossible for the Africans and Westerners to work as a unit.

It is clear that the Westerners were only comfortable being the leaders and overseers over the Africans but were unwilling to return the same courtesy and serve under the leadership of Africans (Young III 2017:210). The Western missionaries always believed they were better than the Africans and that could have been the main source of difficulty in submitting to African leadership. The conviction that their cultures and

customs were matchless compared to Africans was instilled, preached and believed by Western missionaries (Prill 2019:82).

Paternalism amongst Western missionaries who thought they had all the answers to the challenges they faced with the AIC Church was noted as one of the key challenges (Young III 2017:38). Over and above that missionaries were also accused of being colonial agents charged with displacing African indigenous culture and facilitating the political and economic colonization of Africans (Prill 2019:81). Whether that was true or not the cosy relationship between Western missionaries and the colonial officials left very little room for speculation.

Paternalism undermined the process of raising a potentially strong missionary force from Africa. The Western missionary insistence on combining their culture with the gospel message became a huge impediment in building a culturally relevant and independent church. The culture of dependency created a feeling of inferiority amongst African believers and impeded the development of authentically African expressions of missions (Prill 2019:85). It is therefore now incumbent on African believers to find their own missions expressions and run with them.

2.5.2. Sending Strategies

In 1792 William Carey and a few other people formed the Baptist Missionary Society. That was the start of modern-day missions as we know it. Since then hundreds of mission organizations have been started and serve across the world. Some of the most well-known are WEC, AIM, SIM, OM and YWAM. All these agencies have been able to gain and develop some expertise in doing missions over the years. As a result of that they are able to be the feet of churches. Churches that do not have the capacity to send missionaries are able to send some of their members through the agencies.

Even though Africa has received so many missionaries over the last 200 years very few churches and agencies seem to have an idea on how best to approach the task of funding. Majority of the missionaries that have come to Africa have been from the West. Almost all of them come already funded from their home countries and come to serve Africans at no cost. This is honourable and commendable as they come as servants of the people and giving their all to ensure that Africans get the gospel. As a result of their selfless service many Africans have been reached, schools, clinics, bible institutions and universities built all at the cost of the Western missionaries and those that funded them.

In spite of the unquestionable success in reaching out to Africans with the gospel Western missionaries failed to model giving to the Africans they were reaching. Many found it difficult to teach on generosity when they were privileged in so many ways (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:390). Perhaps teaching about giving required the missionaries to model it to those they were teaching to. But what will that look like? It would have probably required them to give more because they would have been giving from a place of privilege. The African believers never knew where the missionary got his money from. The missionary never lacked and, on many occasions, the few Africans that went into ministry were paid by the Western missionary.

How then do Africans find a solution when they never knew how the Western missionary paid his way? What model do churches and agencies in Africa follow when they do not have a successful African model they could emulate? These are difficult questions that are not easy to answer. In the next chapters the researcher will look at some successful African Indigenous solutions to the African missionary sending problem. That withstanding African mission organizations need to create structures that enable Africans to not only go but that foster an atmosphere where they can thrive in reaching the unreached. This should be structures that will also help the African missionaries find their voice and to be masters of their own destiny (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:391).

There is a need to highlight that the ultimate provider for funds to do missions is God. The mission belongs to him and it is therefore his job to ensure that those who go are provided for. Even though most money in missions stills comes from the West it is not the Westerners that are providing and enabling missions. God has used a lot of churches and individuals from the West to provide but he wants all believers to partake in this holy and wonderful task of supporting his mission. It is a job of both the rich and poor and not just the rich. For those who will support his mission it is a privilege for them to partner with God in His global mission to reconcile men back to himself (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:402-403).

Below we will look at two different strategies that have been used by mission agencies to send and fund missionaries.

2.5.2.1. Denominational Funding

The first was through church denominations that not only send but also financially support missionaries. One of the biggest such denominations in the world today is the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist. Today the IMB supports over 5000 missionaries from the United States of America serving all across the world in various capacities. The IMB has what is known as the Cooperative Program which is a fund that Southern Baptist churches give into and the money is then used to support missionaries (Horner 2011:14). The IMB is able to send quite a good number of missionaries out mainly because of their numerical strength as they have over 44,000 churches affiliated to Southern Baptists. (Horner 2011:21). In this case individual missionaries do not have to raise any funds as the church carries all that burden through the Cooperative fund. The system has worked since 1846 when they sent their first missionary.

This as wonderful as it is, poses a huge challenge to many African believers who may want to pursue a career in missions. How are African missionaries coming from the efforts of IMB missionaries in Africa supported and sent? Do they need to raise support? If they are required to raise support how can the IMB missionaries model

support raising when they have no experience in raising support? If they give Africans salaries how do they do that in a without creating dependency and paternalism? How do they also ensure that that is sustainable even when the IMB missionaries have long left the field?

In some cases, as is the case with the Central Baptist Churches in Central Africa local evangelists and missionaries were taught to embrace poverty and discouraged from pursuing anything that could make them materialistic. They were to devote themselves to the work of God and in return they were given clothes to wear, food to eat and a house to live in. With the missionaries giving the leaders all that they needed for survival, the locals were excluded from paying the price for the gospel to get to them. They were not required to fundraise, so they went expecting food, clothing and shelter from the Western missionaries. Where and how those were sourced was not the African leaders' concern. Their job was to focus on sharing the gospel and their Western missionary counterparts where to worry about the rest (Kighoma 2019). All this meant that these ministries were never funded locally and thereby rendering them unsustainable. The African ministers were dependent on their western counterparts. When the Western missionaries leave, they often leave with their finances. The result is that the African leaders are left vulnerable and without resources to do any ministry. Many as a consequence of that are forced to quit ministry and find other ways of providing for their families.

In South Africa which is considered relatively wealthier than most African countries missions giving is still low among black evangelicals. Khauoe (2008:154) interviewed a number of churches on giving to missions and they gave various reason why they could not give. One of the main reasons given was that the churches claimed that their monthly budgets do not allow them to give anything to missions as they already have obligations to pay their pastor and cover other church expenses. The priority is in this case supporting the local ministry that church members can relate with as opposed to supporting a ministry in faraway places. Can this method of sending missionaries by denominations be replicated in Africa today? If can be replicated what shape will it take? We hope to look at that in the following chapters.

2.5.2.2. Support Raising or Partnership Development

The other way missionaries are supported is through their friends and families. The missionary meets the people and solicits for support for his/her intended mission. The friends and family will then send the missionary some funds normally through the missionary sending agency. What made this method successful in the past was that most of those who went as missionaries were from the middle class in the West. That was very helpful in getting the missionaries their needed support. There were however a few who came from very poor families and did not have the backing of well to do families. Those who came from poor families struggled to get their support together in time and some were forced to leave the field because they did not have the funds to do ministry (Kighoma 2019). This method of sending is very dependent on having a community that has the resources to support such endeavours. The community must also have a clear picture of what missions is all about and be convinced it is something worth investing on. It will be hard to use such a model in many parts of Africa that are struggling with poverty. However, one may ask a question on the biblical basis of such a model. Is there any biblical foundation for the model that seem to extract one person from their community of faith to work with a para-church agency and yet be supported by individuals and the very same community of faith they were extracted from?

2.6. Impact On African Involvement In Missions

The many things that happened in the past have limited the Africans ability and zest to be involved in Missions. This is exemplified by the story of Samuel Ajayi Crowther a Yoruba leader who was captured by Muslims as a teenager. He was sold to the Portuguese as a slave but rescued by the British and sent to Freetown, Sierra Leon as a freed slave. He got converted and went on to be ordained as a Minister in the Anglican Church. He went on to be appointed the first African Bishop something that was opposed by many Western missionaries. He however had a very successful ministry among many African groups including his people the Yorubas and the Hausa people (Wedepohl 2012:32). Crowther was however forced to resign his position as

the Bishop of the Niger due to racial tensions he faced at the hands of the Western missionaries (Barnes 2018).

When Crowther died in 1891, he was replaced by a European as a Bishop of the Anglican. This clear lack of confidence on the African people by the Western missionaries was a step backwards and a lost opportunity to encourage African missionary participation. The belief that Africans can only participate in missions when they have a Western boss crippled the confidence of many Africans. Had the Western missionaries believed in the African missionaries, encouraged them and created platforms for them to serve in missions the story would have been different. The mistrust, lack of confidence and clear lack of intentionality on the part of the Westerners hindered the Africans from spreading out as missionaries (Wedepohl 2012: 33).

The other case is that of the Free Church of Scotland in South Africa that has already been discussed in this chapter. The fact that even after more than 50 years of having an ordained black minister a Western missionary was appointed the moderator of the black side of the church. The continued lack of confidence in local leadership did not create an environment where the Africans could spread out and go out with the gospel (Duncan 2018: 372). The result has been a real handicap in the desire to see Africans going as missionaries. Racism, colonialism, apartheid and slave trade hurt and hindered what would have been a thriving missionary movement from Africa.

2.7. Summary

We have noted through this research the history of the church in Africa. Christian history has been told mostly from a Western perspective and Africans only noted as the beneficiaries of the Western missionary endeavours. In this chapter we have seen the clear contributions of African leaders and we have noted how Christianity as we know it was mostly crafted here in Africa. The church has grown, and a lot has

happened in Africa since then. The church in Africa is currently the fastest growing church in the world (Center for the Study of Global Christianity 2013:9).

The African church has grown in spite of the many pains of the past that were afflicted on her. There is no question that slave trade, colonialism and apartheid hurt the African people deeply. Africans have in their strength been able to overcome all those pains of the past and keep growing. We must acknowledge that this growth was also to a very large extent due to the Western missionaries that later on came to evangelize many other parts of Africa. They paid huge prices and their efforts bore much fruit.

The Gordon Cornwell Theological Seminary's Center for Global Christianity estimates that there are currently 630, 644, 000 Christians in Africa today (2013:9). The Operation World estimates that out of those Christians at-least 182 million of them are evangelicals (Operation World 2020). This is a phenomenal growth considering where the church in Africa was just a century ago. The question that however keeps lingering is what is the African church doing with such a huge blessing of a thriving church and a very young continent? God is calling the African church to step out and do more in reaching the lost with the gospel.

The church of Christ in Africa needs to be encouraged to rewrite history by sending many more missionaries to the ends of the earth. In 1900 Christianity in Africa was only 9.8% of the entire population. Today those figures are a staggering 49.3% we have a lot to praise the Lord for (Center for the Study of Global Christianity 2013:9). The call to make disciples of all nations is still very binding to the current crop of African believers as it was to the early church, the African church fathers and the Western missionaries that came to Africa. Africa has the numbers and the strength and God is calling the African church to take a leap of faith and send missionaries. God is calling his church in Africa to find her ways of doing missions and step out in faith and disciple all nations for his glory.

3. CHAPTER THREE: AFRICA INITIATED MISSIONS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter takes a look at what is currently happening in Africa as far as missions participation is concerned. The researcher used the four-phase model of missiological research to structure his research (Gilbert 2016:27). In this phase we will gather success stories of Africans that are doing missions. The focus is to discover if there is a trend and a similarity across the successful missional groups under review. That should help us get a much broader picture of the various factors necessary for any church or organization in Africa to be successful in sending missionaries. The profiled groups represent organizations that are involved in missions with significant success. The highlighted church groups and organizations are taken from the different regions of Sub Saharan Africa in order to be as representative as we can be. We will profile church groups from West Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa. These are churches that have been found to be large in size, very missional in outlook and are making a significant impact in world missions. The largest African Indigenous mission sending agency Calvary Ministries – CAPRO is discussed here as an African indigenous missions success story. From the case studies we will highlight that Africans can play a more leading role in missions.

The researcher was unable to find a thriving missional church in Central Africa to discuss in the paper but believes the samples utilized here are representative of realities in that context as well. The only church that would have met the criterion of a thriving missional church is the Central Baptist Church of Central Africa (CBCA), however the researcher has not found enough data to profile the church. It is possible that there are other churches in Central Africa with a very strong missions focus but at the time of the research the researcher was not aware of such.

The case studies will focus on the four main areas. They will focus on the historical background of the church groups, their missions engagement strategy, their financial

policy and will lastly look at factors responsible for the growth of the church or mission group.

The researcher will highlight factors responsible for the success of the groups and consider what informed and inspired the different groups' participation in the mission of God. For decades colonial Africa was perceived to be a mission field and as a result it attracted missionaries from many Western nations, but the Africa of today is totally different from the colonial Africa. She has a thriving and growing church with over half a billion Africans calling themselves Christians. Africa has more Christians than any other continent in the world today (Center for the Study of Global Christianity 2013:9). Estimations are that by 2050 Africa will have more Christians than Latin America and Europe combined (Johnson et al. 2017:2).

The main focus of this chapter is to point out that Africans can be creative and do missions. We will also highlight that Africans are as equally capable of playing an active role in missions just like their Western counterparts. We will note that the most successful groups seem to be more aligned to the prosperity gospel than any other expression of Christianity. The challenge that comes with that status quo will also be discussed. African Pentecostals seem to be more eager and passionate to reach the lost with the gospel. The impact of that has been that many Pentecostals have been able to go to various parts of the world preaching the gospel. Majority of this Pentecostals ride on the wave of migration and use it as a vehicle to enable their outreach. We will in this chapter also highlight the role of migration in missions sending in Africa.

With many Africans going to various places as migrants they have been able to carry the Christian message as well. The proponents of the Prosperity gospel teach their followers that every migrant should be a missionary carrying the goodness of Christ to places where he may not yet be worshipped (Hanciles 2009:105). Migration is therefore a platform through which the gospel is being proclaimed to many people who are yet unengaged and unreached. Migration has revolutionised missions as sending missionaries through the traditionally Western ways can be rather slow. The candidate missionaries spend a lot of time raising the requisite resources to go as missionaries.

With migration many can go without having to raise any funds as they are able to use their professions, business and even student status as a platform for outreach.

We will end the chapter by highlighting that though there are clearly many Africans that are involved in missions, their engagement is but a drop in the ocean in comparison to the potential that is in the African church. The African church has a much greater capacity and needed resources to be the largest missions sending force in the world. Operation World states that the number of evangelical believers in Africa is over 182 million (2020). With all that God has blessed the African church with why is that Africans are not going as much as they should? The groups that are going out as missionaries are mostly migrant Pentecostals. What are African Pentecostals doing right that the rest of the church in Africa can learn from? What inspires these African Pentecostals to go all out and serve God across the nations? We will attempt to answer these questions in this chapter.

3.2. Africans Doing Missions

3.2.1. Case Study 1: The Calvary Ministries - CAPRO Story

3.2.1.1. Historical Background

Calvary Ministries (popularly known as CAPRO because of their original name Calvary Productions) started as a spontaneous outreach to the Muslims of Northern Nigeria in 1975 (Adeliyi 2020:2). It started as a short-term outreach to Zaria City by a group of young evangelists. Today CAPRO has grown to become an international interdenominational missions Agency with over 700 missionaries from 26 countries working across 35 countries (Adeliyi 2020:2). The CAPRO story is often compared to the bible story of the mustard seed. It is a story of very small beginnings that have turned out to be a huge vehicle God is using to impact many lives of those still unreached and untouched with the gospel. CAPRO started as what may be called a Nigerian affair but has now become a movement that has proven that Africans can also do missions well⁵.

⁵ <http://capromissions.org/history/>

The CAPRO story cannot be told without mentioning one Sidney Granville Elton popularly known as Pa Elton who was a British missionary serving in Nigeria (Habib 2014:62; Kalu 2008:91). Pa Elton travelled across Nigeria encouraging and challenging particularly young Nigerians to consider giving their lives to the task of missions. He sounded the clarion call of missions among university students in the Christian majority of the Nigerian South and challenged them to consider relocating to the Muslim North with the Gospel. He boldly told Nigerian believers that the task of evangelizing Nigeria had been handed over to them (Abodunde 2016:n.n.; Ndukwe 2019:11).

At the time of CAPRO's birth Nigeria was experiencing a spiritual revival that swept through university campuses and Christian fellowships. The revival led many to yearn for more of God and many young Nigerians were fired up with a passion to share the gospel across their nation. Pa Elton was key in training and resourcing many of those evangelists to go and plant churches across Nigeria (Habib 2014:65; Abodunde 2016:n.n.; Ndukwe 2019:9; Burgess 2008:155).

Pa Elton continued to constantly state that the days of the white missionary were finished. His attitude towards Africans facilitated the beginning of CAPRO, that was started by some of Pa Elton's disciples (Abodunde 2016:n.n.). God used Pa Elton to impart vision for mission, to mentor those who started CAPRO and also used him a lot through resourcing this young missionary leaders (Ndukwe 2019:12).

