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Ethnicity And Urban Christian Mission: A Study Of
The Meridian And West Volta Presbyteries Of The
Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

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Foreword

It is with tremendous joy that we present to you our fourth volume of the PhD Compendium. Along with the oral defence, the compendium is the last step to completing the doctoral program at SATS. All the contributors to this volume have successfully defended their thesis in an oral defense. I have personally participated in every oral defense and have heard contributors excellently articulate their thesis and its findings.

Going through the topics of the summary articles in this issue, I could not help but notice the diversity of research topics which gives testament to the impressive range of specialization on offer at SATS thanks to our phenomenal and dedicated team of supervisors. In this volume, you will find research topics in hymnody; New Testament Greek linguistics; political theology; philosophical theology; missiology; pastoral theology; mental health; Hebrew lexigraphy; studies in church and society; and intertextuality.

The research journey of any doctoral student from start to finish is often a lonely and challenging one, demanding no small amount of perseverance and dedication. And so, we joyfully commend all our doctoral students for their exceptional work. While we celebrate our doctoral students, we are also aware of the love and support students receive from family and friends, not to mention their supervisors who

tirelessly review research proposals, sections of chapters, chapters and the entire thesis offering expert guidance and feedback—oftentimes forming a mentoring and pastoral bond with their students. SATS would like to thank our dedicated team of supervisors for supporting our students.

Lastly, and most importantly, we want to thank our Lord Jesus Christ who has equipped our students with academic skills and understanding. Not only has he lavished gifts upon our students, but he has been by their sides cheering them on in their academic endeavors. While a living relationship with him and a life of devotion to him and his church is of utmost importance to Christ, he cares very much about theological truth and that to which we apply our minds. My prayer is that each contributor would continue to serve Christ and his church faithfully, and that this volume would be of service to his people.

Robert Falconer, PhD
Head of Research and Publishing

A Linguistic Evaluation of the Calvinist "All without Distinction" Reading of πᾶς in the Pastoral Epistles

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Abstract

This study examines the linguistic viability of the Calvinist "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς, an interpretation that safeguards the Calvinist teachings of double predestination and limited atonement by claiming that in four key passages within the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11) πᾶς denotes not all individual people but all kinds of people. The study undertakes this linguistic analysis by identifying the six manners of restriction found with πᾶς elsewhere: hyperbole, implicit domain restriction, nonveridicality, intensive nouns, collective nouns, and superordinate categories. The study further finds that the key verses lack these linguistic features necessary for such restrictions. Consequently, it demonstrates that the "all without distinction" interpretation is unviable, as

are the Calvinist teachings of double predestination and limited atonement that depend on it. Conversely, it confirms as scriptural teaching that God desires the salvation of all and that Christ died for the sins of all.

1. Introduction

Four passages within the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11) identify the scope of the Father's merciful will or the Son's atonement as πάντες, "all," or πάντες ἄνθρωποι, "all people." Based on such passages, most Christians have taught and believed that God sincerely desires to save all people and that Jesus died for all people. However, many within the Calvinist tradition have denied that God sincerely desires to save all people, instead teaching a double predestination (Reymond 2006; Ware 2006; Daniel 2019, 397–411; Nimmo 2020; Sammons 2022). A prominent view within the Calvinist tradition further denies that Jesus died for all people, instead teaching a limited atonement, often less pejoratively called "definite" or "particular" atonement (Gibson and Gibson 2013a; Trueman 2015; Allen 2016, 35–653; Daniel 2019, 492–531; Horton 2019; Vanhoozer 2020, 490–492). Such Calvinists have needed a way to account for those passages that speak of πάντες or πάντες ἄνθρωποι as being the scope of the Father's merciful will or of the Son's atonement (Gatiss 2012, 41–45; Gibson 2013; Schreiner 2013). Their traditional explanation distinguishes between πᾶς as meaning "all without exception" and as meaning "all without distinction." If πᾶς can mean "all without distinction," this would denote the inclusion of any kind of person but not every individual. According to this interpretation passages that on their face would seem to refute double predestination and limited atonement would no longer do so. This study tests the

linguistic viability of the "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς for these verses in the Pastoral Epistles.

2. The History of the "All Without Distinction" Reading of πᾶς

The "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς seems to have originated with Augustine of Hippo (*Ep.* 149.17; *Enchir.* 103; *Corrept.* 14), who suggests it as a possible way to avoid the thought that in 1 Timothy 2:4 God is said to want something that he would not carry out. He provides Luke 11:42 and 1 Corinthians 10:33 as parallel verses where πᾶς includes all kinds but not all individuals. John Calvin employs this reading in defence of his position on predestination (*Inst.* 3.24.16; [1549–1556] 1998, 38–40, 196; [1552a] 1856, 90; [1552b] 1857, 55–56; 1563, 73–79). Theodore Beza (1588, 192–193) develops the "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς into a more fully argued interpretation, adding eleven more Scripture verses where πᾶς must refer to something less than all individuals. Contemporary writers (Knight 1992, 115, 119; Gatiss 2012, 43; Gibson 2013, 296; Yarbrough 2018, 156) continue in this same interpretive tradition, attempting to use parallel verses to demonstrate a restricted meaning for πᾶς.

The linguistic dimension of the argumentation for the "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς has remained largely unchanged since it was first employed by Augustine. Once these alleged parallel passages have been advanced to demonstrate the existence of more restricted meanings, linguistic arguments are typically discarded in favor of contextual or theological arguments. No apparent investigation has been made into the linguistic features that trigger or enable such a restricted meaning either in the passages from the Pastoral Epistles or in the proposed parallels.

A standard response to the "all without distinction" reading of πᾶς has been first to concede that πᾶς is capable of such limitation but then to argue that such a deviance from the default sense of the word must be not merely permissible in context but dictated by the context (Goodwin [1651] 1840, 158–160; Weeks [1823] 1863, 582–583; Kennedy 1841, 17, 25, 150, 228; Marshall 1989, 61–63). Most recent writers who reject the "all without distinction" reading do so primarily on contextual and logical grounds (Marshall and Towner 1999, 268, 427; Mounce 2000, 85; Marshall 2003, 328–333; Towner 2006, 746; Picirilli 2015, 54–55; Shellrude 2015, 41). Norman Geisler (2004, 354–355) does briefly comment that the linguistic contexts where πᾶς elsewhere is restricted in sense are qualitatively different from those for which this restriction is cited but he does not develop this observation. What linguistically triggers a limited sense for πᾶς elsewhere, and the presence or absence of such factors in the key verses in the Pastoral Epistles, is yet to be addressed.

3. The Theology of the "All Without Distinction" Reading of πᾶς

Calvinists have often restricted the extent of God's merciful will and of Christ's atoning death to the elect (Canons of Dordt [1619] 2001, 1.1.6, 9–11, 2.1.8; Gatiss 2012; Gibson and Gibson 2013a; Trueman 2015; Daniel 2019, 397–411, 426–431, 509–531; Horton 2019; Sammons 2022). However, the primary Calvinist concern motivating these views is to preserve the nature and efficacy of God's merciful will and of Christ's atoning death for the elect themselves. To these Calvinists, the nonnegotiable truth regarding divine election is that it is gracious and certain, arising solely from God's sovereign will and not caused by anything in man (Calvin, *Inst.* 3.22.1–10; 3.24.1–11; [1552a] 1856, 11–12, 23–24, 27, 30–31, 36–37, 149; Perkins 1617,

627, 632). The nonnegotiable truth regarding the atonement is that it is entirely effectual and sufficient to save, not requiring the fulfillment of any additional condition on the part of man (Perkins 1617, 622, 628; Owen [1648] 1862, 200–216, 234–236, 240–243, 253–257; Gill 1796, 2.175–177; Spurgeon 1859, 70–71, 130, 135–136; Gatiss 2012, 10–14, 31–35; Gibson and Gibson 2013b, 46, 51; Williams 2013; Trueman 2015, 40–41, 47, 55–56; Daniel 2019, 507–509, 514–517; Horton 2019, 121–127). Because of an assumption that theology will be internally consistent and that God's acts of election and reprobation are parallel (Calvin, *Inst.* 3.23.1, 4; 3.24.12; [n.d.] 1954, 179; [1552a] 1856, 2, 58; Beza 1587, 594; Gill 1796, 1.289; Hodge ([1872] 1940, 334–335, 339–347, 547–548; Berkhof 1936, 162), the logical consequence of these nonnegotiable truths has been taken to be that God did not want to save, and that Christ did not die for, those who are not ultimately saved (Calvin, *Inst.* 3.21.1, 7, 11; 3.22.11; 3.23.6; 3.24.12–14; [1552a] 1856, 2, 12–13, 58, 60, 63–66, 98–99, 108, 149; Beza 1587, 586, 606, 624–626; Perkins 1617, 609, 621–622, 627, 632; Gill 1796, 1.287–290, 2.173–175; Hodge [1872] 1940, 331–332, 553–554; Boettner 1932, 104–105, 123, 150–152, 159; Berkhof 1936, 155–156; Owen [1648] 1862, 236–240, 246–253, 258–259; Gatiss 2012, 18; Williams 2013, 480; Daniel 2019, 406–407; Horton 2019, 129–130; Sammons 2022, 158–161).

Although these teachings of double predestination and limited atonement serve to safeguard other, more foundational doctrines, these teachings themselves have needed to be safeguarded from several verses which would contradict them (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11). The "all without distinction" reading has become the standard way for Calvinists to understand these verses, because none of the alternatives for understanding the relevant verses in ways that do not contradict double predestination or limited atonement are viable. Augustine's (*Ep.* 149.17; *Enchir.* 103; *Ep.* 217.19; *C. Jul.* 4.8.44) exclusivity reading, by which 1

Timothy 2:4 would merely mean that all people who are saved are saved by God's will, strains the argumentation both in 1 Timothy 2 and in his alleged parallels (John 1:9; Rom 5:18; 1 Cor 15:22). Reading σώζω/σωτήρ as referring to temporal preservation and not eternal salvation (Gill 1796, 2.184; Smyth 1830, 67–69; Wardlaw 1857, 476–477; Baugh 1992, 333–338) ignores the consistent soteriological use of these words in Paul and their collocation with "come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). Understanding μάλιστα in 1 Timothy 4:10 as serving to specify that the "all people" mentioned are "believers" (Skeat 1979; Knight 1992, 203–204; Marshall and Towner 1999, 556–557) relies on an unsubstantiated meaning for μάλιστα (Poythress 2002; Martínez and Yamuza 2017, 584–590). Taking πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις as dependent on ἐπεφάνη in Titus 2:11 (Gill 1796, 2.184) is unlikely due to the word order and still would be asserting that God's grace made its appearance to all people in a salvation-bearing matter. All these other interpretations are unconvincing when taken in isolation, and since no single one of them could be used for all four of the relevant verses, they become entirely unviable. Consequently, the "all without distinction" reading has rightly become the main vehicle for preserving the Calvinist teachings of double predestination and limited atonement over against passages that seem to teach otherwise. Ultimately, the integrity of these teachings depends on the viability of the "all without distinction" reading.

Nevertheless, although double predestination and limited atonement themselves are untenable without the "all without distinction" interpretation, the falsification of this reading does not require abandoning everything motivating the Calvinist theological system. The primary Calvinist concerns over the nature and efficacy of divine election and the atonement are not necessarily dependent on double predestination and limited atonement—they could be retained without them. Now, to

retain them would require some theological modifications—in particular, giving up the prioritization of having an internally coherent system, as contributions from other Christian traditions show. For example, scholastic theology differentiates between God having a "willingness" and an "absolute will" (Aquinas, *ST* I q. 19 a. 6), Lutheran theology allows for tension between a single predestination and a universal merciful will based on the law-gospel distinction (Arand, Kolb, and Nestingen 2012, 214–15), and Anglican theology upholds many other Calvinist tenets while positing that the atonement is sufficient for all people (Crisp 2021, 87–111). These contributions, coupled with how some Calvinists (Spurgeon 1880, 50–51; Piper 2000; Schreiner 2003, 381–383; Ware 2006, 32–35) have incorporated a universal merciful will within their theological system, demonstrate that there are ways to uphold the nature and efficacy of God's election to salvation and Christ's atoning death, even while saying that God sincerely desires to save all people and that Christ died with the intention of saving all people.

4. Linguistic Features That Restrict πᾶς

This section presents the results of a corpus study (Stefanowitsch 2020, 23–38, 57–59) analyzing the 7,711 occurrences of πᾶς found within the Greek NT and the Old Greek translation of the OT. The study identifies six linguistic features that can either cause or allow πᾶς to be restricted so as not to refer to every individual:

Hyperbole
Implicit domain restriction
Nonveridicality
Intensive nouns

Collective nouns
Superordinate categories

4.1. πᾶς with Hyperbole

A hyperbole is an expression that is intensified relative to the literal truth (Claridge 2011, 12; Burgers et al. 2016, 166). Because hyperbole is intended not as deceptive language but as a truth-bearing exaggeration (Norrick 1982, 172–73; Edwards 2000, 359, 363–365; McCarthy and Carter 2004, 152, 162; Brdar-Szabó and Brdar 2010, 415; Claridge 2011, 18–20; Beare and Meade 2015, 78–79), hyperbole can only be utilized in contexts where an exaggeration would be a sufficiently precise form of communication in keeping with Grice's (1989, 26) maxim of quantity. While it is impossible to definitively state that a statement is hyperbolic without already knowing what the ontological truth is to which it refers (Claridge 2011, 5–16; Burgers et al. 2016, 164–166), certain contexts can be identified as infelicitous for hyperbole. This can be done by mentally supplying a softener (Edwards 2000, 352–360) such as "practically" or "seemingly" to make the hyperbole explicit. If the explicit hyperbole is not sufficiently precise to be contextually felicitous, such a statement cannot be hyperbolic—either it would be literally true or it would be a lie. An example of πᾶς being used with hyperbole is the statement that when Herod heard of Jesus's birth, he was disturbed, as was "[virtually] all Jerusalem (πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα) with him" (Matt 2:3). The context does not require numerical precision, so a hyperbolic use of πᾶς would be felicitous.

4.2. πᾶς with Implicit Domain Restriction

Although quantifiers such as "all" or "every" are themselves universal in nature, the domain over which they quantify is usually restricted, either explicitly or implicitly (Iacona 2016). The domain over which πᾶς scopes will be implicitly restricted to what is relevant to the context, such as by being what is relevant to the topic being discussed, to the setting, to the people involved, or to a set that excludes a party specifically mentioned in the context. An example of πᾶς being used with implicit domain restriction occurs in the account of the feeding of the five thousand, where "all (πάντες) [who were there] ate and became full" (Mark 6:42). When πᾶς is used in the plural and with a noun, the noun will always have the article when the domain is restricted to a definite set, as in Acts 18:23, where Paul was "strengthening all the disciples (πάντας τοὺς μαθητάς) [who were there]."

4.3. πᾶς with Nonveridicality

Sentences which do not make a positive assertion of truth about a specific event, such as negated sentences, protases of conditionals, modal expressions, and generics/habituals, all contain nonveridicality operators (Giannakidou 1998, 2002). Because of differences between languages as to whether a quantifier will outscope the nonveridicality operator or the nonveridicality operator will outscope the quantifier (Giannakidou 2000, 2006; Giannakidou and Zeijlstra 2017), Greek must use a universal quantifier like πᾶς where English either can or must use an indefinite quantifier like "any." An example of πᾶς being used with nonveridicality is seen in the modal expression of 1 Corinthians 10:25. In Greek, a universal quantifier outscopes the modality: "<As for EVERYTHING (πᾶν) sold in

the market <you may eat it>>," but to communicate the same meaning in English, the modality would outscope an indefinite quantifier: "<It is PERMISSIBLE <for you to eat anything sold in the market>>."

4.4. πᾶς with Intensive Nouns

Intensive nouns (Van de Velde 1995) are gradable abstract nouns (Haas and Jugnet 2018). When modifying such nouns, πᾶς indicates the highest degree of those nouns. An example of πᾶς with an intensive noun is the prayer that God would grant them "to speak with all boldness (μετὰ παρρησίας πάσης)" (Acts 4:29), referring to entirely bold speech.

4.5. πᾶς with Collective Nouns

Collective nouns are singular nouns such as "group," "family," or "committee" that are made up of multiple members. Collective nouns are not semantically identical to plurals but refer to a collective entity (Barker 1992; Schwarzschild 1996, 159–192; Wisniewski, Clancy, and Tillman 2005, 108, 113–115). Consequently, something said of a collective noun may be true only of the group as such (Ritchie 2014, 2017), and not necessarily be true of the individuals that make up that collective entity. When πᾶς is used with a collective noun, it can potentially refer to all the collective entities but may not always refer to every individual within them. An example of this is the statement that "all the countries (πᾶσαι αἱ χῶραι) came to Egypt to make a purchase in front of Joseph" (Gen 41:57), which would not necessarily mean every individual from each of those countries came.

4.6. πᾶς with Superordinate Categories

Superordinate categories are umbrella terms referring to multiple basic-level categories. Examples would be general words such as "food" or "animal," which each have multiple basic-level category terms within them, such as "lion" or "cheeseburger." Superordinate categories can pass the picturability test (Lakoff 1987, 51–52; Cruse 2002, 17; Croft and Cruse 2004, 83), in that one cannot picture a superordinate category directly but must pick a particular basic-level example to picture mentally. They can also pass the "name three" test, in that a person, when told to name three of that noun, will identify three of those basic-level categories (e.g., dog, bear, moose; or cheeseburgers, waffles, ice cream) as opposed to three individual instances of them (e.g., Fido, Fluffy, Rex; or the oatmeal I had for breakfast today, the turkey we ate last Thanksgiving, the chocolate bar in my pocket). Because superordinate categories feature taxonymic hyponymy (Cruse 2002, 16–17), they can also pass the "kind of" test (Cruse 2002, 12–13; Croft and Cruse 2004, 147–148), in which the basic-level category can be said to be a "kind of" the superordinate category ("a lion is a kind of animal"; "a cheeseburger is a kind of food"); the single-feature test (Cruse 2002, 13, 18; Croft and Cruse 2004, 148), in which the basic-level term cannot be defined over against the superordinate category merely by the addition of a single feature but must instead be defined encyclopedically; and the essence test (Cruse 2002, 15–16; Croft and Cruse 2004, 150), in that basic-level categories specify the essence of their superordinate categories.

When πᾶς is used with a superordinate category, it can sometimes refer to all the hyponymous basic-level categories without referring to all the individuals within those basic-level categories. An example of this is Jesus's comment that the Pharisees tithe "every vegetable (πᾶν λάχανον)."

As a superordinate category that can pass all five of the diagnostic tests outlined above, λάχανον can be used in reference to each of its basic-level categories without specifically referring to every individual vegetable in existence.

4.7. Unrestricted πᾶς

Several passages claimed as support for the "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς do not bear any restriction to πᾶς at all but have another explanation, either linguistic or theological. For example, in John 1:7 πάντες is found in a ἵνα clause, communicating God's intention that all might believe, but not actually stating that all will believe, so no restriction is necessary.

4.8. Analysis

None of these six manners of restriction are actually different meanings for the quantifier. To even speak of them as "restrictions" is somewhat catachrestic, because πᾶς always bears universal quantification. Hyperbole is not a modification of that universality but a nonliteral use of it. Domain restriction limits what is being quantified, not the universal degree of quantification itself. Nonveridicality does not change the universal nature of the quantification, as the use of the less typical gloss "any" reflects merely a difference in scoping practices between languages. Intensive nouns still receive universal quantification with πᾶς; it is just that it is their degree and not their number that is being quantified. The collective entities referred to by collective nouns do receive universal quantification with πᾶς, even if something is not being predicated of all their individual

members. Similarly, with superordinate categories, πᾶς is not changing its meaning to "all kinds of"; instead, it refers to all the basic-level categories within those superordinate categories.

There is also no evidence to justify attempts to place restrictions on πᾶς beyond these six that are listed. Therefore, when there is a question over whether a given instance of πᾶς has some limitation on it, the passage in question can be tested against these six kinds of limitations to measure the linguistic possibility of such an interpretation.

5. An Examination of the "All without Distinction" Reading of πᾶς

This section examines whether the key soteriological passages within the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11) contain the linguistic features necessary for the six kinds of restriction identified for πᾶς in the previous section.

5.1. Hyperbole

Hyperbole would be infelicitous in 1 Timothy 2:4 because the statement that "God wants [practically] all people to be saved" would not be able to serve as support for the command in v. 1 to pray for all people. First Timothy 2:6 is found in the same context, so the same situation applies. Hyperbole would perhaps be felicitous in 1 Timothy 4:10, but there does not seem to be a way to make such a hyperbole support the Calvinist interpretation of the verse due to the final phrase μάλιστα πιστῶν, "especially believers." Whoever the "[practically] all people" include would still have to be more than those included among "believers."

Hyperbole would seem contextually felicitous in Titus 2:11, but there is no reason to adopt such an interpretation for this verse if the other three cannot be read hyperbolically. Additionally, if "all" in these verses must be restricted to a group as small as the elect, it would remain a minority of the world's population. As a result, these people, while numerically still a large group, could not be called "everyone" except by an unacceptably gross level of overexaggeration.

5.2. Implicit Domain Restriction

None of the verses in question feature a relevant set for the domain of $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma$ to be implicitly restricted to. Additionally, the lack of an article with "all people" (1 Tim 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11) further indicates that "all people" is not referring back to such a contextually implicit set.

5.3. Nonveridicality

First Timothy 2:4, 6 do not contain nonveridicality operators. Both 1 Timothy 4:10 and Titus 2:11 do contain nonveridicality operators, as there is habituality inherent in a characterizing noun such as $\sigma\omega\tau\acute{\eta}\rho$ and a characterizing adjective such as $\sigma\omega\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\iota\sigma\varsigma$. However, the effect of this habituality operator must be noted. This habituality is why we know that God being Savior of all does not necessarily have to mean he actually does save all, and similarly why God's grace being salvific for all does not necessarily have to mean that it actually does save all. Even with the nonveridicality present, these verses communicate that God in some sense intends himself and his grace to be saving toward all people, even if they are not all ultimately saved.

5.4. Intensive Noun

The word ἄνθρωπος is not an intensive noun, as it is neither abstract nor gradable when it has the meaning "human being."

5.5. Collective Noun

The word ἄνθρωπος is not a collective noun. While the word "people," a common English gloss for the plural of ἄνθρωπος, is a singular collective noun, this is merely a quirk of English, as "people" is used as the suppletive plural of "person." The Greek word ἄνθρωπος merely refers to an individual human being.

5.6. Superordinate Category

The word ἄνθρωπος is a basic-level term and not a superordinate category. It fails all five of the diagnostic tests for identifying superordinate categories. It fails the picturability test, in that one can picture a generic human being. It fails the "name three" test, in that a person, when told to name three ἄνθρωποι, will name three specific human beings (e.g., Peter, James, John) and not three kinds of human beings (e.g., farmers, Indians, paupers). It fails the "kind of" test, in that it feels generally unacceptable to say, "A farmer/an Indian/a pauper is a kind of human being." It fails the single-feature test, as its basic-level categories can generally be defined over against it by adding a single feature (a farmer is a farming human being, an Indian is an Indian human being, a pauper is a poor human being). It fails the essence test, in that its basic-level categories do not specify the essence of human-ness. As ἄνθρωπος is not a superordinate

category, πᾶς cannot be used with it merely in reference to kinds of people but would have to be referring to all individual people.

5.7. Analysis

None of the six possible restrictions on πᾶς can support the Calvinist interpretation that seeks to limit the referent of πᾶς in these key verses (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11). Consequently, these verses must be understood as being universal in scope.

This linguistic analysis, then, contradicts the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination, which limits the scope of the Father's merciful will. Passages that state that God "wants all people to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4), that God "is Savior of all people" (1 Tim 4:10), and that God's grace "bears salvation for all people" (Titus 2:11) must be speaking of all people.

Similarly, this linguistic analysis contradicts the Calvinist doctrine of limited atonement, which limits the extent of the Son's atonement. Passages that state that Christ Jesus "gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim 2:6) and that his coming "bears salvation for all people" (Titus 2:11) must be speaking of all people.

Both those arguing for the "all without distinction" interpretation and those arguing against it have generally agreed that πᾶς is linguistically capable of being restricted, and therefore much of the argument has revolved around whether the immediate context of the verses or the wider context of all of Scripture supports such a restriction. This has left the debate at a centuries-long standstill. However, the linguistic analysis presented in this section shows that evaluating the viability and legitimacy of the "all without distinction" interpretation does not need to be relegated to the area of warring dogmatic approaches. The very point on which both

sides have been in agreement—that πᾶς is capable of restriction—can be sufficiently refined so as to put to bed this long-standing interpretive question. Yes, πᾶς is capable of restriction. In fact, it is capable of six different kinds of restrictions that can each be documented and quantified. However, none of those restrictions are linguistically possible where the "all without distinction" interpretation requires them to be.

6. Theological and Pastoral Implications of Rejecting the "All without Distinction" Reading of πᾶς

Rejecting the "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς, as well as the teachings of double predestination and limited atonement that depend on it, has significant effects on the way we speak about God and how he relates to people.

First, abandoning double predestination and limited atonement eliminates the reticence many Calvinists seem to feel in speaking of God having a sincere love for all people (Horton 2019, 133; Sammons 2022). Although some Calvinists do acknowledge that God has a more general love for the world, their overriding concern is typically to safeguard God's special love for the elect, so much so that any love for all people is de-emphasized or explained in such a way that there is little love left to it (Hodge [1872] 1940, 549–551; Carson 2000, 16–17, 77–78). But when one recognizes that the Bible does speak of a sincere love that God has for the world, which includes a universal merciful will and results in an unlimited atonement, this divine love for all people can be freely expressed and embraced (Deutschlander 2015, 111–113, 290–292, 372–377; Allen 2016, 783, 791; 2019, 175–177).

Second, abandoning double predestination and limited atonement enables us to positively tell non-Christians that God wants them to be saved and that Jesus died for their sins. As opposed to Calvinist evangelistic formulations that exploit ambiguous wording or inadvertently make one's prospective faith the condition for the very thing in which they are to believe (Nicole 1995, 410; Gatiss 2012, 113–118), this direct statement of God's desire to save them and of Christ's atoning death for them makes for a gospel proclamation in much more certain and less conditional terms.

Third, abandoning double predestination and limited atonement preserves God's will, Christ's cross, and the means of grace as places Christians can seek assurance when they find themselves questioning the genuineness of their faith and the reality of their election. If double predestination and limited atonement were true, Christians unsure about whether their faith is authentic have nothing else to fall back on other than to examine their own hearts and lives (Calvin, *Inst*. 3.24.4; [1552a] 1856, 117–118, 122; Canons of Dordt ([1619] 2001, 1.1.12)—which is often what had precipitated such a spiritual crisis in the first place (Deutschlander 2015, 360). Conversely, because God sincerely wants to save all and Christ died for all, even when someone has doubts about their faith, they can look to God's expressed will to save them and to Christ's death for their sins (Deutschlander 2015, 291). They can also seek further assurance in the fact that this sincere saving will and atoning death has been communicated to them personally and individually within baptism, communion, and absolution.

The Calvinist and the Arminian each claim their position provides greater assurance of salvation, such that both a Calvinist (Ferguson 2013, 631) and an Arminian (Cottrell 2006, 133–134) will confidently cite the hymn "Blessed Assurance" as an emphatic closing statement to their own position. And each of them does preserve important parts of biblical

assurance, but they each, ironically, would have people looking inward to themselves to supply the part of assurance missing in their theological system.

The Calvinist finds assurance in knowing that if God wants to save them, he will, and that if Christ died for them, they will be saved. However, the Calvinist must look exclusively to their faith to know that God wants to save them and that Christ died for them. The Arminian, on the other hand, finds assurance in knowing that God wants to save them and that Christ died for them. However, the Arminian must look exclusively to their faith to know that this desire for their salvation will be realized and that Christ's death for them will bring them its intended results.

When one gives up the need for a theological system with complete internal coherence from a logical perspective, it is possible to retain both these parts of biblical assurance that are cherished by these two respective Christian traditions. When one, perhaps paradoxically but certainly biblically, embraces God's unconditional election of some to salvation side-by-side with God's universal desire to save and embraces an atonement that is universal in intent and yet entirely effective, there is a more comprehensive assurance. When someone doubts whether they have faith, they can find extra assurance in a universal grace that is not circumscribed by faith. When someone doubts whether they will keep their faith, they can find extra assurance in an unfailing grace that will keep them in the faith. And through all of this, they can find extra assurance from a more robust theology of the means of grace, bringing this universal grace to them in a personal and powerful way.

7. Conclusion

When proclaiming the gospel to someone who is not yet converted, it makes a difference whether that person can be told that God positively desires their salvation and that Christ positively died for their sins. When providing gospel assurance to a Christian who doubts that they truly believe and are among the elect, it makes a difference whether that person, instead of being pointed back to their own faith, can be pointed to God's merciful will for them, to Christ's atoning death for them, and to the means of grace as they have been applied to them. Therefore, passages that present God as desiring the salvation of all and Christ's death as making atonement for all (1 Tim 2:4, 6; 4:10; Titus 2:11) are significant not only for formulating a theological system but also for carrying out evangelism and for providing pastoral care. Accordingly, when an interpretation is proposed that differs significantly from the natural reading of such verses, as the "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς does, this proposed interpretation must be fully examined to determine whether it does justice to the language of Scripture.

 This study, then, took up as its main research question: In what ways does a linguistic analysis of πᾶς in 1 Timothy 2:4, 6; 4:10 and Titus 2:11 affect the Reformed Calvinist doctrine that limits the scope of the Father's merciful will and of the Son's atonement? A linguistic analysis of πᾶς in these verses falsifies both the "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς and the Calvinist teachings of double predestination and limited atonement that depend on it. In turn, it confirms that these verses do attribute to God a universal merciful will and to Christ's death on the cross a universal atonement.

The "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς, is ultimately falsified by this linguistic analysis because it relies on an improper use of parallel passages. There are indeed many other passages where the referent of πᾶς is something less than every individual in existence. However, in those other passages, there is a specific reason why the referent of πᾶς is limited, and these various reasons can be quantified linguistically. Hyperbole, implicit domain restriction, nonveridicality, intensive nouns, collective nouns, and superordinate categories can all result in sentences that restrict what is referred to by πᾶς. However, none of these linguistic features are present within the relevant verses within the Pastoral Epistles such as would keep them from stating that God wants to save all people and that Christ died to make atonement for all people.