When we examine the CAPRO story we realize that there are two main factors that played a huge role in the birthing of CAPRO. The first is the introduction of the one-year National Youth service by the government of Nigeria. The second is the evangelical crusade hosted in the city of Zaria on the 25th of December in 1974. Below we discuss how this two have shaped CAPRO as we know it today.

The National Youth Service Corps: In 1973 the government of Nigeria started a program that became a key vehicle that God used to take the gospel to the northern

parts of Nigeria. This initiative by the Nigerian government led to the establishment of the leading African missionary sending organization. The government launched the National Youth Service Corps scheme as a response to the polarization of ethnic groups as a result of the Nigerian civil war that happened between 1967 and 1970. Young graduates from the Southern parts of Nigeria were sent to serve in the Northern parts of Nigeria for a year (Okegbile 2018).

Among those who responded to the call to go North were young men like Peter Ozodo and Bayo Famonure who were the leading figures in the establishment of CAPRO (Kalu 2008:132; Ndukwe 2019:16). This decision by the government of Nigeria was seen as a fulfilment of Pa Elton's prophecy of many years before. He had given a prophetic word that the government of Nigeria will pay Nigerian youths to preach the gospel where the need is greater (Ndukwe 2019:15). The National Christian Corpers Fellowship records the exact words of the prophecy as follows, "A time would come when the Nigerian Government would pay the Nigerian youth to preach the gospel in all nooks and crannies of the country"⁶.

Zaria Outreach: Whilst in the north of Nigeria some of the young people organized a Gospel campaign on the 25th of December 1974 in Zaria City. Zaria was one of the key Islamic cities in Nigeria and doing such a campaign was at best a suicide mission. The campaign was preceded by 4 months of fasting by the group of young people. They started fasting in August and continued until the crusade in December 1974. Even though preaching the gospel was forbidden in the city the young people's permission to hold their evangelical crusade was miraculously approved. The crusade was set in front of the Emir Palace (Okegbile 2018; Ndukwe 2019:28). A young fellow preached that day and made an alter call for those who wanted to receive Jesus as their Lord and saviour. However, as some Muslims responded to the call many others started throwing stones at the group. The group ran out of the city bleeding, but God had birthed a vision that was to shake face of global missions (Olofinjana 2011:120; Azumah & Sanneh 162; Ndukwe 2019:31;).

⁶ <http://nccfilesa.blogspot.com/p/about-us.html>

The group met after the happenings of the Christmas day gospel campaign and decided to start a ministry that will focus on reaching the Muslims in the North of Nigeria with the Gospel. They called that ministry Calvary Productions (CAPRO), this they said was the vision to produce men just as Christ did. They desired to produce 'Calvary' kind of disciples in their ministry efforts and quests. On the 25th of April 1975 this vision was commissioned, and the organization formally started (Ndukwe 2019:39; Adogame. et al, 2008:175).

3.2.1.2. CAPRO Missions Engagement Strategy

CAPRO sent her first missionaries out of Nigeria to Senegal and the Gambia in the 1980's. In the Gambia this sending was done in partnership with the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade - WEC (Kalu 2008:132). By 1987 CAPRO's work had expanded to other places like Niger Republic and Guinea Conakry. By the 1990's CAPRO had spread her wings to places as far as Southern Africa (Adogame *et al* 2008:175).

One of the strengths of CAPRO has been said to be her training school. The school was established in 1981 in Jos, Nigeria and is believed to be the first missionary training school in West Africa. The school equips people for cross cultural missions with a very strong discipleship focus. Their motto is 'training to die' and trainees are taught and encouraged to be ready to make sacrifices for the sake of Christ. This training is a compulsory for every one that wants to be sent out as a missionary through CAPRO. This is a yearlong training (Harley 1995:11-12).

3.2.1.3. CAPRO Financial Policy

In designing her policies CAPRO was influenced a lot by WEC International. They adopted what they called 'living by faith' as a principle for sustenance for the missionaries and the mission (Adeliyi 2020:3). Living by faith means that every missionary in CAPRO is not remunerated and has to trust God for the needed

resources for life and ministry. Prior to the decision to adopt a faith policy they had tried various ways to finance the work and all of those failing. One of the things they tried was putting all staff on salaries but that was hard to sustain as they did not have abundance of money. The result was that they failed to pay the missionaries their salaries on many occasions.

It was also easy for the early missionaries to live in community and share everything but as the ministry grew that proved difficult to sustain. Prayer was and still is considered the key to finding the resources needed for life and ministry (Ndukwe 2019:102-105). God is seen as the source of provision for all the missionaries needs. They believe a lot in the words credited to Hudson Taylor that, “God’s work done in God’s way will not lack God’s supply” (Taylor & Taylor 1995:42). The reasoning is that since the work they are doing belongs to God therefore they needed to trust in him for provision (Adeliyi 2020:5; Ndukwe 2019:329).

How CAPRO has been able to attract over 700 missionaries from across 26 countries without a salary and no clearly defined financial policy is a mystery. Today CAPRO personnel are involved in ministry amongst 100 previously unreached people groups that are now being engaged with the Gospel⁷. The fact that so many have been enlisted as CAPRO missionaries means their financial policy must be working (Oyebamiji 2012:211).

3.2.1.4. CAPRO Growth Factors

In the formative year’s recruitment in CAPRO was done through the teaching and preaching ministries of some of their pioneer leaders. These leaders criss-crossed Nigeria, visiting churches and universities alike. As the missionaries shared their stories and challenged believers on missions many more signed up and joined the new bandwagon of African missionaries. Later they managed to organize their

⁷ <https://caprosa.org.za/about/>

recruitment processes by starting what they call Mobilizing offices. These offices are tasked with liaising with churches and university Christian fellowships. The missionary mobilizers visit churches to teach and share on the needs of the missionaries and the agency in the different places where they are working (Ndukwe 2019:212). As this missions mobilizers engage churches and share stories of what God is doing through CAPRO missionaries many are being added to their numbers.

CAPRO is certainly one of the amazing stories ever to come out of Africa. CAPRO is a rising mission, impacting lives and reaching out to the unreached people groups across the world today. The fact that the story behind CAPRO is entirely African is such an encouragement. Africans are very capable and able to set their own agenda, own their craft and be mighty vessels in the hand of God.

3.2.2. Case Study Number 2: The Church of Pentecost

3.2.2.1. Historical Background

The Church of Pentecost (CoP) is a Pentecostal church headquartered in Ghana. The church was established through the collaborative efforts of an Irish missionary James McKeown and his African counterpart Peter Newman Anim (Onyinah 2004:218-219). Peter Anim was a Presbyterian minister who got dissatisfied with his church for what he said was their lack of fervency in the Spirit. This dissatisfaction led him to start a prayer group. The prayer group had some personal experiences they termed baptism in the Holy Spirit. These baptisms became very popular and the result was that the group grew in numbers. More of such groups were started across Ghana. As the groups grew, they were eventually incorporated into a church in 1932 (Markin 2019:51-52; Walker 2010:81).

Peter Anim's group developed a partnership with the British Apostolic Church and in 1936 they requested that the church send them a missionary. It was this request that resulted in James McKeown being sent to Ghana as a missionary in 1937 (Onyinah 2004:219). This was however not an easy collaboration as there was a huge disagreement between the missionary and the local African leaders on doctrinal

issues. The main contention was on the issue of faith. The African believers believed in divine healing and basically discouraged the use of medicine whereas James McKeown believed in the use of both faith and medicine. This disagreement was very hostile as the Africans saw the use of medicine as a sign of lack of faith in God (Markin 2019:53; Walker 2010:67). The issue came to light when McKeown contracted Malaria and was very ill. He was later admitted into a hospital which greatly disappointed the Africans that were confident God will heal him miraculously (Wyllie 1974:114). This doctrinal issue broke the union of McKeown and Anim and a partnership that was so promising (Nyanni 2014:58). Anim broke away from the CoP (then known as the Apostolic Church) and started his own church group (Wyllie 1974:116).

Since its establishment the CoP has grown to be a vibrant Pentecostal church with a strong missions vision (Markin 2019:1). The CoP was established, governed and is funded by African believers (Markin 2019:16). By December of 2016 the CoP had churches in 91 countries across the world and a total of 18 426 congregations. These congregations are led by 112 347 lay leaders and only 1995 clergy men. Only 61 clergy serve as missionaries outside of Ghana. This means that the church's growth can be linked to their ability to utilize lay believers in their church planting and mission work (Markin 2019:4; Anim 2019:137).

3.2.2.2. The CoP Mission Engagement Strategy

The CoP has a grassroots missions model. For the most the church's missions strategy has been based on the activities of the church members at the grassroots level (Onyinah 2004:228). The model has been likened to that of the early church in that members are mostly moving around and planting churches without much orientation or even the financial backing of the church. From its formation until 1994 this is how the church grew and expanded. In 1994 the church came up with a clearly defined strategy for missions engagement. This clarification of vision came as a necessity as the church's missional involvement was growing and there was a need to have a structure to channel all the efforts of church members who were planting churches all over the world (Walker 2010:24). The following is the church's mission statement:

The Church of Pentecost is a worldwide, non-profit-making Pentecostal church with its headquarters in Accra, Ghana. It exists to bring all people everywhere to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the gospel, the planting of churches and the equipping of believers for every God-glorifying service. It demonstrates the love of God through the provision of social services in partnership with governments, communities and other like-minded organizations.⁸

The CoP's missions praxis can be referred to as from everyone to everyone. This suggests that the model involves all people at all levels. It is not a top down system of missions participation but could be referred to as mission from below (Walker 2010:26). The church encourages the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers as advocated for in the bible (1 Pet 2:4-10). All church members are therefore encouraged to contribute their time, resources and giftings for the growth of the church and the furtherance of the kingdom of God (Norton 2015:74).

In 1991 the church officially established the International Missions Directorate whose sole purpose is to oversee the church's missions thrusts. The Directorate is also responsible for promoting missions in the CoP (Onyinah 2004:229). Prior to the establishment of the directorate the church had only opened about 13 mission stations in Africa, the USA and Europe over a 42 year period. The church however experienced an exponential growth once the directorate was established. By the end of 1996 the church had 23 new mission stations all started over a period of 5 years. This does suggest that the establishment of the directorate helped push the missions mandate in the church (Norton 2015:72).

Over and above the establishment of the missions directorate there are other factors that led to the growth in the church's mission focus. The main thing was the growth in migration experienced during the same period. Ghana was going through an economic

⁸ The Church of Pentecost Home Page, www.thechurchofpentecost.com

downturn that forced many Ghanaians to leave the country (Onyinah 2004:217). As they left Ghana and settled in other countries across the world they established churches in the diaspora. We note that majority of this accidental missionaries may never have planted churches had it not been for the economic hardships in their country. The establishment of the directorate also helped give missional direction to the members as they migrated. The direction and encouragement of the directorate helped challenge many of the members to plant churches (Walker 2010:125).

The missions strategy is divided in a number of ways as indicated by Walker (2010:79-256). These are local mission model, regional mission model, emigrational mission model, reverse mission model and reflex mission model. Below the researcher gives a brief overview of each of them;

Local Mission Model: Those who got converted to Christianity through the ministry of the CoP were put through a series of prayers and season of fasting seeking for baptism in the Holy Spirit. Once they were baptised in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues a house fellowship will then be established in their home. In this case the only prerequisite to be part of the mission was baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit is believed to be the power of missions hence the need for those who are involved in any form of mission to be fully immersed in the Holy Spirit before embarking on such an endeavour (Walker 2010:79).

This house fellowships almost always lead to the formation of new church plants. It is worth noting that such initiatives were not led by church leaders but rather by normal church members. This buttresses the fact that the CoP has a grassroots missions strategy and not a top down strategy. There is also a lot of emphasis on healing, and the workings of the Holy Spirit (Nyanni 2014:63). This house fellowships are said to have experienced a lot of miraculous works and healings. It is said that in the CoP the

emphasis is not only in knowing Christ as the Saviour but also as the healer (Walker 2010:79-86).

It is the healing that made the CoP very popular at the very beginning. Nyanni (2014:63) notes that around 1933 over 75% of the Ghanaian population had no access to health care. The fact that the church highlighted divine healing made it very popular with those who were desperate to experience healing. Many who came to the church testified that they experienced some healing in the church. Even today that is how the church keep growing through promises of healings and miracles to those who are yearning for such.

Regional Mission Model: Regional missions model involves taking the gospel to neighbouring countries. As members of the church travel to neighbouring countries for work and business they are encouraged to share the gospel. As people accept Christ the church members will then start small groups for fellowship (Norton 2015:73). The home church where the members who preached came from will then be contacted to send leaders to take care of the group. Once the leaders are sent from Ghana the small group fellowship gets established as a church. The church beliefs that by planting churches through this model they are following in the example of the early church as recorded in the bible. It is through this model of doing missions that the church spread from Ghana to many of the neighbouring countries. Majority of the members in the churches planted through this model are indigenes of those nations (Walker 2010:152).

Emigrational Mission Model: The migration model differs with the regional missions model in that it targets migrants. This focuses a lot more on Ghanaian migrants in Europe and the United States of America. Ghanaian migrant workers start house fellowships in their homes from which churches are planted. As the church grows it attracts migrants from other African countries who find it easy to connect with other

Africans. It is worth noting that the churches have grown so strong such that almost all their church planted through this model has some of those migrants as leaders. This is as opposed to the regional model where after a church is established leaders are requested from Ghana to come and lead the church plants (Walker 2010:177-178).

In Europe less than 2% of church members in this migrant churches are non-Africans and usually those non Africans are married to African believers (Walker 2010:177-178). In the case of the United States of America about 5.5% of the church members in the CoP churches there are non-Ghanaian (Norton 2015:74). The church beliefs that having the Ghanaians as the majority in their church plants as a solid foundation upon which they will be able to engage their host nations. They believe that the second and third generations of Ghanaians will be better placed to engage their host cultures. This is because as they are born in their culture they will find it much easier to engage with the host nations that their parents who were born outside that culture (Norton 2015:74).

Reverse Mission Model: Unlike the other models in this model the structure is top down. The director of missions identifies a nation for evangelization and church planting. This mission is normally focused on Europe and the USA. This is so because the two nations were key in reaching out to some parts of Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries. Once the nation has been identified the missions director arranges for a research trip. That is organized to ascertain as to the viability of the mission to start a church in that particular country. Once that is a done an identified missionary is sent to do some further scouting. In this trip the missionary registers the church, gets a house and a church hall is rented. Once this is done a resident missionary is properly sent to start the work and establish a church. (Walker 2010:247).

Reflex Mission Model: In this model a foreign national gets exposed to the gospel in the diaspora. Once that person gets saved and encounters the gospel he goes back

to his country of birth. As the person goes back to their passport country they start sharing the gospel with their own people. Through this process they start a church in their home country. This is done in liaison with the church in the foreign country (normally in Africa). This is as opposed to the other model where the immigrant settles into his host nation and starts a church (Walker 2010:256). The church has used this model to plant churches in Latin America, Eastern Europe and Asia. In this model there is a direct link between the new church plant and the CoP headquarters as the Missions Director offers oversight over the church plant.

The strength of this strategy is in that not all such initiatives are started by an African. The story of one James Raj is a typical example of how the CoP has successfully planted churches using this model. In 1994, James Raj, an Indian, relocated to Ghana as an employee of a Pharmaceutical company for 3 years. Whilst in Ghana he became a member of the CoP. When he went back to India he became a representative of the CoP and started planting churches under the denomination. By 2002 the CoP had 22 churches across India and had even started outreach to neighbouring Nepal (Hanciles 2009:107).

From the discussion of the different models the CoP uses for missions it is clear that the church rides on the wave of migration. Migration trends have become a huge blessing and a means through which churches are being planted and people reached.

3.2.2.3. The CoP Financial Policy

In the CoP there is so much teaching on tithing and giving. There is also a lot of emphasis on the church being self-sufficient. The architects of the church discouraged receiving foreign aid to fund the church operations as they said that created dependency. The CoP has been able to grow a lot without Western funding. The church advocates for a self-supporting model for funding their work. They are fully

dependent on their own local economies for supporting the work. The self-supporting model is credited for helping grow the church as the church members are taught at a very early stage that it is their responsibility to finance the ministry (Darko & Atterbury 2018:36). The church members give sacrificially to finance their church planting and ministry efforts. The giving is very connected to the church's eschatological teachings that highlights that Christ is coming soon. As he is coming soon, they are willing to give sacrificially and not hold on to material things. They believe heaven is their true home and therefore they do not need to accumulate material possessions here on earth (Walker 2010:103-104).

This model though very successful in richer nations where the CoP is working is not very successful in many African nations that are struggling with poverty. Many African mission thrusts are supported from the monthly missions donations, a yearly McKeown missions fund and donations from individuals. Most of the missions funding comes from Ghana and is often very small and not able to cover all the needs of missionaries working across Africa. The result of the limited resources has been that most Indigenous leaders are underfunded and barely have enough (Darko & Atterbury 2018:36). The CoP's funding structures seem to be working very well in Ghana but as Darko & Atterbury (2018:37) note failing elsewhere in Africa.

The CoP has proven to us that Africans can actually do missions with a clear and directed passion. Africans have the resources to be major players in missions and not just mere spectators.

3.2.2.4. CoP Growth Factors

The greatest growth factor for the CoP has been migration. The lifestyle of most people in West Africa is filled with migration and that has been the greatest factor in the spread of the CoP. The formation of ECOWAS a regional integration group for West Africa was key in helping facilitate the growth of the church in the region. ECOWAS facilitated the free movement of people from one country to the other for trade and other things making it easy for the church to spread even as the people traversed from one part of the region to the other (Walker 2010:163). As African believers migrate to other parts

of the world, they carry the gospel, their beliefs and ideas with them (Markin 2019:6). The fact that the church had African roots and promoted African leadership made it very popular even in the diaspora (Markin 2019:17).

The grassroots approach to missions has also been very key in ensuring the gospel gets out quickly. The members are willing to go without being sent, preach the gospel to the lost and establish churches without the supervision of any church leadership. This according to Kärkkäinen (2002) is very characteristic of Pentecostalism which embodies aggressiveness, boldness and participation of all believers.

The other factor credited for the growth of the church is said to be the power of the Holy Spirit. The manifestation of the power of God through healings and miracles is also credited with the rapid growth of the church.

3.2.3. Case Study 3: Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA) or Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI)

3.2.3.1. Historical Background

The ZAOGA was founded by Ezekiel Guti in the early 1960's. The founding group had been expelled from the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) church. The reason for the expulsion of Guti was because the missionaries did not want him to preach as they feared he could take over the mission because of his charisma. His reluctance to listen to the white missionaries got him and a few others expelled from the church. The group of young people later joined the Assemblies of God church (Dube 2017:1; Katsvere 2014:12-13). The relationship with the Assemblies of God also did not work forcing them to leave in 1967. It was after they had left the Assemblies of God that the ZAOGA church was founded. This history of the church is however omitted from the official history of the church as narrated by Ezekiel Guti. Even though it is omitted by the church and its founder it is believed to be a huge part of the church's history (Dube 2017:1; Nhumburudzi & Kurebwa 2018).

The founder Ezekiel Guti, claims the ministry was founded on the 12th of May 1960 when he preached his first message under a tree in Bindura, Zimbabwe (Dube 2017:1; Guti 2017:nn). The church is internationally known as the Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI) and currently has a presence in more than 125 countries across the globe (Nhumburudzi & Kurebwa 2018). ZAOGA is the third largest church in Zimbabwe (Katsvere 2014:12)

One of the key distinguishing features of the church is found in its leadership appointments. Leadership appointments are taken very seriously. No one can be appointed a leader in the church unless they are saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Guti 2004:n.n.). The church constitution gives the Overseer Apostle Ezekiel sole power to appoint leaders over different sections of the church. The Founder is also given absolute power over the operations of the church (Nhumburudzi & Kurebwa 2018; Katsvere 2014:).

3.2.3.2. ZAOGA Missions Engagement Strategy

Outreach is embedded in the foundational doctrines of ZAOGA and has been a huge part of the church from inception. Various outreach programs were introduced by the church over the years and have gone on to shape the church as we know it today. The church has ministries targeting various sections of society. Others are aimed at prisoners, others the unemployed, others those in business and others the working class. One of the most popular is what started as a lunch hour ministry. This was a ministry started in 1968 targeting people in the marketplace. The aim was to convert those in the marketplace to Christianity through organized lunch hour preaching sessions. The results of the outreach were that many got converted including people in business who later on financed the church's missions programs. Due to the success of the program it was eventually registered as a separate wing of the church and renamed African Christian Business Fellowship - ACBF (Katsvere 2014:16).

The establishment of the Ezekiel television station in 2005 has been instrumental in connecting the ZAOGA members in the diaspora to their home church in Zimbabwe. Through the television station the members in the diaspora feel they are connected to their home and their leader on a consistent basis. However, the downside to that is

that the television has promoted the founder to celebrity status as he is hallowed by the church members. The channel is sustained by a \$2 monthly donation by members who want to receive blessings from the founder. The television station has thus become central in the church's fundraising and outreach drive (Biri 2014:159).

3.2.3.3. ZAOGA Financial Policy

The church emphasis' the use of tithes for self-reliance. The churches planted in the diaspora are able to be self-supporting because of that. The members in the new church plants in the diaspora are also trained on financial management by leaders from their home office in Zimbabwe (Dube 2017:5). Most of the teachings on giving and tithing are based on Ezekiel Guti's experiences whilst studying in Dallas, Texas. It is these experiences abroad that also shape the church's theology of missions and migration (Biri 2014:146).

One of the most popular practices of the church is what is known as the "school of talents. Through the initiative the women in the church are encouraged to be enterprising and start businesses. This is a practice meant to discourage laziness and encourage hard work amongst members. The proceeds from the businesses are used for personal effects or given to the church (Biri 2014:146).

Those in the diaspora are also encouraged to continue contributing their 'talents' to serve the church. Because of the believers in the diaspora the church has been able to continue prospering even in the midst of harsh economic times that Zimbabwe experienced over the last decade. In the same period of economic crunch, the church built a hospital, a university and many schools across Zimbabwe. The church is able to ensure that even those in the diaspora adhere to the church doctrines. That is done through their teachings that are entrenched into the very fabric of the church (Biri 2014:147).

3.2.3.4. ZAOGA Growth Factors

Migration has been key in spreading the church to other lands. The ZAOGA branches in Britain were planted as early as 1986. The church currently has presence in over

100 countries and that happened mainly due to migration. The largest number of the ZAOGA churches are found in South Africa due to the high number of Zimbabwean migrants in the country (Dube 2017:2). It is worth noting that even though the ZAOGA church has spread quiet widely majority of its members are still Zimbabweans (Chereni 2010:8).

The members of the church living in the diaspora are encouraged to start bible study groups in their homes. They are also encouraged to see themselves as tent makers and like the Apostle Paul, on a mission much greater than being economic migrants. As a result of the encouragements and teachings majority of the ZAOGA churches in the diaspora started as bible study groups in homes and grew to become churches. Once a church emerges a pastor is sent from the headquarters in Zimbabwe to oversee it. This is a way of maintaining control of the church by the home leadership in Zimbabwe (Biri 2014:147).

The growth of the church is also highly linked to the profile of the founder. The church has successfully used the media to promote the founder and in turn grow the church's appeal. The church has grown to be one of the largest transnational movements to come from Southern Africa (Chereni 2010:8).

3.2.4. Case Study 4: The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)

3.2.4.1. Historical Background

The history of the EECMY can be traced back to 1634 when Peter Heyling a German Lutheran missionary arrived in Ethiopia. He went to Ethiopia to work alongside the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC). He was very instrumental in laying a foundation for later missionary work across the country (Deressa 2014:200). From the beginning the intention of these Western missionaries (from the Lutheran mission) was to serve alongside the EOC and aide them in their ministries (Endalew 2015:16). However, as many people became Christians there were difficulties in cooperation between the new believers and the EOC. This difficulty in cooperation led the missionaries to see the need to establish a denominational church (Bulaka 2015:127). The lack of cooperation was coupled with persecution of evangelical believers by the EOC and the government

of Ethiopia (Endalew 2015:16). Evangelical believers were excommunicated from the EOC. These evangelical believers were also denied baptisms and burial by the EOC and the government.

The other reason that led to the establishment of the EECMY was a decision by the Lutheran World Federation that required Lutheran missionaries to establish indigenous Lutheran churches in the mission field. Lutheran missionaries had established different churches across the country and all these churches were brought together to form the EECMY on the 21st of January 1959 (Bulaka 2015:127; Galla 2011:8; Endalew 2015:17). The church is therefore a result of missional efforts of indigenous and Western missionaries.

It is worth noting that unlike most cases in Africa where Western missionaries struggled to work well with locals the EECMY story is a very encouraging one. The Western missionaries and the local Ethiopian believers had a very good partnership. This partnership was premised on love and mutual respect. Their companionship and comradeship led to many people receiving the gospel. Even more people were delivered from poverty through the many poverty eradication programs that came through the partnership. Many clinics were also built ensuring that many who would have otherwise not had access to medical care had access to it. This Western-Ethiopian partnership has enhanced the growth of the kingdom of God across East Africa (Deressa 2014:202).

The EECMY is the fastest growing Lutheran church in the world with membership of way over 6 million (Bulaka 2015:127; Endalew 2015:33). The church has more than 10,000 congregations spread across Ethiopia and organized in 24 synods. It has about 2625 pastors, 5761 evangelists and 286 539 lay believers involved in some ministry in the church (Endalew 2015:16).

3.2.4.2. Missions Engagement Strategy

In the EECMY evangelism and mission are used interchangeably and are understood to refer to the same thing. They are both understood to refer to the taking on of the gospel to people who do not yet have a relationship with Christ. The only distinction is however made in that evangelism is when the gospel is shared within one's culture and in their immediate environment. Mission on the other hand is used to describe the sharing of the gospel across different cultures and geographical locations (Galla 2011:35).

The mission statement of the church highlights that proclamation of the gospel is vital in connecting people to God. The majority of churches across Ethiopia are planted by local believers and evangelists who see the need and feel the call to take the gospel to their own people (Bulaka 2015:130). Evangelism is seen as a key ministry of the church. The church constitution refers to evangelism as the main call and ministry of the EECMY. Sharing the gospel with those who do not yet know Christ is considered to be of utmost importance in the church (Galla 2011:35). As a result of the emphasis on reaching the lost the number of evangelists in the church has grown exponentially. The number grew from 1436 in 2004 to 2732 in 2009 (Galla 2011:11).

All evangelism and outreach ministers are done under the Evangelistic Outreach Section which is a unit under the department of Mission and Theology. The purpose of the unit is to envision and train church members for evangelism. Over and above that some congregations have evangelists appointed and supported by the church with a mandate to reach the lost with the gospel. The evangelists are part of the evangelism committees that consists of people with a passion to share the gospel. The committee and the evangelists have a two-phase task of sharing the gospel in their own locality and that of continually stimulating passion for the lost in their congregations (Galla 2011:39).

The church believes in ministering to the whole person. The belief is that the gospel is not complete until it has transformed people in totality. Proclamation is combined with meeting the physical needs of the people that receive the gospel (Schifferdecker 2014:201). The church works to provide social relief, education and medicine to communities they are engaging with the gospel. This makes a lot of sense as Ethiopia

is one of the poorest countries in the world and extremely inundated by social ills that need the attention of the church. Social action in a context of poverty and many social needs becomes a natural companion to proclamation (Terfassa 2017:37-38).

3.2.4.3. EECMY Financial Policy

Local missionaries are given a one-year training meant to equip them for the work of missions (Galla 2011:13). At the end of the training they are deployed to the mission field. Once in the field the missionaries are given a salary by the church. As each missionary is attached to a congregation that congregation is responsible in ensuring that they get their salaries. The salaries are however considered too small and unable to cover most of their costs of living. This has forced a number of the missionaries to find other means for provision (Galla 2011:14).

3.2.4.4. Growth Factors in the EECMY

The church has experienced a lot of growth over the years. At its formation in 1959 the church had only 20,000 members. The numbers have now grown to over 6 million members across Ethiopia alone (Deressa 2014:200; Schifferdecker 2014:201). The church has embraced the calling that brought many Western missionaries to Africa. The missionaries came with a clear passion to reach the lost with the gospel. The EECMY now sees the call to reach Muslims groups in Ethiopia and their neighboring countries as their responsibility (Galla 2011:12).

The exponential growth in the church is attributed to a number of factors. Chief amongst them being the increase in the number of lay leaders in the church involved in some sort of ministry. Most of the church is run by lay leaders which makes it easy for the church to grow and reach many communities. Outreach and evangelism are heavily emphasized in the church. 80% of the church members are said to have come to faith through the personal evangelism of ordinary members of the church (Galla 2011:11). Individual church members spontaneously step out and share the gospel wherever they are. This is a huge encouragement and goes a long way in enabling the church to impact more lives (Galla 2011:39).

3.3. The Role of Migration In Missions Participation

Globalization has been one of the key factors that have contributed to the growth in migration in the world. The African people are now perpetually on the move. The same can be said about Christianity. As we will recognize that right from the beginning of Christianity the gospel moved from one nation to the other. Many of the early churches planted outside Jerusalem were planted by refugees fleeing persecution in Jerusalem. The same phenomenon has continued till today. Today many refugees are moving to other nations due to instabilities of various forms in their own nations. In many parts of Africa today the growth of the church may actually not be due to intentional missionary activity on the part of the church but due to migration (Dumitrescu 2019:139).

3.3.1. Migration in Scripture

Migration has been a huge part of the Christian faith right from its inception. The Lord Jesus Christ was himself always in transit in his itinerate ministry. He was actually born away from home and was at an early age whisked away to Egypt and stayed there as a refugee (Stenschke 2016:131). Jesus lived in the diaspora on many occasions during the course of his life and ministry (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008). On the day of Pentecost there were many people including the Jewish diaspora present. As they returned to their home places, they shared their newfound faith with their people. This is a clear indication that from inception Christianity grew because of migration (Stenschke 2016:132).

The death of Stephen in Acts Chapter 8 and the persecution that followed dispersed many of the early believers from Jerusalem. Those who were dispersed preached the word of God wherever they went (Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19). The first Christian missionaries were refugees escaping oppression in Jerusalem. God used Phillip the Evangelist to share the gospel in Samaria and he also explained the word of God to the Ethiopian Eunuch and baptized him (Stenschke 2016:138). The persecution in Jerusalem that could have ended Christianity at its infancy was the beginning of the spread of the gospel. Migration became the very vehicle needed for the gospel to spread. From what

we have noted above we recognize that missions is in its nature tied to migration (Stenschke 2016:139).

In Acts Chapter 18 Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla a Jewish couple that had been expelled from Rome. He forms an alliance with them and works with them in their business of making tents. The couple becomes very instrumental in sharing the gospel in Ephesus and as a result a church was started in their home. This were diaspora Christians who were in business and at the same time reaching out to the Ephesians. Their expulsion from Rome became a blessing as they were able to share the gospel in their new place of abode (Stenschke 2016:144).

3.3.2. African Christians and Migration

With many Africans moving to many places across the World they have ample opportunities to not only find a new home but share the gospel as well. This phenomenon seems to be one of the main ways Africans have been able to carry the gospel to many nations today. Majority of them are in the marketplace and have different professions but using those to proclaim Christ in their host nations.

The African Christian is very tenacious, zealous and passionate to see the lost reached with the gospel. Many African Christians are thriving in the middle of highly secularized places like Europe and that is a clear testament to their character. The recession of religion in Europe is to many African Christians a call to re-evangelize Europe and re-establish Kingdom principles (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008). Many African believers who migrated to Europe believe that God is giving them an opportunity to spread the good news amongst those who did not have a relationship with him (Hanciles 2009:105).

Even though most African migrants cannot be defined as missionaries they play a critical role in missions. They initiate the process of evangelism and church planting and play a critical role in reverse missions (Anim 2019:132). We also need to recognize that every missionary is a migrant and every Christian migrant a potential missionary (Hanciles 2008).

3.3.3. Distinct Characteristics of African Migrant Churches

The growth of African churches in places like Europe also means that such churches take very different ecclesial identities and liturgical structures from the churches planted by European missionaries in Africa. Today an African led Methodist and Catholic church in Europe is very different from the church the European missionaries planted in Africa in the 19th century. The church is more contextual and African in shape and feel. African led mission thrusts take the African Worldview into perspective. Unlike their Western counterparts who often dismissed this African worldview they acknowledge them and find biblical ways of confronting such (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008).

In many of the African led churches in Europe like Sunday Adelaja's God's Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine a lot of miracles have been experienced. The God's Embassy church is said to be daily having the experiences similar to those in the book of Acts. The Holy Spirit is at work touching and transforming lives. Even government authorities have taken note of the massive work of the Spirit through the church and have come in partnership often bringing drug addicts to the church for transformation (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008).

This is a huge distinctive of the majority of migrant churches planted by Africans who have a huge confidence in the power of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin, heal the sick and set the captives free (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008). God's Embassy in the Ukraine is today considered the largest church in Europe. Unlike most churches planted by Africans across Europe his church is made up of mostly the local Ukrainian people. Over 1 Million people in the Ukraine are said to have encountered Christ as a direct result of the ministry of the church. This church is today sending missionaries to places like Russia, Saudi Arabia, Israel, the United States of America and Germany (Hanciles 2009:105).