The Calvinist teachings of double predestination and limited atonement are falsified along with this "all without distinction" interpretation because these verses contradict such teachings when one realizes that the meaning of these verses cannot be evaded via the "all without distinction" reading. God does sincerely want all people to be saved, and Christ did die to make atonement for all people. Nevertheless, the teachings Calvinists have sought to safeguard by double predestination and limited atonement, namely, that God's grace is solely responsible for the salvation of the elect and that Christ's death effectively accomplished salvation for the elect, remain scriptural truth and can and should be believed even once one gives up problematic teachings such as double predestination and limited atonement.

Therefore, even though it might not be entirely consistent from a logical perspective, we retain Scripture's teaching—and simultaneously receive Scripture's fullest comfort—when we see God's grace as both universal (wanting all people to be saved) and also effective (saving his

chosen people for no other reason than his grace), and similarly when we see Christ's atoning death as being both universal (paying for the sins of all people) and also effective (accomplishing the salvation of the elect with no further contributing cause necessary). This understanding enables God's sure and saving love to be communicated to—and to be appropriated by—a person who doubts whether they have faith, a person who doubts whether they will keep their faith, and a person who does not yet have faith.

Consequently, in light of this linguistic analysis, the "all without distinction" interpretation of πᾶς should be abandoned, as should the teachings of double predestination and limited atonement. On another level, though, the "all without distinction" reading and the teachings of double predestination and of limited atonement never really needed to be formulated in the first place. True, they might have served the purpose of ensuring several biblical teachings within a system that has assumed complete internal logical coherence. However, far better than any perfectly consistent system is the paradoxical scriptural truth: God has effectively chosen some for faith and salvation solely out of his grace, and yet he also sincerely wants all to believe and be saved. Christ has effectively bought the elect for God by his death, and yet Christ's death also made atonement for the sins of all.

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A Critical Theological Examination of Little's Creation-Order Theodicy's Soteriology in Light of the Coexistence of Gratuitous Evil with the Benevolence and Sovereignty of God

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Abstract

This research, entitled "A Critical Theological Examination of Little's Creation-Order Theodicy's Soteriology in Light of the Coexistence of Gratuitous Evil with the Benevolence and Sovereignty of God," sought to evaluate the soteriological provision in the theodicy. Upon identifying

inherent weaknesses in the soteriology, the aim of the research was to revise Little's Creation-Order Theodicy to account for a soteriology that is in harmony with the coexistence of gratuitous evil with the benevolence and sovereignty of God.

The integrative theology methodology proposed by Lewis and Demarest was utilized for the research (Lewis and Demarest, 1996). The chosen methodology allowed for the integration of information from a variety of disciplines. The methodological steps followed were: (1) evaluation of Little's theodicy, (2) evaluation of major Christian monotheistic theodicies, both historical and contemporary, (3) exegetical analysis of pertinent biblical texts, (4) construction of theologically formulated revisions to the Creation-Order Theodicy, (5) apologetic interaction of the revised Creation-Order Theodicy with major Christian monotheistic theodicies, and (6) evaluation of theological relevance of revised the Creation-Order Theodicy.

The research culminated in a revised Creation-Order Theodicy. Most significantly, the revised theodicy contained a soteriology that provides for the salvation of all who would be saved. The following biblically, theologically, and logically sound revisions were incorporated into the original Creation-Order Theodicy: (1) a soteriological understanding of God's benevolence, (2) the actualization of the world in which all who would be saved are saved, (3) dichotomization between the best way to the best possible world from the best of all possible worlds, to include qualifying and quantifying criteria for each, and (4) a consistent position on the gratuitous nature of evil.

The revised Creation-Order Theodicy provided a paradigm shift on how to counsel the suffering, how to engage a fallen world, and the development of a new theological curriculum.

1. Introduction

The Creation-Order Theodicy is the work of Dr Bruce Little. Little explores and defends the possibility of the coexistence of gratuitous evil with the sovereignty of God (Little 2013, 46–49). Antithetical to greater good theodicies, Little argues that God's benevolence is not undermined by the existence of gratuitous evil and is expressed through God actualizing the best of all possible worlds (Little 2005, 150–152). However, Little's theodicy fails to provide for the salvation of all who would be saved, a deficiency that I considered a fundamental weakness in Little's work. This research aimed at resolving the primary soteriological deficiency identified in the Creation-Order Theodicy.

In constructing a resolution to the soteriological deficiency identified in the Creation-Order Theodicy, revisions were needed regarding Little's position on the actualization of the best of all possible worlds and the lack of consistency on the nature of gratuitous evil. Little's stipulation for what constitutes the best of all possible worlds was determined to be incongruent with a biblical understanding of the benevolence of God and negated a sound soteriology (2 Pet 3:9). Little's criterion for the best of all possible worlds only requires that God achieve the optimal balance between good and evil, and between the saved and the unsaved. Such an optimization could render a person saved in one world, but unsaved in another world. Their salvation, albeit through their libertarian free choice, would be a function of which world God chose to actualize. A revision of the criterion of which world God would actualize, could remedy the optimization shortfall. By changing the criterion of which world to actualize to all who would be saved, no one would be lost as a function of God actualizing the world. In consideration of the benevolence of God,

such a criterion would be reflective of the manifestation of his benevolence and coherent with the biblical record.

The initial research required an analysis of the chosen theodicies and was conducted based on the fundamental elements of Little's theodicy. The fundamental elements were: (1) evil, (2) creation-order, (3) benevolence and sovereignty of God, (4) libertarian freedom, (5) soteriology, (6) middle knowledge and the best of all possible worlds, and (7) gratuitous evil. After analyzing Little's theodicy and identifying its critical deficiencies, the alternative theodicies were evaluated to see if they provided contributions to rectify the soteriological and other associated deficiencies identified in Little's Creation-Order Theodicy. The theodical analysis failed to resolve the soteriological deficiency identified within the Creation-Order Theodicy.

After a careful analysis of Little's Creation-Order Theodicy, historical and contemporary major monotheistic theodicies, and the biblical text; a revision to the Creation-Order Theodicy that incorporated a soteriology that provides for the salvation of all who would be saved was constructed. The proposal of a sound theodical soteriology required a coherent understanding of the coexistence of gratuitous evil with the benevolence and sovereignty of God. The biblical text informed the position that the research would maintain regarding gratuitous evil and the benevolence and sovereignty of God. The new theodical doctrine once introduced back into the framework of the Creation-Order Theodicy, offered a soteriological resolution, and provided for the simultaneous coexistence of gratuitous evil with the benevolence and sovereignty of God.

2. Analysis of the Fundamentals

2.1. *Evil*

Like many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Little defines evil as a privation (Little 2005, 134; Augustine 1955, § 2.19.53; Aquinas 2014, § 1.49.1; Geisler and Bocchino 2001, 233). Ontologically, God could not create a non-contingent and perfect creation because only God is necessary and perfect. Although God created humanity as close to perfect as possible, the contingent human cannot be equal to the necessary and perfect God (Little 2005, 134–135). The contingent nature of humanity creates the privation of creaturely perfection and thus the potential for evil (Little 2005, 141–142). While the act of creation does make evil possible, evil is not necessary (p. 135).

2.2. *Creation-order and Sovereignty*

Creation-order, the "*modus vivendi,*" is the structure whereby humanity interacts with God, (Little 2005, 135; 2010, 84–92). Creation-order stands in contrast to the macroevolution and natural order approaches proposed by Dembski and Hasker respectively (Dembski 2009, 42; Hasker 2008, 139). Within the creation-order, there are rules by which humanity must abide. The choices that humanity has are limited within the creation-order (Little 2010, 87). The limitations set the parameters for humanity, while simultaneously allowing humanity to have full libertarian free choice within the set of available choices. The individual has an authentic mind and can act volitionally, thus being fully culpable for their choices. Similarly, the physical laws of nature are part of the creation-order (p. 90). The predictability and regularity of the laws of nature throughout the

universe allow for humanity to live safely and to harness the power of the physical world.

Also, within creation-order is covenantal ordering (Little 2010, 91). Within the created order, God has limited himself, through the adherence to covenants (Gen 9:11). The covenantal ordering bears directly on the understanding and application of God's sovereignty. Those who hold to a meticulous providence understanding of God's sovereignty, such as Irenaeus and Augustine, insist that everything that happens in creation has a purpose (Irenaeus 2016, §2982; Augustine 2013, Loc. 5954-5965). The justification for God allowing evil to happen is that he has a purpose for each evil, either to bring about a greater good or prevent a worse evil. Little argues that the meticulous providence understanding of God's sovereignty would, in effect, make God responsible for the very evils that he prohibits (Little 2005, 181–182).

Antithetical to the meticulous providence understanding of God's sovereignty, Little suggests that God has voluntarily, without any external influence, decided on how he would interact with humanity (Little 2005, 136). God, being necessary, is ontologically different from contingent humanity (Little 2005, 136; MacGregor 2005, 1). To have a truly volitional relationship with contingent humanity; God sovereignly gave humans the ability to make real choices. Little and Olson agree that the construct of such a relationship requires that God, within the time and space of creation, self-limits the full expression of some of his attributes (Little 2005, 136; Olson 2009, 44). Scholars such as Fouts, Hendryx, Highfield, and Haas, consider any self-limitation of God to be a weakness which denies God of his sovereignty (Fouts 1993; Hendryx 2018; Highfield 2002; Haas 2011, 13).

2.3. Benevolence

Little denies the greater good understanding of God's benevolence, namely that God must bring about a greater good or prevent a worse evil to justify each evil which he allows (Little 2005, 112–113). Instead, Little suggests that through his middle knowledge and consistent with his benevolence, God will actualize the best of all possible worlds. God's benevolence would require the actualization of such a world (Little 2010, 95–99). Little stipulates that the best of all possible worlds will have the optimal balance between good and evil, and the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved (Little 2010, 121). Based on a definition of God's benevolence being the expression of his unselfish concern and welfare for humanity, I argued that Little's criterion for the best of all possible worlds is irreflective of God's benevolence (Ryrie 1999, 44; Erickson 1998, 318–319). Little uses the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved as a standard of God's benevolence (Little 2010, 121). I maintained that a standard that merely achieves the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved could render a person saved in one contingent world and unsaved in another. Even though each person freely chooses whether to accept or reject God, their salvation could be directly impacted by which world God chooses to actualize, even though the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved would be achieved. Therefore, I proposed that if God's benevolence is understood as being concerned for the welfare of all of humanity, then the manifestation of his benevolence would provide for the salvation of all who would be saved. Further, Craig suggests, and I agree, that God would lovingly actualize those who reject him into their least culpable set of counterfactuals, while still honoring their libertarian free choices (Craig 1995, 9). Such a manifestation of God's benevolence would determine which world he actualized.

2.4. Libertarian Freedom

Libertarian freedom is the concept that God has given humans the ability to make free choices within the two or more possibilities which are available to them (Little 2010, 14). In deciding between the available choices, humans exercise moral evaluations. Although God, through his middle knowledge, knows what decisions man will make; God does not determine the decisions (p. 94). Libertarian freedom is congruent with the understanding of God's self-limiting sovereignty. Libertarian freedom conflicts with the predestination and deterministic views of reformed scholars such as Calvin (Calvin 2010, Loc. 896). Hasker notes that under the compatibilist view, the choices a person makes have been predetermined and yet, that person is held responsible for their moral choices (Hasker 2008, 153).

2.5. Soteriology

Little's soteriology stands in opposition to an Augustinian type of gratuitous election and predestination-based soteriology. Augustine and Aquinas both held the position that God gratuitously elected to predestine some to salvation and others to reprobation (Augustine 2013, Loc. 171311-171321; Aquinas 2005, 580). Little's soteriology eliminates God's gratuitous election and predestination of individuals as the causation for who is saved and who is unsaved. Instead, Little's soteriology is demonstrated through his argument that the actualization of the best of all possible worlds would include the optimal balance between those who are saved and those who are unsaved (Little 2005, 155). Little explains that those who are unsaved are unsaved by their own libertarian free will choices

and God is not responsible for their choices (Little 2005, 138,155,157,184). I found Little's criterion of achieving the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved to be a deficiency in his soteriology. Depending on which world God chose to actualize; the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved could be achieved. However, a particular person could be saved in one world yet unsaved in another world, although the optimal balance between saved and unsaved was still obtained. As a function of obtaining an optimal balance, Little's soteriology does not account for the salvation of all who would be saved. I contended that God, being benevolent, would want as many people to be saved as possible.

Like Little, Craig argues for the actualization of the best of all possible worlds, with the best world containing the optimal balance between the saved and the unsaved (Craig 1989, 184). However, Craig also contends for the existence of Transworld damnation, the state of being whereby "any person who freely does not respond to God's grace and so is lost in every world feasible for God in which that person exists" (p. 184). I maintained that Craig's theory of Transworld damnation suffers from shortcomings. The most significant shortcoming of the Transworld damnation theory is that it is based on facts that are not in evidence. Craig's entire theory rests on assumptions of counterfactuals that cannot be proven. Scripturally, 1 Samuel 13:13 and Matthew 11:23 indicate that counterfactuals can result in different outcomes. We do not know those outcomes; therefore, I concluded that Transworld damnation cannot be evidentially demonstrated. It is impossible to definitively state that an individual would be lost in every possible counterfactual situation. Thus, neither Little nor Craig provide a soteriology whereby all who would be saved are saved.

2.6. Middle Kowledge and the Best of all Possible Worlds

Little has adopted a belief in the middle knowledge of God (Little 2005, 147). The concept of middle knowledge was introduced in Molina's *Concordia* (Molina 2004, §4.52.9). Middle knowledge is the knowledge that God has of the undetermined acts of "His free moral agents in all possible circumstances" (Little 2005, 146). Also subscribing to a belief in God's middle knowledge are Flint and Laing who use the term 'counterfactual' to describe the nondetermined acts of God's free moral agents (Flint 1998, 40; Laing 2018, §8151).

Through God's middle knowledge, his knowledge of all counterfactuals, Little postulates that God chooses which world to actualize (Little 2005, 147). Further, God must choose to actualize the best of all possible worlds due to his omnibenevolence. The best of all possible worlds, according to Little, would be a world which contained the optimal balance between good and evil as well as the optimal balance between the saved and unsaved (Little 2010, 121). Craig, alongside Little, proposes that the criterion for the best of all possible worlds is the achievement of the optimal balance between the saved and the unsaved (Craig 1989, 184). Molina, the architect of the theory of middle knowledge, determined that God's selection of which world to actualize would be determined solely by his sovereignty and gratuitous predestination regarding the saved and unsaved (Molina 2004, §4.14.13.53.2.13; 2009, §7.23.4–5.1.11.7-10). Laing, also a proponent of God's middle knowledge, denies that God must actualize the best of all possible worlds (Laing 2018, §5115). Laing reasons that God will actualize the world that best meets his purposes. Appealing to mystery, Laing asserts that we cannot know the goals and purposes that God intends, therefore we cannot accurately ascribe the criterion of what the

best world would be. Rennie argues against adopting the theory of middle knowledge, insisting that God would only have a probable knowledge of contingent choices in lieu of a certain knowledge of them (Rennie 2019, 5).

Geisler likewise argued against the existence of middle knowledge (Geisler 2010, 143–144). Geisler maintained that middle knowledge would undermine God's sovereignty (p. 143). Additionally, Geisler contended that middle knowledge required a linear progression of God's knowledge, God knowing things and then making decisions accordingly (p. 148). In lieu of a linear progression of knowledge, Geisler maintained that God knows all things intuitively and simultaneously, not progressively. Regarding Geisler's claim that middle knowledge would require a linear progression of God's knowledge, I did not agree. I argued that God's middle knowledge is likewise intuitive and simultaneous, not requiring any linear progression of time or knowledge.

In defining the best of all possible worlds, Little puts parameters on defining what constitutes the world. Little defines the world as existing from the beginning of creation to the full manifestation of the kingdom of God throughout eternity (Little 2005, 147). Although Little contends that he has defined what the best of all possible worlds is, the world that has the optimal balance between good and evil as well as the optimal balance between the saved and the unsaved, I argued that his terminology does not give definitive qualifiers or quantifiers as to what the best would be. To require only the optimal balance between the saved and the unsaved could result in an individual being unsaved in the actualized world, where they would have been saved in an unactualized world. Clearly, Little's optimal balance criterion does not provide for the best soteriological situation for each individual.

Geisler, Bocchino and Corduan developed a dichotomized definition for understanding the best of all possible worlds (Geisler and Bocchino 2001, 235; Geisler and Corduan 1988, 345). Geisler and Bocchino denied that this actualized world is the best of all possible worlds (Geisler and Bocchino 2001, 235). Instead, Geisler, Bocchino and Corduan, maintained that the actualized world is the best way to achieve the best of all possible worlds – heaven (Geisler and Bocchino 2001, 235; Geisler and Corduan 1988, 345). Geisler, Bocchino and Cordaun stipulated that the actualized world must have the most moral value and achieve the greatest good possible. However, they failed to consider the salvation of humanity as a qualifier or quantifier in determining what world would be the best world to achieve the final, best of all possible worlds. Additionally, they failed to offer any means by which to assess whether the actualized world is the best way to achieve the best of all possible worlds.

Regarding heaven, the best of all possible worlds, Geisler and Corduan explained that a sinless heaven is better than any existence on earth where there is sin (Geisler and Corduan 1988, 313). The state of being in heaven where there is no sin is a quantifiable measure of what is best. No sin is better than the smallest amount of sin. Although I argued that Geisler, Bocchino and Corduan did not successfully quantify or qualify the best way to the best of all possible worlds, I did find that dichotomizing the actualized world from the future world in heaven is a valuable construct in building a soteriologically centered revision of Little's Creation-Order Theodicy.

2.7. Gratuitous Evil

Little affirms the possibility of the existence of gratuitous evil (Little 2013, 46-49). In rebutting any greater good reason for God to allow evil,

Little offers a six-point argument: (1) to fight for social justice would be to undermine the greater good that would be obtained if the evils went unchallenged, (2) the greater good makes God dependent on evil in order to do good, (3) there is no way to positively measure the value of the good that is associated with a particular evil, (4) it is a logical fallacy to argue that the end justifies the means, (5) a greater good reason requires an overly deterministic operation of God's sovereignty, and (6) if the greater good reasoning were valid, then the greater the evils that are allowed, the greater the corresponding goods will be, so evil should never be stopped. Borofsky contends the argument for the existence of gratuitous evil answers questions and resolves issues that the greater good theodical position does not (Borofsky 2011, 6).

Although Little argues convincingly for the existence of gratuitous evil, Little equivocates on his stance stating that even if most evils were gratuitous, it would not mean that all evils are gratuitous (Little 2013, 45). I maintained that Little's equivocation is problematic. Having argued competently for the existence of gratuitous evil, and against a greater good rationale for evil, Little undermines his own argument by giving allowance for non-gratuitous evil. If, as Little presented, the argument against the greater good pertains to one evil, it should pertain to all evils.

Hasker likewise endorses a belief in gratuitous evil (Hasker 2008, 203–207). However, Hasker reaches his conclusion from an open theistic perspective. MacGregor also believes in gratuitous evil (MacGregor 2012, 174). Building a strong argument for gratuitous evil, MacGregor presents propositions that are similar to those in Little's argument (MacGregor 2012, 171–172; Little 2013, 46–49). Contrary to the equivocating position held by Little, MacGregor holds a consistent position regarding gratuitous evil, namely that all evil is gratuitous.

Unlike Little, both historical and contemporary greater good theodicists deny the existence of gratuitous evil. Historically, theodicists such as Augustine, Aquinas, Molina, and Leibniz all held to a greater good justification for evil (Augustine 2016, §XI, 7187; Aquinas 2014, §1.2.2; Molina 2004, §4.3.53.3; Leibniz 1996, part 1, pp. 62;86). The argument was simple, God must bring about a greater good or prevent a worse evil for every evil allowed. Similarly, contemporary theodicists Geisler, Bocchino, and Craig, have held to a greater good justification for evil (Geisler and Bocchino 2001, 239; Craig 2016, 3). Craig bases his argument on the epistemic distance between God and man; man simply does not know the mind of God and his purposes for allowing evils (Craig 2017, §958).

3. Formulation of a Soteriologically Centered, Revised Creation-Order Theodicy

Little's Creation-Order Theodicy provides a strong theodical framework, yet I considered it to be deficient in several aspects. The proposed revisions of the Creation-Order Theodicy provided rectification of the following deficiencies: (1) a definition and outworking of God's benevolence that better reflects the biblical text, (2) a soteriology that provides for the salvation of all who would be saved, (3) dichotomization of the best way to the best of all possible worlds from the best of all possible worlds, offering qualification and quantification for both timeframes of existence, and (4) a consistent position on the existence of gratuitous evil.

3.1. Benevolence and Soteriology

Little claims that God demonstrates his benevolence by creating the best of all possible worlds, consisting of the optimal balance between good and evil and the optimal balance between the saved and the unsaved (Little 2005, 150;153; Little 2010, 121). I contended that a proper understanding of God's benevolence and his choice of which world to actualize must be soteriologically based. I contended that the witness of scripture requires that the salvation of all must be considered (2 Pet 3:9; 1 John 4:10). I argued that the benevolence of God would not be satisfied by him actualizing a world that only achieves an optimal balance between the saved and unsaved, such a world would result in the inadvertent eternal damnation of some people. Such people may be saved if God selected a different world to actualize.

Therefore, I proposed that God's benevolence is best demonstrated by assuring that all who would be saved are saved. No person who would ever be saved under some counterfactual circumstances would ever suffer eternal damnation. Given the infinitude of counterfactual possibilities, resulting in an infinitude of possible worlds, it is logically possible for God to actualize a world in which all who would be saved are saved. Further, as a continued demonstration of his benevolence and in respect of their libertarian free choices, he would actualize those who reject him into their least culpable existence (Craig 1995, 9).

3.2. Dichotomize the Best Possible Way from the Best of All Possible Worlds.

Little's definition of what constitutes the world is that which begins at creation and lasts throughout the manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth for all eternity (Little 2005, 150). While encompassing the entirety of the timeframe proposed by Little, I proposed the dichotomized framework provided by Geisler and Corduan (Geisler and Corduan 1988, 356). The dichotomization results in the following timeframes: (1) the actualized world as the best possible way to the best of all possible worlds, and (2) the future world of heaven as the best of all possible worlds.

While the sum of the dichotomized timeframes is equivalent to Little's timeframe, the dichotomization offered value and clarity. By dichotomizing the timeframes, a qualifiable and quantifiable definition of 'best' could be developed as was pertinent to each timeframe. The definition of best, as applied to each timeframe, clarified the totality of the theodicy as it undergirds the attributes of God while simultaneously providing for the salvation of all who would be saved.

3.3. Qualify and Quantify the Best Way to the Best of All Possible Worlds.

I contended that the actualized world must be the world that contains all who would be saved if it is to be the best way possible. In defining the term "best" as it pertains to the actualized world, the qualifier is those who would be saved, and the quantifier is all. Reflecting the biblical record, 2 Peter 3:9 and 1 John 4:10, I argued that God's benevolence is most realized in his provision for the salvation of humanity. This argument rests on the premise that the number of people that comprise humanity is fixed,

there are no contingent human beings. Therefore, the most benevolent situation in the actualized world would be for everyone who, through their libertarian free choices, would ever be saved to be saved. Further, those who reject God's salvation would benevolently be actualized into their least culpable set of counterfactuals concerning their libertarian free choices. Given the infinitude of counterfactual combinations, it is logical for God, through his middle knowledge and reflective of his omnibenevolence, to be able to actualize such a world. As I defined it, the actualized world is the best way to achieve the best of all possible worlds.

3.4. Qualify and Quantify the Best of All Possible Worlds

The best of all possible worlds is the future kingdom in heaven. In heaven, there will be no sin and all who would be saved are saved and will reside with God for eternity. Because the actualized world, as I defined it, contains all who would ever be saved under any counterfactual combination, heaven will likewise be populated with all who would ever be saved. Heaven will not be limited to a population resulting from an optimal balance of saved versus unsaved people. No person will suffer eternal damnation due to God's choice to actualize one world in lieu of another. By actualizing the world in which all who would be saved are saved, God provides the best way possible to guarantee the best of all possible worlds, the future world in heaven.

For those who, through their libertarian free choices, choose to reject God's plan of salvation, they will also experience their best eternal situation. Those who reject God will have their choices in the actualized world permanentized in eternal damnation. By actualizing such individuals into the counterfactuals that will make them least culpable,

God thereby mitigates their punishment as much as possible, while respecting their libertarian free choices. Such an arrangement upholds God's benevolence and his demand for justice.

3.5. Gratuitous evil

Both Little and MacGregor demonstrate sound arguments against the greater good justification for evil and for the existence of gratuitous evil (Little 2005, 124–126; MacGregor 2012, 171–172). I contended that all evils, moral and natural, are gratuitous as they pertain to God and, as such, do not infringe on the attributes of God. Evil is a privation, and because mankind is created, and thus ontologically not equal to the necessary and perfect God, mankind is subject to privation. Privation resulting from the ontological difference between God and contingent humanity, does not make evil necessary, it only makes it possible (Little 2005, 135).

Logically, if Little and MacGregor's arguments against the greater good justification for evil apply to one evil, they must apply to all evils (Little 2005, 124–126; MacGregor 2012, 171–172). Given the soundness of the arguments presented by Little and MacGregor and considering the biblical account in Luke 13:1–5, I incorporated the position that all evils are gratuitous in my revisions of the Creation-Order Theodicy. My position on gratuitous evil included the self-limiting understanding of God's sovereignty and negates the meticulous providence sovereignty model held by greater good theodicists. When considered within the creation-order, the self-limiting sovereignty of God, as explored in Genesis 9:11, along with the libertarian freedom of man, coexist with gratuitous evil (Olson 2009, 44). The gratuitous nature of evil does not infer that God is powerless to come against any moral or natural evil. Instead, because of his

sovereign choice to establish and abide by a creation-order, which includes the self-limiting manifestation of some of his attributes, gratuitous evils are allowed in the passive sense. I maintained that gratuitous evils do not infringe on any attribute of God; they, in fact, uphold the attributes of God.

4. The Soteriologically Centered, Revised Creation-Order Theodicy—A Summary Presentation

The soteriologically centered, revised Creation-Order Theodicy was based on the following two premises: (1) through his middle knowledge, God knows all counterfactuals, and (2) no person is contingent, God set a definitive number of people that he would create. In every possible world, every person would exist.

God, knowing all counterfactuals, chose to actualize the world, in which all people who would ever be saved are saved. Further, for those who are unsaved, having rejected God by their own libertarian free choices, God actualized them into their least culpable set of counterfactuals, mitigating their retribution as much as possible. This construct demonstrates the benevolence of God and preserves the libertarian freedom of humanity.

Because the actualized world contains all who would ever be saved, and the unsaved are in their least culpable set of counterfactuals, the actualized world is the best way to achieve the best of all possible worlds. The actualized world can be considered the best because it can be qualified and quantified. Regarding qualification, the best refers to the state of being saved and the state of being least culpable. Regarding quantification, the best refers to all who would be saved and the mitigation of culpability of all who would be unsaved. Therefore, the actualized

world is the best way possible world, to achieve the best of all possible worlds, the future world in heaven.

The future world in heaven is the best of all possible worlds. The future world can be considered the best of all possible worlds because it will contain all who would ever be saved under any set of counterfactuals. Further: (1) the saved will reside with God, (2) there will be no sin, and (3) evil will not exist. For those who are unsaved and will suffer eternal damnation, they will have their retribution mitigated as much as possible while having their libertarian free choices honored. The future world in heaven for the saved is qualifiably and quantifiably the best. The qualifiers are salvation and sinlessness. The quantifiers are all who would be saved and no sin. Likewise, for the unsaved, the state of eternal damnation is the best possible world. The qualification is the mitigation of punishment, and the quantification is all unsaved people receiving the most mitigation possible.

In the actualized world, God set up a creation-order, the modus vivendi whereby God and humanity can have a truly volitional relationship (Little 2005, 136–137). Within the creation-order, God bound himself to self-limiting covenants. Because he freely entered the covenants, they do not impinge on his sovereignty. The self-limiting understanding of God's sovereignty negates the need for meticulous providence and makes possible libertarian free choices by humanity and the associated consequences.

Lastly, the soteriologically centered, revised Creation-Order Theodicy maintained that all evil is gratuitous as it pertains to God. With the actualization of the world in which all who would be saved are saved, and the unsaved have their punishment mitigated as much as possible, any gratuitous evil that should transpire would have no relevance to the benevolence of God, his benevolence being measured on a soteriological

basis. Further, any gratuitous evil that should transpire would not undermine the sovereignty of God, God having sovereignly self-limited the manifestation of some of his attributes in the actualized world, and sovereignly bestowing libertarian freedom on humanity. No evil is necessary for God to bring about any good. While God may choose to bring about a good despite an evil, the evil is still gratuitous.

5. Conclusion

Little's Creation-Order Theodicy, while demonstrating many strengths, failed to account for the salvation of all who would be saved. This research intended to formulate biblically, theologically, and logically sound revisions to the Creation-Order Theodicy that would result in a theodical soteriology that provided for the salvation of all who would be saved. In formulating such a theodicy, the following major revisions were incorporated into Little's original theodicy: (1) redefinition of God's benevolence, (2) actualization of the world in which all who would be saved are saved, (3) dichotomization of the best way to the best of all possible worlds from the best of all possible worlds, providing qualification and quantification criteria for each, and (4) adoption of a consistent position on the gratuitous nature of evil. Further, the framework of the revised theodicy biblically, theologically, and logically accounted for the following: (1) the concomitant attributes of God, (2) the actualization of the best way possible world and gratuitous evil, (3) natural evil, (4) the cross, (5) eternal damnation, (6) miracles and prayer, and (7) the eternal state of all people.

In consideration of future research, the revised Creation-Order Theodicy should be evaluated within the disciplines of pastoral

counseling, missiology, and Christian education. Adopting the revised Creation-Order Theodicy as an informing frame of reference could generate a paradigm shift in how to counsel the suffering, how the church engages a fallen world, and how curriculum should be developed.

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Christening a Nation: A Critical Theological Investigation of Declaring Zambia a Christian Nation

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Abstract

Christening a nation: A critical theological investigation of declaring Zambia a Christian nation is a study contributing to the ongoing discussion concerning the theological implications surrounding the declaration of Zambia a Christian Nation, and how the Church in Zambia should respond to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation? The nation was officially decreed, by President Fredrick Chiluba, who declared Zambia a Christian nation on 29th December 1991. However, one finds insufficient biblical and theological basis concerning the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation.

The study considers some historical and theological models and a biblical hermeneutical approach to the understanding of christening a nation.

Osmer's (2008), four steps approach to practical theology helps to match the patterns, underlying forces, and theological implications of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. Twelve participants were involved in the study by responding to interview questions. Their responses to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation reflect mixed feelings that indicated that the nation was divided.

The theological implications of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation raise concerns that the declaration could lead to a misunderstanding of national identity and religious beliefs. It suggests that tying the identity of Zambia so closely to Christianity could unconsciously ignore and marginalise individuals who are not identified as Christian, and create an atmosphere of religious exclusivity, where people of other Christian faiths or non-religious individuals are seen as less patriotic or less deserving of full citizenship.

1. Introduction

The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation was not an ordinary maneuver, but rather a move that the Zambian Church embraced (Cheyeka 1998, 170). According to Phiri (2003, 407) there was heightened corruption and political injustices, which led Fredrick Chiluba to state that the epoch of corruption and bribery was over and emphasize that Zambia should be governed by biblical principles.

Several Zambian theologians (Chammah 2018; Muwowo and Buitendag 2010); Mukuka 2014; Njovu 2002; Phiri 2003; Sakupapa 2016) have engaged the christening of Zambia from a literary perspective. Recent

theological concerns have moved from just celebrating the christening of Zambia to a theological critique of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation.

Zambia was first politically couched in multipartism until 1972 when the country adopted a one party system. Since independence in 1964, the following were Zambia's presidents; first Kenneth D. Kaunda (October 1964–November 1991), then Fredrick T.J. Chiluba (November 1991–January 2002), then Levy P. Mwanawasa (January 2002–September 2008), then Rupiah B. Banda (September 2008–October 2011), then Michael C. Sata (October 2011–October 2014), then Edgar C. Lungu (January 2015–August 2021), and the seventh one being Hakainde Hichilema (August 2021–to present). In December 1991, at the State House, Fredrick Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian nation.

In this study, the celebration of the declaration that christening the Zambian nation is critiqued using the following Scriptures, Genesis 31:43–55, Exodus 19:1–8, 2 Kings 23:1–7, 2 Chronicles 7:14–18, Psalm 33:12, and Jeremiah 31:31–33. Thus, this study asks the following main question: What are the theological implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation? Accompanied by four subsidiary questions:

1. What factors influenced the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation?
2. Historically, what does the literature teach about christening a nation?
3. What does the Bible and theologians teach regarding christening a nation?
4. What are some of the critical theological implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation?

The study applies Osmer's (2008:31-218) four steps and questions to answer the main question, and the following four subsidiary questions. Osmer's steps and questions are: Step 1: The Descriptive Task: what is going on? Step 2: The Interpretative Task: why is this going on? Step 3: The Normative Task: what ought to go on? Step 4: The Pragmatic Task: how might we respond? These steps form the following discussion that answers the above four subsidiary questions to answer the main question.

2. Factors That Influenced the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation

The section uses Osmer's Step 1 and asks the following question, "what factors influenced the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation?" The chapter collected empirical data concerning the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation from twelve selected participants using a combination of structured, semi-structured and open-ended interviews.

The socio-political context (Burgess and Van Der Maas (2003, 1229); Hinfelaar (2004, 315); Kalusa and Phiri (2014, 2) during Kenneth Kaunda's rule to help understand factors paved and influenced the declaration. As for the religious context, Gordon (2008, 46) observes that Kenneth Kaunda and the UNIP government started suppressing any religious movement, which was deemed, to be a threat to the political advancement of the UNIP agenda. Additionally, the participants also pointed to the socio-political-religious context of Zambia prior to the christening of the nation.

Responding to interview questions related to the christening of Zambia, eleven out of twelve mentioned that they were aware that President Fredrick Chiluba had declared Zambia a Christian nation on 29th December 1991. The declaration ceremony was held at the State

House. Pentecostal-Charismatic leaders were wholeheartedly received, although there were some denominations and those who represented the church mother bodies who may not have been too excited with the declaration. One responded from a mainline church and said that there was no biblical Scripture that supports the declaration of a nation to being a Christian nation. A Muslim leader said that the declaration sidelined other religions.

A politician said the legislative wing of government was supposed to be in line with the biblical principles, because the tone set by Fredrick Chiluba, who was a political figure, opened the nation to Christian values. While trade unionists, mentioned that the declaration had become the platform for political mileage, and this had made politicians hypocrites in their leadership to conform to the declaration. Politicians are now using the Zambian Church for campaigns and their political mileage, pretending to be Christians, when in actual sense they are not.

These diverse views form the basis of the next sections that (a) address the historical, theological and biblical understanding of christening Zambia; (b) offer a biblical critique of christening Zambia and (c) address the implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation.

3. Historical, Theological and Biblical Understanding of Christening a Nation

Osmer's Step 2 answers the question, historically, "what does the literature teach about christening a nation?" An inquest to consult different theological, historical and other literature related to the phenomenon was undertaken to understand the christening of a nation related to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation.

The section unveiled the historical context of christening various regions of the world. First, the relationship between the State and the Church in church history using the Early Church Fathers like Polycarp (c. AD 69–155; Papandrea 2012, 25), Justin Martyr (c. 100–165; Aquilina 2006, 79), Tertullian (c. 160–225; Latourette 2003, 255), Ambrose of Milan (c. 340–397; Walker et al. 1985, 159), and Augustine of Hippo (c. 354–430; Witte 2006, 18–19, and the Church Reformers like John Wycliffe (1329–1384) (George 1988, 36), John Calvin (1509–1564; Cairns 1981, 305), Martin Luther (1483–1546) (Kooiman 1957, 1106), Huldreich Zwingli (1484–1531; Nichols 1941, 203), and Menno Simons (1496–1561; George 1988, 264). Second, the relationship between the Zambian State and the Zambian Church by discussing how Europe (Cebula 2019, 108; Brown 1993, 118–120), North America (MacCulloch and Comby 1986, 65–74) and Africa (Robert 2009, 19; Kalu 2007, 5) were christened. Third, the historical models of christening a nation, such as the Edicts of Milan, Nates and Nimes. The section also discussed the different theological models of the relationship between the State and the Church, namely: Separationist, Constantinianism, Denominationalism, Restorationism, and Erastianism (Sceats 1984, McGowan 2005, and Esbeck 1986).

4. Biblical and Theological Critique of Christening a Nation

Osmer's (2008, 4) Step 3 is used to guide in answering the question, "what does the Bible and theologians teach regarding christening a nation?" Step three used theological concepts to interpret episodes, situations, or contexts which provided the biblical and theological critique of christening a nation by studying some Scriptures (Genesis 31:43–55, Exodus 19:1–8, 2 Kings 23:1–7, 2 Chronicles 7:14–18, Psalm 33:12, and Jeremiah 31:31–

33) used by Fredrick Chiluba and the Church to bolster the christening of the nation.

The chapter draws insights from the exposition of the Scriptures which contributes to understanding the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation based on biblical and theological principles. The study was discussed from the following outline to interpret the phenomenon: (i) the biblical and theological critique of christening a nation (ii) the biblical and theological understanding of the Old Testament covenant, (iii) the biblical and theological understanding of the Scriptures related to christening Zambia, (iv) Israel in God's plan, and (v) Zambia in juxtaposition to Israel.

4.1. The Biblical and Theological Critique of Christening a Nation

Fredrick Chiluba envisioned Zambia sharing in the covenantal relation between God and Israel when christening Zambia, and how Zambia would benefit from Israel's covenant. During the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation speech, Fredrick Chiluba quoted 2 Kings 23 which refers to King Josiah entering into a covenant with God on behalf of Judah; thus, Fredrick Chiluba's act is compared to the religious ceremonial acts of King Josiah in the temple. So, 2 Kings 23:1–24 draws analogous religious acts between King Josiah as a political and religious leader and Fredrick Chiluba as a politician and Christian (Njovu 2002, 55).

Therefore, the covenant theology of the Old Testament inspired Fredrick Chiluba to Christian Zambia as he took the literal meaning of the Scriptures and applied them to his christening ceremony on 29th December 1991 by entering a covenant with God on behalf of the Zambians.

4.2. The Biblical and Theological Understanding of the Old Testament Covenant

Fredrick Chiluba drew from the theological theme of the covenant relationship between God and Israel described in the Old Testament Scriptures. Fredrick Chiluba entered into a covenant with God on behalf of the Zambian people after, being sworn in as the second president of the Republic of Zambia in October 1991, and he further christened the nation by declaring Zambia a Christian nation on 29th December 1991. Therefore, the biblical and theological understanding of the Old Testament covenant is important in understanding the biblical and theological background of christening Zambia, which cannot be understood in a vacuum without considering the underpinning context, purpose, nature, and the parties to the Old Testament covenant.

The context of a biblical covenant was in an agreement between two parties who pursue a mutual objective for the formation of a consolidated relationship; in this case, establishing the sovereign rule of God within a religious community living in righteousness and obedience to God (Dickson 2015, 265; Gary and George 1996, 1179). Further, a covenant was an official affirmation that was guaranteed by a ratification pledge—whether as an oral declaration or symbolized in a written, insignia or ceremonial way—of the parties involved (Horton 2006, 10)

The purpose of biblical covenants was to disclose God's providential care for the nations of the earth and his redemptive discourse through Jesus Christ; and they served as a reminder of the relationship between God and the Israelites (Jeon 2017, xv; Schultz and Benson 1999, 33).

The nature of biblical covenants throughout the Old Testament bordered on God relating to his people and creation in a covenantal way as

he promised to reward obedience and punish disobedience (Van Til 1991, 240).

The parties to a biblical divine covenantal relationship were between God and Israel, and nations were blessed through Israel's obedience to the stipulation of the covenant.

4.3. The Biblical and Theological Understanding of the Scriptures Related to Christening Zambia

Fredrick Chiluba and the Church used the above mentioned Scriptures to support christening Zambia. It is therefore imperative to look at the Scriptures used in their social-historical and context backgrounds, exposition and conclusion, to appreciate the biblical and theological understanding of the Scriptures related to christening Zambia. Additionally, the Scriptures used to support the christening have the concept of the covenant which should be biblically and theologically understood as, to who was the initiator of the covenant. What were the conditions of the covenant? And what promise was made by keeping the covenant?

4.4. Israel in God's Plan

Israel was exclusively chosen, and favoured by God through the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob including their descendants. This act by God demonstrates God's sovereign choice of a nation based on his terms (Walvoord and Zuck 1985, 47). God called Israel by different conceptualized names such as son of Abraham, firstborn son, the chosen nation, the daughter of Zion, a priestly nation, and God's precious possession to

demonstrate his covenantal relationship, sovereignty and the messianic promise.

4.5. Zambia in Juxtaposition to Israel

Christening Zambia is compared to Israel's covenantal relationship with God. This move undermines Israel's special place in God's redemptive plan as a chosen nation with a unique religious and political outlook. Therefore, developing a proper theology of christening a nation will help the Zambian Church understand that it was in God's sovereignty to choose and create a nation not on merit, but because of his sovereign grace as stated in Exodus 19:5, that "out of all nations you will be my treasured possession" (Wright 1997, 18). Comparing the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation to Israel's disposition is void of an appropriate biblical and theological basis for christening a nation, and it creates a theological vacuum that attracts theological critique (Olsen 2002, 40).

5. Implications of the Declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation

In this section, the authors guided by Osmer's (2008, 176) Step 4 related to the question, "what are some of the critical theological implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation?" The chapter explores the implications of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation and formulated guidelines that might help the Church engage a working theological approach or praxis for the situation, namely: (i) critiquing the theological basis of christening Zambia, (ii) revisiting the hermeneutics

of christening Zambia, (iii) determining a balanced biblical and theological perspective of christening Zambia, (iv) developing a theology of engagement of christening Zamia, and (v) developing a practical theological framework of christening Zambia.

The actualization of christening Zambia depends on the Zambian Church to develop a practical theological praxis that engages the Church to practically participate in communities within its context to interpret human needs and address the needs of the community.

5.1. Political Praxis

The political praxis will guide the Zambian Church with a balanced political and spiritual approach in the application of actions of the Christian faith in politics. Politics should provide a platform for the christening to actualize and ultimately cause Christianity to flourish. When Christianity is secluded from politics, it deprives the citizens of their active participation in national development based on the christening (Gifford 1996, 204). The Church should work out a political praxis from the christening by turning the abstract theological differences to developing a political praxis which addresses the socio-economic challenges facing the citizens (Sakupapa 2016, 762), and not advocate for governance structures parallel and in opposition to the government but making the christening a partner in national development. At the same time, the Church should not be politically inclined but remain an emissary of peace and reconciliation. Christening Zambia should not be a mere unsubstantiated political statement, but a christening which is founded on a clear political praxis driven by the Zambian Church.

5.2. Socio–economic Praxis

The socio-economic praxis is a working practical theological praxis of christening the nation which will help the Zambian Church to practically interpret its faith; and bridge the gap between an individual and the community (Klaasen 2014, 1). The praxis helps the Church understand its social obligation towards communities because it will be applying God's work through individuals. Developing a socio-economic praxis helps the Church direct the right theology of christening Zambia to actualize national values and good governance which will improve the social life of the people; and will challenge the government's unaccountable socio-economic decisions which disadvantage the business community and ultimately the people (Klaasen 2014, 2; Mukuka 2014, 75). The Church should take advantage of the platform created by the theological concept of christening Zambia to incorporate the socio-economic affairs of the country into its theology.

5.3. Praxis of Promoting the Welfare of the People

A praxis that promotes the welfare of the people is concerned with the welfare of the people by uplifting their standard of living, thus fighting poverty (Campbell 1987, 188; Buffel 2007, 52). God has a preferential concern for the oppressed and marginalized poor, consequently, the Church should take advantage of the christening and stand for the economically disadvantaged. Christening Zambia sets the theological tone for the praxis to help the Church to take the leading role in the social and economic transformation of the citizens' well-being, and by so doing, cushion government's efforts to fight poverty, corruption, and injustices (Muwowo and Buitendag 2010, 8).

5.4. The Praxis of Promoting Moral Values

A theological praxis that promotes moral values will help the church promote Christian moral values enshrined in the Zambian constitution and advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ by advocating for biblically founded moral values to realize the christening (Mukuka 2014, 76). The church is called upon to take an interest and participate in the application of national moral values. According to the Zambian constitution (The amended constitution of the Republic of Zambia 2016, 7), the National Values and Principles enshrined in Part II, Article 8 of the Constitution can be realized if the Church initiates the praxis of morals. The praxis of moral values based on christening Zambia should be informed by the biblical teachings of both the Old and New Testaments (Muwowo and Buitendag 2010, 9).

6. Recommendations

This study of Christening a nation: A critical theological investigation of declaring Zambia a Christian nation contributes to the ongoing study of christening a nation, and subsequent declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation and its biblical and theological underpinning. In 1991 Fredrick Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian nation, and declared that the citizenry would be governed by the righteous principles of the Word of God. The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation has attracted criticism and debates on whether it has any biblical and theological basis or not. This unique concept of christening a nation, and the subsequent declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation calls for a balanced biblical

and theological approach by the Church in Zambia and all the concerned stakeholders to give it a proper understanding.

From the research findings, it is clear that the former president Chiluba never consulted different stakeholders, thus, making the declaration biblically and theologically baseless to the extent of conflicting with the Constitution of the Republic in terms of freedom of worship and lack of regard for other religions. Consequently, the study has created room for further in-depth research surrounding the matter of christening a nation and the subsequent declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation.

The study uncovered the need for further studies to fill the gap regarding christening a nation and the subsequent declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. This is because there is a scarcity of theological data surrounding the phenomenon of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. Further biblical and theological research concerning the declaration are suggested.

There is a need for further in-depth research on the socio–economic, political and theological implication of the declaration of Zambia a Christian nation seeing that it has repercussions on how people perceive politics, economics, and the interpretation of the biblical scriptures regarding the declaration. There is also a need to revisit the objective of the declaration of Zambia a Christian nation, as some stakeholders like the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), the Zambia Catholic Council of Bishops (ZCCB), and Islamic Supreme Council of Zambia (ISCZ) suggested that a wider consultation before the declaration by Fredrick Chiluba should have been undertaken.

There has been a growth in the number of churches since the declaration. In this regard, there is need for further research on how to engage scholarly minds and works to understand the biblical and theological resonance of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation

so that it is understood on the premise of proper biblical hermeneutics by the Church in Zambia.

Finally, having considered the circumstances surrounding christening Zambia and the ensuing declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation, this research has only considered a section of the study dealing with the main research question, "what are the theological implications of declaring Zambia a Christian nation?" Therefore, there is still room to conduct further studies focusing on the issues of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation and how the Church in Zambia can actualize it.

7. Conclusion

This study of Christening a nation: A Critical Theological Investigation of Declaring Zambia a Christian Nation, is a contribution to the ongoing study of christening a nation, and its biblical and theological underpinning. In 1991 Fredrick Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian nation; and ascertained that Zambia was in a covenant relationship with God. Thus, the citizenry would be governed by the righteous principles of the Word of God. The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation attracted criticism and debates on whether it has any biblical and theological basis or not.

This concept of christening a nation, herein, the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation calls for a balanced biblical and theological approach by the Zambian Church and other stakeholders to give it a proper understanding.

The study underscores the fact that Fredrick Chiluba's christening Zambia had a feeble and baseless biblical and theological basis because it was not objectively done as some stakeholders like the Council of

Churches in Zambia (CCZ), the Zambia Catholic Council of Bishops (ZCCB), and Islamic Supreme Council of Zambia (ISCZ) were not consulted; and there was no in-depth investigation on the socio-economic, political and theological implications as it has repercussions on how people perceive politics, economics, and the interpretation of the biblical Scriptures regarding the declaration. Furthermore, to actualize the phenomenon, there was need to engage historical, biblical and theological scholarly works so that the declaration is understood on the premise of proper biblical hermeneutics by the Church in Zambia.

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Homelessness and Poverty in Phoenix, Arizona, in the United States of America, and a Theology of Hope: Rethinking the Church

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Abstract

According to the study conducted in Phoenix, Arizona, despite the increase in aid and resources aimed at alleviating homelessness and poverty, the homeless population persists. The study aimed to instill hope in the impoverished population by examining historical and current ministry practices in Phoenix and aligning them with biblical principles to uncover their theological significance. The study employed a hybrid of Appreciative Inquiry and Browning research methods and further used a mixed-method approach involving questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions, with forty-six participants including church

and para-church leadership, homeless individuals, and the working poor. The findings revealed that personal interaction, mainly when someone listens to and prays for their stories, is pivotal in building hope and encouragement. The study underscores the need for ministries to understand and address the real needs of the impoverished, emphasizing the shift from transactional to transformative ministry. Collaboration among ministries, offering counseling, job training, support, and prayer, emerges as a critical strategy to foster hope and improve the lives of the poor.

1. Introduction

Homelessness is a complex issue with multifaceted causes and global implications. Factors such as wars, genocide, and emigration contribute significantly to homelessness, especially in European nations and the United States (Minnery and Greenhalgh 2007). In the United States, specific contributors include the rising cost of housing, foreclosures, domestic violence, low wages, reductions in public assistance, substance abuse, and mental illnesses (Who Are the Homeless, 2009).

Homelessness affects diverse demographics, including families, women, children, youth, the elderly, and marginalized ethnic or migrant groups. Various studies, such as those conducted by Forrest (1999), Wearing (1996), and Minnery and Greenhalgh (2007), highlight the significant social impact of homelessness that transcends specific demographics or geographic regions.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs' 2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, there were approximately 564,708 homeless adults in the United States. Of these, 69%

sought shelter in residential programs, while the rest lived in unsheltered locations. Homeless youth under eighteen constituted 23% of the total homeless population, with 45,205 children spending at least one night without an adult. Another 9% were between eighteen and twenty-four, and the remaining homeless individuals were twenty-five years old and older.

A research project addressing homelessness in Phoenix aims to bring hope to the homeless and poor populations through various measures. The research data includes.

- Comparing current church practices with biblical principles,
- Evaluating the effectiveness of churches in assisting the homeless, and
- Collaborating with homeless individuals to develop a biblical model for restoring hope.

The research takes a comprehensive approach, considering theological insights, practical effectiveness, and the input of the homeless community to develop a holistic response that incorporates spiritual, emotional, and practical dimensions for lasting change and restoration in Phoenix.

2. Research Methods, Questions and Population

2.1. Research method: Browning and Appreciative Inquiry

The research approach used in this project combines Browning's methodology (Browning 1996) with Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Cooperrider and Whitney 2004). Browning's framework, which consists of descriptive,

historical, systematic, and strategic practical theology, is followed in this study. These sub-categories involve examining the present situation, past beliefs, and praxis and comparing current beliefs and practices with scripture. Based on this analysis, practical biblical solutions are developed (Browning 1996, 8). Moreover, integrating the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) model was valuable in comprehending what is not working and identifying successful aspects within the praxes (Hammond 2013, 26). The AI model involved identifying achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, lived values, and stories in context to instill confidence in the group's capabilities and inspire action (Cooperrider and Whitney 2004, 3).

2.2. Research Questions

The researcher conducted a study to explore how churches in Phoenix, Arizona, could actively promote a sense of hope among the homeless community in the area. The study aimed to answer subsidiary questions to identify practical ways to foster hope and positivity within this community.

i. What do biblical and historical theological perspectives say about ministering to those experiencing homelessness?
ii. What is the theological stance of the church's ministry towards the homeless in Phoenix?
iii. How does the current practice of Phoenix's churches compare to scriptural teachings?
iv. In what ways can local churches in Phoenix, Arizona, work with the homeless community to develop a practical and theologically sound approach to ministry that brings hope?

2.3. Research Population

The research included forty-six participants, which included fourteen leaders from churches and parachurch organizations and thirty-two people from the homeless and working poor community. The latter included individuals from various ethnic groups, genders, ages, and marital statuses. All the study's ministries and people were in Phoenix, Arizona. The only criterion for people experiencing homelessness inclusion in the study was that they had to have been homeless for at least three months.

3. The Judeo-Christian Historical Response to the Poor/ Homeless

While not explicitly addressing homelessness, the Bible contains numerous references to poverty and homelessness. This section aims to connect the biblical references with the concept of homelessness.

3.1. The Mosaic Law and the Treatment of the Poor

Biblical perspectives on poverty and justice consistently reveal God's concern for marginalized groups across historical eras. The Old Testament's Mosaic Law demonstrates a commitment to justice and the well-being of marginalized groups (Exod 23:6; Lev 19:13; Deut 10:18–19, 24:17). However, the establishment of a centralized government introduced exploitative practices, challenging justice (Hoyt 1977, 15–16; Bammel 1968, 890). To address this, the Torah instituted measures like gleaning laws, triennial tithes, fair labor practices, and impartial judicial systems,

reflecting God's concern for the immediate needs of the poor (Chilton 1981, 58; Gottwald 2014, 197; Lev 25:13, 25–28; Deut 10:18–19).

In the pre-exilic period, prophets linked the Israelite nation's defeats to idolatry and injustice, condemning social inequality tied to power grabs (Amos 5:11–12; Micah 2:1–5, 3:9–11). Nehemiah's example and rebuke of the wealthy's unjust treatment of the poor temporarily alleviated poverty, but the Israelites' continued neglect of God's warnings led to their downfall (Nehemiah 5; Levin 2001, 263).

First-century Middle East agrarian societies, such as Roman Palestine, featured distinct social classes, with the wealthy governing class maintaining aristocracy (Lenski 1984, 199–200; Hanson and Oakman 2013, 59–62). The lower class, retainers, engaged in patron-client relationships, facing exploitation through excessive taxation, high-interest loans, and land ownership disparities (Hanson and Oakman 2013, 104–108). This socio-economic landscape influenced Jesus's teachings, emphasizing stark class divisions and the struggle of the impoverished population (Lenski 1984, 199-200; Hanson and Oakman 2013, 104–108).

3.2. Jesus's Ministry to the Masses

Jesus's ministry was a powerful force for change, challenging established societal hierarchies and promoting justice for all (Friesen 2004, 328, 332). He emphasized the intrinsic value of every individual and showed compassion through miracles like feeding over 5,000 people (Hoppe 2004, 156). While he cared for those in need, Jesus also showed discernment in recognizing people's true motives (John 6:26). Through his parables, he challenged societal norms and exposed issues that needed to be addressed (Herzog 1994, 26-27; Eck 2016, 40–41). The Great Banquet parable directly

confronted the societal emphasis on social class boundaries, offering hope to the marginalized and challenging elitist worldviews (Luke 14:16–23; Matthew 22:1–14; Eck 2016, 112-116; Herzog II 1994, 70). Ultimately, Jesus's ministry defied societal norms by serving marginalized groups and emphasizing compassion, justice, and the intrinsic value of every individual (Friesen 2004, 328, 332).

3.3. Early Church and the Poor

The close-knit Christian community in Jerusalem exuded a remarkable sense of solidarity, empathy, and generosity, all were guided by the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:32). Acts 4:32 highlights their eagerness to share their assets and possessions, which exemplified their altruism and collective support. By pooling their resources to assist those in need, they secured assistance for anyone who required it (Acts 4:34–35). These actions demonstrated their unwavering commitment to embodying the teachings of Jesus.

In summary, the early Christian community's voluntary sharing and benevolence towards the underprivileged marked their cohesiveness, empathy, and social impact. This communal ethos played a pivotal role in the growth and influence of the early Christian Church.

3.4. Patristic Era Practices Towards the Poor

During the patristic era, church leaders, particularly bishops in the Roman Empire, actively addressed the needs of the poor and acknowledged social injustice (Brown 2012, 8; Holman 2009, 53). This pledge included individuals, such as monks and lay Christians, who voluntarily renounced wealth through vows of poverty and redistributed their resources (Finn 2006, 90–91).

Contemporary sermons emphasized the benefits of almsgiving, portraying it to gain God's favor, secure forgiveness, ensure justice, avoid danger, and earn heavenly rewards (Finn 2006, 177–178). Nevertheless, some Roman elites who supported the Church abandoned wealth renunciation, emphasizing its acquisition and use as a power tool (Brown 2012, 378; Cooper 2007, 165–189). The Church encouraged assistance to the poor based on justice and piety without linking the conditions to the salvation of the recipients (Chrysostom 1889, 451; Augustine 1995, 413–414).

In conclusion, despite occasional tensions and variations, the patristic era demonstrated a firm commitment to ministering to the poor, guided by the teachings of Christian leaders. This commitment expanded beyond individual generosity to establish institutions dedicated to helping the less fortunate, reflecting the evolving role of the Church in society.

3.5. Reformation Leader's Views and Practices Regarding the Poor

During the Protestant Reformation, attention was given to the well-being of the poor, as demonstrated by the commitment of its followers (Torvend 2008, 20). Drawing from his monastic experiences, Luther emphasized the Christian obligation to serve and support those in need, as seen in "The Freedom of a Christian" (Thomley 2015, 22–27). Luther's perspective on poverty transformed, moving from seeing it as necessary for salvation to a broader definition of "poor" and highlighting the value and dignity of work (Brummel 1979, 119; Kahl 2005, 102).

Following the Peasants' War, Luther called for government intervention to safeguard people experiencing poverty from exploitation (Pattison 2006, 100; Linderberg 1987, 89–94). Similarly, John Calvin urged the Church to assist the needy and promote equitable governance

(Tuininga 2016, 1). The Reformers significantly shaped social structures and Church practices during and after the Reformation, influencing attitudes towards poverty and welfare.

3.6. Post-Reformation Practices and the Poor

During the post-Reformation era, Protestants and Catholics acknowledged the significance of providing aid and assistance to those in need (Brown 2005, 516). However, this period also witnessed a disturbing rise in homelessness and poverty due to various social, economic, and political factors (McIntosh 2005, 460).

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, expressed deep concern for the plight of the impoverished and dedicated his life to helping them (Bloor 2015, 84). His involvement underscored the significance of understanding the needs of individuals experiencing poverty to ensure effective government assistance (Bloor 2015, 84). He shifted his motivation from a fear of God's retribution to the biblical principle of loving one's neighbor (Bloor 2015, 86).

Inspired by his impoverished upbringing, William Booth devoted himself to preaching the Gospel and aiding the needy (Railton 1912, 9–10). Despite encountering obstacles, Booth's influence led to the establishment of numerous charitable institutions worldwide under the umbrella of the Salvation Army (Railton 1912, 196). The legacies of Wesley and Booth continue to impact Christian practices of caring for the poor, emphasizing their dignity, worth, and inclusion in the community. Their commitment to holistic ministry, rooted in Christian love and the Gospel, serves as a source of inspiration for contemporary social work and outreach initiatives.

4. Contemporary Christian Practices and the Poor

The Christian Church recognizes historical periods of silence and inaction regarding injustice (Woodbridge and Joynt 2019, 1; Ndukwe 2008, 2; Pillay 2017, 11). Inspired by Latin American liberation theology, churches have shifted towards political activism and challenging negative stereotypes about low-income individuals (Shannahan and Denning 2023, §2.3.4; Gutierrez 1971, 302). Liberation theology promotes aiding the impoverished through personal assistance, political engagement, and building relationships, following the example of Jesus (John 1:1–3; Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45; I John 2:6). With these principles in mind, Christian organizations are adopting comprehensive strategies that combine personal aid, political involvement, and building connections with marginalized communities.

4.1. Shared Experiences

Leaders of church and para-church organizations participated in surveys and interviews to collect data. The data revealed a range of services offered by churches and para-church organizations. These services varied from ministry to ministry, often focusing on specific groups within the impoverished population, such as homeless families, working poor, or homeless teenagers. Those in need received food, clothing, medical care, counseling, housing, transportation, education, and job training.

4.2. Common Ministry Challenges

This study explored the difficulties leaders of church and parachurch organizations face when helping the homeless and those struggling to

make ends meet. The study highlights the critical issues and obstacles these leaders must overcome.