The God's Embassy church is one of the very few churches started by African migrants who have the local believers as the majority. African migrant churches have been criticized for only catering for their own nationals. However, a good number of this migrant African believers have attained citizenship in their host nations. The churches have therefore become a training ground for the next generations of citizens (Hanciles

2008). Future generations of Europeans will have a different Christian legacy as their parents are busy engaging with God through the migrant churches. The migrant churches are therefore serving a much deeper purpose in Europe as they will likely become the very catalyst needed to restore the fortunes of Christianity in places like Europe.

3.4. African Pentecostalism

3.4.1. Pentecostalism

Pentecostal churches are also the fastest growing churches in Africa (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007:128). In Africa more than any other place Pentecostalism has found a very thriving place (Mashau 2013:4).

3.4.2. What is Pentecostalism?

Defining Pentecostalism is not an easy task as there are various definitions given by adherents and those sceptical of it. Anderson (2004) defines Pentecostalism in a general way as all churches and movements that emphasize the workings of the Spirit. White (2017:2) on the other hand defines Pentecostals as Christians who believe in baptism in the Holy Spirit as part and parcel of being a Christian (White 2017:2).

Pentecostalism is understood to be an experience of the Spirit in two main ways. The first experience being one's conversion which happens as the Holy Spirit convicts one of their sinfulness. The second is what is known as baptism in the Holy Spirit. The point of reference for this is the experience of the early apostles as recorded in the book of Acts. This baptism in the Holy Spirit must be evidenced by speaking in tongues. The key teaching of the Pentecostal movement is that believers need to also experience what the early believers experienced as recorded in the New testament (Mashau 2013:2).

3.4.3. Distinct Characteristics of African Pentecostalism

Salvation: One of the key beliefs is salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone. The emphasis is therefore on regeneration through the power of the Holy Spirit. The main preaching by Pentecostals is on repentance, on the call to believe and accept Jesus Christ as one's Lord and personal saviour. A typical evangelistic message of Pentecostals ends with an invitation to receive Jesus (Mashau 2013:5). This is the reason why Pentecostals are known for their huge open air crusades, door to door evangelism, street evangelism, radio and television evangelism through which the gospel message is preached. All the evangelistic programs highlight how important salvation is to Pentecostal believers (Ma 2014:92).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit accompanied with the speaking of tongues: Also key to Pentecostal preaching is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This baptism must be accompanied with the evidence of speaking in tongues. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is also believed to be accompanied with the endowment of Spiritual gifts (Mashau 2013:5). Spiritual gifts such as prophecy, healing and working of miracles are highly embraced and desired by Pentecostals. It is not very strange to find Pentecostals praying and fasting believing God for gifts of the Spirit (Kärkkäinen 2014:36).

Healing and Prosperity: Prayers combined with faith are said to be ingredients necessary for healing and prosperity. Deliverance is also a huge part of Pentecostalism that often blames all misfortunes on demonic attacks. It promises health and wellness to those that follow this form of Christianity (Mashau 2013:6).

3.4.4. History of Pentecostalism

Many trace Pentecostalism to the Azusa Street revival of 1906. This revival was very central in the birth of Pentecostalism as we know it today (Anderson 2014:14). There are others who believe Pentecostalism can be dated back to 1901 when one Agnes Ozaman was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. All Pentecostal however agree that Pentecostalism is as old as Christianity itself (Mashau 2013:3; Ma, et al. 2014:4; Anderson 2014:23). The number of Pentecostals has grown from very little numbers in 1901 to over half a billion followers by the year 2000. What that means is that over 28% of all Christians globally are affiliated to the Pentecostal movement. Pentecostalism continues to grow exponentially especially in the Global South (Ma, et al. 2014:4; Anderson 2014:22-23).

The history of Pentecostalism is a history of missions participation. In 1916 only 10 years after the beginning of Pentecostalism there were already Pentecostal missionaries in 42 countries outside Europe and North America. This was mostly amazing because all those missionaries were not sent out through some organized efforts on the part of their churches. Most of them were not even trained or equipped. They just packed their bags and left their countries to share the gospel in other countries across the globe. They deeply believed that they had a responsibility to share the gospel with other people. It is this deep conviction about reaching the lost that makes Pentecostalism a very unique movement (Anderson 2014:12).

3.4.5. Pentecostalism and Missions Participation

African Pentecostals are very missional as evangelism takes the highest priority in their doctrines. Evangelism is seen as an opportunity to go out and share the gospel with those that are lost. As part of the Pentecostal experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit adherents are also filled with passion for the lost. It is this passion that pushes them to take part in the great commission. The Holy Spirit experience also empowers them for evangelism, disciple making and church planting (Allison 2020).

The main ways African Pentecostals reach out is through personal evangelism, crusades and tent campaigns. The tent campaigns often promise healing and deliverance for those who will attend. It is through this strategies that Pentecostals reach out in Africa. Their growth is a clear manifestation that evangelism is a huge part of who Pentecostals are. This outreaches accompanied with healings, prophecy, demonic exorcism and protection from evil forces make Pentecostals very attractive. The message is very relevant to many Africans who are eager to hear and know how they can be freed from demonic oppression, witch craft and diseases (Mashau 2013:5).

Pentecostals are more eager to do mission work as compared to the more reformed expressions of Christianity. Pentecostalism points to the power of the Holy Spirit as the source of Christian mission (Ma *et al* 2014:1). From inception Pentecostalism has been a movement with a global vision and built in migration tendencies. This has been one of the key differentials that have enhanced eager missions participation by Pentecostals (Anderson 2014:14). They firmly believe that the Spirit was released for them to perform signs and wonders and reach the world with the gospel (Anderson 2014:25).

Due to their missional orientation Pentecostals have been able to take the gospel to many parts of the world within a short space of time. Most of the Pentecostal missionaries went and still go today with little training. They believe that the only qualification they need is the infilling of the Holy Spirit. The infilling of the Holy Spirit is believed to be a sufficient empowerment for ministry. Many churches were planted across the world by this ill-equipped Pentecostals. In every place where they planted churches many more stepped out from their church plants with the same convictions to go to other lands with the gospel (Kärkkäinen 2014:26). Without the empowering and anointing of the Holy Spirit the missionary is believed to be powerless. Any ministry done without the anointing of the Holy Spirit is considered an exercise in futility as it lacks enduring impact (Asamoah-Gyadu 2014:51).

African Pentecostals have planted churches all across the world. They are very convinced they have a mandate to win the entire world for Christ. This convictions combined with the African tenacity, perseverance and staying power have enabled African Pentecostals to achieve the seemingly impossible in world missions (Wariboko 2017).

3.4.6. Factors Leading to the Growth of Pentecostalism in Africa

The gospel grew a lot under Africans as compared to the 19th century work of Western Missionaries. African evangelists and preachers were able to contextualise the gospel to their own people and had a much greater success in spreading the gospel (Wariboko 2017). The number of African Pentecostals was estimated to be over 200 million in 2015 which is about 35% of the total Christian population in Africa. That means that of the 1.2 billion people in Africa at least 17% of them are Pentecostals. In 1970 the number of Pentecostals in Africa were around 18 million and they have grown quiet significantly over the last four decades. This growth is credited to evangelism by African believers and not Western missionaries (Wariboko 2017).

According to Mashau (2013:1) the following are also some of the reasons Pentecostalism has grown:

- Flexibility of the Spirit: This quality of the Spirit enables the Holy Spirit to easily manifest himself within any and every context. This allows the followers to determine his most relevant form of expression (Mashau 2013:5). African Pentecostals have successfully managed to contextualise the gospel into their own setting. The gospel as communicated by African Pentecostals is more adapted to the African worldview. The bible is read and interpreted in a manner that speaks to the African context (Wariboko 2017). Wariboko (2017) notes that Christianity is growing across Africa because African Pentecostals that have succeeded in taking Christianity into the African context. They have

successfully managed to take Christianity deeper into the African *psyche, culture, space, and worldview*.

- Emphasis on the Holy Spirit's ability to deliver from sin, demonic oppressions and poverty: African Pentecostals do not believe in waiting passively for the future to shape itself. They believe that Christians can shape the future through prayer and spiritual declarations. Prayer is therefore considered to be key in shaping peoples future. The African Pentecostals are known for their very vibrant and energetic prayers. Prayer is a tool to unlock the heavens and get whatever is due to them from God (Wariboko 2017).
- The freedom to spontaneously worship God: In response to the negative attitudes of Western missionaries to many customs within the African culture Pentecostals have merged many of the African expressions into their worship. Pentecostalism can therefore be said to have come in handy in decolonizing African worship from Western influence (White 2017:5).
- African Pentecostals unlike their Western counterparts believe in self-financing in missions participation: With the exception of very few church groups majority of African Pentecostals use their skills, professions and businesses to support their ministries. This has taken away the weight of trying to raise funds which are often hard to come by. The result is that many Pentecostals are able to do a lot more than their Mission Initiated churches counterparts (White 2017:5).
- Focus on the Priesthood of all Believers: All believers are believed to be called and gifted to participate in the mission of God. This highlights the greatness of God in his ability to use ordinary people to do rather extra ordinary things. Every gift in believers is given so that it can be used in the mission of God. It is therefore imperative that such giftings be stewarded in a manner that will extend the kingdom of God. This approach breaks the huge gap between the laity and the clergy (White 2017:5). Or as Michael Oh (2019) put it the 1% in professional ministry will never reach the whole world with the Gospel. The reason being that the clergy or the 1% are just not enough. There is 1 missionary for every 500,000 unreached Muslims and as long as only the 1% go as missionaries we

will never see the task of reaching the nations accomplished. There is therefore a need to mobilize the 99% in the market place to engage the least reached with the gospel (Oh 2019). Pentecostals seem to have long realized that hence their growth.

- The teaching in the African Pentecostalism is that one cannot do mission without the infilling of the Holy Spirit: Believers are sent by the Spirit hence the need to be filled by the Spirit before embarking on a mission to reach the lost. Those going as missionaries are encouraged to be led by the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit also means that whoever is going will have empowerment to do ministry effectively and relevantly (White 2017:4).

3.5. CONCLUSION

In this paper we have highlighted a number of initiatives by African peoples. We have clearly shown that Africans have also embraced the call to make disciples of all nations. The Church of Pentecost from Ghana started in a rather obscure way and rose to be one of the movers and shakers globally. The church has been able to infuse passion for missions on ordinary members who have been instrumental in planting churches across the world. The church's ability to have the laity take up such courageous steps to start churches globally needs to be commended. The wider church of Christ in Africa has a lot to learn from the commitment, passion and strategies employed by the Church of Pentecost.

The ZAOGA church in Zimbabwe has also managed to rise from a tiny part of Zimbabwe to be a global transnational force. It has been able to rise and grow even in the midst of harsh economic realities in Zimbabwe. The church has been able to instil in its members the passion for the lost and the need to play a role in the mission of God. The church has continued to grow even in the diaspora. What we learn from the ZAOGA is that Africa has an even greater potential to impact nations for Christ. With

over 34 Million Africans living in the diaspora there is a huge potential to turn many of those who are evangelical Christians into missionaries (Ochieng and Thwaites 2019). Those involved in missions mobilization need to tap into the wave of Africans Christians on the move and challenge them to consider playing some role in missions.

The CAPRO story shows us that there is a huge untapped potential in the African youths. The movement has been able to rally together young university students from over 26 countries and give them a passion for missions. This young people are able to go out with close to nothing and serve the Lord wholeheartedly (Ndukwe 2019: 16). Some of this young people are even willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the call to reach those yet unreached with the gospel. An example of those is one Mark Ojunta (a CAPRO Missionary) who was killed by Boko Haram militants whilst ministering in the North East of Nigeria⁹. CAPRO trains her workers in such a manner that they will be willing to die if need be for the gospel (Osinaike 2018). CAPRO has also proven that it is not until there is abundance of resources that Africans can go as missionaries. The excuse that there are no resources to do missions has been quashed by CAPRO Missionaries who are able to still go with very little resources. CAPRO also proves that with the right training and mentorship Africans can achieve more for God.

The EECMY is a typical example of how partnership should look like. Western missionaries have been able to work well with the local Ethiopians to start a church that is impacting many lives. This type of partnership needs to be recognized, emulated and commended. The EECMY has also been able to utilize the ministry of the laity. Proving to us once more that the laity are a great resource that needs to be fully maximized for kingdom impact. The fact that over 80% of believers in the EECMY church's first got exposed to the gospel through the ministry of ordinary members in church means that there is something they are doing right. Their story needs to be told and their efforts and strategies emulated by many across Africa.

⁹ Voice of the Martyrs, <https://vomcanada.com/ng-2011-10-27.htm>

We have also been able to recognize that the largest number of Africans that are involved in missions are Pentecostals. Pentecostalism and its teachings have been a manure that has helped give birth to many churches. Pentecostalism amongst African Initiated Churches has proven to be very successful in getting church members to share the gospel. There is a lot to learn from Pentecostals as evangelism is built into their doctrinal teachings. More church group need to include teachings and encouragements on evangelism and outreach in their discipleship pathways and doctrines.

With all the wonderful stories highlighted above there is still more that the church in Africa can do. The potential is huge and it needs to be fully leveraged in order for more lives to be impacted by the gospel. The efforts highlighted in the chapter are just tiny bits in comparison to the huge potential that Africans have. If only churches across Africa can send missionaries as much as they are capable of, there will be a major move of God in world missions that will impact those still unreached. This potential in the African church needs to be fully unleashed.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: TOWARDS AN AFRICAN MISSION NORMATIVE

4.1. Introduction

In Chapter 3 we sampled a few African missions success stories from which we can derive the African mission normative. Africans who are taking the lead in missions have enjoyed considerable success mostly without outside participation or assistance. On the contrary, such success has not always been realized in missionary organizations from the West who have presence on the continent. In the observations made, it has been noted that God is using various factors such as migration and Pentecostalism to spread Africans across the globe. As Africans migrate, they also take the gospel with into their new contexts. In this chapter we take a closer look at key factors that are essential in achieving sustainable methods for missions engagement for Africans.

Notably, all the churches sampled in the previous chapter, in the first place, prioritized reaching the lost with the gospel as their main *modus operandi*. It is this prioritization that has made it pragmatic for them to inculcate in their members a culture of outreach and a passion for the lost. Exegetical analysis of Matthew 28:18-20 highlight how a deep appreciation of the great commission is embedded in this effort of churches reaching out and engaging with the lost.

In the second place, it has become apparent that the African churches are able to utilize their migrant members as missionaries without necessarily heavily investing in them to do so. These African churches have been able to finesse a members' discipleship approach that effectively capacitates them for sharing the gospel even in the diaspora. This approach is similar to the biblical paradigm of the unnamed individuals who whilst fleeing persecution in Jerusalem moved to Antioch and started a church that has shaped world missions. We will have an overview of Acts 11:19-21 and Acts 13:1-3 to get a much broader picture of what made this church a significant

church. There are many lessons to be learnt from the church in Antioch and those will be discussed in light of what is already happening in Africa.

In the third place, Africans are very capable of taking a much leading role in missions as a natural expression of their faith and loyalty to their sending church's. They are able to go out there and really make impact by taking initiatives to start churches and only asking for backup and assistance from the sending church once a considerable group is in place. Some even ask for assistance when the new church plant has enough resources to pay a fulltime pastor. Again, this in principle reflects the scenario intimated in the pastoral epistles where the Apostle Paul directs his protégé Titus to appoint elders in the churches that had been variously initiated (Titus 1:5-9). This effort basically means that African churches simply copied the biblical approach which indigenized missions as a natural expression of faith.

However, in contrast to churches working under Western missionaries, Africans seem to be rather disempowered, somewhat excluded from the means to becoming missionaries. We noticed, encouragingly in the previous chapter, that the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus was established through collaborative efforts of both indigenous and Western missionaries. Such partnerships seem to have yielded better outcomes than when the ministry remains foreign based and controlled.

In the fourth place, and closely related to the above, it is notable that as long as Africans are the ones leading their own initiatives, they seem to enjoy creditable success. This speaks to leadership entirely divorced from external determination. For example, Calvary Ministries (CAPRO) an indigenous African mission agency was able to work well and receive guidance from Western agencies in the initial stages of their foundation only. This partnerships with older mission agencies helped shape this young mission organization and the organization was successfully weaned off this arrangement. Today CAPRO has over 700 African missionaries serving in every continent in the World (Adeliyi 2020:2). We will make suggestions on the need for such kinds of partnerships that encourage and mentor instead of those that are paternalistic.

Lastly, as controversial it sounds, associating the gospel with individual prosperity incentivised and practicalized the faith approach. Criticism of the prosperity gospel has done very little to dissuade its popularity among followers because of its appeal to real life situations. So, regardless of the theological reservations, the prosperity gospel is relevant to many Africans. This was especially notable as Africans were coming out of colonial demises that left them impoverished and disadvantaged. The desire to excel was inherent and the prosperity gospel highly attractive.