One of the most prominent challenges that emerged was safety concerns for congregants, with 60% of leaders perceiving safety as a top-three issue. Leaders' apprehensions about safety manifested in actions such as congregation members changing seats if homeless individuals were nearby during church services. However, the study noted a lack of verifiable evidence for such actions.

Government regulations and zoning laws were also significant hurdles. Zoning laws restrict food distribution in public spaces, which led to a lawsuit against a church for feeding the poor in its parking lot, prompting creative solutions such as organizing farmers' markets to comply with regulations.

Determining whether services were transactional or transformative was problematic. Transactional ministry, providing goods or services without expecting anything in return, was deemed insufficient for transformative change. Building relationships, understanding individual struggles, and establishing programs with intentional participation requirements were essential for transformation.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified challenges, leading to a surge in needy people. Parachurch organizations responded with creative solutions like drive-thru food distribution and portable community markets to reach a larger population with fewer volunteers.

Validation and hope emerged as crucial needs for people experiencing homelessness and the working poor. Leaders recognized the significance of validation (14%) and providing hope (64%). Acts like handshakes, listening to stories, and learning names were instrumental in restoring hope among those in need.

4.3. Needs of the Homeless

Research data divides people experiencing homelessness and the working poor into two distinct groups, each with its challenges and priorities.

Group 1: Homeless individuals who lack proper shelter and rely on makeshift accommodations in various locations. The group's primary needs are shelter, food, and employment, and 10% also require urgent medical attention. The challenges of this group are exposure to the elements, which makes securing proper shelter urgent. Helping this group requires comprehensive strategy and action through collaborative efforts.

Group 2: Individuals with some shelter, such as a vehicle or hotel room. This group's two highest priorities are medical and dental care (66%) and full-time employment. People in this group face systemic barriers to accessing healthcare and aspire to secure full-time employment for economic stability.

In conclusion, it is critical to recognize the diverse needs of these groups to develop effective policies that address both immediate and long-term needs.

4.4. Having a Sense of Hope

Inviting homeless and working poor community members to church and related organizations can have a positive impact. However, invitations that solely focused on religious services were less effective than invitations that demonstrated genuine care, kindness, and meaningful conversations, which provided a sense of hope.

To create lasting social change and hope, Christian churches are actively addressing the complex challenges the homeless and working

poor face. Change is evident as churches increasingly cultivate genuine relationships, strive to understand the unique requirements of those in need, and collaborate with other ministries.

5. Focus Group Discussion

The study focused on the roles of churches and para-church organizations in a specific community. Their findings revealed two main actors in this landscape. Para-church organizations demonstrated successful collaboration, while independent churches operated redundantly. They offered a more comprehensive range of services, highlighting the need for coordination among these entities to maximize their impact.

Furthermore, the focus group challenged certain assumptions that influenced the actions of the Church and homeless individuals. Para-church organizations, recognizing the diverse needs of the homeless population, showcased the potential for collaborative efforts, suggesting that joint initiatives between churches and para-church entities could enhance their ministries' effectiveness and transformative impact.

5.1. Solutions to Enhance the Ministry of Churches and Parachurch Organizations

The focus group discussions emphasized the importance of training and congregational involvement in successful outreach efforts. The training initiatives covered a range of areas, including counseling, child daycare, and transformational ministry, with a strong emphasis on encouraging church members to take an active role in ministry. By training ushers and greeters to help, the church can create a safer environment and encourage

members to participate actively in outreach efforts and community building.

The group suggested leveraging state-certified therapists and implementing liability disclaimers to improve counseling services. They also proposed creating a comprehensive website that lists resources to increase accessibility to counseling services.

The group highlighted the potential impact of child daycare services in supporting parents and guardians within populations experiencing homelessness and working poor. To foster a unified strategy for ministry to vulnerable populations, the focus group recommends that churches and para-church organizations collaborate actively to implement child daycare services. Collaboration emerged as a critical theme in initiatives like the "Find Help Phoenix" directory and partnerships with non-Evangelical organizations.

By comparing current practices with biblical principles, the group cited Acts 2:42–44 and 4:32–35 as examples of gathering and distributing resources for those in need. They also recognized the practice of biblical principles of tithing and giving, rooted in passages from Deuteronomy and Acts. The focus on compassionate aid in these biblical passages aligns with the Old Testament's call to actively support the impoverished, underscoring the alignment of current practices with the early Christian community's commitment to supporting the impoverished.

5.2. Recommended Plan of Action

The study examines several biblical principles related to serving people experiencing poverty, tracing their historical implementation, and assessing their current relevance in contemporary ministries. The

study finds that many churches and parachurch organizations continue incorporating these principles in their outreach efforts, although adaptations and challenges persist in the modern context.

This study examines the implementation of various biblical principles related to serving individuals experiencing poverty, including their historical background and relevance in contemporary ministries. Survey data reveals that despite facing challenges in the modern context, numerous churches and parachurch organizations continue to integrate these principles into their outreach efforts.

The first biblical principle focuses on allocating a portion of the tithe; particularly the food tithe, for the welfare of specific groups outlined in various biblical passages (Lev19:15, 23:22; Deut 14:28–29, 26:12–15. This principle gained prominence in the first-century Church and continues to be practiced today, with 85% of surveyed leaders confirming their commitment to providing aid to people experiencing poverty.

The second principle emphasizes addressing injustice, combating oppression, and upholding justice, as mandated in various passages (Exod 23:2, 6–9; Deut 24:17; 27:19). While the survey data did not explicitly indicate engagement with addressing injustices faced by people experiencing homelessness and the working poor, churches and parachurch organizations shared a commitment to treating everyone seeking assistance with dignity, respect, and justice.

The third biblical principle emphasizes the Church's compassionate ministry to all people based on their intrinsic value (Matt 14:15–21, Ps 34:6, 35:10). The Early Church practiced this principle, and churches today (86% of survey ministries) continue to assist such as food, housing, medical aid, clothing, and initiatives aimed at ending poverty cycles (Torvend 2008, 93–95).

The fourth biblical principle involves appointing individuals to oversee the ministry to the poor, mirroring the first-century Church's establishment of deacons (Acts 6:2–4). Today, churches, parachurch organizations, and governments collaborate to address poverty, emphasizing adherence to the biblical principle of appointing overseers for the ministry to people with low incomes (Torvend 2008, 93–95).

The fifth biblical principle centers on Christians expressing love and extending care to individuals outside the faith community (Exod 23:6–9; Mark 12:31). Contemporary research data affirms the continuity of this practice, revealing that ministries in the research area did not deny services or aid based on faith community membership.

The sixth biblical principle emphasizes personal responsibility, discouraging Christians from providing food to those unwilling to work (2 Thess 3:10). Ministries in the research area need help aiding individuals without encouraging irresponsibility.

The seventh biblical principle underscores activating grace through prayer, with Christians praying for God's grace to work powerfully in their lives and ministries to achieve "no needy person among them" (Deut 15:7; Acts 4:33b–34).

In conclusion, the study highlights the implementation of biblical principles, their historical background, and their relevance in contemporary ministries. Survey data suggests that churches and parachurch organizations continue to incorporate these principles in outreach efforts, adapting to the modern context to address poverty and its associated challenges.

5.3. Suggested Biblical Praxes

The study examined data from interviews and surveys conducted with homeless and working poor individuals to suggest recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of the Church's ministry for this demographic. The focus group recommends various aspects, such as congregational involvement, counseling, child daycare, transformational ministry, and collaboration between churches and parachurch organizations, aligning with one or more relevant practices.

The study revealed the importance of appointing leaders to oversee the ministry and ensuring equitable resource distribution, aligning with congregational involvement's biblical practice (Acts 6:2–4). Providing counseling services is considered vital. When seeking counseling assistance, it is crucial to prioritize compassionate care and love, regardless of religious affiliation. Trained or lay counselors can provide care and support for mental health issues.

Church childcare programs are essential and should align with biblical compassion, evangelism, and community service practices. The childcare programs should also facilitate full-time employment, especially for single parents, contributing to breaking the cycle of generational poverty.

It is important to include prayers for the working poor and homeless as it holds great significance for them. Praying for individuals, incorporating private prayer times, and personal interactions involving prayer contribute significantly to their validation and a sense of importance. Prayer aligns with biblical principles, acknowledging the transformative potential of hope and faith in God.

The focus group recommends a transformational ministry approach that emphasizes empowerment towards self-dependency. This approach

helps individuals become self-sufficient, promoting their transformation and growth. Shifting from a transactional to a transformational model aligns with multiple biblical practices, fostering holistic growth, accountability, and universal love. Collaboration between churches and parachurch organizations is crucial for providing adequate support and addressing challenges comprehensively.

In conclusion, the present study recommends strategies to improve the Church's ministry to people experiencing poverty by addressing immediate needs and guiding individuals toward sustained self-worth, growth, and hope. Collaboration, compassion, accountability, universal love, and the transformative power of prayer form the foundation of an effective and holistic ministry. The ongoing challenge lies in implementing these strategies effectively and dispelling negative perceptions to create a more comprehensive and impactful ministry.

6. Conclusion

God consistently expresses concern for the poor, emphasizing care for their physical needs and addressing injustices contributing to their plight. The Old Testament demonstrates God's anger when Israel tolerates inequities. The New Testament stresses proactive Christian care for the impoverished and holds those neglecting duties and avoiding work accountable.

Protestant Reformers recognized the biblical imperative to care for the poor, collaborated with governments, and addressed various needs. Leaders like Wesley and Booth initiated reforms, emphasizing the importance of personal interaction in validating and increasing hope among people experiencing poverty. This study aligns with the current

global perspective of amplifying the voices of the poor in poverty solutions discussions.

Leaders genuinely desire to follow biblical principles in caring for the poor, with smaller churches lacking resources. Larger churches and parachurch organizations possess means for more comprehensive assistance. Collaboration with state agencies enhances effectiveness, but broader collaboration among churches, parachurch organizations, and state agencies is needed.

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Arranged Early Childhood Marriages among the Northern Tribes in Zambia: Lessons from Customary Marriage in Genesis 29:13–30

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Abstract

This study sets out to investigate the customary early childhood marriage practice among the Northern tribes in Zambia and develop a new missional strategy for the church. This practice is based on marriage customary laws that allow parents to give under–age girls into marriage to older men.

The study analyzes early child marriage praxis among the Northern tribe in Zambia and identifies the factors that motivate early marriages by young girls, their consequences for social and community life, and the

lack of engagement from the church. The study captures a socio-cultural reality in Zambia and the rest of the African continent. The research topic is limited to the Northern tribes in Zambia and focuses on Genesis 29:13–30 because of its analogy to customary early marriage laws among the Northern tribes in Zambia.

Early marriage impedes young girls' development, and their future potential, it also infringes upon their human rights, their educational development, and puts them at risk during childbearing.

The study informs empirical understanding to mitigate and overcome the challenges of early marriage practice to foster a better evangelical practice and, proposes a new missional approach to transforming the practice based on sound biblical principles.

1. Introduction

At the heart of this thesis is the issue of customary early childhood marriage practice among the Northern tribes in Zambia. The practice of early marriage has consequences for social and community life. Under the guise customary marriage laws, parents give under–aged daughters in marriage to men who are older than them, against their will. In some cases, parents take their daughters out of school and force them to marry so that they will benefit in terms of *lobola* (bride price or dowry). A typical example is provided in a story (Zambian Watchdog 2010, 1) in which Patricia at the age of twelve was taken out of school by her parents and forced to marry a man who was four years her senior so that they could benefit from her dowry before they die.[1] The practice infringes on the human rights of the affected girls, it prevents them from advancing in

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[1] Patricia and other names of girls mentioned in the thesis are pseudonyms.

education and inhibits their development and future potential. The church needs to engage the entire community and teach them the gospel and biblical and sound theological values and principles of marriage.

A study of Genesis 29:13–30 was conducted and contextually applied to assess this old-age traditional practice within the Zambian context. An attempt was made to discern godly principles applicable to the situation by employing a theological survey of Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30 that was premised on the Jewish customary law which forbids a younger sibling to marry before the older one.

The theological value of this research is that it attempts to discern biblical principles in the Zambian context regarding early marriage practices by exploring Genesis 29:13–30 so that we might live and act in ways which are congruent to God's nature and purposes. The practical value of the research is that the church's current silence on the issue of early marriages would encourage the breaking of this tradition in developing a feasible strategy for protecting young girls from being forced into early marriages. The purpose of this research aims to examine and describe early marriage practices through empirical research and aims at transforming the practice through theologically informed strategies and action.

There are four objectives of this study. The first objective was to examine and describe the customary early marriage practices among the Northern tribes of Zambia, by way of a qualitative empirical study. The second objective was to provide factors which motivate young girls in Northern Zambia to marry early, drawing on the best theories on the area of the study. The third objective was to do an exegetical study of Genesis 29:13–30 and draw insights from Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel which could be applied to solving the early marriage problem

in Northern Zambia. The fourth objective of the study was to provide a model with a biblical, sound theological and practical foundation for marriage practices based on theories of transforming leadership, open system, and revolutionary change. Osmer's (2008, 1–218) model has been employed to achieve the objectives of this study because his four tasks represent a logical sequence for a study.

2. Research Questions

2.1. The Main Research Question

How can churches in Zambia address early marriage practices among the Northern tribes of Zambia in the light of Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?

2.2. Subsidiary Questions

By answering the following subsidiary questions, the study's objectives were determined:

i. What early marriage practices are under customary laws among the Northern tribes of Zambia?
ii. What motivates young girls among the Northern tribes of Zambia to get married very early in life?
iii. What biblical principles can be derived from Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?
iv. What strategy can be developed to help the church in Zambia to address early marriages among the Northern tribes in the light of Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?

3. Summary of Literature Review

Mouton (2001, 86–87) suggests that every research project begins with a review of existing literature. The literature review surveys scholarly educational materials in the field of research, that includes journals, books, articles, theses, Newspapers, and other relevant, credible scholarship. This section is divided into two sub-sections: Zambian early–marriage practices, and Genesis 29:13–30: Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel.

3.1. Zambian Early Marriage Practices

Ndulo (2011, 86–87) asserts that customary law in its application discriminates against girls who are denied children's rights and dignity over issues such as lobola. Likewise, in her work, Walker (2012, 232, 239) argues that 41.6 per cent of girls in Zambia get married before the age of eighteen due to poverty, and Northern Zambia is leading in the percentage of women who get married before that age.

In this study, the focus is on the arranged childhood marriage custom among tribes in Northern Zambia. Under the customary marriage law, a young girl can get married at a very tender age, if the parents give consent. One of the requirements is that the groom must pay lobola to the bride's family. In the past, it was also a requirement that, before marriage could officially commence, the girl had to prove that she was a virgin. This would be achieved by allowing the man and the woman to sleep together the night before the scheduled date of marriage, in the presence of selected elderly women counselors called, *banachimbusa*. Banachimbusa would place a piece of white cloth on the bed. If the piece of cloth got blood stained after intercourse, that was proof that the girl was a virgin. It

was the responsibility of banachimbusa to keep that cloth in safe custody, so that, should any dispute arise in future, it could be used as proof. This was also a Jewish custom as recorded in Deuteronomy 22:13–19.

The practice of paying lobola has been turned into a money-making venture now. Grooms are asked to pay amounts ranging from US$ 100 to US$ 2,000 or even more. Research reveals that the major contributing factors to the practice of early childhood marriages among the Northern tribes of Zambia are marriage customary laws and poverty (Girls Not Brides, 2017, 1: Mori, A.T. 2018, 1). Some of the consequences of early marriage are that the young brides are put at risk during childbearing and enhance mortality deaths because the bodies are not yet ready for giving birth.

In her article, Kiefer (2017, 6) claims that the United Nations Population Fund (U.N.F.P.A) reports indicate that child marriage rates are the highest in the Northern Province of Zambia and that protecting girls from early marriages has become a national priority. Measures, such as raising awareness and sensitizing local communities to the negative effects of child marriages, are being taken but the practice is growing, and as a result, more girls are dropping out of school. Early marriage is the main contributor to adolescent pregnancies which result in complications at birth, maternal deaths, and high levels of infant mortality–prompting traditional leaders to take action to protect girl children.

Chief Zombe, a traditional leader of the Mambwe and Lungu tribes in Northern Zambia, for example, is so passionate about solving the vice of child marriages in his area. Mupeta (2018, 4) reports that the traditional leader is working in partnership with Non–Governmental Organizations in combating the early marriage vice, which is rife in his chiefdom, because he is concerned about the education of girls, and understands

the benefits of having educated women to help in the development of his chiefdom. Sometimes he punishes parents and guardians who give their daughters in early marriages, but he is fighting a losing battle. Similarly, in 2010 alone, chief Kasoma dissolved fifteen early child marriages and sent twelve of the girls back to school (Zambian Watchdog. 2010, 3).

In her article, Chihame (2018, 6) reports how three teenage mothers, Elizabeth, Mary, and Cecilia, have been retrieved from marriages and restored back to school by Non–Governmental Organizations Co-ordinating Council in Luwingu, a district in Northern Zambia. The three teenage mothers, now back in school, narrate that early marriage is full of hardships which teenagers are unable to cope with. Chihame (2018, 6) further reports that Elizabeth's parents forced her into marriage at the age of twelve, in 2015, and she gave birth to twins barely a year later. She had complications at birth because she was too young. Her husband would beat her even when she was pregnant over petty issues like burning relish. Likewise, Mary says her parents forced her to get married in 2012, at the age of twelve because they were unable to support her, and she stayed in the marriage for five years. So far, the Non–Non-Governmental Organizations Co-ordinating Council in Luwingu district has withdrawn one hundred and ninety–two girls from early marriages, of which seventy have been sponsored back to school.

Some of the factors which motivate parents, and young girls themselves to practice early marriage include the flawed customary marriage laws, high levels of poverty, lobola, school dropouts due to adolescent pregnancies, a low appreciation of the value and dignity of girls by parents who think that they would rather give a girl into marriage to make money for educating a boy child (Anadolu Agency. 2018, 1–3; Girls Not Brides. 2016, 2; Kiefer. 2017, 6; Simwaka. 2018, 2; Zambian Watchdog.

2010, 2–3; Maingaila. 2016, 2–3; Mori. 2018, 1; Mupeta. 2018, 4; Chihame. 2018, 6; Kawanga. 2018, 8). In some cases, when a wife of a man dies or gets too old and weak to perform marital duties, a close relative, as young as twelve years of age, can be given to her husband as a second wife called; this is called mpokeleshi. This is usually done as a token of appreciation if the man has been very generous to the in-laws.

The voice and action of the Evangelical Church are conspicuously missing in this fight against arranged early childhood marriages. This presents a gap which has motivated me to carry out this practical theological research, informed from a biblical point of view, to possibly contribute to putting an end to this appalling scourge of early marriages, based on customary laws in Northern Zambia.

3.2. Genesis 29:13–30: Jacob's Customary Marriage to Leah and Rachel

In this study, the anchor text (Gen 29:13–30) was selected because of its analogy to customary marriage laws among the Northern tribes of Zambia. In the text, Laban forced his daughters Laeh and Rachel into marriage with Jacob premised on the custom of the land which forbids a younger daughter to get married before the older one (Gen 29:26). In the empirical research in Chapter Two (subthemes 2.7.4.2.2 and 2.7.4.2.3) of this research, results revealed that under the customary law, parents in Northern Zambia can also force daughters in marriage to earn lobola or secure free labor from poor grooms. Likewise, an exegetical study in Chapter Four (Normative Task) revealed that Laban manipulated the land's custom to give both of his daughters so he could secure fourteen years of free services from Jacob.

Averbeck (2019, 28–29) situates Genesis 29:13–30 within the patriarchal narratives Genesis 12–50 genre. This genre focuses on the

historical patriarchal narratives about the family, clan, and tribal ancestry of ancient Israel. The identified theological themes in Genesis 12–50 include God's faithfulness, his promises, the deception of patriarchs, God's blessings, descendants of patriarchs, and land (Janzen, 1993, 8–16; Mathews, 2006, 72; Schmit, 2012, 50; Okoye, 2020, 26; Kern, 2021, 19).

Significantly, as Mathews (2005, 78) observes, despite the generational deception among patriarchs, as depicted in the Genesis narratives, God did not suspend the goal of blessing the elect family of Abraham (Gen 12:1–3). This is important for the Christian audience in that it gives hope to the church that through the gospel, transformational change in Northern Zambia can take place with regard to the early childhood marriage practice.

Analogies identified in the patriarchal narratives are conspicuous when comparisons are made with the research results of chapters two and four. For example, Von Rad (1972, 290) argues that in ancient Israel, daughters were viewed as possessions of property that could be passed on to another man without any questions. This is similar to Patricia's story whereby her parents traded her for lobola to a man who was four years her senior when she was aged twelve (Zambian Watchdog 2010, 1). Similarly, research results revealed that among the Bemba people of Northern Zambia, girls are merely viewed as low class citizens, marriage material, and sex objects. This is the concept depicted in Laban's facilitation of his daughters' marriage to Jacob (Gen 29:16–28). The discrimination of daughters in Israel in Jacob's time is like the way girls in Northern Zambia are discriminated against their male counterparts.

4. Research Methodology and Design

This study uses Osmer's (2008) four tasks of practical theology as its research design. Each of the four tasks is governed by a key question. Osmer's (2008, 4) model can be summarized as follows:

i. The descriptive–empirical task: 'What is going on here?' This task examines and describes the situation.

ii. The interpretive task: 'Why is this going on'? This task draws insights on the best theories pertaining to a particular episode and makes a wise interpretation of the situation under study.

iii. The normative task: 'What ought to be going on?' This means applying theological concepts to interpret situations, constructing ethical norms to guide our responses, and learning from "good practice."

iv. The pragmatic task: "How might we respond'? This phase involves the development of strategies that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering a reflective conversation with the "talk back" emerging when they are enacted.

The four tasks of practical theological interpretation interpenetrate as demonstrated in Figure 1 below.

4.1. The Descriptive–Empirical Task: Early Marriages Among the Northern Tribes of Zambia

This empirical research is based on Osmer's (2008, 50) qualitative approach. This section attempts to answer the first subsidiary question,
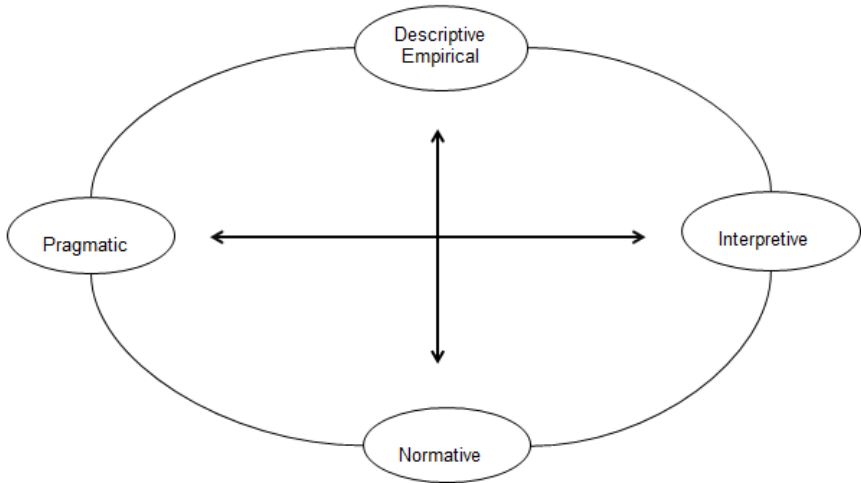
Figure 1: Osmer's (2008, 11) Four Tasks of Practical Theological Interpretation

"What are the early marriage practices under the customary laws among the Northern tribes of Zambia?" The approach involved collecting data through face–to–face semi-structured interviews of respondents in the field of study. A research team was constructed comprising the researcher, and four others. Three of the research team members were drawn from the field of research. The data was collected through writing notes and videotaping (Creswell 2007, 130). The recorded data was subsequently transcribed, coded, triangulated, analyzed, and evaluated. This process helped to understand and describe the situation regarding early marriage practices in Northern Zambia, and the underlying customary laws that influence such practices.

The research population sample comprised twenty–eight respondents (16 girls, 4 pastors, 4 teachers, and 4 traditional leaders), all drawn from communities in the Northern region of Zambia. Four people were recruited to make the research team (the wife of the researcher,

and three pastors from the Pentecostal Assemblies of Zambia). Six major themes emerged from the descriptive–empirical research:

Firstly, customary marriage laws emerged as one of the major themes which promoted early marriages among the Northern tribes of Zambia. Under the customary law, unscrupulous parents abuse the law to give under-aged daughters in marriage knowing fully well that they are legally protected by customary laws.

Secondly, high poverty levels, due to the lack of industries in Northern Zambia, emerged as another major theme that promotes early marriages. Parents give young daughters in marriage to earn lobola and relieve themselves of the pressure to look after big families.

Thirdly, lack of educational support from the parents due to poverty results in high school dropouts. The only option left after failing school is to get married.

Fourthly, most girls are not given educational support by parents due to the traditional value systems which privilege boys over girls. Some parents think that they would rather invest in their son's education because they will not benefit from the girl's education once, she gets married.

Fifthly, the traditional chisungu ceremony affects girls' educational performance and advancement, because they miss classes when they are taken out to be taught the responsibilities of women once they get married. Chisungu ceremony takes place upon a girl's attainment of puberty.

Sixth, participants said that the lack of biblical teachings regarding child marriages is partly responsible for early marriage practice. Respondents said that the church's silence over the early marriage issue is not helping the community, and people generally have no fear of God in them.

4.2. The Interpretive Task: Motivating Factors of Early Marriages among Young Girls in Northern Zambia

This chapter attempts to determine what factors motivate young girls among the Northern tribes of Zambia to get married early in life by way of exploring the best social-cultural theories. This section attempts to answer Osmer's (2008, 4) second question, "Why is this going on?" The goal is to answer the second subsidiary question, "What motivates young girls among the Northern tribes of Zambia to get married very early in life?" This approach applied is a "communicative model of rationality" (Osmer 2008, 83). Rationality is a form of communication in which people offer reasons to others in support of their assertions, especially when others challenge them or ask us to unpack what they mean. This has been achieved using a literature survey through entering the debate and dialogue of the relevant audience. This audience is a community of competent scholarly peers who have published academic works in practical theology, especially those focusing on issues to do with child marriages. A literature review is helpful because, as Chandran (2004, 63–64) argues, this process may lead the researcher to charter unexplored areas and avoid replicating studies that have been done by others.

In this study, therefore, the best social-cultural theories about reasons why girls get married early in Northern Zambia were identified, analyzed, and evaluated the central arguments of each of them to help in determining the most persuasive ones.

An overview of the literature studied on factors that motivate early marriages among young girls revealed that the phenomenon is a global one and that it is an old-age practice. The study revealed, for example, that the early marriage practice also occurs in countries such as Turkey,

Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi.

An analysis and evaluation of the identified best theories on motivators of childhood marriages showed that the recurrent themes that motivate child marriages include the following: weak legal systems, poverty, gender discrimination, lobola, lack of education, traditional and cultural value systems, chisungu ceremonies, peer influence, lack of awareness campaigns, lack of recreation facilities, high technology, lack of empowerment, and family honor.

4.3. Normative Task: The Implications of Jacob's Customary Marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30 in the light of Early Customary Marriage of Young Girls in Northern Zambia

This chapter turns to the third task in Osmer's (2008, 4,129–173) model which attempts to answer the question, "What ought to be going on?" This section aims to answer the third subsidiary question, "What biblical principles can be derived from Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?" The task seeks to discern God's will for the present situation. The approach used in this section is Osmer's (2008, 4, 129–173) theological interpretation which uses theological concepts to interpret contexts informed by a theory of divine and human action. This approach was applied by the researcher based on evangelical convictions that all theology must be Bible-based. The objective is to provide a normative biblical foundation and biblical principles for the church to help transform the early marriage practice among the Northern tribes of Zambia.

An exegesis of Genesis 29:13–30 was conducted to uncover the author–intended meaning of the pericope for the original readers and its

significance for today's church. This was achieved by using commentaries, encyclopedias, dictionaries, lexicons, theses and other relevant theological works. Turker's (2016, 106–138) model which involves four steps was used to do the exegesis. The four steps include (i) introduction, (ii) exegesis of the keywords in the pericope, (iii) basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope, and (iv) conclusion.

In the passage, we learn that Laban gave his daughters Leah and Rachel in marriage to Jacob, his nephew, premised on the custom which forbids a younger daughter to get married before the older one (Gen 29:26). Originally, we learn that Jacob offered to serve Laban for seven years in return for a hand in marriage to Rachel his younger daughter (Gen 29:18). In chapter two, research results showed that it is also common among the Northern Zambia tribes, for a poor groom to cultivate maize fields for the in-laws, as a settlement for marrying their daughter. However, Laban deceptively swapped Leah for Rachel on the wedding day under cover of darkness. He gave Leah in marriage to Jacob, instead of Rachel for whom he served him for seven years as agreed earlier on (Gen 29:20–25).

Scholars like Wenham (1994, 237) and Poniatowski (2021,6–7) argue that Laban manipulated the custom that forbids a younger daughter to marry before the older one (Gen 29:26) to secure more years of labour from Jacob. We learned in Chapter Two that parents in Northern Zambia manipulate customary marriage laws to secure lobola or free labor from grooms who marry their daughters. The same attitude of having a low view of daughters by Northern Zambians is demonstrated by Laban in choosing a spouse for his daughters.

Deception, as depicted in the analysis of the pericope (Gen 29:21–25) is not supported by Scripture (Lev 19, 11,13; Prov 26:19). The deception found in Laban's action is like the manipulation of marriage customary laws in Northern Zambia where young daughters are given in marriage by

parents without their consent. As Domeris (2014, 156) argues, when there is a conflict between custom and Scripture, Evangelicals are expected to stand with Scripture. Therefore, by putting the custom of the land ahead of Scriptural teaching, Laban was wrong. In Leviticus 18:18, Scripture forbids one man from marrying two sisters, like mpokeleshi in Northern Zambia.

The theological significance of the pericope is that God remained true to his promises, as he blessed Jacob with descendants born to him through Leah and Rachel. These are the ancestors of our Savior Jesus Christ. This should give hope to the church in Northern Zambia, that through the preaching of the gospel, the people can change and transform their customary marriage practices. Jiao (2020, 144) affirms that the theological significance of the pericope is that God is a keeper of promises (Gen 12:1–3; 28:15).

The basic biblical and theological principles derived from the pericope towards normativity include the following: first, it is God's nature to faithfully fulfil all promises he makes to his people; second, deception which was found in both Jacob and Laban does not find origin in Scripture. Equally, men, in Northern Zambia who give their under-aged daughters in marriage, premised on customary law, do not get support in Scripture; third, customary propriety of any society should not take precedence over Scripture; fourth, polygamy or mpokeleshi is not supported by Scripture. These findings in Chapter Four have laid down the foundation for carrying out the strategic task considering how to respond to the main research question: *"how can church leaders and Christian parents among the Northern tribes of Zambia address the problem of early child marriage practices in the light of Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?"*

4.4. The Strategic Task: The Development of Strategic Methods to Bring Transformational Change to Early Customary Marriage Practices Of Under–Aged Girls among the Northern Tribes of Zambia

This chapter draws from chapters two to four studies to answer Osmer's (2008, 4) fourth question: "How might we respond?" The chapter's objective is to provide a model of biblical and theological principles for churches concerning the early marriage practice in Northern Zambia. Elkington (2021, 12) describes the pragmatic task as simply "forming an action plan". It seeks to answer the subsidiary question: "What biblical principles can be derived from Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?" This inevitably contributes to answering the main research question: "How can churches in Zambia address early marriage practices among the Northern tribes of Zambia in the light of Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?"

The approach in this process is based on Osmer's (2008, 4,175–218) model of Servant Leadership. The aim is to improve the effectiveness of the church's ministry and to come up with a strategy for changing the early marriage praxis in Northern Zambia. The church has been identified as the major player in bringing about transformational change. The church has been called upon to do mission work in Northern Zambia and hopefully bring about transformational change regarding the early marriage practice. The church has the responsibility of training church members to carry out evangelism in line with the biblical worldview. A missiologist Hiebert (2008, 7–8) argues that those doing mission work must understand the worldviews of the people they are reaching out to. Another missiologist Njemadt (2019, 2) argues further that in doing missionary work, a missional church should focus on the missional God who sent

his Son Jesus Christ to save the world. In Chapter Two (section 2.7.4.8) interviewees stated that the church does not teach on issues of morality and childhood marriages. This is the reason why those church members earmarked for mission work need to be grounded in biblical principles if they must effectively carry out mission work. Even though African biblical scholars like Mwandayi (2017, 14) are calling for the acceptance of African customary–based marriages by the church, compromising on sound doctrinal principles, and nominal Christianity should be avoided. To facilitate a rapid deep change, a revolutionary change approach is to be applied.

The strategic model proposed in this study is initiated by the researcher selecting a change leader from the Pentecostal Assembly of God Church, and a member of the research team, to lead the mission team. The researcher is to empower change leaders with the vision and help in forming a guiding team. The change leader should then develop rapport with the stakeholders in Northern Zambia who include traditional leaders, pastors from different denominations, teachers, non–non-governmental organizations, youth leaders, politicians and social welfare officials. He is responsible for reasoning with them regarding how to tackle the early child marriage problem. With the help of other church leaders, a mission team is to be composed consisting of committed mature church members. This mission team is the one tasked to launch evangelism among the Northern Zambian communities and teach them the gospel of Christ. This whole process has been described visually and represented with the flowchart in Figure 2 below:

Form a vision by working together
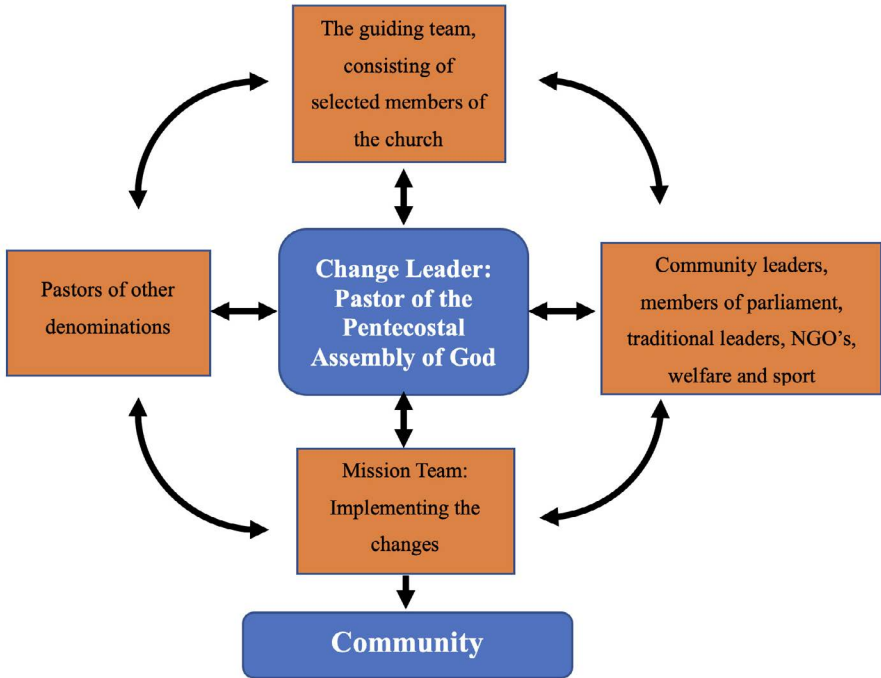
Figure 2: Individuals involved in forming and launching the vision.

4.5. Conclusion of the Study and Recommendations

This study employed Osmer's approach of practical theological research involving four tasks. It is an appropriate model in that it represents a logical sequence in carrying out a study. The focus of the study has been on: firstly, examining the early marriage practice among the Northern tribes of Zambia, and describing it (the descriptive–empirical task), secondly, determining factors which motivate young girls to get married early in Northern Zambia (the interpretive task), thirdly developing

sound biblical and foundation principles to develop a normative model for early marriage practices among the Northern tribes of Zambia (the normative task), and fourthly, developing a normative model that could help in a transformational change regarding the early marriage practice in Northern Zambia (the pragmatic task).

The objective of the study was to answer the main research question: "How can churches in Zambia address early marriage practices among the Northern tribes of Zambia in the light of Jacob's customary marriage to Leah and Rachel in Genesis 29:13–30?" This was achieved by answering the four subsidiary questions. The findings in the research demonstrated that the major factors which motivate early marriages among young girls in Northern Zambia include the following: customary marriage laws, poverty, lack of education for girls, discriminatory traditional and cultural value systems, lobola, high technology, chisungu traditional ceremonies, lack of awareness campaigns, peer pressure, lack of recreation facilities, and lack of sound biblical and theological teachings.

This study has demonstrated that Osmer's practical theological model is suitable for doing studies in various contexts. By applying it, this research contributes to the knowledge of the Zambian practice of early child marriages by focusing on the Northern tribes and developing indigenous knowledge from the people themselves. Another contribution is the biblical-theological reflection which is a unique reflection rather than an overemphasis on sociological or anthropological insights. Lastly, the research presents a practical framework that can be used within the specific community under study.

The researcher recommends the following actions to be taken to help in curbing the early childhood marriage practice among the Northern tribes of Zambia: firstly, the customary marriage law should be repealed,

secondly, both parents and girls should be empowered to alleviate poverty, thirdly, girls should be given equal educational opportunities as their male counterparts, fourthly, charging heavy lobola on grooms should be discouraged, fifthly, prolonged chisungu traditional ceremonies should be abbreviated to prevent girls from missing learning time, sixth, awareness campaigns about consequences of child marriages on social and community life should be enforced, seventh, recreation facilities should be provided in communities, and eighth, the church should openly talk about the issue of child marriages within the church and among the outside community, teaching members about consequences of child marriages, and teaching them sound biblical and theological principles about marriage, and preaching the gospel to all stake holders.

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The Impact of Transformational Evangelical Churches in Two Cities in Angola

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Abstract

Research on urban mission plays a central role in missiology studies. This article examines the impact of transformational evangelical churches in two cities in Angola, to investigate and assess trends in church missions in the two selected cities. The study looks at both the Scriptures and literature to understand the transformational nature of the church, specifically identifying key markers that identify what a transformational church is. The research describes three churches and the context and needs found in their urban settings. This is followed by an analysis of the links between an urban transformational church and its context, noting how effective these local churches were in responding to and impacting their environment. This article summarizes the findings of the study and draws a series of conclusions and their implications.

1. Introduction

The global trend is clearly towards urbanization at the expense of the countryside (*World Population Prospects* [WPP] 2006). The future of the world, as well as of Angola, will be urban (Alves 2002; White 2006). Within that global trend, the church of Christ is called to bring "the whole gospel to the whole city" in a transformational way (*Pact of Lausanne*). Bakke (COWE 1980) concluded that the church in general, no matter where has the same functions. They are worship, evangelism, discipleship, stewardship, fellowship and service, all of which need to be adapted to specific contexts.

In the context of Angola, the church has grown tremendously (Henderson 2001). From 1987 to 2005, 84 churches were recognized by the government, with 729 existing without official recognition (Viegas 2008, 15). I would like to look at the transformational impact of evangelical churches in two key cities in Angola, Luanda and Lubango. The growth of these cities has been rapid and disorderly with administrative, economic and social degradation, asymmetries between rich and poor, a rampant cutting of trees, and the presence of illegal expatriates.

To reach the city in a relevant way and to respond to the challenges of rapid urbanization, the church needs to be transformational, based on a contextual biblical theology. This study analyses specific churches within a specific context to see the extent to which they have been transformational. I will examine the socio-cultural and religious context of transformational churches, drawing on the Bible and literature to identify their characteristics. After analysing these three specific churches, I will offer conclusions and recommendations.

2. The Socio-Cultural and Religious Context

I will highlight the general panorama and broader context of Angola, and as I look at three historic churches in Luanda and Lubango (Café in Luanda; IEL – UIEA in Lubango; and IESA – Benfica, in Lubango) I will note how these historic evangelical churches have had great influence on the spaces they occupy. I will also note the challenges they face as they try to preach the gospel to all nations.

The name "Angola" is derived from the Bantu word Ngola. It was a Portuguese colonial territory until 1975. The Angolan population of almost 26 million people is mainly composed of ethnic groups of Bantu and non-Bantu origin (Kung, Bosquimanes. The officially spoken language is Portuguese (INE 2014, 51). The colonial war lasted until 1974, with independence being declared in 1975. Angola then suffered a civil war between 1992 and 2002. The Angolan reality is characterized by poverty and complicated by corruption. There is a need for pragmatic policies to consolidate peace, justice and development in education, health, economy, technology – and Christian spirituality.

The two cities examined in this study are Luanda and Lubango. Both cities are vital examples of the country's dynamics. Luanda is the capital of the province of Luanda and of the country. More than two million people—over 30% of Angola's population—live in Luanda (INE 2016). Urban life and population growth result in constraints on the mobility of people, goods and services, and cars, in addition to tensions due to unmet social expectations urgently need to be resolved. For this purpose, competent and suitable human resources are needed for the management of the common good.

Life in Lubango is similar. Lubango is located in the south of Angola on the Huíla plateau. It is the capital of the province of Huila, consisting of 31% (731,575) of the total population. It is characterized by inadequacies in social services in terms of health, teaching and education. All these realities mentioned above represent challenges that churches must consider in their transformational agenda.

3. A Description of the Three Selected Churches

In this study, three urban churches were examined from the evangelical denominations in Angola; Christian Missions in Many Lands CMML, Missions Philafricaine of Switzerland, and the South Africa General Mission.

3.1. Evangelical Church of the Brethren of Bairro Café - IEIA

The Evangelical Church of the Brethren in Angola "IEIA" was founded on November 15, 1884 (July 30) (Henderson 1990, 433). In 1969, the IEIA church in Bairro do Café was established in the urban area of Luanda. Its history is an example of the transition from the rural phase in Kwanjuluka-Bié in 1884 to the urban one (1969) (Saúl, ed. 2019, 1, 19). It grew from approximately 14 members in 1969 to 13,342 members in 14 churches in the 9 municipalities where evangelization had occurred (Saúl, ed. 2019, 21, 22, 52–60). The activities of the church are oriented towards evangelization, discipleship, teaching and social diakonia under the supervision of congregational leadership (Saúl, ed. 2019, 24–34).

3.2. Evangelical Church of Lubango – UIEA

The UIEA is a national denomination recognized by the Angolan State, with its national headquarters in the city of Lubango, Huíla Province (Henderson 1990, 118; Viegas 1999, 89). The UIEA Evangelical Church of Lubango was founded on May 19, 1946. In its 73 years of existence; it has had a numerical growth of nearly 2,000 participants with approximately 800 effective members. The church is oriented toward evangelization and teaching.

3.3. Sinodal Evangelical Church of Benfica – IESA

The Sinodal Evangelical Church of Angola (IESA) is a recognized national denomination with its headquarters in Kaluquembe. The church of Benfica was founded in 1970 and is located in Lubango. The activities of the church are oriented towards evangelization and mission.

Each of the churches of IEIA-Café in Luanda, IEL-UIEA in Lubango and IESA-Benfica in Lubango faces complex ethnic and social challenges, like other global cities. These include issues of security, employment, sanitation, health, transportation and education at all levels. The urban spiritual emptiness is due to the lack of fear of God and love of one's neighbor. To effect change, the church needs to be transformational.

4. Biblical Characteristics of Transformational Churches

For a clear understanding of these three churches in Angola and their impact, I will find out what the church should be and do based on biblical characteristics. The church is unique, one and of the same substance from

the Old to the New Testaments. This includes the three churches in this study because it is the same missional God who called them, and it is their reason for existing.

The church and its leadership must take a biblical-theological position, drawing on how the church and its councils have understood scripture. The one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church is a holy people, a chosen race, a holy priesthood, a peculiar people called to worship God alone (Exod 19:5, 6; 1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6).

The starting point of the transformational church is the Old Testament, understanding the transformational nature of the church is rooted in the call of Israel (Barro 2013, 22). When the blessing of the nations was announced in God's call to Abraham, that blessing included the churches that have been established in Angola. The historic nation of Israel was to be the transformational people of God by the election of the Lord. The transformational church that began in the Old Testament moved outwards as a centrifugal force. The Messiah who makes and will make all things new is the hope in the Old Testament and fulfilment in the New.

In the New Testament, the church takes on a new meaning with a radiant, attractive and inclusive dimension, embodying, through faith in Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles. It values the pilgrimage from the past to the future, from the Old to the New Testament. Jesus is the bridge of the testaments and the foundation of the church whose coming announces the fulfilment of the promises of the Old Testament complemented by the New Testament.

The transformational apostolic church will declare itself as the society of the future by Christian brands, for example, the churches of Antioch, Galatians, Ephesus, Philippi and Rome. So, the question is: after the apostolic times, does the church remain faithful to the fundamentals

of evangelical teaching? The biblical factors of a transformational church that maintains sound doctrine and proclaims the gospel in different realities aids in answering the question.

5. Biblical Factors of a Transformational Church

The spiritual eminence of the transformational church is described by biblical marks linked to its nature: being biblical, spiritual, a servant, a witness, a community that grows, a unit, benevolent, a community that worships, and apostolic. Its teachings are "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone" (Eph 2:20). As the Apostolic Creed affirms, these were the marks of a church which was one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

According to John Stott (2006, 3), "the church is at the centre of the plan of salvation." In Henderson's opinion (2001, 460), the transformational church is one, human and divine, the people of God. Its mission is to proclaim and live out the kingdom of God.

6. Characteristics of Transformational Churches—Contributions from Literature

The writings of prominent thinkers have helped biblical-theological reflection, producing books on the missionary practice of transformational Christian churches, and presenting global examples of transformational urban churches that have had relevant results in their diverse locations. This shows that the transformational church is God's agent to cause transformation, and to be transformed in the process. Some of the many

authors who have written about this are: Bakke (1987, 1997, and 2002), Berkhof (1992), Blauw (1966), Bosch (2002:11-41), Engen (2007), Glasser (2009), Padilla (1992), Padilla and Yamamori (2003), and Schwarz (1996).

The contribution of the biblical-theological literature allows us to develop the research with sufficient theoretical and methodological foundation to understand the role of the transformational church, in the social and spiritual change of the context. The transformational church must be understood as "a community in response to the missio Dei, witnessing to Jesus Christ in word and deed" (Kirk 2006, 52).

The three Angolan churches in this study are the fruit of the church that preceded it in the process of transformation in response to God's mission. A transformational church sends out transformational disciples to restore and heal the world. The basis for understanding mission is the missio Dei, the Word of God and biblical theology. God sent Jesus, and Jesus sent the church to spread his Word of forgiveness of personal and social sins and the restoration of creation.

There are good global examples of churches and urban communities from different social and political contexts, such as Costa Rica, the USA, Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador. Transformational churches live the gospel by being proactive and responding in context-sensitive ways. What they have in common and what has impacted these global contexts are evangelization, mission, worship, prayer, praise, teaching and social service. Such churches are not simply activists; they characterize the nature of the church.

I thus suggest a list of six marks or indicators that can be used to analyze whether the three Angolan urban churches are transformational or not. These transformational indicators or characteristics of the church are as follows: worship (*latreia*); preaching (*kerygma*); fellowship (*koinonia*); service (*diakonia*); teaching (*didascalía*) and stewardship (*oikonomos*).

7. Analysis of Three Churches in Angola

The research project was planned to include four churches. However, a church chose not to respond. A series of written questions were sent to leaders and lay members of the three churches that participated in this study. These were of a variety of ages, both male and female. The written surveys were followed up, as needed, with interviews. The questions asked were:

i. Identify two or three major problems (spiritual and social) in the city where your church is located. Respondents noted spiritual problems as being: a lack of fear of God, a lack of love for others and occultism. As to social issues, respondents noted poverty, crime, health and unemployment.

ii. How is your church responding to these major social and spiritual challenges? Be specific, giving examples of something that has been done. In the spiritual area respondents noted, problems with evangelization, biblical teaching, discipleship and prayer. Concerning social issues, respondents noted the need for assistance to, and empowerment of, the needy, entrepreneurial training, education and health care.

iii. In your opinion, what is the transformational (transformative) impact on this city and region? In your view, what is - or what does - a transformational (transformative) church do? For both questions, the respondents in each local church had a sufficient understanding of what is (function) and what makes (activity) a transformational church. Some responded that a transformational church is a church that evangelizes unbelievers, disciples believers, trains workers, and

allows the socialization of church groups and families. In general, respondents felt that the church must seek first the kingdom of God; considering the spiritual and social sides when diagnosing and solving society's problems in impactful ways. Others said it is a community of saved people, disciples, who are welcoming, who live and preach the gospel of Christ with a purpose and mission to transform lives and promote the well-being of the human person.

iv. In your opinion, how could your church better respond to the spiritual and social needs of your city? In the spiritual area, respondents noted a need for evangelization, discipleship, and prayer. For social areas, respondents commented on things like visitation and assistance to the needy, food assistance and support for drug addicts, entrepreneurial training and advocacy for the poor, including families and society. The impact was observed through the tendency of local church members to engage in the urban mission of thecity in which they serve.

The empirical work of the research and questionnaire covering the impact of three evangelical churches in two cities in Angola demonstrates the importance of understanding the dynamics of the cultural context in the spiritual and social dimensions.

8. Are the Selected Churches Transformational?

With the analysis to be made of the three Angolan churches, we mark a crucial stage of the academic work for the validation of the preliminary hypotheses of the research. The characteristics of transformational churches expressed earlier are valuable foundations that result from the

Bible and the literature to discern whether these three Angolan churches are transformational or not. From the Bible and literature, we noted that the church is addressed as a peculiar property, a priestly kingdom, holy people, living stones, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, biblical, spiritual, a servant, witness, growing, united, benevolent, worshipping, and apostolic (Exod 19:5, 6; 1 Pet 1:4–6; Deiros 2006, 81–87). Based on the list of characteristics mentioned above, we abstracted six characteristics (worship, fellowship, proclamation, service, teaching and stewardship) with which to do the analysis: to determine the extent to which the three selected evangelical churches are transformational in their respective contexts? The intention has been to understand the degree of interaction of the local churches in their individuality, similarities and differences, in the face of the big challenges of these urban centers.

8.1. The Evangelical Church of the Brethren of the Café neighborhood

I conclude that the Igreja dos Irmãos do Bairro Café is a transformational community. It is characterized by a certain representation of every function of a Christian church. Among all the characteristics or marks of a transformational church, the ones that stand out the most are proclamation, worship, teaching, and service. Undoubtedly, we can say that there was some transformational impact in the city of Luanda, in both spiritual and social areas, albeit in small proportions. Insufficiencies occur because the structures and rules of the church and the training of leaders do not provide the necessary skills for training members. With greater training and better leadership, the church would be better able to provide consistent and effective responses to the city's major problems.

8.2. Evangelical Church of Lubango

We conclude that the Evangelical Church of Lubango is also a transformational community. A transformational community is characterized by a certain display of every Christian ecclesiastical function. Among all the characteristics, the most outstanding are, proclamation, teaching, worship, and service. Considering these functions, it can be said that there were some transformational impacts in the city of Lubango, in both the spiritual and social areas, albeit in small proportions.

8.3. Sinodal Evangelical Church of Benfica

Furthermore, we conclude that the Sinodal Evangelical Church of Benfica is a transformational community that is characterized by a certain display of every Christian ecclesiastical function. Among all the characteristics, the ones that stand out the most are evangelism, proclamation, worship and service. Considering these functions, it can be said that there was some transformational impact in the city of Lubango, in both the spiritual and social areas, albeit in small proportions.

9. Interaction with the Research Hypothesis

Given the results obtained, I conclude that all three of the selected churches are reasonable transformational communities, characterized by a certain display of each Christian ecclesiastical function. Accordingly, we can say that there was some transformational impact in the cities of Luanda and Lubango, in both spiritual and social areas, albeit in only small proportions. The six functions mentioned characterize the nature

of the church and were observed in each of the three churches selected for the study. Programs that are expressed in activities give visibility to functions. The programs aim to build up the church and respond to the problems and needs of the people of the city. Not everything that is done by the church, results from a preliminary study, or through conscious, planned responses to the context of service. The participation of the programs are mostly absorbed by the members. Essentially the church is carrying out its activities for itself and others, with little impact on the problems and needs of the city. For correction, it is important to reorient the procedure and pay attention to a study of the social environment that it intends to impact, identifying the need for the life of ordinary people. Quality life is only with God. The agency of God sent to the city is the church that is dedicated to reaching citizens in the different urban locations of Luanda and Lubango who are hungry and thirsty for justice. This is why the number of programs and activities to be carried out, depends on the number and quality of members in the local church.

The research showed that the church actively and consciously participated in the process of urban transformation with certain limitations. These limitations stem from a lack of knowledge and training skills that would have helped to better respond to some of the major problems identified. In some cases, the church was aware of what it was doing and why, while in other cases, it unconsciously or passively demarcated itself, depriving itself of its full role of "salt and light of the earth" (Matt 5:13-16). Church services are important to maintain the quality standard of care for city dwellers with values. Carrying out acts of social service is also proper to the nature of the church to reduce the level of precariousness of life within urban areas.

10. Conclusions

In this study we researched the impact of transformational evangelical churches in two cities in Angola. We established a basis for defining the problem and research parameters. We noted that the city has become, the center and the future, of the world in the urbanization process. An urban context is a space that is a crossroad for multi-cultures. It is a space that is always changing. The spiritual and social areas where the church is trying to serve are a challenge that has been the object of study by missiologists and sociologists.

We described the socio-cultural and religious context of the cities of Luanda and Lubango in Angola. In their various facets and realities, there is a deficit of services that requires a lot of care in areas such as traffic management, environmental sanitation, security, employment, health, and education at all levels. There is always great potential for culture, economics and social development within urban centers such as Luanda and Lubango. Complex challenges face the historical churches of IEIA-Café in Luanda, IEL-UIEA in Lubango and IESA-Benfica in Lubango. If these churches are to be transformational in their mission, they are called to respond to the spiritual and social needs in their urban settings.

The city's social reality brings with it unsustainable security and subsistence challenges, attracting phenomena common to other cities in the world. Problems of education and health, employment and adequate infrastructure become barriers.

There is also a spiritual emptiness in urban areas, caused by the lack of a fear of God, and a lack of love of one's neighbor. These are values that must be taught by the church, as it faces the types of problems that we have identified.

To determine whether the three churches examined in this study are transformational, we looked at the Christian Scriptures and at the literature on urban ministry to discover characteristics of transformational churches. We affirmed that the church began in the Old Testament, based on the election of Israel and Abraham to follow the mission assigned by God. Israel was set apart as a holy people, to be a chosen race, a holy priesthood, and a peculiar people to worship God alone. In the fullness of time, Jesus appeared; the expected Messiah, who's coming fulfilled the promises of the Old Testament and the building of the redeemed church.

The transformational community of the Old Testament was formally established as a church in the New Testament. It continued to grow and develop from the apostolic age into the post-apostolic age of today. The spiritual nature of the transformational church is described by the biblical marks attached to its nature. These are drawn from, and observed in, the churches and teachings found in the book of Acts. These marks are that the transformational church is biblical, spiritual, a servant, a witness, growing, united, benevolent, worshipping and apostolic. This isn't a compilation of characteristics of multiple churches but of the one true transformative church. This continued to be true even as the church faced heresies with differing biblical-theological positions. What has become defining Christian distinctiveness came from church councils. For example, it was defined that the church is one and has the same essence. As has often been repeated, the Apostles' Creed states that this transformational community is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church; and by God's will, the church is at the center of the plan of salvation.

We looked at the examples of five global churches with impact on their unique contexts. All of them have evangelization, mission, worship,

prayer, praise, teaching and social service in common, and in their various contexts as each responds to meet urban challenges. The nature of the transformational church boils down to worship, preaching, fellowship, service, teaching, and stewardship that correlate word and action.

This is not only for the benefit of society but for the benefit of the church itself. The transformational church is God's agent that is transformed in the process of causing transformation in others. This biblical content from the book of Acts provides the foundation for the analysis of the transformality of the three selected churches in Angola.

We conclude that the empirical work (research, questionnaire) concerning the impact of three evangelical churches in two cities in Angola demonstrates the importance of the understanding and perception of the dynamics and heterogeneity of the cultural context in their spiritual and social dimensions. It elucidates the methodology applied for data collection to test the reliability of the research's basic assumption. It clarifies how and why data collection was done on three different groups, representing the members of three churches, and how the data was analyzed and interpreted.

The research showed that the church actively and consciously participated in the process of urban transformation with certain limitations. These limitations stem from the lack of knowledge and training skills that help to respond to some of the major problems identified. Therefore, the church was aware in some cases and in others it unconsciously or passively demarcated itself, depriving itself of its full role of "salt and light of the earth" (Matt 5:13–16). Church services are important to maintain the values and the quality standard of care for city dwellers. Social service is a proper outflow of the nature of the church to reduce the level of precariousness.

This article responds affirmatively to the research question. There was evidence that each of the churches was transformational, with different levels of activity in the cities of Luanda and Lubango. God is impacting the city through transformational churches.

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The Emergence and Development of Missiological Themes in Early Nonconformist Hymnody (1706–1755)

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Abstract

This thesis examines the use of missiological themes in the corpus of new hymns which were produced within English Nonconformist churches between 1706 and 1755. It assumes that the words used in worship have the potential to shape the way Christians think about theology and, ultimately, to affect the way they live (an assumption grounded in the Christian tradition's long experience of worship and faith: *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*). The appearance of a new genre of texts for congregational worship in the early eighteenth century provides an opportunity to trace the development of certain theological ideas. Taking the missiological themes present at the launch of the Nonconformist mission movement

at the end of the eighteenth century, this thesis studies their appearance and usage in the earlier hymn-texts. While the earliest hymns of the period show relatively little usage of these themes, the 1719 publication of Isaac Watts's psalm paraphrases introduces substantial missiological content into Nonconformist worship. By the end of the period, these themes develop an actively missional sensibility, thus laying some of the groundwork for the subsequent mission movement.

1. Introduction

Beginning in the 1790s, the Nonconformist churches of England (in particular, the Congregationalists and Baptists) were instrumental in launching a global mission movement which accelerated the spread of Christianity and changed the course of history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some historians regard the Nonconformists as having been unlikely candidates for this development, having been a minority movement with little discernible missiological interest a century beforehand. To explain the emergence of the mission movement, its ideological roots are often traced to its initial promoters in the 1780s and '90s (figures like Andrew Fuller and William Carey), or further back to the Evangelical Revival and Moravian mission movement of the 1730s and '40s. This study posits that such explanations, while partially valid, nevertheless leave out a major formative source of missiological development in Nonconformist church culture: the contents of the new genre of hymnody that blossomed in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

This study analyzes the emergence and development of missiological themes in early Nonconformist hymnody, acting under the hypothesis that the theological roots of missiological ideas which were later important in the mission movement of the 1790s were already present in the hymnody of a half-century to a century before. It proceeds by using a content analysis research design, coding for the missiological themes in William Carey's 1792 treatise, *An Enquiry Concerning the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, and then examining the corpus of hymns produced during the first major period of Nonconformist hymnography (1706–1755) to study the frequency and usage of those themes. After the content analysis survey, this study uses a modified exegetical methodology, which is geared toward the detailed analysis of representative texts from a broader corpus, to examine ten key hymn texts for their treatment of those missiological themes.

As revealed by the content analysis survey, the hymn collections produced by Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge show a significant presence of missiological themes, reflecting the development of a theological mindset which was beginning to consider the question of the global spread of the gospel at least half a century before the missiological treatises of the 1780s and '90s. Of particular interest is Isaac Watts's 1719 collection of hymns, entitled *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*, in which missiological material rises to a far greater prominence than in any other work in the period, including Watts's other hymns. By comparing Watts's *Psalms of David* to other hymns and to the preceding psalter tradition, a plausible case can be made for Watts's *Psalms of David* to be considered an original infusion of missiological content into the liturgical life of Nonconformist church culture, and thus to be ranked

alongside other leading historical causes of the mission movement at the end of the eighteenth century.

2. Background

Following a modified exegetical methodology, this study undertakes a thorough exploration of the historical and theological contexts from which the new genre of congregational hymns emerged in the early eighteenth century. Of particular importance, is the literary context of the hymns, since they represent a new genre of liturgical text within the English Protestant tradition, as well as the historical-missiological context in which they were written.