Without necessarily endorsing the prosperity gospel, it must be said that African churches were able to relativize both the gospel and missions in one bold stroke. Perhaps that is the learning point of pitching missions to real life situations to incentivise prospective participants. The Church of Pentecost (CoP) and the Zimbabwean Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) which are discussed at length in Chapter 3 are churches that seem to align more towards the prosperity gospel. Many of their members have been able to successfully plant churches in the diaspora even without any mandate from their home churches. Their alignment to the prosperity theology has played a significant role in making them churches on the move. We however also highlight some of the pitfalls of the prosperity teachings and their potential impact on missions participation.

4.2. Reaching the Lost Prioritized

What is evidently clear from the previous chapter is that missions participation happens in churches where it is prioritized. In the church groups sampled the church leadership and the church constitutions see the need to reach the lost as something of paramount importance. In the case of the Evangelical Ethiopian Church of Mekane Yesus (EECMY) reaching the lost is embedded in the church constitution which notes that reaching the lost is the most important purpose of the church (Galla 2011:35). The

church's mission statement also highlights that proclamation is vital for connecting with people (Bulaka 2015:130).

In the case of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) outreach is embedded in the foundational doctrines of the church and has been a huge focus of the church right from its inception (Katsvere 2014:16). The Church of Pentecost (CoP) on the other hand has a grassroots missions model which encourages every member of the church to be active in sharing the gospel. The culture of missional living is a huge part of the church's DNA. Every member knows that doing missions is part and parcel of being a Christian (Onyinah 2004:228). The church's mission statement notes in part that the church exists to bring all peoples everywhere to the saving knowledge of Christ. Walker (2010:26) notes that the church has a missions strategy that can be referred to as from everyone to everyone. This buttresses the fact that no Christian is excluded from the task of reaching the lost with the gospel.

Based on the examples already noted it is without doubt that if we are going to see missions passion ignited in many other churches across Africa missions needs to be in the very foundational teachings of churches. Missions needs to be prioritized and given a huge focus. If Christians are continually taught about missions and given more information on a regular basis, they will inevitably become more involved in reaching the lost. The very low number of churches and individuals involved in missions is a clear indication that there is still a massive ignorance about missions in churches. In order to curb this, pastors need to start teaching their congregations on the great commission and the need for them to play a role in God's global mission (Paterson 2005:151).

The pastors will conversely only be able to educate their members on missions if they are well conversant with the great commission. They will need to not only know about the great commission but have a conviction that it is vital that their members be a part of it. What is noteworthy is that African churches that are active in sending missionaries seem to have a much deeper understanding of the great commission. Is their understanding biblical? Below we look at a few great commission scriptures in light of what we noted in the previous chapter.

4.2.1. Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Jesus calls his followers to make disciples of all nations. This call is not a suggestion but a command. It is a call of Christ for believers to go not on their terms but on his. Christians must follow his instructions as he gave them. As his disciples go to various places, they should be making disciples (Ripkin 2014:1-2).

The call to make disciples is directed to the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. What this means is that the prerequisite for making disciples of all nations is being a disciple. But what is a disciple and what are the key peculiarities of a disciple? We also note that the call is not just to make disciples but disciples of all nations. What does the word nations mean? Is it geographical? And how do we possibly make disciples of all nations? What is the implication of this call? The scripture continues to say that the disciples need to be taught to obey all things that Christ has commanded them. What are those things? And how is obedience taught? The scripture ends with an assurance that Christ will be with the disciples until the end of the age. What is the end of the age? Below we will attempt to understand this scripture and get answers to the questions in light of our findings in Chapter 3.

4.2.1.1. Who is a Disciple?

A disciple is a sinner who has believed in Christ, repented of their sinful life and is regenerated by God. Such a person has also agreed to make Jesus the Lord of his life. A disciple can also be defined as a learner following Jesus with a goal of becoming like him. He is submitting to the authority and lordship of the teacher who is Jesus Christ (Isiguzo 2020:41-42). A disciple can also be defined as one who has accepted

Christ as his Lord and saviour and is being continually taught in the ways of Christ. The disciple is making disciples and teaching them to do the same. Discipleship on the other hand can be defined as the practice of winning people to Christ and helping them grow to be more like Christ (Khauoe 2008:5). In all the groups sampled in the previous chapter, making disciples is greatly valued and pursued by the different groups.

4.2.1.2. Implication of Discipleship on Missions Participation

Below we discuss how the understanding of discipleship shaped missions participation in the sampled groups.

A Disciple leaves all behind: A disciple of Christ is one that leaves all to follow after the master Jesus. This is clearly exemplified in the book of Matthew Chapter 4. Jesus met some fishermen busy at work fishing and he called them to follow him. They immediately left their fishing careers and followed Jesus (Mt 4:18-20). In the same way true discipleship calls believers to leave and abandon their old lives and embrace a new life in Christ. As observed in the example of Calvary Ministries – CAPRO as discipleship is taught many leave their careers and dedicate their lives to taking the gospel to other nations. University graduates and professionals have been able to sign up as missionaries because like the early disciples they are called to leave all behind and follow Christ. David Platt (2018:8) notes that when Jesus asked the disciples to follow him, he was asking them to leave their comfort zone, careers and all they are accustomed to and follow him to the unknown. Many Africans seem to have understood this and are willing to take risks and follow Christ even to the unknown.

A call to absolute abandonment: In Matthew 14:24 Jesus calls all those who want to follow him to deny themselves, carry their cross daily and follow him. This call involves leaving behind the life of sin and embracing the life of righteousness in Christ. It is a call for absolute abandonment to Christ and a call to complete adherence to the person of Christ (Isiguzo 2020:43-44). The call to follow Jesus is a call to abandon all, ones

needs, desires and even families. This is certainly not an easy call. But it is evident that those whose lives are completely sold out to him we will be of more service to him. On the other hand, if people hold on to their lives, do only that which they deem right and insist on their ways they will not be vessels Christ can use. Complete abandonment to the person of Christ is what Christ requires of his disciples. In this call sin is abhorred. In the Church of Pentecost (CoP) there is a strong teaching that being a disciple is to be morally blameless, separated from sin and consecrated for the Lord's service (Walker 2020:21).

It is quite evident from the groups under review that as they focus on discipleship, they become more missional in outlook. When discipleship is done well it has the potential to impact the eternal destiny of many lives across the world. The cost of lack of discipleship is that millions of people will continue to remain unreached with the gospel (Platt 2010:14). It is therefore imperative that churches have intentional discipleship in place if we are going to see disciples going out to make disciples of all nations (Khauoe 2008:150).

Discipleship is key to the completion of the task of world evangelization. Unless discipleship is taken seriously, African believers will continue to be passive spectators as far as missions participation is concerned. Discipleship is one of the most significantly impactful ways to get people involved in the mission of God. It changes their worldview and most significantly unleashes the missional passion in believers (Khauoe 2008:48).

4.2.1.3. Obedience

Part of the call of Christ in Matthew 28 is to teach the disciples to obey all that Christ has commanded. A key requirement of being a disciple is therefore to obey every one of his commands. Jesus states in John 14:15 that, "If you love me, keep my commands", he continues to state in John 15:14 "You are my friends if you do what I

command". It is clear that Jesus values obedience and requires his disciples to embrace it.

There seems to be a huge disconnect between what Christians know and what they actually end up doing. Most Christians know that they need to share the gospel but very few actually go and do the actual sharing of the gospel. The same seems to be true for missions. In some quarters the commission is understood to have been given to the early disciples and therefore not binding to the church today. But Jesus call his disciples to obey every command of his and make disciples of all nations (Horner 2011:42-43).

The great commission is as mandatory to the 21st century church as it was to the first century church. The commission is binding for as long as the task to make disciples of all nations still remains unfinished. Jesus ends the commission by saying in Matthew 28:20 that "and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age". The specific people Jesus spoke to died a few years after being given that instruction. This means that the commission is binding to all future disciples until the "end of age". In Matthew 13:39-40,49 this "end of age" seems to refer to the Judgement at Jesus' second coming. If he was only referring to the early disciples he would have most likely not added "end of age" to his commission. His commission will end when he comes back the second time and until then the commission is still binding to Christians (Piper 1996:16).

When people become believers and disciples of Christ, they submit their will to the Lord. A disciple is then marked by obedience. The mark of a true disciple is the willingness to do all that the Lord requires of him. As Christ requires his disciples to make disciples of all nations it will be natural for a disciple to seek to play a role in making disciples of all nations. An obedient disciple is then willing to pay the price whatever it might be to ensure the lost get a chance to hear the good news of Jesus Christ (Watson 1981:32-33).

4.2.1.4. All Nations

The call of Christ is to make disciples of all nations. In Greek the command is to make disciples of *panta ta ethne*. *Panta* means all, *ta* means the and *ethne* refers to nations (Meier 1977:102). What we seek to understand is what Christ meant when he gave the commission to *panta ta ethne*. *Ethne* refers to a people bound together by a common language, culture and even the land the people occupy.

Ralph Winter, a world-renowned missiologist opened the eyes of the church to understand that nations did not refer to geographical and political countries. Nations refers to ethnic groupings that share the same culture and language. These nations are often referred to as people groups (Piper 1997). In March 1982 a Lausanne Strategy Working group came to the conclusion that a people group is defined as:

a significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, residence, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc. or combinations of these... For evangelization purposes, a people group is the largest group within which the gospel can spread as a church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.¹⁰

From the definition of people groups above it is clear that the task is not to reach more and more individuals for Christ but as many people groups as possible. The call of Christ is therefore to reach every people group in the world with the gospel. No single *ethne* or people group is excluded from this call. The call is not necessarily for mass evangelization but rather for this people groups to be made into disciples (Weerstra 1992:100). The task is doable because even though individual people keep increasing the number of people groups remain the same (Piper 1997; Severn 1997).

4.2.2. Motivation for Mission Participation

¹⁰ 1982 Lausanne Committee Chicago meeting

4.2.2.1. Biblical Motivation for Missions Participation

South Africa has received missionaries for centuries yet there are still more missionaries sent to South Africa than are sent from South Africa. We have noted that some Pentecostals from poorer African nations are going as missionaries yet that is not the case amongst black evangelicals in South Africa. This leads to the question, what is the main motivation that drives other African believers to go as missionaries often with nothing to engage the lost with the gospel?

The greatest motivation to participating in missions and ministry to the unreached with the gospel is found in John 10:16:

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

These sheep are very precious to God. Burge & Hill (2012:1137) note that the “other sheep” refers to the Gentiles. Those who are still unbelievers and unreached with the gospel. The above scripture is the one that challenged Peter Cameron Scott to start Africa Inland Mission and come to Africa as a pioneering missionary. He had a conviction that the many people in Africa who were still unreached with the gospel deserved to get a chance to hear the gospel and be part of the Christ’s “sheep pen” (Anderson 1994:17; Karanja 2009:8).

Revelation 5:9 says “because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation”. Though not part of Jesus’ “sheep pen” these “other sheep” have been purchased with the greatest price one can pay, the blood of Jesus Christ. So, when Jesus Christ laid down his life at the cross, he had these lost people in mind. His death provided an atonement for every tribe, language, people and nation (Burge & Hill 2012:1602).

4.2.2.2. Paul’s Motivation for Missions Participation

For Paul there are a number of factors that moved him to see the need to take the gospel to those who were still unengaged with the gospel. Below we discuss 3 of those motivations as discussed by Bosch (2011:n.n.).

A Sense of Concern: Paul saw humanity outside of Christ as lost and in need of salvation. He time and again preached and spoke about the impending judgement on those who are disobedient to the Lord. This was the motivation that kept him sharing the gospel with those who did not yet have a relationship with Christ. He called himself an ambassador of Christ through whom God was using to make an appeal to all those who were lost to be reconciled to himself (1 Co 5:20). This concern for the lost became the main motivation for Paul to share the gospel with the lost. He was clearly desirous to see those without Christ encountering the love of Christ (Bosch 2011:n.n.).

With over 3 billion people in the world still without access to the gospel there is a huge need for the church to move with a sense of urgency in ensuring the gospel gets to those people (Joshua Project 2020). In Matthew 9:36 Jesus had compassion on some people who looked harassed and helpless. He then implored his disciples to pray for more laborers to be sent into the harvest field. Jesus is concerned by the lostness of men so should his church. This is the same concern that is moving many Africans in the CoP and ZAOGA to places like Europe with the gospel with a conviction that they need to reach such places that are experiencing religious stagnation (Hanciles 2009:105).

A Sense of Responsibility: Paul states repeatedly that he has an obligation to share the gospel to the Gentiles. He writes in 1 Corinthians 9:16 that “For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”. Paul feels indebted to the Lord and as a result of that he feels a sense of obligation to share the gospel with others (Bosch 2011:n.n.). All believers have a responsibility to share the love of God with the lost. The great commission was given to every believer. It is therefore every Christian’s responsibility to ensure that many others get to know the amazing love of Christ (Horner 2011:43).

Galla (2011:12) highlights that the ECCMY sees the call to reach to Muslims groups in countries around Ethiopia as the responsibility of the church. It is that sense of responsibility that moves them to engage these Muslim groups with the gospel. The

sense of responsibility is also heavily entrenched in Pentecostal convictions (Anderson 2014:12).

A Sense of Gratitude: It seems the main reason Paul went out as a missionary was because of the gratitude he felt towards Christ. He had a huge sense of gratitude towards Christ for his salvation. It is this gratitude that challenged him to share the gospel with many Gentiles that God led him to engage with the gospel (Bosch 2011:n.n.). It is such a privilege to know Christ and therefore appropriate that Christians take a step to share the love of Christ with others who do not yet have that privilege so they can also experience and know Christ (Brown 2014).

4.2.3. The Unreached Not Prioritized

With the excellent examples of Africans doing missions there is one thing that seems to be missing. All of the examples given with the exception of Calvary Ministries – CAPRO and to some extent the EECMY have ministries that are focused on urban settings. Not only are they focused on urban settings they also do not have a clearly defined vision for those that are yet unreached with the gospel. With 3.22 billion people in the world still considered unreached they should be the priority of the church. The Joshua Project (2020) states that over 42% of the world’s population is still without the gospel. This should be something that moves the African church to do outreach ministry with a strategic focus on the unreached peoples.

We need to define who are the unreached and why are they unreached? Joshua Project defines the unreached as follows:

An unreached or least-reached people is a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance.¹¹

¹¹ <https://joshuaproject.net/help/definitions#unreached>

The definition of the unreached seems to relate much closely to Paul's conviction about sharing the gospel where it had not been taken before. In the book of Romans 15:18-21 he notes the following:

I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done—by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God. So, from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

Paul states that his ambition has been to preach Christ where he was not known. This is the ambition that led him to keep moving from one place to another once a community of believers was established. Instead of staying behind to nurture the believers he kept moving to the next barren land that needed the gospel. He claimed that he had *fully* preached the gospel from Illyricum to Jerusalem. This is a huge area that would have included places like Syria, Cyprus, Galatia, Cilicia, Pisidia, Phrygia, Mysia, Greece, Macedonia and many other cities (Stam 1984:298). It is highly improbable that Paul would have preached the gospel to every person in the area.

Even though Paul always moved to his next church plant once a church was established he still sent his protégés to continue the work on those places. He sent Titus to Crete to “finish what was left unfinished” (Tit 1:5). He also sent Timothy to Ephesus to teach against wrong doctrine that had become prevalent in the area after Paul left (1Ti 1:3). Paul through sending his two protégés indicated that there was some work that still needed to be done in those places (Piper 1996:21). Even though there was still work to be done in the areas his priority was those that were still unreached.

In Romans 15:23 he notes that “there is no more place for me to work in these regions...”. He claims there was no longer any work for him in the region. He felt God was calling him to take the gospel to places that still had no gospel impact and to engage the Gentiles who were still unengaged with the gospel.

The number of pioneer missionaries with a focus on the unreached is very little compared to the number of missionaries focusing on people that are already reached. Piper (1997) states that the number of what he calls Paul type of missionaries going to places where there is no church established has been obfuscated by Timothy type of missionaries. Today we see missionaries crossing cultures and going to places far from their cultures and establishing churches. Majority of them are however going to places where there are churches already established. They set out to establish their own denominations which become just one of many other denominations in such places. Like Timothy and Titus their goal is to see churches established, elders appointed, and believers nurtured.

As honourable as that is, there are more of the Paul kind of missionaries needed in the world today. Pioneer missionaries going to barren lands where the gospel has not penetrated the people groups. Paul said in the book of Romans that his ambition was to preach the gospel where Christ was not yet known (15:20). We need to see the same kind of passion unleashed across churches and individuals in Africa.