2.1. The development of hymnography in the English Protestant tradition

The approximate half-century, from 1706 to 1755, represented a major shift in the creation and usage, of liturgical texts for congregational song. During this period, Nonconformist congregations experienced a transition from a nearly exclusive use of metrical psalms to a new genre of original poetic compositions as their main form of hymnody. Congregational singing had been dominated by biblical canticles and metrical psalms since the English Reformation of the sixteenth century. Thomas Cranmer, the leading figure behind the production of the *Book of Common Prayer*, drew much of its substance from classical Christian models (Davies 1996, 20). Singing remained an important part of these inherited liturgies but did not include the production of new hymns for use in worship.

Throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, various poets published collections of "hymns" (for instance, those by John

Donne, George Herbert, and John Milton), but these were devotional poems, as this was what the term "hymn" generally referred to at the time, not compositions intended for congregational singing (Benson 1962, 63–65; Reynolds and Price 1999, 50; Knapp 2012, 465). In some circles, even well into the eighteenth century, hymn-texts were still largely used for reading in private devotional settings rather than for public singing (Phillips 2012, 205).

With the advent of the seventeenth century, this relatively limited field of hymnody continued to grow, but it grew almost exclusively in the direction of psalmody (Davies 1996, 64–65). The inheritance of the Protestant Reformation was a mixed one, and although certain sectors of it had promoted the use of newly composed vernacular-language hymns—for instance, Martin Luther was the author of several prominent new hymns—other sectors like the Calvinist/Reformed churches put their emphasis on a renewed and expansive use of psalmody in worship (Douglas 2012, 78; Sherman 2002, 81). It was this latter tradition that played a more significant role in the development of early English hymnody. Though there was a brief attempt by some English writers to introduce songs in the Lutheran model, such as Miles Coverdale's *Ghoostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*, published in the 1530s, the predominant influence of Calvin's Reformed tradition quickly won the day, and psalms became the standard songs of the church (Gillman 1927, 141–45; Foote 1968, 9–10).

There were some minor attempts in the seventeenth century to write new hymns for worship, though none found widespread acceptance until after the subsequent "improvement of psalmody" (Watts 1707, 233) introduced by the works of Isaac Watts. By the 1690s, a few Baptist pastors were writing singable Christian poems and putting them to use within their local congregations. One such figure was Benjamin Keach,

a major representative of the Nonconformist contribution to creative literature (Wallace 2011, 27). The printing of Keach's hymns in the 1690s engendered controversy within his denomination and resulted in a split within Keach's own congregation (Clarke 2011, 25; Wootton 2011, 82). Such early Nonconformist hymns were published and put into local circulation, but they were not yet widely used in congregations outside each hymnographer's own church, and thus their restricted circulation and usage exerted only a minimal impact on Nonconformism as a whole.

The pivotal moment of change came with Isaac Watts's publication of major collections of original hymns (see Phillips 2018, 87–88). Instead of a small-scale program of hymns intended for localized congregational use, they were now being disseminated in a form adapted to widespread use. Even if one cannot accurately call Watts "the father of English hymnody"—though many have sought to do so (for example, see Wootton 2011, 84)—he is certainly, says hymnologist Erik Routley (1974, 526), "the liberator of English hymnody." The transition from psalm-singing to hymn-singing, largely effected by Watts and his influence, was not smooth, but it was striking. In the words of one historian, "We might almost say that before Watts, English churches sang Psalms. After Watts, they sang hymns" (Herzel 1946, 142).

The popularity of Watts's hymns established the new genre as a widely accepted feature in Nonconformist worship, and both the influence of the previous model of psalmody and the controversy engendered by his creative work shaped early Nonconformist hymnody in important respects. Watts's hymns were consciously grounded in Scripture, loosely following the scriptural model established by centuries of psalmody. This scriptural grounding is most clearly seen in his *Psalms of David*, which went on to have a broad impact in some of the earliest missionary

outreaches in North America, despite Watts himself not appearing to have an overtly missiological bent to his thinking.

2.2. The development of missiological thought in eighteenth-century Nonconformism

The period in question was also a time of growing missiological awareness in many Protestant circles, nevertheless the influence of missiological thought on Nonconformist life appears to have remained muted, largely due to the defensive and inward posture which Nonconformism had been forced to take during its development. Nonconformism was a reactionary movement against Anglicanism's moderate philosophy in church practices. The English Reformation had swung back and forth for its first few decades in the sixteenth century, oscillating between full-throated rejections of Roman Catholic practice and the subsequent re-adoption of many of those same practices (Spinks 2006, 492–503). By the time Anglican practice was codified and standardized during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, it had adopted a "middle way" of embracing the *sola Scriptura* standard of Protestant theology while retaining many of the liturgical practices associated with Catholic worship. The Puritans, for their part, hoped to cleanse the English church of what they saw as Catholic accretions in the liturgy and to reform the habits and manners of English life in a more pietistic direction (Greaves 1985, 449–52).

By the turn of the eighteenth century, the theological heritage of Puritanism was largely carried forward by Nonconformist churches. Since Nonconformism had arisen out of a milieu of social turmoil driven by issues of local faith and practice, it was these same issues that formed the main emphasis of many Nonconformist churches throughout the period.

Doctrines like congregational polity and believer's baptism had become matters of the utmost importance for many Christians, convictions which they had to hold at the price of tremendous social costs for themselves and their families. As historian Brian Spinks (2008, 84) notes, "the price of Dissent [i.e., Nonconformism] for most was marginalization from the centre of civic and cultural life, with the constant threat of their neighbors' wrath during times of unrest." As such, the apologetic defense of these doctrines, along with continued polemics against the contrary practices of mainstream Anglicanism, formed the main outward-facing programs of Nonconformist churches during this period. Their primary goal was survival and the right to meet for worship, and they did not yet have the practical possibility of considering a broad, intentional, and organized program of global evangelization (see Bready 2021, 373; Porter 2004, 28).

Certain aspects of Nonconformist doctrine also tended to dampen the emergence of missiological trends in theology. Calvinist theology was a predominant influence across much of the Puritan movement, and this carried over into Nonconformism as well. The undergirding emphasis on the sovereignty of God within this theological system, and a corollary de-emphasis of human agency, tended to restrain the growth of missiological ideas from moving in the direction of intentional, organizational action (Lambert 1999, 26–28; Crawford 1987, 373). It should also be noted, though, that the predominance of Calvinist theology did not dampen all missiological ideas in early Nonconformism, since it was within those same theological circles that the optimistic global vision of postmillennial eschatology grew and flourished (Kidd 2007, 8; Bosch 2011, 284). However, early postmillennialists were often content simply to believe that the nations would be converted before the return of Christ, not to take the

next step of resolving that it might be through their own actions that that conversion would be brought to effect.

With this historical-missiological context in view, it is unsurprising to find that Nonconformist writings in the early decades of the eighteenth century—when Isaac Watts was composing his hymns—tend to neglect missiological issues entirely. Later, by the mid-century mark, one can find such issues being raised, as the impact of the Moravian mission movement and the beginnings of the Evangelical Revival took shape. Even so, mid-century leaders like Philip Doddridge, who exemplified the rising Nonconformist interest in the global scope of Christian mission by the end of the period, remained atypical and isolated figures, not yet representative of the broader Nonconformist mood. Nonetheless, Philip Doddridge appears to have been a seminal figure in the rise of the Protestant mission movement, anticipating the ideas of later leaders like William Carey by nearly a half-century. While he did not actually create a mission society, his was one of the first voices in English Nonconformism to promote the idea (Nuttall 1951, 87–93). Doddridge's influence in this regard often goes unremarked in general histories of mission; but his ability to use hymnography as a vehicle for his ideas put him in the position to sow the seeds of missiological reflection into the weekly patterns of Christian worship, and so his missiological influence was likely to have spread as a growing undercurrent in Nonconformist life.

3. Content Analysis Survey Results

By identifying the themes which were prominent missiological ideas during the launch of the Protestant mission movement and then noting their appearance in earlier Nonconformist hymns, the content analysis

survey data permits an assessment of those hymnographers and sources which provide the best representation of the development of those missiological themes. The study looked for twelve missiological themes in the corpus of early Nonconformist hymns, as derived from William Carey's later *Enquiry*; some of which were subdivided into further sub-themes. The tables below record the results of the content analyses surveys (with the exclusion of one of Carey's themes which showed no incidence in the hymns).

3.1. Statistical Overview for All Sources

	% of total hymns with missiological themes (Set 1)	% of verses in Set 1 hymns with missiological themes	% of total hymns with an overall missiological character
Watts's *Hymns* (1709)	9.6%	21.3%	0.8%
Watts's *Psalms* (1719)	23.8%	24.1%	3.5%
Watts's Minor Sources	7.0%	22.2%	0.9%
Doddridge's Sources	14.2%	27.0%	2.1%
Minor Congregational	2.6%	12.5%	0.0%
Minor Baptist	3.7%	16.7%	0.7%

3.2. Statistical Incidence of Missiological Themes for All Sources (Sub-Themes Listed in Italics)[1]

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1 See page 156.

	Watts's *Hymns*	Watts's *Psalms*	Watts's Minor Sources	Doddridge's Sources	Minor Congregational	Minor Baptist
God's lordship/ Christ's reign over the world	1.6%	12.5%	1.3%	2.9%	1.1%	2.2%
Practical expansion of Christ's reign	0.8%	6.1%	0%	1.9%	0.8%	0.0%
Knowledge of the gospel/Christ's name	0.8%	2.6%	0.9%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Spread of that knowledge	2.2%	4.1%	1.8%	5.9%	1.1%	0.0%
Implementation of that spread by Christians	2.2%	2.9%	1.3%	4.0%	0.4%	1.5%
Expressions of prayer for the nations	0.8%	6.9%	0.9%	5.9%	0.4%	0.0%
The practice of going or being sent out	0.3%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.7%
Missionary activity as biblical obedience	1.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Missionary activity as spiritual warfare	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Awareness of division between evangelized and unevangelized areas	0.3%	4.1%	0.5%	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%
Emphasis on specific areas or people groups	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%
Positive effects of the gospel on the nations	0.8%	4.1%	0.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Awareness of mission movements and the current opportunity	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Spiritual state of non-Christians as a subject of emotional concern	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Eschatological promise of all nations coming to God	0.3%	2.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Average Total Incidence per Source	**0.9%**	**3.1%**	**0.5%**	**2.0%**	**0.4%**	**0.3%**

3.3. Assessing the Results of the Survey Data

Two main insights emerge from the content analysis survey data. First, the presence of missiological themes is most notable in the works of Isaac Watts and Philip Doddridge, whose results surpass all the minor Nonconformist hymnographers of the period (Joseph Stennett, Simon Browne, Daniel Turner, and Benjamin Wallin). While Watts's *Psalms of David* show the highest overall usage rate of missiological themes, Doddridge's hymns show the greatest distribution of themes, representing a broader range of the thematic material which would later be present in William Carey's works. Guided by these results, this study's selection of key hymn texts focuses on the works of Watts and Doddridge, with nine of the ten key texts taken from their hymnbooks. (The remaining hymn, by Joseph Stennett, is selected in order to give representation to the Baptist side of early Nonconformist hymnody.)

Second, Isaac Watts's *Psalms of David* emerges from the content analysis survey as a statistical outlier, significantly outpacing not only the works of all other hymnographers but also Watts's other works. Watts's *Psalms of David* holds a central place in the development of missiological content in Nonconformist hymnody, not only by merit of its high usage rate of missiological themes, but because it also happened to be one of the most widely used sources of new hymns, and so any missiological content within it would have been in an advantageous position for influencing undercurrents of theological reflection in Nonconformist life. Because of its importance, Watts's *Psalms of David* contributes more of the key hymn texts (four of the ten) than any other source.

4. Results of the Analysis of Key Hymn Texts

Having completed the content analysis survey, the study then goes on to select ten key hymn texts and subjects them to a detailed literary and theological analysis. The ten texts chosen were as follows:

- "Twas the Commission of Our Lord," from Isaac Watts's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707/1709), based on the biblical Great Commission passages
- "Go Preach My Gospel, Saith the Lord," from Watts's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1709), based on the biblical Great Commission passages
- "The Sacred Body of Our Lord," from Joseph Stennett's *Hymns Compos'd for the Celebration of the Holy Ordinance of Baptism* (1712), based on the biblical Great Commission passages
- "The Heavens Declare Thy Glory, Lord," from Watts's *Psalms of David* (1719), based on Psalm 19
- "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun," from Watts's *Psalms of David* (1719), based on Psalm 72
- "Sing to the Lord with Joyful Voice," from Watts's *Psalms of David* (1719), based on Psalm 100
- "O All Ye Nations, Praise the Lord," from Watts's *Psalms of David* (1719), based on Psalm 117
- "Behold Our God, He Owns His Name," from Philip Doddridge's *Hymns Founded on Various Texts* (1755), inspired by Isaiah 25:6-9
- "Behold with Pleasing Extacy," from Doddridge's *Hymns Founded on Various Texts* (1755), inspired by Isaiah 66:8

- "Thou, Mighty Lord, Art God Alone," from Doddridge's *Hymns Founded on Various Texts* (1755), inspired by Acts 17:23

The analysis of the ten key hymns above bears out some of the insights revealed in the content analysis survey data: namely, that Isaac Watts's *Psalms of David* shows a significant missiological sensibility (one that was likely magnified in its reception and usage to a degree that Watts himself had not envisioned), and that Philip Doddridge shows the highest incidence of those themes which strike closest to the tenor of later Nonconformist missiological works, like William Carey's *Enquiry*. The disjunction between Watts's own major hymnals is striking: one moves from hymns based on texts in which one would expect to find significant missiological reflections (such as the Great Commission passages of Matt 28, Mark 16, and Acts 1)—but in which such missiological content is relegated to a distant historical context—to hymns based on texts which Nonconformists had been singing for generations (the biblical psalms), and which under Watts's treatment have developed in a significantly missiological direction. Some of this may be attributable to developments in Watts's own theological development in the period between those two publications (1707 and 1719), but more likely, the missiological character of his *Psalms of David* arose from the method Watts applied to reworking the underlying biblical material.

Doddridge, for his part, does not include missiological content quite as frequently as in Watts's *Psalms of David*, but when he does, its character is striking. In Doddridge, the expansive scope of the task of Christian missionary labors is consistently highlighted as an imperative which extends to every nation and language group in the world. Doddridge also adds an emotional undercurrent to his

missiological themes which was lacking in the works of Watts and the minor hymnographers. For Doddridge, the question of global Christian mission is not a matter of abstract theology; it is an urgent call on the Christian conscience, to be responded to with concerted efforts in prayer. Finally, Doddridge also reveals that he believes the call to Christian mission will not be limited to prayer alone but will require the intentional actions of his own generation of English Christians to see that it is accomplished. While clear indications of this sentiment appear only rarely in his hymns, it is instructive to note that this theme is the same one that William Carey (1792, 1–3) would present as the center of his question to English Nonconformists nearly half a century later: whether Christians had an obligation to "use means" for the conversion of non-Christians around the world. To that question, Doddridge had already answered "yes" in his hymn on Acts 17. Doddridge was living and working amid the Evangelical Revival of the 1730s and 1740s, from which "the missionary awakening of the 1790s… flamed forth" (George 2008, 46), and his pen gave voice to the hopes of that revival in a manner that would position them to be repeated, sung, and meditated upon for the subsequent decades of the eighteenth century. It is no surprise, then, that William Carey did not see himself as a great originator of new ideas when he wrote his *Enquiry* in 1792, but rather as someone who was "entering into a process already in motion" (Walls 2001, 33). The grand desire for global evangelization had been sung in Nonconformist churches since the time of Watts, and the expectation that their own churches would be a part of it, since the time of Doddridge.

5. Development of Missiological Themes

The use of biblical material in the hymnography of the period included four main types, each of which affected the frequency and expression of missiological themes. First, some hymns—including many of Isaac Watts's—used biblical material as a topical inspiration. In such hymns, a particular passage of scripture is cited in the subscript of the hymn's title, and the doctrinal themes rooted in that passage provide the main ideas of the hymn text (for example, see Watts 1709, 5).

Second, some hymnographers used biblical material in a compilatory way. These hymnographers—of whom Joseph Stennett and Benjamin Wallin are good examples—would write a hymn on a doctrinal theme, and in doing so would draw the hymn's content directly from a compilation of many different verses of scripture (see Stennett 1712, 3–4; Wallin 1750, 16–17). This represents a much more extensive use of biblical content than the first category, but it shares with the first category the fact that the shaping influence on the hymn's framework is the hymnographer's own doctrinal interpretations. Here the biblical passages provide the content for the hymn, but not the thematic structuring. Using this method, for example, it would be possible to create a hymn built entirely of proof-texts for a doctrinal position which is expressed by no single biblical passage on its own; the guiding interpretive influence in such a case must come from the hymnographer.

Third, some of the hymns from this period use biblical material in an expository manner, much as a sermon would. A scattering of these hymns can be found in most of the hymnographers of the period; but the only collection which is marked throughout by the use of this

style is Philip Doddridge's. An expository hymn quotes certain parts of the passage and then provides interpretive and illustrative expansion upon it (for example, see Doddridge 1755, 4). Expository hymns use the biblical passage to provide more of a guiding framework for the hymn's construction than do compilatory hymns. In Doddridge's use, expository hymns were often paired with the scriptural passage used in a given week's Sunday services, and they served as a further reinforcement of the sermon's expository applications (Payne 1951, 199).

Fourth, some of the hymns of this period are paraphrastic, the outstanding example being Watts's *Psalms of David*. These hymns strive to be paraphrases of an entire biblical text, replicating the content of the scriptural passage into the rhyme and meter of a hymn. Nevertheless, the paraphrastic hymns from this period are not simply metered translations of the biblical text in the same way that a metrical psalm would be. Rather, the hymnographer still exercises significant interpretative influence in arranging the biblical content, eliding certain sections and adding expressive imagery not found in the underlying text. Some of these hymns also include a doctrinal transposition of the content, moving from the way an Old Testament passage is expressed and producing a rendering of that passage's content as if it had been composed using the ideas and images of the New Testament. Historian of hymnody Louis Benson (1962, 55) regarded the extension of scriptural paraphrase from metrical psalters to the inclusion of New Testament themes as one of three major lines of development in early English hymnody. A paraphrastic hymn, then, relies upon a single biblical passage for its content and its structural framework, but the hymnographer still exercises some influence in the thematic expressions of the content. Paraphrastic hymns match

compilatory hymns in the amount of hymn-text taken directly from biblical passages, but exceed both compilatory and expository hymns in the extent to which a single biblical passage provides the structural framework for the hymn's construction. Such hymns are an attempt, in the words of Watts (1753, 4:148), to "obey the direction of the word of God, and sing his praises with understanding" (cf. Beynon 2016, 151).

How hymns make use of their underlying biblical material appears to affect the presence and frequency of missiological themes. Topical and compilatory hymns, which are more reliant on their hymnographers' guidance for their overt thematic content than on the biblical material itself, tend to have the smallest proportion of missiological themes. This is to be expected, especially since the hymnographers in question came from a historical-theological context that was not yet attuned to significant missiological reflection. Expository and paraphrastic hymns, by contrast, exhibit greater rates of missiological content, and this is especially the case with the paraphrastic psalms of Isaac Watts. This indicates that part of the infusion of missiological themes into early Nonconformist hymnody comes because of reappropriating missiological themes within the biblical texts themselves. Further, the way in which hymns formulate their missiological themes can span a range from passive to active expressions, and it is the active expressions that most clearly match the missiological themes in Nonconformist thought in William Carey's day, at the end of the eighteenth century. Such active expressions are most commonly found in the work of Philip Doddridge, whose sentiments anticipated Carey's by half a century.

6. Theological and Practical Significance

After analyzing the use of biblical material in the key hymn texts, the study then goes on to trace the theological and practical significance of missiological themes therein, principally by analyzing the hymns' patterns of biblical interpretation and their use of divine attributes. In the case of biblical interpretation—particularly in Isaac Watts's method of paraphrasing the psalms—it appears that an innovation in his hymnography introduced new missiological content, which had not otherwise featured in contemporary Nonconformist sources, into the hymnody of the period. By taking Watts's key hymn texts from his *Psalms of David* (based on Psalms 19, 72, 100, and 117) and comparing them to parallel texts in the metrical psalters of the late seventeenth century, one can discern a significant shift in the way that the psalmic material is being presented. Watts's method—which transposed the underlying biblical language into concepts related to Christ and the church—resulted in the global-scale rhetoric of the biblical psalms being turned into expressly Christian-missiological ideas in a way that none of the other metrical psalters matched. Not only did Watts's *Psalms of David* thus introduce novel missiological content into Nonconformist circles, but it also appears to have had a measurable effect on the way that Philip Doddridge understood and articulated missiological content in his hymns. Each of the main areas of growth in thematic missiological content in Doddridge's hymns was preceded by a growing focus on those same thematic areas in Watts's *Psalms of David*.

In other cases, such as the study's analysis of divine attributes and the practice of prayer, the key hymns' thematic content correlated with a rise in missiological thought, but likely reflected that rise rather than

drove it. Philip Doddridge's missiological sensibility, exemplified by his preference for active expressions of missiological themes in his hymns, correlates with his advocacy for active practices, such as corporate prayer. Another area of correlation is in the passive expressions of many missiological themes in early Nonconformist hymns, which likely owe their formulation, at least in part, to the characteristic emphasis of eighteenth-century Calvinism on God's providence rather than on human action. Another practical aspect in which Nonconformist hymnody is widely assumed to correlate with broader movements in its historical context is that of colonialism. This study's examination of key hymn texts, however, demonstrates that the expression of missiological themes in early Nonconformist hymnody likely had little to do with colonialist ideology (largely because it preceded the most significant period of British colonial expansion), although such hymns may have come to be used in that way in later historical contexts.

In sum, this research has made the case that early Nonconformist hymnody represented a major conduit of missiological reflection for its theological community, some of which reflected ongoing influences within Nonconformist theology, and some of which represented a novel influx of missiological thinking. The presence of missiological themes in the medium of hymnody offered an opportunity for their ongoing transmission in a way that encouraged their continued use and development.

7. Conclusion

This study provides significant new information for the study of the history of missions and bears practical significance for the way

in which church communities use their practice of congregational song. General histories of mission tend to root the development of missiological thought in Nonconformist circles either in the 1780s and '90s, with the advent of major figures like Andrew Fuller and William Carey, or (at least partially) in the Evangelical Revival and the influence of the Moravian mission movement in the 1730s and '40s. There is merit to both these views, but this thesis shows that a further fountainhead of missiological reflection needs to be added to the list, one that has never been fully noted before: the development of missiological themes in early Nonconformist hymnody, with a special place of honor being given to Isaac Watts's 1719 *Psalms of David*. William Carey's 1792 *Enquiry* is often regarded as an epoch-making work, introducing a new perspective on the global scope of the Christian witness into English church life, but this study shows that many of the themes Carey made use of had already been in wide circulation in hymns written more than half a century beforehand. Further, since those themes appeared in a medium that was suited for widespread usage, frequent repetition, and easy memorization (Johnson 1979, 196; Sherman 2002, 98–99), the presence of missiological themes in the hymnody of the period would have likely promoted the widespread habituation of those thematic emphases as part of the broader Nonconformist theological mindset. Thus, by the time Carey introduced his arguments in 1792, his reading audience would have already been a field made ready to receive the seed of those ideas, prepared by the effects of generations of singing about the global scope of the gospel's call.

This study also bears practical significance for contemporary church communities, and particularly for worship leaders and liturgists. This study offers a poignant reminder of the power of communal song

to shape a church community's awareness of theological ideas. Further, the remarkable infusion of missiological content in Isaac Watts's *Psalms of David*—marking a level of missiological reflection higher than that normally shown by the hymnographer himself—stands as an inspiration for worship leaders to write and choose songs which use and apply biblical material in their lyrics. Watts's method of application resulted in a dynamic transformation in which the underlying missiological content of the psalms was applied to contemporary Christian life in such a way that it resulted in a far greater missiological focus than Watts himself can ever be said to have held, and it was that infusion of new missiological content which helped set the stage for the launch of the great Protestant mission movement at the end of the eighteenth century. The appropriation and application of biblical content in songs provides an influential way in which that content can be internalized into the theological mindset of the congregations which use them, illuminating their blind spots and preparing them for new works to come.

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Prototype and Semantic Field Analysis of the Lexical Item עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible: Some Implications for the Fields of Biblical Hebrew Lexicology, Exegesis, and Translation

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Abstract

The term עֲנָוִים has attracted various interpretations among the scholars of the Hebrew Bible. This is manifested in translations, commentaries, lexicons, and dictionaries of the Hebrew Bible. Two questions have been at the centre of the discussion of the term. The first question concerns the formation of the term while the second question concerns the identity of the people designated by the term. Following the application of modern

semantic theories of semantic field and prototype, the research found that the term עֲנָוִים has two senses "afflicted" and "humble" which are determined by the various contexts in which the term is used. A prototype analysis established that the sense "afflicted" is the core sense while the sense "humble" is an extension motivated by a cognitive mechanism of metonymy. The findings of the research have practical implications in the fields of Biblical Hebrew lexicology, Hebrew Bible translation and exegesis, and Christian theology.

1. Introduction

When doing translation and exegesis of texts of the Hebrew Bible, there are times when one enjoys the tasks because the texts do not contain words that are difficult to deal with. However, there are times when translators and exegetes encounter words whose meanings are difficult to establish. The situation is further complicated when an exegete or translator decides to read other exegetical works and translations to find what others have done only to discover that there are diverse views. This is the case of the Hebrew word עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible. The word registers 22 occurrences in the entire Hebrew Bible, but scholars and translators render it using more than 9 glosses. One wonders as to whether the word is polysemous or not. But then the question is how a problem of such a nature can be resolved. Using modern linguistic theories of semantic field and prototype, this research conducts a lexical analysis of the term to establish its meaning(s) in the different contexts wherein it is used. The motivation for such a pursuit is that the findings can be of various practical implications in different fields such as Hebrew Bible translation, exegesis, Biblical Hebrew lexicology, among others. Prior to the analysis,

different scholarly works were surveyed to establish what others have done concerning the subject.

2. Literature Review

The researcher reviewed various relevant scholarly literature to appreciate what has been done in the past and to establish the current situation concerning the term under investigation. The survey focused on how different scholars have attempted to answer two questions that were found to be central to the discussion of the term. The first question concerns the form of the term עֲנָוִים. The second question concerns the identity of the people designated by the term. Below is a presentation of what was found.

3. The Formation of the Term עֲנָוִים

Two views were observed regarding the formation of the term עֲנָוִים. The first view comprises of scholars who consider the term עֲנָוִים to be the plural form of the term עָנָו. Some of the scholars who adhere to this view are Coppes (1990), Dawes (1986), Pleins (1992), and Dumbrell (1997). According to these scholars, the term עֲנָוִים is a plural form of עָנָו which must be distinguished from the singular form עָנִי because the former is used to describe the spiritual state while the latter is used in economic contexts for those who are materially poor. The researcher found this view problematic because it restricts the use of עֲנָוִים in spiritual contexts only.

Another group of scholars view the term עֲנָוִים as a plural form of עָנָו and עָנִי. Scholars who follow this view include Bammel (1968); Gesenius (1979); Soares-Prabhu (1991); Dickson (1995); Holladay (2000); Koehler and Baumgartner (2000); Gerstenberger (2001); and Martin-Archard (2001). As

an explanation for the existence of the two terms, עָנָו and עָנִי, it is argued that עָנִי is the earlier form used to describe material deficiency while עָנָו is the form that came into use in a later stage of the Biblical Hebrew language following a fusion with Aramaic. Apart from changing the form, the fusion also brought a change in meaning from material need to spiritual quality of humility (cf. Bammel 1968, 888). This view has not been adopted in this research because by insisting that עָנָו is a form that came into use in late Biblical Hebrew replacing עָנִי, following the fusion between Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic, it implies that the references to עֲנָוִים not עֲנִיִּים must be dated in the post-exilic period when the Late Biblical Hebrew language was in use and after that language fusion happened. Unfortunately, there is insufficient evidence to prove that all texts with reference to עֲנָוִים belong to the post-exilic period. Similar to the first view, this view also is problematic because it enforces a spiritualistic interpretation of the term עֲנָוִים.

3.1. The Identity of the עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible

The survey of scholarship also sought to establish what various scholars say about the identity of the people designated by the term. Six views are discussed.

The first view considers the term עֲנָוִים as a designation of people who were faithful to God in the Judean community. Scholars who follow this interpretation base their arguments on what they observe to be the difference between the terms עָנָו and עָנִי. They argue that the term עֲנָוִים as a plural form of עָנָו must be distinguished from the term עָנִי because the former functions to describe people of God while the latter is used for those who are economically poor regardless of their spiritual status. This view classifies the עֲנָוִים in the same category of other faithful

people of God such as the חֲסִדִים and צַדִּיקִים. Scholars who adhere to this interpretation are Rahlfs (1892); Schultz (1973); and Croft (1984). This view has not been followed in this research for, among other reasons, failing to acknowledge the fact that there are cases in the Hebrew Bible where the term עֲנָוִים is used in economic contexts.

The second view comprises of another group of scholars who consider the עֲנָוִים as a religious party that emerged in Judaism in the post-exilic period. Scholars who follow this view include Causse (1922); Kittel (1929); Gunkel (1933); Albertz (1994); Levin (2001); and Jones (2019). According to these scholars, the עֲנָוִים were a group of faithful Judeans who suffered economic and social exploitation because of their faithfulness to God. This view presupposes the existence of two rival groups in the post-exilic Judean community, namely, a group of pious yet poor and weak people (the עֲנָוִים) who were opposed to a group of the rich and powerful yet wicked people (the רְשָׁעִים) (Kittel 1929, Gunkel 1933, 209). This view is problematic because of two reasons. First, there is no conclusive evidence to support the view that all references to the term עֲנָוִים date to the post-exilic period. Second, there is no evidence to support the claim that a party existed in post-exilic Judaism by the name עֲנָוִים. Even in the Hebrew Bible, the people designated by the term עֲנָוִים are never presented as a party.

The third view considers the עֲנָוִים as a theological movement within Judaism in the post-exilic period. This view is held by Ro (2018). According to him, the עֲנָוִים were faithful worshipers of God who were not materially poor but were subjected to various forms of abuses by the political and religious elite who had an upper hand in the religious affairs within Judean community. The chief concern of the עֲנָוִים was not their social and economic suffering but religious bankruptcy. Even though the group identified themselves as poor, they were not poor in economic sense but rather a well-trained theological movement of the elite. Some

of the reasons this view has not been adopted are: first, it does not specify the kind of exploitation the עֲנָוִים suffered; second, it negates a socio-economic interpretation of the term yet it does not explain as to why the term is sometimes used in socio-economic contexts; and, third, it dates all texts with references to the term in the post-exilic period, a view that has already been critiqued.

The fourth view is held by a group of scholars who adopt a nationalistic interpretation of the term עֲנָוִים whereby the nation of Israel is construed as the referent. Scholars who ascribe to this view include Birkeland (1933); Mowinckel (1967); and Wittman (2010). These scholars argue that this term is used to describe Israel's status as compared to other powerful nations in the ancient near eastern world whereby Israel sees herself as weak. Recognising her weakness as עֲנָוִים, Israel looks to God for her survival. This view is mostly based on the cases of עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Psalter. This view is problematic in two ways. First, it is based on a faulty assumption that all the Psalms are communal, representing Israel. Second, this view does not consider other cases of the term עֲנָוִים outside the Hebrew Psalter.

The fifth view is held by scholars who consider the term עֲנָוִים as depicting the spiritual state of humility. Scholars who adhere to this view include Bammel (1968); Keck (1976); Harris, Archer, and Waltke (1980); Dawes (1986); Coppes (1990); and Dumbrell (1997). According to these scholars, the term עֲנָוִים is a plural form of the term עָנָו which came into use in the post-exilic period to replace the term עָנִי that was in use in the pre-exilic period to refer to those who were socially and economically poor. But in the post-exilic period, עָנָו was used to describe a humble person. When it is a group, it is referred to as עֲנָוִים. Those designated by this term were considered humble because of their reliance on God as opposed to those who depended on their social and economic affluence. Even though

the עֲנָוִים were economically poor, the term was used not as a description of their poverty but their humility as people who depended on God. This research found that this view suits some contexts in the Hebrew Bible where the term is used to describe those who are humble. Unfortunately, it fails to recognise other contexts in which the term functions to express other semantic nuances. The view also presupposes that all references to the term עֲנָוִים date from the post-exilic period.

The sixth and last view that has been reviewed in this research interprets the עֲנָוִים as a term that describes a social class of people who were poor and oppressed in the Judean community. Scholars who adhere to this view include Brennan (1963); Holwerda (1986); Soares-Prabhu (1991); Berges (1999); Hoppe (2004; 2009); Tenai (2010); Domeris (2010; 2016); Groenewald (2007; 2018); and Cheboi (2020). According to these scholars, the עֲנָוִים were victims of unjust treatment by the powerful and the rich in society. Because of their unjust treatment and economic exploitation, the עֲנָוִים turned to God for help. Nevertheless, this does not mean they spiritualized their poverty, rather they saw God as their last hope (cf. Domeris 2016). In this research this view has been commended for bringing the materialistic and spiritualistic interpretations of the term עֲנָוִים into dialogue. However, this still lacks evidence to support its assertion of the existence of a social class designated by the term עֲנָוִים.

3.2. The Multifaceted Nature of the Semantic Nuance of עֲנָוִים

The various scholarly viewpoints reviewed indicate that the term עֲנָוִים has multifaceted semantic nuances. This research adopts the polysemiotic approach of Tucker who acknowledges that some lexical items have multiple usages depending on the contexts in which they are used. Tucker (2004, 425-428) analyses different terminologies used for poverty

in the Hebrew Bible to highlight his point. Recognizing that the various interpretations of the term עֲנָוִים may signify multiplicity of its semantic nuance, this research has used Tucker's polysemiotic approach as a theoretical model to study the term עֲנָוִים used in the Hebrew Bible.

4. Linguistic Semantic Solution to the Problem

Since the problem of this research deals with the meaning of a lexical item, the importance of using modern linguistic theories in the study is a must. Different biblical scholars have emphatically highlighted the significance of studying linguistic problems of the Hebrew Bible linguistically. Some of these scholars are Barr (1961); Silva (1983); Nida and Louw (1992); Groom (2003); and Burton (2017). The problem of this research has been situated in the field of lexical semantics which belongs to the branch of linguistic semantics (Cruse 2000, 13; Malik 2017, 944; cf. Silva 1983, 10).

4.1. Etymological Approach and Its Problems

The researcher observed that lexical studies in Biblical Hebrew (BH) were for a long time dominated by an etymological approach whereby the focus was given to studying the roots of Biblical Hebrew words in relation to words in cognate Semitic languages such as Ugarit, Canaanite, Phoenician, Moabite, and Aramaic (Eng 2011, 12, Kogan 2015, 85). While etymology was helpful in the sense that it provided BH scholars with tools of analyzing words that are rare and peculiar in the Hebrew Bible (Barr 1961, 158; Silva 1983, 54), this approach has its own problems. Etymology may provide information about the background of a lexical item, but it does not

provide any clue on its contextual usage (Barr 1961, 109). Applied to the study of the term עֲנָוִים, etymological approach cannot help in establishing the semantic nuances of the term various contexts as it is used the Hebrew Bible.

4.2. Semantic Field

The first linguistic theory that has been used in this study is the semantic field which belongs to a structural approach. Structuralism in linguistics was developed by a Swiss scholar Ferdinand de Saussure. This approach views language as a system with different elements which are interrelated and fulfil their functions following specific principles (Geeraerts 2010, 48; Lyons 1977, 231; Matthews 2003, 2, 20; Silva 1983, 108-109). When narrowed in lexical semantics, structural semantics states that words do not have any meaning in themselves unless they are understood as linguistic elements which coordinate with other elements to convey meanings.

While within a structural approach, there are various theories, this research has used semantic field theory. This theory was developed by Jost Tyre who proposes that "words should not be considered in isolation, but in their relationship to semantically related words" (Geeraerts 2010, 52-53; cf. Mansouri 1985, 42). Lexical items that are semantically related belong to a specific semantic domain called "semantic field" (Nagy 2017, 114). Therefore, to understand the meaning of a lexical item, it is important to identify lexical items that belong to the same field. This field can be traced by looking at the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations of the semantic fields (Silva 1983; Lyons 1995; Geeraerts 2010; Fellbaum 2015; Nagy 2017). Paradigmatically, lexical items may be in relationship because their senses are similar or opposite. This can be through synonyms, antonyms, and

hyponyms. Syntagmatic relations deal with word alignment in syntactical slots. In other words, it is said that the meaning of lexical items can be determined by the lexical items that make its company (Firth 1957). To do this, it is required that a collocation analysis is done to see the lexical items which keep occurring with each other (Yule 2020, Löbner 2013, 131).

Semantic field theory has been used in this research because it helps establish the semantic nuance of the term עֲנָוִים in various contexts through collocational analysis which allows the identification of lexical items which keep on occurring with this term. However, this theory is not sufficient to deal with the problem of this research because it does not explain the existence of polysemy, a linguistic phenomenon whereby a single lexical item is assigned multiple senses. This is why prototype theory has been used side by side with the semantic field.

4.3. Prototype Theory

As a lexical semantic approach, prototype theory is a field within cognitive semantics, a daughter of cognitive linguistics. According to Tylor, cognitive linguistics is based on a fundamental principle that "language forms an integral part of human cognition, and that any insightful analysis of linguistic phenomena will need to be embedded in what is known about human cognitive abilities" (Taylor 2002, 4). One of the cognitive skills of human beings is categorization which allows them to classify objects in different categories according to their similarities and differences (Tylor 1995, viii). Concerning linguistic categorization, Brenda (2014, 20) argues that "words usually represent a cognitive process of categorisation and the formation of concepts in the mind. Words are not labels attached to objects, and they do not stand for specific objects or even classes of objects; rather, words are labels of the process of categorisation." It is through

categorization that this study employs prototype theory developed by Eleanor Rosch (1975, 193).

According to prototype theory, members belong to a category not necessarily because they possess all attributes of that category, but because in a category, members have different statuses. Therefore, in a category, there are two types of members; the central or core member that functions as a prototype and other members whose membership is based on their relationship to the core member. Members with a closer relationship with the core are ranked closer to the prototype while those that resemble the core less are at a distance (Antuňano 2004, 10; Halas 2016, 126 cf. Tylor 1995, 59 Rosch 1978, 10ff.).

Applied to lexical semantics, prototype theory states that when a lexical item has multiple senses, those senses create a category. In this category, there is a prototype sense and other senses (Halas 2016, 127 cf. Lakoff 1987, 417). Some senses share a closer relationship with the core or prototype sense while others share a distant relationship. In addition to this, prototype theory says that polysemous senses are created through sense extension which is motivated by different cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor and metonym (Lakoff and Johnsen 1980, 4). Therefore, in addition to the semantic field, this research has used the prototype theory because it offers a linguistic explanation as to why the lexical item עֲנָוִים has multiple senses.

5. Application of Semantic Field and Prototype Theories

Recognizing the different linguistic challenges of the Biblical Hebrew language in the application of modern linguistic theories, this research used different methodological steps in its application of the semantic field

and prototype theories to the study of the term עֲנָוִים. In the first place, the study has conducted a corpus-based synchronic analysis of each case of the term עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible. For the books of Psalms and Proverbs, which are widely recognized as poetic, the research followed a discourse analysis method of Wendland (2002, 13 204–209) to analyze poetic devices that influence the semantic nuance of the term. The research also classified different texts with an occurrence of the term עֲנָוִים into different contextual domains to appreciate the role of textual contexts in the making of the meaning of the term. Thereafter, the research has done a collocational analysis which sought to establish words that co-occur with the lexical item עֲנָוִים. The research also identified and defined the various senses of the term in each text. After all the texts were analyzed and the senses were identified and defined, the research conducted a prototype analysis to establish the core sense that functions as a prototype sense of the term עֲנָוִים. The final step involved establishing the cognitive mechanism behind the sense extension.

6. Research Findings

After analyzing all the cases of the term עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible, the research came up with the following findings:

6.1. Lexical Senses of the Term עֲנָוִים

After conducting an empirical analysis of all the cases of the term עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible, the research has established that the term has two senses: afflicted (Ps 9:12, 18; 10:12, 17; 22:27; 34:3; 37:11; 69:33; 76:10; 147:6; Prov

14:21; 16:19; Isa 11:4; 29:19; 32:7; 61:1; Am 2:7) and humble (Ps 25:9 x2; 149:6; Prov 3:34; Zeph 2:3). Statistically, the sense "afflicted" is used 17 times out of 22 cases, representing 77 per cent. The sense "humble" on the other hand is used in 5 cases, representing 23 per cent.

The sense "afflicted" is used in contexts where those designated by the term experience different forms of sufferings and physical conditions. In the Hebrew Psalter, the term עֲנָוִים prefers the sense afflicted in the contexts where the wicked are identified as causative forces of their afflictions (Ps 9; 10; 22; 34; 37; 76; 69; 76; 147). Regardless of their unpleasant physical conditions, in the Hebrew Psalter, the עֲנָוִים are presented as people who share a good relationship with God and depend on him for their deliverance. In the book of Proverbs, the afflictions of the עֲנָוִים are caused by their economic insufficiency (Prov 14:21 and 16:19). In the prophetic literature, the עֲנָוִים as the afflicted ones are presented as people who suffering economic, social, and political conditions caused by political authorities and rich members of the society. Their venerability makes them need God's salvation and they are part of God's salvific plan which renders them beneficiaries of God's rule prophesied by the prophets (Isa 11:4; 29:19; 32:7; 61:1; Am 2:7).

The sense "humble" is used in several ways. First, in Psalm 25, the sense is used to mark the humility that is shown in one's admittance of wrongdoings and seeking God's forgiveness. In Psalm 149, those who are humble depict the quality of depending on God for deliverance from danger. In the book of Proverbs (3:34), humility is expressed in being willing to accept a godly lifestyle by following the path of wisdom as compared to those who are proud and follow their own path of folly. In the book of Zephaniah, the עֲנָוִים are portrayed as humble because of their steadfast commitment to follow God's ways amidst religious deterioration,

apostasy, and socio-economic upheavals. From how the sense "humble" is used in the books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Zephaniah, it can be noted that there is one key similarity and one key difference.

The main similarity in all the books is that humility is presented as an act of individual liberty. It is out of their liberty that the עֲנָוִים seek God's face to repent their sins (Ps 25), rely on God for their deliverance in the face of problems (Ps 149), choose the path of wisdom, not folly (Prov 3:34), and remain committed to God regardless of religious and political evils (Zeph 2:3). The key difference in the usage of the term עֲנָוִים as "humble" is in the situations in which the humility is demonstrated. In Psalm 25 their humility was demonstrated in their willingness to acknowledge and repent their sins, while in Psalm 149 their humility was in their dependence on God in the face of problems. In Proverbs 3:34 the humility of the עֲנָוִים is expressed in their willingness to follow the path of wisdom/righteousness not the path of folly/wicked. In the book of Zephaniah, the humility of the עֲנָוִים is expressed in their commitment to do God's commands despite living in times of serious religious and political problems.

6.2. The Prototype Sense and Cognitive Mechanism behind Sense Extension

The fact that the term עֲנָוִים has two senses means it is polysemous. Using the frequency model of Geeraerts (2006) and Vyvyan (2005), the sense "afflicted" was found to be the prototype sense because it registers higher frequency than the sense "humble." The research further found that the sense of "humble" radiated from the sense of "afflicted" following the cognitive mechanism of metonymy. The identification of the cognitive mechanism of sense extension was based on Lackoff's "part-for-the-whole" model which states that "metonymy...allows us to focus more specifically

on certain aspects of what is being referred to" (Lakoff 2003, 37). This means that if the sense extension is motivated by metonymy of the "part-for-the-whole" kind when a writer or speaker chooses a sense that has been extended because of the metonymic mechanism, he/she wants to emphasize that aspect created by the metonymic extension more than the other aspects.

In the case of the term עֲנָוִים, the sense "humble" is somewhat an aspect of the prototype. What is seen in the different contexts in which the term is used, is that emphasis is being placed on the sense that suits each specific context. That is to say, the aspect that is being emphasized is the sense that is preferable in a specific context. For instance, in Psalm 25:9, the sense "humble" is more preferred than the prototype "afflicted" because in the context of the psalm the aspect of humility is what is being emphasized. Since the term עֲנָוִים was used to designate those who were experiencing physical affliction of different sorts, it became the case that the different writers used it in a metonymical way to point out the aspect of humility in some contexts.

7. Practical Implications of the Research Findings

Following the findings of the synchronic analysis of the cases of the term עֲנָוִים in the Hebrew Bible done in this study, some lexicological implications can be made. First, even though there is no adequate textual evidence concerning the morphological background of the term עֲנָוִים, this study upholds the view that this term is a plural form of the term עָנָו. This is based on the fact that in the construct state, this term is עַנְוֵי (Ps 76:10; Zeph 8:4) which means that ים is a masculine plural suffix. Minus this suffix, the singular form becomes עָנָו. Secondly, in terms of

its lexical values, this study has found that the term עֲנָוִים has two senses "afflicted" and "humble." The difference between the two forms is that the sense "afflicted" has the connotation of problems caused by external forces whereas the sense "humble" is a spiritual act that is exercised willingly without any external force. This is in line with what some BH lexicographers that the term עֲנָוִים comes from the root ענה which among other senses means "to be bowed down" or "to humble" or "to oppress" (Coppes 1990; Dumbrell 1997). But this study has moved further to explain that for the term עֲנָוִים, there are two senses, namely: "afflicted" and "humble", but most importantly, this study has established that "afflicted" is the core sense of the term while the sense "humble" is an extension. For the sense "afflicted" there are external forces, while the sense "humble" is an act of individual liberty.

This research also has implications for the field of Hebrew Bible exegesis and commentating. Since this research has established that the term עֲנָוִים is polysemous, as evident in the fact that the different contexts in which the term occurs prefer one of the two senses, this means that Bible commentators must provide exegetical comments on the term in all the verses it occurs. The exegetical comments must be aimed at bringing out the contextual meaning of the term. Since the people who are designated by the term עֲנָוִים have different characteristics in different contexts, Bible commentators should give a contextual description of the term עֲנָוִים in various contexts in which it is used instead of using general comments for all the occurrences.

Another implication is in the field of Bible translation. The fact that this research has established that the term עֲנָוִים is polysemous means that there is an implication for Bible translation. Since this research has found that the two senses of the term עֲנָוִים can be properly established

by understanding the context in which it is used, this means that exegesis is the basis for sound Bible translation. By exegeting the texts before translation, Bible translators develop a good understanding of the context. It is this contextual understanding of a biblical passage that can enable Bible translators to make a sound decision as to which sense to use in translating the term עֲנָוִים in a given context. This is not only helpful in translating the term עֲנָוִים, but other polysemous terms as well.

Another implication is in the field of Christian Theology. This research has found that regardless of sharing a good relationship with God, the עֲנָוִים faced various forms of physical sufferings. This is against the claims of the prosperity gospel which states that genuine believers can never experience any form of suffering (Copeland 1974; Idahosa 1986). The sufferings of the עֲנָוִים prove that the claims of prosperity gospel teaching are incorrect.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has studied the lexical item עֲנָוִים using the semantic field and prototype theories. Having followed all methodological steps, the research has found that the lexical item עֲנָוִים has two senses "afflicted" and "humble." This means the term is polysemous. The study has also established that the sense "afflicted" is the prototype sense because it registers higher frequency than the sense "humble." The research has also found that the sense "humble" radiates from the prototype in a metonymical way. The research has ended with a discussion of various practical implications of the research findings in the fields of Biblical Hebrew lexicology, Hebrew Bible translation and exegesis, and Christian theology.

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Towards a Biblical Integrated Framework for Promoting Mental Health in Kenya

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Abstract

The study used quantitative and qualitative methods to interrogate mental health promotion in Kenya. By applying Osmer's (2008) model in practical theology, the research explored global, African, and biblical mental health perspectives. Interestingly, no significant difference was found between the approaches used by Christian and non-Christian psychologists. Both groups utilized biopsychosocial, cultural, and spiritual viewpoints. While literature exists on global and African mental health perspectives, none was found that specifically addressed an integrated practice considering evangelical beliefs. The study delved into the biblical mental health perspectives to discern God's will for mental health promotion. It proposed a biblical integrated framework for mental health promotion in Kenya, defining terms like 'mental health' from a Christian standpoint

and introducing the concept of a 'Christian mental health promoter.' Recommendations for further engagement were also provided.

1. Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in spirituality and mental health amongst mental health practitioners globally. This curiosity prompted the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to publish a Handbook on Spirituality and mental health in 2013 (Pragament, 2013). Perusing the contents of the handbook revealed an outlook on spirituality that embraces the inclusivity of all faiths. However, the evangelical faith perspective is one of exclusivity. Founded on our faith as presented in the Holy Scriptures, the gospel is one of exclusivity. There is only one way to God and that way is through faith in God's Son Jesus Christ. For example, in John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" (NKJV) leaves no doubt in the readers' minds of the position of Christ as the only way to God. The question of, whether Christ is the only way is a topic of discussion among Christians. In a modern context, some perceive the belief that there are multiple paths to God as arrogant and intolerant. Blair (2021) highlights a study by Probe Ministries, revealing that nearly 70% of born-again Christians in America do not consider Jesus as the sole path to God. This prompts inquiry into the origin of this belief among Christians. Grudem (1994:10-104) contends that challenges to scripture's sufficiency arise from incorporating extrabiblical Christian literature, Roman Catholic teachings, or texts from cults like the Book of Mormon alongside Scripture. Such practices may de-emphasize biblical teachings and promote doctrines contrary to Scripture.

In emphasizing the centrality of Christ, 1 Corinthians 3:11 reads, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (NKJV). The implication of this verse to Christian mental health practice is the need to anchor everything on Christ and essentially on the entire scriptural teachings, which are a pointer to Him. These evangelical beliefs then pose a challenge for the evangelical mental health practitioners who find themselves in the maze that is inclusivity, to find a way to integrate their faith with their practice. Addressing how to teach practical theology, (Osmer 2008, 219–241) discourages the excessive isolation of the various sub-disciplines but rather encourages that isolation to be replaced by models that among others encourage intradisciplinary dialogue i.e. dialogue between theological sub-disciplines and interdisciplinary dialogue i.e. between theology and other fields of study. This study boldly embarks on the interdisciplinary dialogue, to develop a new, integrated biblical model, for mental health promotion, that takes into consideration the evangelical suppositions.

2. Method and Design

The research focused on mental health promotion practitioners in Kenya, examining and evaluating their approaches and practices. It posited the absence of dedicated mental health promoters in Kenya, leaving the responsibility to psychologists and psychiatrists. Psychiatrists typically address biological aspects of mental health, while psychologists concentrate on psychosocial factors. Although Chapter 1 does not offer a complete overview of Christian mental health promotion in Kenya, it lays the groundwork for the empirical investigation central to Chapter 2. Chapter 3 delves into theoretical perspectives that shape global mental

health promotion practices within specific contexts. By the end of this chapter, the researcher identifies gaps that must be addressed to facilitate effective Christian mental health promotion in Kenya.

The Normative Task, as the third component of Osmer's model, is explored in Chapter 4, which delves into biblical perspectives on mental health promotion and the chosen conceptual framework. The discussion's primary aim is to discern God's will for current mental health promotion practices. This sets the groundwork for the Pragmatic Task discussed in Chapter 5. Osmer describes this task as developing an action plan and executing precise responses to "shape the episode, situation, or context in desirable directions" (Osmer, 2011:2), which he equates to servant leadership. The researcher contributes to servant leadership by creating and suggesting a biblical integrated framework to enhance Christian mental health in Kenya. Osmer's model facilitates the effective integration of secular and biblical views on mental health promotion, leading to the development of a new model named the 'Biblical Integrated Framework for Mental Health Promotion (BIF).

3. Summary of Literature Review

The study's literature review is grouped into four subsections namely, the global, African, and the biblical perspectives of mental health and mental health promotion. The global perspectives of mental health promotion start with a focus on the scope and orientation of mental health promotion. It was established that mental health promotion as a concept involves efforts to improve the well-being of communities and individuals, the distinction being the action to improve and protect mental health. The spectrum divides interventions for mental health problems into four

categories, that is, promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery. This led The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine committee of 2009 to conclude that mental health promotion should be recognized as an important component of the spectrum as it can serve as a foundation for both the prevention and treatment of mental health disorders. In the same vein, the study proposed that Christian mental health promotion ought to also be recognized as an important component of the spectrum as it can serve to significantly improve the interventions utilized in the prevention and treatment of mental health disorders.

During the study, the researcher had difficulty accessing literature that discusses the orientation and scope of mental health promotion from a biblical perspective. In their research on Church-based health promotion (CBHP), Campbell et al. (2007) concluded that such interventions have great potential for reducing health disparities. Whereas the scholars here focus on the church, in the study's opinion, there is an urgent need to infuse spirituality right from the onset of mental health promotion by first, identifying the role of faith in the orientation and scope of mental health promotion; second, in developing bibiliocentric oriented mental health promotion frameworks and disseminating the same to Christian mental health promoters. The study proceeds to focus on the theoretical foundations of mental health promotion. Whilst summarizing seminal literature on mental health promotion (Tudor 2014, 10–11) lists Cattan and Tilford as one of the most recent works which address mental health promotion from a lifespan approach. According to Cattan and Tilford (2006,17), the perspective of mental health in a pathogenic view seeing health as being the absence of disease.

3.1. Resilience Theory

Roberto et al. (2020, 3) borrow the Seiler & Jenewein (2019) definition of resilience in which the scholars redefine resilience "as the ability of an individual to recondition and rebuild a steady psychological and physical state when challenged with major adverse life events." Some of the traumatic life experiences that require resilience are but are not limited to: the loss of a loved one; loss of income, abuse, neglect, and being a witness to violence or a diagnosis with a terminal illness as postulated by Lydsdottir et al. (2019), Dorji, Dunne, Seib and Deb (2017), Bryant, Oo & Damian (2020) and more recently testing positive for COVID-19 has led to increased trauma in individuals and families. Roberto et al. (2020, 3), note that traumatic life events are on the rise during the COVID-19 pandemic and have the possibility of triggering memories of emotions, thoughts, or sensations that remind them of past traumas causing a physiological reaction that may lead to a fight, flight or, freeze state of mind that may manifest in varying psychological reactions. The role of the brain's plasticity in allowing for healing from traumatic or adverse life events when protective factors are in place with reference to Hambrick, Brawner, and Perry (2019), Brunetti et al. (2017), and Shapiro and Brown (2019) is also examined.

Other conceptualizations of resilience discussed in the literature review include the views of psychological resilience as either a trait or a process. Harris et al. (2008, 395–408) felt that the more appropriate question is not whether religion's relationship to mental health is positive or negative, but which aspects of religion have a positive or negative relationship with which components of mental health. According to Chang et al. (2021) religion has an impact on well-being when people

encounter stressful situations and adversities as it may increase resilience. Chua et al. (2019) have noted positive correlations between spirituality and resilience for individuals who suffer from physical illness, death of a loved one, human error and natural disasters in addition to other disease outbreaks. The researcher concurs with Mugaini and Lassi's (2015, 1) conclusion that "Given Religion and Spirituality common and strict relationship to the psychosocial functioning, to the Quality of Life, and to those psychological constructs that are well studied in Positive Psychology (life meaning or purpose, hope, well-being, post-traumatic growth factors, forgiveness, character strengths), religious coping and religiousness-linked resilience should receive particular attention in journals …" (Mugaini and Lassi, 2015, 1). Of all the studies on religion and spirituality the researcher came across the focus on man's outward works and the environment without taking into consideration the impact of faith in Christ, which is fundamental in evangelical faith and eventually on an individual's resilience. Therefore, there is a need for practical theologians to look at how faith in Christ impacts individual and group resilience.

3.2. Sense of Coherence Theory

The Antonovsky (1987) Sense of Coherence Theory seems to be a reaction to the pathogenic view of mental health. Antonovsky's theory is salutogenic. A salutogenic theory assumes that "the human and living systems are subject to unavoidable entropic processes (the damage and deterioration caused by life and ageing), and unavoidable death" (Cattan and Tilford, 2006, 18). Salutogenesis, they observe, sees treatment as enhancing the coping mechanisms not just to one specific illness, but in general, helping people to move towards the healthy end of the health-

illness continuum. Nevertheless, Mittelmark and Bull (2012, 37) remark that Antonovsky's conception of health and its origins may seem a departure of "paradigm shift" proportion from the pathogenic question of the origins of disease. Antonovsky's theory argues the need to understand the movement of people toward health. The theory views it as impermissible to identify or equate a rich, complex human being with a particular pathology, disability or characteristic, or a particular set of risk factors. Billings and Hashem highlight the two core salutogenic concepts namely, generalized resistance resources (GRRs) and a sense of coherence (SOC) that came out of Antonovsky's primary research and have been investigated further in recent years. These include material such as "knowledge/intelligence, ego identity, coping strategy (rational, flexible, farsighted), social support, ties, commitment (continuance, cohesion, control), cultural stability, magic, religion/philosophy/art (a stable set of answers), and a preventive health orientation".

From Antonovsky's perspective, what all the GRRs seem to have in common is that they contribute to or create a sense of coherence (SOC). Antonovsky's three key indicators of a person with a strong SOC as discussed by Cattan and Tilford (ibid) are: Comprehensibility: The ability to see confronting events as making sense in that they will be expected. He notes that seeing these difficult events as 'challenges' more than as crushing blows may challenge one's SOC but will not undermine it completely. In his investigation on the sense of coherence, spiritual maturity, and psychological well-being among United Methodist clergy, Anorld (2007, 71) found that members of the clergy do seem to fare better than non-clergy on some, but not all, domains of psychological well-being. The major conclusion of the Anorld study was "that spirituality may make a small contribution to psychological well-being, though being mediated through sense of coherence" (Anorld 2007, 71). Being that Antonovsky's

theory is centered on social determinism, how does faith interact with the social in fostering comprehensibility, manageability, and meaning, and in turn a believer's SOC? These questions were unanswered in the study owing to the lack of literature on the interface between Antonovsky's SOC and evangelical beliefs. There is therefore a need for further inquiries to respond to the question of the impact evangelical beliefs have on a believer's sense of coherence.

3.3. Social Capital Theory

Cowley and Billings (1999) argued that a salutogenic perspective links to qualities such as social capital, capacity building, and citizen engagement. Scholte and Ager (2014, 210) define Social Capital as a way of conceptualizing the social world. The scholars highlight the core contention of the concept as that of social networks being an asset and providing a basis for social cohesion and cooperation. Social capital is more represented as the norms of trustworthiness and reciprocity increase in a social network. Scholte and Ager (2014, 210) note that the use of social capital in scientific literature dates from the 1960's beginning with Jacobs (1961) to Putnam (1993), and McKenzie and Harpham (2006). Scholte and Ager (2014, 211) present Woolcooks' (1998) distinction of the three major forms of social capital. The first is social capital, which includes social bonds with family, co-ethnic, co-religious, co-national, and any other group forms. Scholte and Ager (2014, 211) highlight social bonds as being considered the strongest ties while social links are weak as they are exploited to secure other resources from the environment. The scholars propose that a distinction can also be made between structural social capital and cognitive social capital.

In relation to spirituality and social capital, Auguste (2019) undertook an extensive study on exclusive religious beliefs and social capital where he unpacked nuances in the relationship between religion and social capital formation. As such, he highlights the need for a greater emphasis on personal religious beliefs that represent more directly the theoretical link between religion and the process of social network development that is relationship-building, social trust, and attitudes toward others. The findings of the Auguste (2019) study demonstrated that individuals' exclusionary beliefs undermine the formation of bridging social capital. However, due to data limitations, his analysis did not investigate other potential motives such as economic, ethnic, class, or political identity-based motives for creating symbolic boundaries that include some people while excluding others. Lam (2002, 408) states, "I focus on personal beliefs because denominational affiliation provides a limited understanding of the extent to which individuals adhere to the precepts of their denominations." The study found a gap focusing on the impact of personal beliefs on social capital as most literature delves into the impact of spirituality on social capital, focusing on religion and social capital. Therefore, future research needs to focus on the impact personal beliefs have on social capital. Of great interest to the study was the impact of evangelical belief, both in a group and personally, on social capital and in turn mental health and mental health promotion.