Johnson (2012:77) notes that one of the main challenges particularly with Pentecostals that hinder focus on the unreached is the belief in being led by the Spirit. What this means by extension is that until someone is led to do something by the Holy Spirit nothing much is ever done. That also takes away the strategic planning that is necessary in missions. The end result has been that the unreached have remained unreached and in some cases even unengaged. Churches like the CoP and ZAOGA have such great potential to impact many of those still unreached with the gospel if only they can make them a priority.

4.3. Migrant Africans As Missionaries

4.3.1. The Church in Antioch

One of the most exciting examples of the ministry of migrant believers is found in the book of Acts. The church in Antioch was planted by unknown migrants who were fleeing persecution in Jerusalem. Men and women who loved Christ enough to take a step and share the gospel with the people in their new place of abode. Later on, when the church had been established the Church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to encourage the believers there (Acts 11:22). This church is a testament that migrant believers are a great resource that should be used to impact nations. From the example of the church in Antioch we notice that it is not until one is a world-famous evangelist that the Lord will use them to make impact across the nations (Paterson 2005:90).

The CoP has successfully planted churches through the efforts of migrants who are on the move. Majority of them are not fleeing persecution in their home countries but leave their countries due to economic hardships. These economic migrants have become the best church planters (Anim 2019:132). This is in many ways like those migrants who planted the church in Antioch. Below we discuss the distinguishing attributes of the Antioch church.

4.3.1.1. Acts 11:19-21

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

According to Paterson (2005:90) the church in Antioch was planted by anonymous men and women. He uses Acts 11:19-21 to highlight the fact that all those anonymous men and women scattered by persecution in Jerusalem started sharing the Gospel and church was a result of those efforts. Not a single person who was involved in the founding of this church was named. This leads to the conclusion that this church which is very significant in the history of missions was not the work of a mighty evangelist but of ordinary migrants.

There is thus a need to recognize ordinary men and women and give them a platform to express their God given purpose to reach the lost with the Gospel. This goes against the usual norm where ministries are built around one gifted man (Paterson 2005:91). The people who planted the church in Antioch did that without permission from the Church in Jerusalem. They saw a need to preach the gospel in their community and they went ahead to do just that. It was only after the church in Antioch was planted that the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas there (Acts 11:22).

This is very similar to what is happening in the Church of Pentecost (CoP) as noted in the previous chapter. As members of the CoP emigrate to other nations, they start bible study groups in their homes. As this study groups grow churches are planted. These migrants plant church's without any permission from the Church headquarters but in obedience to the call of Christ to make disciples of all nations (Walker 2010:177-178).

The Zimbabwean Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA)'s growth has been attributed to its ability to fully maximise the ministry of their members in the diaspora. As their church members migrate to other nations they are encouraged to start bible study groups in their homes. This bible study groups later grow to become churches. This type of church plants by ZAOGA members are spreading all across the world. This growth would never have been realised through using the clergy only who often have to be trained and paid to do the job. But as their members are already in those places and have jobs it is much easier for them to do all that at no cost to the church (Biri 2014:147).

Selwyn Hughes states that "the future of the church belongs to the laity" (Paterson 2005:92). The future of the church indeed belongs to ordinary men and women who will go and impact nations for the Lord. Often the laity are seen as objects for church projects however, they are a resource that could be used to do greater things for God (Paterson 2005:92). As observed in the previous chapter of this research God is using African migrants to do great things and plant churches across the world. The Embassy

of God Church in Kiev, Ukraine was started by Sunday Adelaja who was at the time a university student. He had received a scholarship to study journalism at the Belarus State University (Ratajeski 2015:1570). He became active as a student leader going on to become the leader of the Christian fellowship. This led him to a deeper conviction to reach the lost across the Soviet Union. He was not an ordained minister or trained theologian but an ordinary Christian with a desire to see the lost around him reached with the gospel. From his efforts a church was started, and that church continues to impact many lives across Europe and many other parts of the world (Asamoah-Gyadu 2006:73).

It is the ordinary believers that will give birth to many more Antioch type of churches that will impact lives across the nations for Christ (Paterson 2005:103). For that to be a reality churches need to find a place for the ordinary people in their congregations and help them find their place in God's global mission. As these ordinary believers migrate, they will carry the seed of the gospel to the nations and do exploits for God.

4.3.1.2. Acts 13:1-3

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

As noted above the church in Antioch was born out of the obedience of migrant believers. Paul's ministry was also born out of the obedience of Barnabas in Acts 11:25-26. The first missionary movement was also born out of the Antioch church's obedience in Acts 13. Out of that movement countless people have been reached with the Gospel and many churches planted (Paterson 2005:136). Below we discuss what made the Antioch church excel at what they were doing. We noted the church's ability to utilize the laity in ministry. We highlight some other factors that helped make this church the success that it was. Our hope is that churches across South Africa and Africa can learn from this example and emulate it for more missional impact.

Encouraging and Facilitating Leaders: The church in Antioch had an encouraging and facilitating leader in Barnabas who made it easy for people to find their place in ministry. Every church needs a Barnabas who not only encourages and pastors but sees the potential in people. When Paul first went to Jerusalem, he was viewed with a lot of scepticism because of his role in persecuting the church. Acts 9:26–28 states (in part) that the disciples “were afraid of him and did not believe he was a disciple”. It continues to say that “Barnabas took him and introduced him to the Apostles”. Barnabas was willing to take a risk for Paul. He believed God could work through even the most unlikely candidates (Branch 2007:306). He risked his credibility before the church and introduced Paul as a brother. Had it turned out that Paul was in fact still on his journey of persecuting the church, Barnabas would have been ostracized by the church. Due to his willingness to take risk, he helped become a mediator that helped the church trust and accept Paul as a fellow brother in Christ (Paterson 2005:111; Branch 2007:307).

It is quite evident that Barnabas believed in Paul’s calling and he worked to make sure that it is facilitated, and a platform created for him to do ministry. Paul had been sent to Tarsus as his life was in danger in Jerusalem. He had a clear call to reach the Gentiles, yet he was relegated to what Paterson (2005:112) calls a “relative backwater”. Barnabas went to look for him in Tarsus and brought him to Antioch where they ministered together for a year (Branch 2007:311). Barnabas gave Paul the validation he needed to kick start his journey in ministry. As churches across Africa seek to build more Antioch type of church’s they will need more Barnabas kind of leaders. Leaders who are willing to take risks, who will validate those with a calling and give credibility to those who would otherwise have none (Branch 2007:307).

Leaders Passionate About God’s Mission: If we are going to see more Antioch type of churches planted, we will need many churches with leaders who are passionate about seeing the lost reached with the gospel. The Antioch church had leaders who did not just have a heart for their congregation but were passionate for the lost. The leaders had a deep desire to see the lost reached with the Gospel (Paterson 2005:115).

Missions direction for any church starts and ends with the pastor. If the leadership of the church is not motivated or inspired about missions it is most certainly impossible for the members to join in (Horner 2011:29). This sentiment is shared by Vumisa (2012:123) who asserts that as long as the pastor does not have a vision for missions the church will most likely never be involved in missions. Many churches in Africa lack leadership that is inspired, involved and informed on missions. As long as this remains as the status quo many churches will most likely still continue to have no vision for missions.

Before any significant restoration in missions emphasis in churches can be seen, the pastors will need a strong conviction from the Lord that will change their focus and priority. George Frederick Pentecost in Horner (2011:30) had this to say about church leaders

Every pastor holds his office under Christ's commission, and can only fulfil it when, as a missionary bishop, he counts the whole world his fold. The pastor of the smallest church has the power to make his influence felt around the world. No pastor is worthy of his office who does not put himself into sympathy with the magnificent breadth of the great commission and draw inspiration and zeal from its worldwide sweep.

Any church that is not actively involved in the mission of God is in that state because the pastor is failing to see and fully understand the commission of Christ. It is very difficult for a congregation to resist a passionate pastor's plea for them to be more involved in God's mission. On the other hand, it is almost impossible for a congregation to rise above the lack of conviction regarding missions on the part of the pastor (Horner 2011:30).

Congregations will need pastors to be hands-on as they lead their congregations to deeper involvement in missions. Pastors cannot sit on the side-lines and yet expect their congregations to be deeply involved in missions. The people will be ablaze for missions as they see their pastor also passionately burning with a passion for missions. Passion is very contagious, and members of the congregations will inevitably be ablaze for the Lord as they observe and follow a pastor who is on fire for

Jesus and his mission (Horner 2011:32). Barnabas exemplified this as a leader in the church in Antioch. He was hands on and eventually went out as a missionary himself. This says a lot about his dedication, zest and passion to see the lost reached.

We recognize that Paul's missionary vision extended the influence of the Antioch church way beyond what they could have imagined. Antioch's influence grew and became even more international because they dared to embrace a missionary and offer him support. As unattractive supporting a missionary can be, the long-term impact is huge and has a huge potential to impact nations greatly (Paterson 2005:128). Congregations that are passionate for the glory of Christ amongst all nations will work hard in sending missionaries. By so doing like the Antioch church they will expand their impact and reach. They will be able to impact lives in far-away lands that they would have never impacted had they not sent a missionary.

Obedient Church: The Antioch church set a model for the church that we should be willing to surrender our very best for the sake of the lost (Paterson 2005:136). When Barnabas picked Paul from Tarsus, he served alongside him in Antioch for a year (Acts 11:25-26). They were both very gifted men and in Acts 13 as the church waited upon the Lord in prayer and fasting the Holy Spirit spoke to them. The Holy Spirit asked them to release Paul and Barnabas for the work he was calling them into. It seems the church was doing very well under the leadership of Barnabas and later with the addition of Paul. God however asks this church to release "the best two people" to go and share the Gospel with those who did not yet know him (Burge & Hill 2012:1191). The church responded to the call by laying hands on them and sending them off (Acts 13:3). They did not hold on to these great leaders they must have loved dearly but sent them to be used by God in other places (Paterson 2005:136).

4.4. Reaching Out: A Natural Expression of Faith

From the examples in the previous chapter it is evidently clear that many African churches that are sending missionaries highlight the priesthood of all believers. Christians are taught the importance of sharing the gospel. Sharing the gospel with others is seen as part and parcel of being a believer. Sharing the gospel is understood to not be a ministry of the clergy only. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus (EECMY)'s exponential growth is linked to the ministry of ordinary believers. It is the lay leaders that are going out the most, engaging the lost and sharing the gospel with as many people as possible. 80% of their members attribute their salvation to the ministry of the laity and not the clergy (Galla 2011:12).

As believers travel to various places, they are able to share the gospel. Majority of them do it through their professions. Many have been able to incarnate Christ into their professions and share the love of God with others. This is not a new way of sharing the gospel with the lost as we see clear examples in scripture of the same model being used. Paul, an Apostle had a background in tent making and in some of the places where he went to preach, he used that skills as a way of providing finances for his ministry. From Acts 18:2-18 we note that Paul was employed by Aquila and Priscilla who were businesspeople and tent makers. They were part of the Jews that had been expelled from Rome and ended up in Corinth. Because of the couple's expertise in tent making they had a business they were running. They used their skill to run a business and to create a platform for ministry in Corinth (Rocklin 2017).

Those who critique tent making almost always question whether the tent makers get enough time to share the gospel with unbelievers since they have a full-time vocation. Daniel (2012:165) brings a distinction between Paul and the tent making couple Aquila and Priscilla. He notes that Paul was an Apostle with a calling to plant churches in various places. He was travelling a lot planting churches and having a full-time vocation would have taken his energy and focus away from planting churches. In the bible we note that Paul only did the job of a tent maker for a season alongside Aquila

and Priscilla. The couple he worked with understood his calling and may have offered some sort of flexibility that still gave Paul time to preach.

Rocklin (2017) however notes that Paul and the couple shared their faith with colleagues, customers and suppliers who may have come through their way. Business was not seen as being separate from ministry but was rather integrated into ministry. Tent making becomes one of the most strategic ways through which believers can be sent to engage the lost. With many in Africa not having sufficient resources to go as support raising missionaries, they have a chance of going as tent makers. Professionals who will integrate their faith into their work and incarnate Christ in the world.

Aquila and Priscilla were gifted businesspeople who opened their home to reach out to the people in their city. In Africa we have professionals of various kinds who are already on the move. They may be doctors, taxi drivers, plumbers, teachers etc moving from Africa and some settling in places where Christ is not known (Daniel 2012:165). Unlike Paul they may not have a call from God to engage the Gentiles. They can be like Aquilla and Priscilla who started sharing the gospel with the people in Corinth and started a church in their home. These African believers are the future of the church. We have clearly seen in Chapter 3 that the CoP and the ZAOGA churches have successfully utilised this method to plant churches across the world. Their members share the gospel as an expression of their faith in Christ.

When doing a survey of the Central Baptist Church of Central Africa (CBCA) Kighoma (2019) discovered that the CBCA had 25 church planters in Rwanda who had planted 6 churches. 80% of these church planters had a vocation through which they were earning money to sustain their families. These church planters were not dependent on church support or salary to do the church planting. He actually discovered that they never left their home countries with the intention to plant a church but as they settled in those places, they started sharing the gospel. The result of their expression of their

faith led to churches being planted. They became church planters by accident rather than through intentional planning on the part of the CBCA (Kighoma 2019).

With more intentionality in the part of churches and sending agencies this strategy of sending missionaries has a great potential to send thousands of missionaries. Africans are already on the move and if churches and mission agencies could envision those who are moving to consider sharing the gospel and planting churches wherever they go we will see a huge number of churches planted by ordinary obedient African believers.

4.5. Partnership Not Paternalism

Kim (2019:303) defines Paternalism as the relationship in which a father treats a child as if that child falls under the father's authority even if the child is mature. "This parent-child relationship is vertical and authoritarian. The missionary is automatically in charge. He is the example that the people must imitate and their source of knowledge" (Jonathan 1989:111). In the previous chapter we noted that what has been helpful in the past has been situations where Westerners came in as partners alongside African believers. When the Westerners call the shots and chose to be in charge Africans never seem to take initiative and do not seem to find their voice in missions.

4.5.1. Calvary Ministries - CAPRO

Even though most Western missionaries did not seem to see the value of investing in Africans as potential missionaries there were always a few exceptions. Calvary Ministries (CAPRO) a leading African missions agency was started as a direct result of the impact and challenge of a British missionary, Sidney Granville Elton who served

in Nigeria (Ndukwe 2019:11). Sidney Elton became an encouraging Westerner who saw the need to invest in the local Nigerian youth. He did not only encourage them to go but helped provide opportunities for training and provided some resources needed for them to succeed. He helped raise funds to support some of the first CAPRO missionaries for a year as they discovered the new path in missions.

Youth with A Mission (YWAM) a Western mission organization also played a significant role in shaping CAPRO in the early days. Early CAPRO leaders were given scholarships to study at the YWAM schools in Britain and the United States of America. As a new mission that had very little experience and knowledge in missions these opportunities went a long way in shaping the organization (Ndukwe 2019:90).

Another group of Westerners that God used to shape CAPRO is the World Evangelization Crusade (WEC) one of the very old mission organization that has been working in Africa for many years (Kalu 2008:132). CAPRO policy designs were shaped a lot by WEC at those infant stages. To a very large extent the CAPRO Guiding Principles resemble those of WEC. Even when deciding on their financial policy they adopted what they called 'living by faith' as a principle for sustenance for the missionary and the mission (Adeliyi 2020:3). CAPRO leaders were also given an opportunity to understudy WEC at their international office. It was during this season of understudying WEC that CAPRO leaders had a glimpse of what running a mission organization looked like. That visit also helped the CAPRO leaders design the structures necessary for CAPRO to function well (Ndukwe 2019:94-95).

The Western mission organizations did not ask the new mission to join their own organizations. Instead they came alongside them, encouraged them, resourced them and coached them for effective ministry. These partnerships with older Western mission agencies helped shape this young mission organization and successfully weaned them off. For us to see more African groups thriving we will need more partnerships like this that enhance, encourage and cheer on the Africans without taking control.

4.5.2. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus - EECMY

The EECMY was started through the collaborative efforts of Lutheran missionaries and indigenous Lutheran churches across Ethiopia. Lutheran missionaries had established different churches across the country and all these churches were brought together to form the EECMY on the 21st of January 1959 (Bulaka 2015:127; Galla 2011:8; Endalew 2015:17). This partnership is a clear indication that when partnership is done right a lot can be achieved.

It is worth noting that unlike most cases in Africa where Western missionaries struggled to work well with locals the EECMY story is a very encouraging one. The Western missionaries did not only risk their lives bringing the gospel to Ethiopia but their partnership with locals was premised on love and mutual respect. This companionship and comradeship led to many people receiving the gospel. This Western-Ethiopian partnership has enhanced the growth of the kingdom of God across East Africa (Deressa 2014:202). It goes without saying that in the future we will need to see Western organizations take a more supportive and collaborative role with African churches and mission organizations.

It is imperative to note that mission is no longer a sole occupation of Western missionaries but a call for all Christ-loving believers (Clarke 2014:197). Missions has now shifted and is becoming more post-Western in outlook. As much as missions is still predominantly Western in shape and colour this will have to change in order for us to see a new surge of missionaries from Africa. We will need to see more collaborations and partnerships between Western missionaries and African missionaries. More Western missionary will need to take a back seat and play a role of encourager, partner and friend to the African missionary as he takes the lead.

4.5.3. Paternalism and Finances

Part of overcoming Paternalism is through Africans finding solutions to the money question. One of the ways Western missionaries have been able to control and isolate Africans from missions participation is through finances. Even though Africa has received so many missionaries over the last 200 years very few African churches and agencies seem to have an idea on how best to approach the task of funding missionaries from Africa.

Majority of the missionaries that have come to Africa have been from the West. Almost all of them came already funded from their home countries and serve Africans at no cost. This is honourable and commendable as they come as real servants of the people and giving their all to ensure that Africans get the gospel. As a result of these Western missionaries many Africans have been reached, schools, clinics, bible institutions and universities have been built all at the cost of the Western missionaries and those that fund them.

In spite of the unquestionable success in reaching out to Africans with the gospel Western missionaries have failed to model giving to the Africans they were reaching. Many found it difficult to teach on generosity when they are privileged in so many ways (Franklin & Niemandt 2015:390). Perhaps teaching about giving required the missionaries to model it to those they were teaching. It would have probably required them to give more because they are giving from a place of privilege.

The African believers never knew where the missionary got his money. The missionary never lacked and, on many occasions, the few Africans that went into ministry were paid by the Western missionary. How then do Africans find a solution when they never knew how the missionary paid his way? What model do churches and agencies in Africa follow when they do not have a successful model they could emulate? These are difficult questions that are not easy to answer. A lot more work will need to be done to discover if there are any truly successful African Indigenous solutions to the African missionary funding problem. That withstanding African mission organizations need to

create structures that enable Africans to not only go but that foster an atmosphere where they can thrive in reaching the unreached (Franklin & Niemandt 2015: 391).

4.6. Prosperity Gospel Incentivizing Gospel Outreach

The prosperity gospel has found root in Africa and is thriving more than most expressions of Christianity. The prosperity gospel is very attractive and according to Robbins (2004:118) it is the fastest growing form of protestant Christianity and some predict it may soon surpass Catholicism to become the most dominant form of Christianity.

It is even more attractive post colonialism. With many Africans having suffered a lot under colonialism the prosperity gospel's focus on exciting financial prospects, independence and good health are very appealing (Heuser 2015:18). This combined with the harsh economic realities in many African countries have made the prosperity gospel a more attractive expression of faith in God. God who can pull his children from harsh economic situations and prosper the needy seems more attractive (Heuser 2015:3).

As far as missions involvement is concerned the prosperity gospel is able to go to many places than other expressions of Christianity. The prosperity gospel is transnational in nature, adapts well to globalization and easily adapts to new contexts (Heuser 2016:1-3). The adherents are able to quickly replicate the prosperity gospel in various cultures and are able to indigenize it quite easily. The churches adapt very quickly to the new contexts within which they are started (Robbins 2004:118). The prosperity gospel has successfully been able to utilize media and has been able to take full advantage of globalization. Globalization has therefore been a vehicle the prosperity gospel has used to travel and adapt (Niemandt 2017:212).

From the way the prosperity gospel is growing there is certainly something that adherents to this expression of Christianity are doing right that all other expressions of Christianity can learn from. It is also very interesting to note that the most missional churches across Africa are Pentecostals with a leaning towards the prosperity gospel. According to the PEW Research Centre (2010) in most countries across Sub Saharan Africa more than half of Christians believe in the prosperity gospel. Khaoué (2008:49) also notes that in terms of expansion Pentecostals have the highest numbers.

The reason for that is believed to be the fact that proclamation is central to the Pentecostal movement. McClung, Jr (in Khaoué 2008:50) further highlights that Pentecostals view evangelism as a major way they are being obedient as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This conviction is further intensified by the belief that those who are without Christ are lost and condemned to eternity in hell. The only way out for those unbelievers is faith in Christ. Pentecostals and by extension the prosperity expression therefore work to ensure that salvation in Christ is found by as many people as is possible.

As clearly effective as the prosperity gospel is on taking the gospel to many communities there are other challenges that are embedded in their theology and mission praxis. The prosperity gospel tends to shift from the message of the cross that calls for sacrifice to the more attractive message of materialism. In the case of the EECMY there has been a few errors that align towards the prosperity gospel. First the message has shifted from the finished work of the cross to what believers can get from God. The sermons focus on seducing believers with material greed. The other thing that is preached from the pulpit is that believers can basically manipulate God by doing certain things like fasting or giving. This obviously goes against biblical teachings and borders on being an idolatrous perception of God. The decline in the biblical emphasis in the church and the proliferation of the prosperity gospel in the church will likely result in a huge decline in Christian commitment (Galla 2011:106-108).

The prosperity gospel is based on the theology of the spoken word that believes in the power of positive confession. The teaching is that when one confesses the right words, faith will make those words a reality. It also preaches that God is glorified when his people are wealthy. Living in poverty is believed to be dishonouring to God (Lioy 2007:42-44). Attention is turned away from the pursuit of God and the focus goes to the day to day needs and concerns of adherents. God is seen as a being who is obligated to do things for his followers because they have faith and confess the right words (Amanze 2012:191).

As a result of the prosperity gospel many place more value on material possessions and their spirituality is “skin deep”. The emphasis and the focus is on acquiring the latest best car, and all other material things and not on the pursuit of God. When all else takes a prime position in people’s hearts, God, religion, church and missions take a back seat (Amanze 2012:191-192). In the prosperity gospel money is a sign of the blessing of God. God is seen as wanting to make all his people wealthy and is desirous for them to have the best life has to offer.

The relationship between man and God then gets defined as “cause and effect”. It preaches that for one to get the blessing of God there needs to be some “sowing”. It also emphasises faith and the belief is that God will give wealth and good health to those who have enough faith. Often when someone does not get what they had hoped to get be it healing or wealth they are often told they did not receive because they lacked faith. In essence the prosperity gospel is often seen as a contract between God and man. Men keep their side of the promise by sowing seeds, having faith and making the right confessions. On the other hand, God is then obligated to deliver security, health and prosperity as part of the contract between him and men (Niemandt 2017:205 – 210). Prayer is used as a weapon to manipulate God for personal gains (Jones 2015).

The prosperity gospel is not Christocentric but rather anthropocentric in its theological orientation (Essien 2018:53). The leaders in the prosperity gospel tend to twist the

scriptures to push their own personal agendas and success. Self is loved, appreciated, glorified and church members are encouraged to seek to make her (self) even more beautiful (Lioy 2007: 60).

4.6.1. Implication on Missions Participation

The Christian message of sacrifice and suffering that requires believers to give their all and count their lives not as precious to themselves is not seen to be appealing. The prosperity gospel is premised on getting returns for every gift sown yet the biblical message of discipleship requires for believers to give away their lives without anything promised in return (Lioy 2007:47). Jesus called his disciples to give all and expect nothing in return however the prosperity gospel preaches that people should give and expect more in return (Jones 2015). It is therefore very hard to talk about missions to a group that only understands service and giving as something that needs to be reciprocated by God.

With the proliferation of the prosperity gospel many adherents do not fully believe that Jesus will ask them to forsake all and follow him. The prosperity gospel to a very large extent seeks to redefine and reshape Jesus into its own shape and form. Jesus is shaped into a Jesus who doesn't mind materialism and who would never ask his followers to make huge sacrifices. He perceived to be a Jesus who embraces superficial devotion that does not require his followers to make any radical changes to the way they live (Platt 2010:13).

That being said there is a lot to learn from the international nature of the prosperity gospel. The adherents are able to take more risks when they strongly believe God is with them and will bless their act of faith. That leads them to cross boundaries and take the gospel to many places with much ease as compared to other expressions of Christianity. Their conviction that their good deeds will be reciprocated makes them more eager to do what other believers may not necessarily be willing to do.

4.7. Conclusion

In order for missions to be recognized and practised in Africa churches will need to prioritize missions. That will start through preaching and teaching on the great commission by leaders. As church leaders emphasise on the need for missions in their preaching many church members will be released into missions.

With the smaller numbers of African missionaries being sent out we realise that there are very few churches where missions is preached and prioritized. We recognize that for more African church leaders to get more involved they will need other leaders who can model missions participation for them. When there is a lack of role models it becomes very difficult for them to explore this new thing as they do not know of any success stories. Horner (2011:33) gives an example of the Southern Baptists who though well known for their missions involvement only about 10% of their congregations are actually involved in missions. What that means is that majority of the pastors are exposed to the 90% of potential mentors who are not at all interested nor involved in missions (Horner 2011: 33). This is the reason why we chose to highlight Africans involved in mission work so that in the process we may inspire others to step out and emulate the EECMY, CoP, ZAOGA and CAPRO.

There is a new generation of pastors needed who will model missions for generations coming after them. Churches are overwhelmed by a plethora of issues and needs and it is very hard to start prioritizing something so far-fetched from the very vision of their church. For a change to happen we will need many role models that will lead the way and guide young and upcoming pastors on how to do missions as a congregation. We will also need many professors who will lead the way and fill their students with a passion for missions as they exegete scriptures with a missional eye to their students in seminaries and universities (Horner 2011:34).

In the cases where Africans are taking a leading role there is a sense of ownership of the vision. This ownership gives African believers a chance to have the mission take

a more Afrocentric shape. When Westerners are good followers and good partners the synergy between them and Africans is able to really make such a huge impact on global missions. As long as Africans are brought into Western mission agencies they will continue to struggle to develop and shape mission that is relevant to their own people. The Western agencies that desire to see Africans joining them must be willing to change their structures in such a way that Africans can come on board and have thriving ministries. The Lutherans did a great job of forming a new church alliance with local Ethiopian churches. That helped shape the new church (the EECMY) into a church that could accommodate both Western and African missionaries (Bulaka 2015:127; Endalew 2015:17). The result has been a thriving and growing missional church impacting many unreached people groups.

Churches have a great potential to be the real movers and shakers in missions. The case studies of the CoP and ZAOGA show that with a consistent teaching by the church leadership on the need to reach out many more churches across Africa could send missionaries. The seemingly seamless ways through which they are able to send missionaries is a great challenge to other churches across Africa and Western organizations. Africans are enterprising and are willing to take risks (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008). This is the reason why we have African believers all over the world planting churches. The hardship in many parts of Africa combined with a growing zealous number of Pentecostal believers has become a great combination that has given birth to missions in a new way.

We have also come to the clear understanding of the valuable ministry of the laity. They are a valuable resource that needs to be fully harnessed for the work of missions. As Oh (2019) puts it the 1% in professional ministry will never reach the whole world with the Gospel. The reason being the clergy or the 1% are just not enough. There is 1 missionary for every 500,000 unreached Muslims and as long as only the 1% go as missionaries we will never see the task of reaching the nations accomplished. There is therefore a need to mobilize the 99% in the market place to engage the least reached with the gospel (Oh 2019). If churches across Africa can manage to capitalise on the millions of the laity living in the diaspora that will be the biggest mission force ever raised (Ochieng and Thwaites 2019).

The threat of the prosperity gospel is that it takes away the willingness to take risks. The quest for comfort goes against the very call to missions and discipleship that call for reckless abandonment. The prosperity gospel almost seeks to redefine and reshape Jesus into what the adherents want him to be (Platt 2010:13). As long as the prosperity gospel keeps growing it will be difficult to get missionaries from churches willing to take risks for the sake of the Lord. However, the amazing thing about the desire to excel and the willingness to take risks amongst adherents of the prosperity gospel is something many church groups and agencies can learn from. Real life challenges and pains do not make them withdraw but challenge them to take further strides in sharing the gospel with others.

As Revelation 5:9 makes us aware Jesus was slain and with his blood purchased for God people “from every tribe and language and people and nation”. Over 3 billion people in the world are still yet unaware that Christ died for them. These people whom Christ purchased with his precious blood need to be engaged and given a chance to know their sins have been atoned for (Joshua Project 2020). Churches across Africa need to be mobilized as matter of urgency to reach all these people still wallowing in darkness. With the huge church in Africa this vision to see the unreached reached can be realized. Churches need to challenge their members and reach these unreached peoples.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This research has shown some of the challenges faced by Africans in their quest to take the gospel to the nations. We highlighted how Christianity first found roots in Africa before most parts of the world. Early Christian leaders did exceptionally well in contributing to knowledge and to shaping Christian theology as we know it today. We also gathered that Christianity in Africa was not founded with the help or involvement of Europeans but it goes back to the mission of the early Apostles (Van der Merwe 2016:562). It is therefore impossible to separate the story of Christianity from the history of the church in Africa. This is more so because the earliest theologians such as Augustine of Hippo, Origen and Athanasius of Alexandria were Africans and so were the earliest Christian communities (Ward 2019).

Even though Christianity in the continent started so well and was gaining much root there were some setbacks that affected the Christian outlook in the continent over time. Christianity went into an almost state of extinction in North Africa. In the 15th century missionaries started coming to some parts of Africa and started evangelizing other African people groups. This efforts continue till today. In 1910 there were only about 8.5 million Christians in Africa. Due to the efforts of both Western missionaries and African believers the numbers of Christians have grown significantly. Today there are over 500 million Christians in Africa (Pew Research Center 2011). Of the 500 million Christians over 182 million are evangelical Christians (Operation World). This is a huge achievement that needs to be celebrated. The Lord has done a great thing in Africa and it is beautiful.

The research objective was to find out the factors contributing to the low missions involvement among black evangelicals in South Africa and by extension Africa. In spite of the clearly growing and vibrant church in Africa there has been very few African missionaries sent out. The researcher is desirous to see many Africans going to the

nations as missionaries and particularly engaging the unreached people groups with the gospel. The whole research was premised on finding answers to the issue of low missions participation and looking for appropriate ways to encourage missions participation amongst black evangelicals.

5.2. A Historical Review of Missions Disengagement amongst Africans

5.2.1. History of the Church in Africa

The research has discovered that Africans need to understand their Christian heritage and acknowledge that Christianity has a much richer history in Africa than in many Western nations. For many years the history of Christianity in Africa has not been told in full. However, as Oden (2007:n.n.) rightly notes any attempt to study the history of Christianity while ignoring the history of Christianity in Africa makes that history questionable and incomplete. The ultimate result of the inaccurate telling of the history of Christianity in Africa has been that Christianity has gotten associated with the pains of colonialism (Williams II 2019:94).

The research has noted that contrary to popular belief the church in Africa was not started through the efforts of Western missionaries but rather through the efforts of early Christians (Van der Merwe 2016:562). It is therefore impossible to separate the story of Christianity from the history of the church in Africa. We have also clarified that the World's earliest theologians such as Augustine of Hippo, Origen and Athanasius of Alexandria were Africans. Some of the earliest Christian communities were found in Africa (Ward 2019).

We noted that even though Christianity had taken root in North Africa in the first century that sadly changed with time. We discovered through this research that one of the major issues that contributed to the death of the church in most parts of North Africa was that the bible was not translated into most of the local languages in North Africa. With the bible only available in Greek and Latin that meant that only the elite could fully understand the word of God. With the majority not too familiar with both

languages Christianity never developed roots. The people could not understand the word of God in their heart languages.

Around 640 AD North Africa was invaded by Arabs and the result was that most of the region was Islamized (Wedepohl 2012:21). The church in Egypt and Ethiopia survived these invasions and still remain strong today. The reason the church in the two countries survived was because the bible was translated into the Coptic language. As a result of that the church in both countries were able to withstand the pressure from Islam (Shakur 2014; Wedepohl 2012:21). From these experiences we recognize that one of the ways through which the gospel develops deep roots is through having the bible translated into local languages. A word in a people's language helps deepen their convictions and understanding of God.

5.2.2. Africans Side-lined in Missions

The research found that one of the key issues affecting missions participation in Africa today is that Africans are not involved in shaping how missions looks like. The largest Christians in the world are found in the Global South with over 61% of the Global Christians found here (Pew Research Center 2011). Even though that is the case the West almost dictates and sets the agenda for missions. We have also noted that missions agenda takes the shape of whoever sets it. When those in the minority set the agenda for missions it inevitably takes their shape in outlook. The direct result of that is that missions becomes only attractive to the minority who set the agenda at the exclusion of the majority (Water 2015:11).

We have thus discovered that for missions to be more attractive to Africans it needs to be more non-Western in outlook. Africans need to set the agenda for missions and play a role in shaping it into what they desire for it to be. If missions can be purged of its Western shape and outlook many Africans will be able to participate (Clarke 2014:197-201). That will however prove to be a very difficult exercise as things have been like this for centuries. Changing the narrative and the shape and form of missions will take a lot of courage on the part of the Africans and loads humility on the part of the Western missionaries.

When Western missionaries came to Africa to bring the gospel, they also imposed their ways on the African people. They believed they had the best things to offer and Africans were only qualified to be recipients. The impact was that Africans lost confidence in what they possessed and started believing that they had no contribution to make. The painful result of this was that they now put all their confidence in the Western missionary methods and resources. They did not have the confidence to create their own means and try to shape their own home-grown missionary methods. They also never saw themselves as missionaries and never believed they could make any significant input to world missions (Kighoma 2019).

The research highlighted the story of Samuel Ajayi Crowther the first African Bishop. He managed to achieve what many did not believe was conceivable. He did amazing work reaching out to his own Yoruba people and the Hausa's in the Northern parts of Nigeria (Wedepohl 2012:32). In spite of his clear successes in ministry Crowther was forced to resign his position as the Bishop of the Niger due to the racism he faced at the hands of his Western missionaries colleagues (Barnes 2018).

One would think with Crowther doing a sterling job Western missionaries would have realized that Africans are equally talented and gifted to take leadership and take initiatives. However when Crowther died in 1891, he was replaced by a European. The Western missionaries' lack of confidence on the Africans delayed what could have been a huge move of God started by empowering African believers. The perpetual thinking that Africans can only be followers and not leaders crippled African believers. The lack of confidence and clear lack of desire in empowering African leaders on the part of the Westerners hindered the Africans from spreading out and finding their role in missions (Wedepohl 2012: 33).

5.3. African Initiated Missions

The research has painted a rather gloomy picture of the state of missions amongst Africans. The odds seem to be against them. It is very hard to think anything can come

out of the clearly uninspiring history. However, we have noted that Africans are crossing borders and engaging the lost with the gospel. Some go without resources and proper training, but they still make missions work.

5.3.1. Migration

We have noted in the research that migration is not a new phenomenon. It has been a huge part of the Christian faith right from its inception. From scripture we realize that Christianity moved on the vehicle of migration. We also highlighted that Jesus Christ himself lived in the diaspora on many occasions during the course of his life and ministry (Asamoah-Gyadu 2008).

Globalization has been one of the key factors that has contributed to the growth in migration in the world. We have seen that Africans are riding on the wave of migration and going to many parts of the world. They are often pushed out by harsh economic realities in their own nations but that has led many of them to engage the lost and find their own place in the mission of God. We have noted that as many Africans migrate to other parts of the world, they carry the gospel as well. Many believe that as they migrate God is giving them an opportunity to spread the good news amongst those who do not have a relationship with him (Hanciles 2009:105).

Many churches with origins in Africa have been planted in the West. Some have planted church denominations originally planted by Western missionaries in Africa in the West. Africans are planting churches that are more contextualized and aligned to their African worldview. Many of them are able to plant these churches not because of clear planning from their home churches but through accidents of migration (Dumitrescu 2019:139). Churches across Africa need to maximize on this potential that is in migrants. African professionals are moving daily, and they are a resource that could be fully harnessed for the sake of sharing the gospel with the lost. As noted in the research every Christian migrant is a potential missionary and African churches need to realize that and capitalize on migration to send Africans as missionaries (Hanciles 2008).

5.3.2. African Pentecostalism

We have noted in the research that African Pentecostals are very missional and highly prioritize evangelism and outreach. Their belief and reliance in the power of the Holy Spirit to empower for Christian mission makes them more eager to do mission work than other expressions of Christianity (Ma *et al* 2014:1). We noted that this is not only peculiar to African Pentecostalism as from its inception Pentecostalism has been a movement with a global vision and built on migration tendencies. Pentecostals firmly believe that the Spirit was released for them to perform signs and wonders and reach the world with the gospel (Anderson 2014:25). They believe they are called to reach the world with the gospel. An opportunity to migrate to another part of the world for work is seen as an open door by God to reach the lost with the gospel.

We have noted that African Pentecostals such as the ZAOGA and the CoP have planted churches all across the world. They do so with a firm conviction that they have a mandate to win the entire world for Christ. This conviction combined with the African tenacity, perseverance and staying power has enabled African Pentecostals to achieve the seemingly impossible in missions. This is the reason why an African student will successfully plant a thriving Pentecostal church in a traditionally orthodox city such as Kiev, Ukraine (Wariboko 2017).

Pentecostals are more eager to do mission work as compared to the more reformed expressions of Christianity (Ma *et al* 2014:1). The passion and focus on reaching the lost has been a key part of the Pentecostal movement right from the beginning. Pentecostalism has always been a movement with a global vision hence its ability to travel through migration. The past couple of years have seen an increase in migration and that creates a platform for Pentecostalism to thrive (Anderson 2014:14). That is the reason why Pentecostals have been able to take the gospel to many parts of the world within a short space of time. They have also been able to plant churches exponentially. In every place where Pentecostals have planted churches many more people from those churches stepped out with the same convictions to go to other lands with the gospel (Kärkkäinen 2014:26).

5.3.3. Priesthood of All believers

We have noted that one of the key things that is making African Pentecostalism to thrive is that there is a huge focus on the priesthood of all believers. All believers are taught and encouraged to realise that they are called and gifted to participate in the mission of God. They highlight the fact that God is so powerful and able to use every believer to expand his kingdom here on earth. Believers are also taught that every gift God has endowed them with is to be used in his mission. This focus plays a huge role in encouraging many Pentecostals to share the gospel wherever they are.

We have clearly highlighted in the research that the ministry of the laity is not a recent invention. We noted that the church in Antioch (which is a very significant church in missions history) was planted by the laity. It was a direct result of believers who were not ordained ministers. They were not Apostles sent out by the church to plant a church but ordinary believers living out their calling to make disciples of all nations. God used these ordinary believers to birth such a significant church in the bible. There is no better example than the one noted in scripture for us to follow (Paterson 2005:90).

For more Africans to be sent out as missionaries there is an urgent need to recognize the ministry of ordinary believers. The laity must be encouraged and given a platform to exercise their calling. We are at a very critical stage in history where the church in Africa can impact lives through creating platforms for the laity to thrive. If churches across Africa could capitalize on migration and envision the many ordinary believers already on the move Africa will have the largest missions force. By extension this will impact many lives of those still in darkness and no access to the gospel.

5.3.4. Prosperity Gospel

We have highlighted so many wonderful things happening in Africa and the huge potential for even greater kingdom impact. We have also noted that one of the fastest growing expressions of Christianity is the prosperity gospel. Adherents to the prosperity gospel have been able to go to many places and plant churches with seeming ease. However even though the prosperity gospel seems to be doing much

better than most expressions of Christianity their level of gospel commitment seems rather shallow (Amanze 2012:191-192). The prosperity gospel teachings seem to divert from the main focus of the gospel that teaches on the need to be self-effacing to the new teaching that focus on self-promotion. This poses a huge threat to missions as the proponents and believers in the prosperity gospel are not ready for radical obedience to the call of God. The call to missions is often a call to a hard life and that cannot be accepted by the adherents of the prosperity gospel. For someone who has been discipled to see life as glamour and all things bling missions will never be attractive enough.

5.4. Recommendations

Having completed the research the following are some recommendations that the researcher believes will help black evangelical churches across South Africa find their place in the mission of God. The researcher firmly believes that considering all the findings of this study a focus on the following will go a long in enabling many across South Africa and by extension Africa find their place in missions. We must hasten to note that this recommendations are not exhaustive as they may be other factors that may be helpful in shaping the church's vision for missions.

5.4.1. Mission Must Be Prioritized in the Church

Today there are still 3000 unengaged people groups in the world. This means that there is no church or mission organization that has taken the responsibility to share the gospel with the people (Newell 2012). This by extension means that there is no chance of a church being planted and established in the people group as there is no viable witness. A further 6926 people groups are considered unreached with the gospel. This is over 3 billion people still without sufficient number of believers in their midst to ensure that the whole people group is evangelized. The Joshua project (2020) defines the unreached as a people group with less than 5% Christian population or less than 2% of evangelical Christian presence.

These statistics show a very gloomy picture of the state of world evangelization. There is therefore a need for missions to be prioritized in the church. It needs to be prioritized in giving, in preaching and in the church's overall ministry strategy. Churches need to be mobilized and envisioned to see the need to play a more active role in the mission of God. It is until local churches find their role and place in the mission of God that we will see many of those still unreached reached and those unengaged engaged with the gospel.

We have noted in this research that African churches that are involved in missions have outreach and missions heavily embedded in their doctrinal statements. It is therefore not wrong to conclude that in order for a missions movement to come out of South Africa the mission of God will need to be prioritized. The low number of churches and individuals involved in missions across black evangelical churches in South Africa could be a sign that there is still a massive ignorance about missions in churches (Paterson 2005:151). Pastors and leaders alike need to fully embrace the call of God to make disciples of all nations. It is as they are infused with this passion that they will in turn set their churches ablaze for the glory of Christ. All this is however dependant on the pastors themselves fully understanding and embracing the mandate of Christ to make disciples of all nations (Wood 2019).

5.4.2. Prioritizing Outreach to the Unengaged and Unreached

As churches find their place in the mission of God, they will need to prioritize the unreached and the unengaged with the gospel. The examples given in the research show that very few groups in Africa are prioritizing the unreached and the unengaged. The church's need to engage such peoples with a sense of urgency. The fact that over 42% of the world's population still remain in darkness and untouched by the gospel should challenge churches across South Africa to send many to engage such (Joshua Project 2020). This is even more urgent as we have highlighted that the number of missionaries working amongst the unreached is way smaller compared to the number of missionaries working amongst people groups that are already reached (Piper 1997).

Chismon (2020) summarises the role of the church in the Great Commission as follows;

The Church in all reached people groups exists by mission and therefore for mission! For example, someone or some people, foreign to your people group took up their cross, left home, family and the familiar, travelled to your people group, learnt a new language, studied a new culture and communicated the gospel to your forefathers – some of whom were touched by the Holy Spirit, through their message, and believed. After many years they travelled back to their home land or in many cases were buried in the land of their sacrificial missionary endeavours! All of us who enjoy the blessing of the gospel today have such a story – whether or not we are aware of the details and the names of the missionaries involved. Replicating this process of ‘reached people groups reaching unreached people groups’ must continue. God forbid that it should stop with us! How can we possibly stand before Jesus on ‘that day’ with the testimony of having received blessing but having refused the responsibility of passing it on.

As Chismon (2020) challenges, churches need to embrace the responsibility to engage the unreached. Just as churches in South Africa came into existence as a result of the sacrificial endeavours of many Western missionaries. Churches across South Africa and Africa should step out and be a blessing to many who are still waiting to be reached with the gospel.

5.4.3. Focus on Discipleship

The research noted that one of the strengths of CAPRO has been her focus on discipleship. Through their missions training exposure program, they are able to mobilize and equip many for missions all across Africa (Harley 1995:11-12). The fact that CAPRO has successfully sent hundreds of missionaries across Africa is a testament that discipleship when done right has potential to shape church’s and individuals in missions. The researcher therefore recommends that the true message of the cross that emphasizes sacrifice and dying to self needs to be taught in churches. Only disciples can make disciples and it therefore goes to say that if we are going to

see missionaries going to the nations churches need to make more disciples and challenge their members to do the same.

5.4.4. Lay Ministry Should be Given Prominence

As noted above churches need to give prominence to the ministry of the laity. This will ensure that many are equipped, mobilized and released to share the gospel with the lost. The lay are the majority in churches and they need to be fully leveraged for maximum impact amongst the nations. This research has highlighted the fact that the laity are the 99% in the church yet most of the work seem to be left to the 1% in full time ministry (Oh 2019). If ever we are going to see the largest number of people sent into the mission field from South Africa the laity need to be disciplined, envisioned and mobilized for missions.

5.4.5. Churches Should Be at the Forefront

Our research has proven that the main actors in missions across Africa are churches. There are today millions of Africans that are living in the diaspora and a good number of them Christians. This migrant Christians are from churches across Africa. Para Church organizations may never be able to know about such peoples, but the church has access to them. We notice that churches seem better placed to equip and send missionaries than para-church groups. As we noted from Acts 13 the first missionaries were sent through a church. The missionaries' call was recognized by the church leadership who then prayed for them and sent them to serve God amongst the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-3).

In the book of Acts Chapter 14 we see the two missionaries that were sent out coming back to the church and giving updates on all that God did through them (Acts 14:26-28). We see that the church does not only send missionaries but still plays a role of oversight over the missionaries they send out. The Church of Pentecost, ZAOGA and the EECMY discussed in the research at length are church groups and have been able to send many missionaries across the globe. Para church mission groups like Calvary Ministries – CAPRO send missionaries independently. Comparing the two ways of sending missionaries it is much clearer that the church sending model has much

bigger capacity to send more missionaries than the para-church model. The researcher therefore recommends that sending be done through the church.

5.4.6. Encourage African-Western Partnership

For more impact amongst the nations there will need to be a closer partnership between Africans and their Western counterparts. For the most part Western mission agencies have lots of experience in doing missions and can play a much bigger role of mentoring and training Africans to do missions better. The research has given good examples of successful partnerships between African groups and Western missionary groups. We have noted that the largest mission organization from Africa, Calvary Ministries - CAPRO was started as a response to the encouragement of a Western missionary. The organization was also shaped through the influence and mentorship of other mission organizations (Ndukwe 2019:11). The result has been that millions of people have been impacted through the ministry of CAPRO missionaries. That may not have happened without the influence and mentorship of Western missionary groups.

Another groups that has been highlighted is the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesu (EECMY). The church was started through the collaborative efforts of Western Lutheran missionaries and their Ethiopian counterparts (Bulaka 2015:127; Galla 2011:8; Endalew 2015:17). Their mutual respect, partnership and collaboration has proven that when partnership is done right many lives can be won for Christ and a lot can be achieved to the glory of God (Deressa 2014:202). Churches and mission groups across South Africa need to find ways to partner with well-established mission groups already working in South Africa. This will go a long way in shaping and helping them birth a missions vision that will impact nations. One of the oldest mission groups in South Africa is the Lutheran Mission. The Lutheran's presence in South Africa dates back to 1829 (Garaba & Zarvedinos 2014:6). It will be helpful to interact with such groups with long standing history and experience in doing missions so that there is cross pollination of ideas that can help shape the budding missions movement from South Africa.

5.4.7. Ride on the Wave of Migration

We have proven beyond doubt that Africans are riding on the wave of migration to the nations. Churches across Africa have been able to take advantage of this phenomenon and plant churches across the world. The black evangelical churches in South Africa need to take advantage of migration and send missionaries to the nations. There are an estimated 4.3 million South African nationals living in the diaspora (Head 2017). With the Operation World estimating that 21.1% of South Africans are evangelical Christians that means about 907 300 of this South Africans are evangelical Christians. 80.9% of South Africans are black and that means that of the 907 300 evangelicals living in the diaspora 734 005 are potentially black evangelicals (Stats South Africa 2018).

Without even looking for missionaries in their church's, black evangelical churches in South Africa have one of the largest potential missionary forces at their disposal in their congregations. Black evangelical churches need to be intentional about envisioning all this people to consider being involved in the ministry of sharing the gospel with the lost in their new places. The people are already on the move and will not need to raise money as they are on most occasions employed. They will also not need to apply for missionary visas which are often very hard to get in many countries. Their jobs and professions give them legitimate reasons to be in the places where they find themselves and solves many of the challenges encountered by traditional missionaries on an ongoing basis. This needs to be fully maximized by churches across South Africa.

5.5. Future Work

There is still more research needed on the real number of churches sending missionaries from South Africa. There are no clear statistics on the number of missionaries being sent from South Africa and that needs to be researched and

published. If that can be done, we will have a much clearer picture on the number of black South Africans being sent into the mission field.

A lot more work also still needs to be done on work by Africans in the para-church structures. These Para Church organization seem to be doing well sending missionaries outside church structures. There is a need to research on how such groups finance their missionaries. It is possible that answers to such a research inquiry will help solve many problems faced by African missionaries today. This will also go a long way in encouraging many others who are desirous to go but are in churches that are not keen to send them.

The research records stories of mostly African Initiated groups that are involved in missions. There is therefore a need to do a comprehensive research on missions amongst mission-initiated churches. SIM planted the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in Nigeria. AIM also planted the Africa Inland Church (AIC) across East Africa. Some research needs to be done on missions participation in these church groups. How are they doing missions? Is it in the fashion of their planting mission organizations or have they discovered newer expressions of doing missions? Answers to these questions will go a long way in helping many across Africa who are grappling with questions on how missions by Africans should look like.

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