3.4. Seedhouse's Foundation Theory

Hafen (2016, 437–438) views Seedhouse's work as a profound analysis of different health theories. The scholar highlights Seedhouse's (2001) distinction of four clusters of health theories. Seedhouse (2001, 79) gives

these clusters as first, one that describes health as an ideal state which is perfectly represented by the WHO definition of health; the second cluster equates health to physical and mental fitness to do socialized daily tasks; in cluster three some theories see health as a commodity that can be bought or given. Cluster four consists of theories that view health as a personal strength or ability. Here Seedhouse (2001, 79) seems to refer to Parson's health theory. The scholar sees the health care system as a mechanism of control.

Seedhouse's analysis of these matters led him to conclude that any plausible account of health must understand the purpose of health work as the identification of obstacles where possible and the removal of the obstacles to enhance human potential. As a result of this conclusion, the work of mental health care is therefore essentially a question of providing the appropriate foundations to enable the attainment of personal and group potential. In Sy and Kessel's (2005) view, the import of this theory on mental health promotion is that health promotion is seen as needing to work with the target clients to fill in gaps within the foundations that is from where individual clients now are to where each client wants to be. First, his focus is too individualistic, and the emphasis is on what we need to do for or to the individual to promote mental health. They take issue with his proposition that, "the purpose of health work to be the identification, and if possible removal of obstacles to worthwhile (or "enhancing") human potential" (Seedhouse 1998, 8). As such Cattan and Tilford (2006) see Seedhouse as missing out on the opportunity to underline that it is precisely these social constructions and cultural determinations of mental health that mental health workers would do well to focus upon in their efforts to promote mental health.

As with the previous theories, the researcher was unable to find literature that appraises Seedhouse's foundation theory. Whereas (Cattan and Tilford, 2006) find this focus too individualistic in its emphasis on what we need to do for or to the individual to promote mental health, the researcher is intrigued by how this thought would interlace with the evangelical beliefs, where faith is personal as opposed to a group and the growth of mental competencies individual as one focuses on their spiritual growth. Individual members may experience a sense of self-worth which in turn, has an impact on individual mental health. Whether healthy or unhealthy, what is important to note within the context of our current study is that the community plays a significant role in the life of a believer, and it would be erroneous to consider an individual's mental health as autonomous. The second critique that relates to Seedhouse's proposition that the purpose of health work is the identification and if possible, removal of obstacles to enhancing human potential was that the scholar failed to clarify what counts as "worthwhile" and "enhancing." It is the researcher's view that whereas the clarification needs to be done, for Christian health promotion, research by Christian scholars may add valuable clarification of the same as it relates to the identification of what is spiritually "worthwhile" and "enhancing." There is therefore room for Christian scholars to appraise Seedhouse's theory to enable the growth of Christian mental health promotion as a research and evidence-based practice.

3.5. The MacDonald and O'Hara Model

Cattan and Tilford (2006) observe that the starting point for the MacDonald and O'Hara (1998) analysis is the Albee and Ryan Finn

(1993) analysis. Albee and Ryan Finn summarized their analysis of the research evidence by providing a 'formula' for mental illness prevention as indicated below:

$$Mental\ illness = \frac{Organic\ factors + Stress + Exploitation}{Coping\ skills + Self - esteem + Social\ support}$$

Albee and Ryan Finn (1993) proposed that reducing the factors on the top of the equation and increasing the factors on the bottom can prevent mental illness.

In their discussion, Cattan and Tilford (2006) find it noteworthy to highlight other theories of mental health which have been proposed by identifying elements or factors within mental health. They list three theories: First, Trent (1993) who lists five senses of mental health as trust, challenge, competency, accomplishment, and humour. Likewise, the NHS Health Advisory Service of 1997 quoted by HEA (1997) lists four abilities. None of the four abilities includes wider structural elements. Third, Tudor (1996) who lists eight 'elements of mental health', namely: self-esteem, autonomy, purpose in life, personal growth, environmental mastery, positive relations, self-actualization, and vitality. Cattan and Tilford (2006) concluded that these theories fall because they omit social influences, demoting influences, or both.

MacDonald and O'Hara (1998) built on the Albee and Ryan Finn (ibid) analysis by identifying ten elements of mental health, its promotion, and its demotion. These are; environmental quality, self-esteem, emotional processing, self-management skills, social participation, environmental deprivation, emotional abuse, emotional negligence, stress and social exclusion. Considering the elements leaves no doubt that MacDonald

and O'Hara view the definition of mental health as the 'absence of mental illness + something'. They, therefore, move away from a negative, disorder-focused approach whilst at the same time giving freedom and tolerance for various views, especially if the '+ something' is left open for different interpretations.

MacDonald and O'Hara (1998) provide accounts of the meaning they attach to the elements and also an account of where this meaning comes from as the elements themselves can presumably be open to interpretation. The scholars further identified three ways in which elements or levels should be looked at. That is, not in isolation, but in interaction and interrelatedness with each other. They assert that a multi-component approach would increase the efficacy of mental health promotion programs. Hosman and Vetman (1990) note that the second interaction is that experiences in one element can influence mental health much later on in life. Due to this, there is a need for mental health promotion to aim for cumulative interaction.

The third aspect is that of interdependence in the ten-element map. This is the claim that all the ten elements can occur or relate to the micro, meso, and macro levels. MacDonald and O'Hara's (1998) assertion is that good mental health promotion will recognize and shape their programs on such interaction. Cattan and Tilford (2006) see the challenge as being able to integrate various policy developments and interventions into a strategically determined whole. The MacDonald and O'Hara model not only conceptualizes the impact that various elements within society can have upon an individual's mental well-being but also fashioned a tool that can be used to gather information on an individual's perceptions of what is enhancing or demoting to their mental wellbeing. Thus, the model played a pivotal foundational role in the conceptual model appraised in the study.

3.6. The Science Advisory Report Conceptual Model

According to (Desjardins et al. 2010), the conceptual model was developed in 2010 by a scientific committee in Quebec. The committee was appointed by the Institut national de santé Publique du Québec. The institute had been given the mandate to produce a science advisory report on the interventions to advocate in the areas of mental health promotion and mental disorder prevention by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux (MSSS). The scientific committee adopted a conceptual model that combined the prevention elements as proposed by the Albee model and the promotion elements as recommended by the MacDonald and O'Hara model.

Whilst targeting the entire population, the model pays particular attention to individuals considered to be at greater risk of developing mental disorders. The committee believed that improving mental health requires addressing a set of social determinants, enhancing protective factors, and reducing the negative impact of risk factors associated with mental disorders. As a result, the model identifies ten categories of factors that must be addressed to promote mental health and prevent mental disorders in the general population as illustrated in the equation below.

$$Mental\ Health =$$

$$\frac{Basic\ Personal\ Resources+Self\ Esteem+Social\ Support+Social\ Inclusion+Environmental\ Quality}{Negative\ Organic\ Factors+Stress+Socio-economic\ Inequalities+Social\ Exclusion+Environmental\ deprivation}$$

Prevention   Promotion
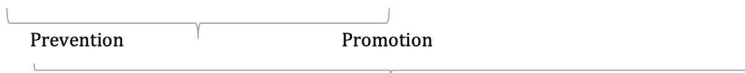
Source: (Desjardins et al. 2010, 22)

The adopted conceptual model falls within an ecological perspective just as the model developed by MacDonald and O'Hara (1998). The conceptual model highlights three core elements. First, is the reminder that efforts to promote mental health and mental disorder prevention rely on the interaction of individual and environmental factors. Second, the conceptual model highlights the need for and importance of acting at various systemic levels namely the individual, one's immediate living environment, and one's overall environment. Third, the conceptual model is developmental in its approach. It, therefore, acknowledges that maturation and development are because of the interaction of all individual and environmental factors. As a result, the conceptual model acknowledges an individual's experiences during critical transition periods as having an impact on one's mental health in later life.

Whereas the models' assertions are widely accepted, the model leaves out two core elements that are vital in the study's context, which is an African Evangelical Christian setting. The gaps are because of differences in the intended target population. The conceptual model was selected for use in Canada whilst the researcher is targeting the Kenyan population. The two countries are distinctly different in terms of location, people groups, culture, and socioeconomic factors. To efficaciously target the Kenyan evangelical context as established in the findings in Chapter 2, a Christian mental health promoter would need to include the two missing elements which are the spiritual and African cultural perspectives of mental health. Gopalkrishnan (2018) emphasizes that cultural differences have a range of implications for mental health practice. These include the ways that people view health and illness; treatment-seeking patterns and the nature of the therapeutic relationship. Hence, failure to consider the contextual culture in mental health promotion may result in culture-based misunderstandings that can interfere with the expected outcomes.

3.7. The African Perspective

The study area added the challenge of the African perspective of mental health. This being that the eventual goal is to develop a biblical integrated framework for application in Kenya, ignoring the conceptualization of mental health from an African cultural perspective would be a critical error. As Mburu (2019, xiii) notes, ignorance of the African culture in interpretation has resulted in a spiritual dichotomy in the spiritual life of African Christians. To avoid this dichotomy in the understanding of Christian mental health promotion, the study delved into the African cultural perspective. In his exploration of healing in the traditional African perspective, Ndungu (2009, 91–94) uses various examples to demonstrate that illness and other maladies did not occur by accident. A study on the knowledge, attitude, and practice of mental illness among staff in general medical facilities in Kenya (Ndetei et al. 2011, 1–8) explains that many people believe that mental disorders are a result of either a familial defect or evil machinations. This view gives rise to the stigmatization of sufferers and their families.

It was notable that interventions in mental health in Africa depend on one's ascription of the aetiology with the thought that in traditional Africa, misfortunes, inclusive of illnesses, were seen as religious experiences that required a religious approach to deal with them. It was significant from the discussion that traditional healers are the first professionals contacted for mental illness. The trend was attributed to the traditional healers being enshrined in the minds of the people, respected in their community, are often its opinion leaders, and are first respondents in case of an emergency. The study summarized the modern African perspective of mental health interventions in Kenya as faith healing, traditional healing, and formal mental health interventions which is

psychiatry. Also noted was the scarcity of literature on mental health promotion in Africa. The study, therefore, proposes that in place of explicit mental health promotion literature in Africa, it behooves mental health promoters to view mental health in terms of its interconnectedness to overall individual health and wellness from the specific target community's perspectives on wellness. The proposal is anchored to the fact that it is complex to define what is African. African traditional and post-modern cultural perspectives and practices are as diverse as the number of people groups on the continent.

3.8. A Biblical Perspective of Mental Health Promotion

The discussion centred on an overview of available literature that highlighted various thematic Christian attributions to the aetiology of mental illness. These were: original sin, personal sin and sins of others, lack of faith, and God's divine purpose. From the available literature, it was evident that having created man Genesis 1:26–2:25, Isaiah 43:1 and for a specific purpose Ephesians 2:10, there are situations where humankind will be unable to account for the onset or presence of mental health disorders other than to God's sovereign will. As was extrapolated, man's original sin in the Garden of Eden got various things in motion. First is the death process that affects the physical body of which the brain is a vital organ thus having an impact on a person's mental health. The pivotal role the original sin plays in the aetiology of sicknesses is a running thread in the discussion. The original sin is the root of all other effects of the fall of man such as individual sin, other's sins, and demon possession, all of which have been demonstrated to influence a person's mental health.

From the discussion on God's sovereign will, it is imperative to highlight that whereas God may allow sickness, He is not the cause of sicknesses. It is notable from the discussion that whereas the sins of others may cause mental illness, it is related to the consequences of the sins, but not generational curses as has been erroneously taught. The discussed role of faith or the lack of it was omitted from the biblical perspective as no biblical backing for the common notion was found. Whereas the study focussed on identifying the biblical attributions to the aetiology of mental health disorders, a deeper examination of each of the five identified biblical determinants of mental health may shed greater light on the understanding of mental health from a biblical and eventually integrated perspective.

4. The Outcomes of the Study

4.1. The Empirical Task

The findings from the empirical task established current approaches in mental health promotion in Kenya; identified gaps in Christian mental health promotion; and identified the viability, and scope of any proposed integrated mental health promotion framework in Kenya. First to answer the question, "Which mental health promotion approaches are currently applied in Kenya?" It was evident that most of the mental health promoters did not use any globally recognized theoretical approach to mental health promotion. Second, "Do Christian psychologists in Kenya acknowledge the need for the integration of determinants of mental health from an Evangelical Christian perspective?" Some Christian mental health promoters indicated the use of beliefs such as salvation and faith in their

practice. However, those who did not avoid the integration did not feel competent to successfully undertake the task. Many of the practitioners did indicate that they would use an integrated model if they were aware of it. Based on these findings, the study concluded that Christian psychologists in Kenya acknowledge the need for the integration of determinants of mental health from an evangelical Christian perspective.

The third question read, "Are there models that integrate an evangelical perspective in mental health promotion practice being used in Kenya?" The study found no evidence of any models that integrate an evangelical Christian perspective in mental health promotion being used in Kenya. To the question, "What integrated framework would be suitable for mental health promotion in Kenya?", the results point towards a model that combines biopsychosocial, spiritual, and cultural factors. Where, in this study's context, spiritual refers to the biblical perspective of mental health. It was evident that although no models were guiding the integration of spiritual beliefs in mental health promotion approaches and practices in Kenya, spiritual beliefs were integrated into mental health promotion activities in the country. Forming part of the integrated beliefs, were beliefs such as salvation and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The lack of Christian mental health promotion models in use in Kenya and the indication by the respondents that a Christian model would improve their efficacy is a pointer to the need for a biblical integrated framework of mental health promotion in the country. From the deductions, it was clear that before developing a biblically integrated framework, there is a need to explicate the biblical perspective on mental health and mental health promotion. From this, an integrated framework can be developed. The framework needs to integrate three core components that are part of mental health promotion in Kenya namely: the scientific, cultural, and biblical, perspectives respectively.

4.2. The Qualitative Outcome

Definitions:
Available literature defines faith-based health promotion in various ways. However, the study's results revealed that there was no distinct definition of Christian mental health promotion in Kenya. The absence of a clear definition made the task of developing a framework difficult. As a result, the researcher offered definitions for the critical terms namely, mental health, Christian mental health promotion, and Christian mental health promoter.

The Biblical integrated framework for promoting mental health in Kenya (BIF):
The BIF was tailored to meet an identified need in the practice of Christian mental health promotion in Kenya as established by the empirical task. The BIF combines the elements recommended by the Science Advisory Report Conceptual Model (Desjardins et al. 2010), with the biblical and cultural aspects of mental health. It is vital to note that the proposed framework does not negate the determinants as proposed by the advisory report. Rather, the proposed framework adds to them in an effort to address mental health from a wholistic perspective in the Kenyan context. The study postulates five broad determinants of mental health namely: Spiritual, Biological, Psychological, Socio-cultural, and Environmental. Taking into consideration all factors elucidated above and in the entire study, the researcher postulates the 'Biblical Mental Health Equation' as illustrated below:

$$MH = R \left[\frac{pp + ps + pc + pe}{no + np + ns + nc + ne} \right]$$

Where:

MH = *Mental Health;* **R** = *Regeneration;* **pp** = *Positive Psychological factors;* **ps** = *Positive Spiritual factors;* **pc** = *Positive socio-cultural factors;* **pe** = *Positive environmental factors;* **no** = *Negative organic factors;* **np** = *Negative Psychological factors;* **nc** = *Negative socio-cultural factors;* **ne** = *Negative environmental factors;* **ns** = *Negative Spiritual factors*

The equation is an adaptation from the one proposed by the Science Advisory Report Conceptual Model. The differences are the central role regeneration plays in mental health, and the inclusion of spiritual and cultural factors. The equation presupposes that the impact of the positive factor categories must be enhanced whilst reducing the effects of the negative factor categories in mental health promotion. Yet, that without focusing on an individual's regeneration is not sufficient. Whereas the WHO has adopted the slogan, "there is no health without mental health" as stated in chapter 1 of the study, the framework's explicit position is "there is no mental health without regeneration." In Chapters 4 and 5, there is an in depth discussion of the BIF and a detailed application of the same in both an individual and group setting.

5. Conclusion

Whereas the growing interest in mental health and spirituality worldwide is based on inclusivity, the outcome of the study gives room for the believer's mission in the great commission as contained in Matthew 28:19–20. As the Lockard (2006) study demonstrated, the church's mission is a team effort which when theologians, behavioural scientists, mission

professors, and administrators work in cooperation, guided by the Spirit of God, enables the church to accomplish the supreme mandate of Christ's great commission. The researcher echoes Beck's passionate call for a balanced integration of mental health sciences and the Bible (Beck 2001). It is a path that many have not yet been trodden but is valuable in achieving the missiological calling of the church.

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A Pastoral Strategy for Addressing Spousal Violence in Northern Accra Diocese of the Methodist Church, Ghana

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Abstract

The current nature of spousal violence has been described as a global problem that cuts across culture, class, ethnicity and age. This research explores whether there is spousal violence within the context of the study and primarily aims to develop a pastoral strategy that would help the Northern Accra diocese address spousal violence within its confines. This pastoral strategy is intended to be a practical tool to guide pastors in the study area to address spousal violence. The research model applied in this study is the EDNA Model. According to Woodbridge (2014, 95), this model explains practical issues, considering cultural and theological

perspectives in a given context. The research establishes the existing features and contributing factors of spousal violence within the study area. This research concentrates on the sociocultural practices in Ghana, the establishment of the Methodist Church in Ghana, and family lifestyle within the study area. A descriptive analysis of spousal violence in the Northern Accra Diocese is established based on the perceptions and experiences of the selected respondents.

Furthermore, a theological, psychological, and sociological normative analysis was established from biblical foundations, the constructs of the self-efficacy theory, and conflict theory. The normative analysis was used as the background for developing the pastoral strategy, which is constructed as an offshoot of the Triple Helix development model to present a realistic and achievable strategy. This pastoral strategy is desirable for the church, especially within the confines of the study area. A general direction is set for the church and its various components to achieve the desired state in the future, which will be effective in such a context. This pastoral strategy is called the Individual, Church, and Community (ICC) pastoral strategy. These three elements addressed spousal violence and proposed preventive measures against it. The findings of this study establish implications for theological education, practice and research. Recommendations were made to Theological Institutions, Northern Accra Diocese, Pastors in Northern Accra Diocese, Communities within Northern Accra Diocese, and spousal violence victims to surmount such a challenge. Ultimately this research presents a constructive tool for practical implementation to address spousal violence in the said diocese.

1. Introduction

Researchers in Ghana and other parts of the world (e.g., Rasool 2015, 24–38; Dienye and Gbeneol 2009, 333–339; Kishor and Johnson 2006, 293–307; Oyeridan and Isiugo-Abanihe 2005, 38–53; Panda and Agarwal 2005, 231–247; Carlo 2004; Amoakohene, 2004, 2373–2385; Coker-Appiah and Cusack 1999) have drawn attention to domestic violence. It is a global problem that cuts across culture, class, ethnicity and age (Tenkorang et al. 2013, 771–781). More specifically, domestic violence is a huge social problem that requires urgent attention in Ghana.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) Report (2002) defines violence as a deliberate act of using physical force or threats against an individual or group of persons, which might result in death, psychological harm, injury or deprivation. It further describes domestic violence as one of the most deliberate acts of gender inequality (World Health Organisation Report 2005). In Ghana, the Domestic Violence Act 2007 defines domestic violence as engaging in an act that constitutes a form of harassment, threat or harm to a person or behaviors likely to result in physical, sexual, economic, emotional, verbal or psychological abuse. A more popular and widely used definition according to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women states that it is:

> An act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (United Nations General Assembly 1993, 320).

Such a definition emphasizes the status and priorities of women to participate and benefit in development processes both at national and international levels. Considering such heightened recognition of the state of women, some countries, including Ghana, register their support and commitment to eradicating domestic violence. However, this study focuses on spousal violence, which is widely recognized as part of the categories under domestic violence. In Ghana, spousal violence is described as violence committed against an intimate partner in a domestic setting or environment, such as marriage or cohabitation (Institute of Development Studies Report 2016, 200).

Assimeng (1999, 79) describes marriage as currently practised in Ghana as "the coming together of a man and woman from two different clans to establish a family such that the offspring could ensue to replenish and perpetuate the tribe. It is a solemn social and happy occasion." Thus, marriage is a social status that is desirable to both men and women in Ghana. Cusack and Manuh (2009, 51) describe marriage in Ghana as "a process with several stages. It is accompanied by goods and services from the man's lineage to the woman." In some communities, such an occasion is not meant only for the couples to decide and go ahead with arrangements for the ceremony but also for both families.

Cohabitation for an extended period is legally recognized as one of Ghana's other forms of marriage (Okyere-Manu 2015, 45–60). This study also considers such unions part of spousal violence, including those separated or divorced. Consequently, in this study, spousal violence is defined as any violent behaviour, whether physical, psychological, emotional or economic, directed to a spouse, married, living together in a typical law relationship or divorced or separated. In Ghana, domestic violence manifests in different forms, such as physical, psychological,

emotional, sexual and economic violence. According to Cusack (2009, 1), "75% of the total population living in Ghana have experienced some form of violence." Thus, there have been frequent news reports about domestic violence, and such may include spousal violence in various communities, even within Accra, the capital city. Also, in Ghana, poverty, cultural practices, family and marriage, and political divide contribute to some unfavourable atmosphere within the nation which results in domestic violence.

Coker-Appiah and Foster (2002) note that in Ghana, there is a practice among some ethnic groups wherein a cane is given to the husband during the wedding ceremony, which implies that he must discipline his wife or, in effect, beat up his wife if his wife does something wrong. Consequently, this may result in a high rate of violence within the family circle, especially between husbands and wives. There have been shocking reports of violence against women worldwide, as reports indicate that at least one out of every three women has faced some form of violence in their lifetime (DuBois and Miley 2005, 417; Bott et al. 2005). Such a condition is evident in the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women by the United Nations in 1999 (Okereke 2006, 1–35). According to the late Dr Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations, "Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. It knows no boundary of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, peace and development" (DuBois and Miley 2005, 471). Other international organizations have made tremendous contributions toward addressing spousal violence, such as the World Health Organization and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, at its General Assembly, which adopted 25th November as

International Day for the Eradication of Violence against Women (General Assembly Report 2004, 41) at its General Assembly.

Therefore, this phenomenon has increasingly become an issue of concern for non-governmental associations (NGOs), gender activists, social activists, and policymakers, among other stakeholders (Dienye and Gbenoel 2009, 333–339; Kishor and Johnson 2006, 293–307). In this regard, successive Ghanaian governments have tried to eradicate spousal violence. Such effort is evident in the establishment of the Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) in 1998, and the Ministry of Gender, Social Protection and Children in February 2001 (Imoh et al. 2016, 5). In addition, the 1998 Childrens' Act, 1998 Criminal Code Amendment Acts, Gender and Children's Act 2002, the Domestic Violence Act 2005 and the Domestic Violence Act (act 732) in February 2007. Despite all these measures to eradicate or minimise spousal violence, it still threatens the nation.

2. Research Methodology and Design

This research falls within the discipline of Practical Theology even though it impinges on a common social phenomenon. Nevertheless, it primarily focuses on a particular aspect with implications for the witness and mission of the church. It entails theological praxis. Heitink (1996, 6) defines Practical Theology as an "empirically oriented theological theory that helps the Christian faith deal with practical issues in modern society. It is a branch of theology that guides our Christian thoughts and actions in various social contexts." Contributions to the development of practical theology have been made by many scholars (e.g., Graham 2009; Thompson 2008; Pattison 2007; Balland and Pritchard 2006; Reddie 2003;

Woodward and Pattison 2000; Forrester 2000). This study aims to generate a pastoral strategy for addressing spousal violence within the study area. In this situation, a gospel of liberation is needed, and an insight can also be drawn from the assertion submitted by Woodward and Pattison (2000, 9) that "Pastoral and Practical theology must convey religious beliefs and practices to meet modern-day practices, actions and reactions." Dawson (2009, 14) asserts that "research methodology involves the ideas or rules that guide research." The research method employed is qualitative because it "explains and interprets a particular issue and allows participants to be the centre of the research" (Creswell 2014, 4). This research aligns with explorative design since it aims to develop a contemporary pastoral strategy to address spousal violence in the context of a church community.

2.1. Research Design

The research employs a combination of interviews and focuses on group discussions. It also employs a standpoint that is based on biblical analysis, psychological analysis, sociological analysis and theological reflection. Participants were chosen based on purposive sampling from within the Northern Accra diocese, especially those willing to participate since the project aims at establishing authentic and transparent information about experiences of spousal violence within the study area. De Vos et al. (2002) explained that studying the total population in a given scope is impossible. Therefore, a sample of the subjects should be selected to reflect the population that adequately interests the researcher. The following categories of respondents were selected from members:

- Five superintendent ministers.
- Ten ordained ministers.

- The research methodology designated these two sets of respondents as category A.
- Ten class leaders of any local church within the diocese.
- Fifteen members who do not administrate any local church within the diocese.

These two sets of respondents were designated as category B for the focus group discussions in this research methodology. Focus group discussion was employed in the study because it is an appropriate and effective methodology used primarily in the research field to gather data (Garrison et al. 1999, 428–450). According to Smith (2008, 161), "focus group is described as group discussions that solicit views about a focus area." The purpose of this focus group discussion was to (a) determine whether participants clearly understood what spousal violence is, (b) investigate the nature and scale of spousal violence within the Northern Accra Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana, (c) examine and document the general understanding and experiences and the factors that contribute to and the possible theologically informed solutions to spousal violence within the Northern Accra diocese (d) develop and construct a pastoral strategy for addressing spousal violence within the Northern Accra Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana. Five focus groups were in each group with five participants. The five participants were targeted based on the structure of the local church's class meetings within the study area. Therefore, the focus group discussion was a selection of participants from the male, female, and young adult classes within the diocese.

2.2. Research Steps

In this study, the researcher used the EDNA Model. According to Woodbridge (2014, 95), "The EDNA model emphasises explaining practical issues considering cultural and theological perspectives in a given context." Furthermore, this model comprises four essential areas in conducting research in practical theology. The first step is an explorative task that gives insight into the present situation concerning spousal violence within the study area. It examined Ghana's historical and socio-religious background, ethnic demography, and the Accra North diocese, including some of the experiences and understanding concerning spousal violence. In addition, it explores the behaviours and problems observed within the stated community.

The second step describes spousal violence as observed and documented by the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) as it naturally occurred within the study area. It also seeks to collect local data within the districts covered by the diocese to shed light on the nature and scale of the problem. This second step established the scale of the problem, its theological consequences, the dimensions, and the contributing factors to its entrenchment. Focus group discussions and interviews were done to qualify and describe what was happening in the study area. The third step is referred to as the normative task. This third step interprets the prescribed norms and values for how things must be done, drawing attention to how the church should address spousal violence. This was to eventually establish the expected biblical and theological moral values, including norms relevant to addressing spousal violence in a Christian community. This step involves the exposition of three scriptural texts of relevance, namely (Genesis 2:18–25, 2 Samuel

13:1–22, and 1 Peter 3:1–7) followed by theological reflections and analysis and interaction with appropriate secondary literature in its application to addressing spousal violence among Christian believers. The fourth step is action-oriented. This presents a pastoral strategy that practically addresses spousal violence within the study area. The findings of the previous steps are compared and weighed with the ICC pastoral strategy to generate the desired strategy for action.

3. Background of the Study Area

This research was conducted in Accra, the capital city of Ghana, but specifically in the northern part of the city where the Northern Accra Diocese of the Methodist Church Ghana is positioned. The study area includes several municipalities starting from West Ridge; Korley Klottey Municipality; La Dade Kotopon Municipality; Accra Municipality; La Nkwantanang; Adenta Municipality, and Ga East Municipality.

This map covers the whole of Greater Accra Region. The map also covers the administrative boundaries of the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) within the study area. In addition, selected Circuit Headquarters in the study area are delineated. The estimated population of the city is approximately 2,514,000 inhabitants. Accra is the most densely populated city in Ghana. It holds the country's most important bank, the Bank of Ghana, the headquarters of the government ministries, the parliament and the seat of government. Economic activities include fishing, food processing, timber processing, textiles, clothing and financial services.

Figure 2.1 A Map of the Study Area
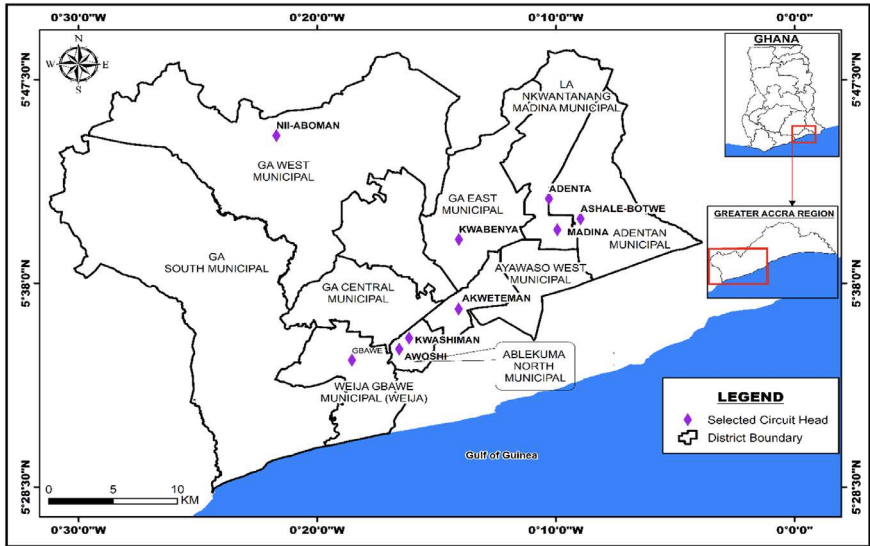
Source: Fieldwork, 2023.

4. Factors that Contribute to Spousal Abuse in Northern Accra Diocese

Spousal violence in the study area is influenced by various factors, which are presented in Table 3.4. The forthcoming discussion will revolve around these contributory factors, which have been developed based on the data collected from the respondents. Their understanding and experiences of spousal violence in the study area have informed the identification of these factors. Additionally, relevant literature pertaining to the participants' experiences, thoughts, and suggestions will be examined to enrich the discussion. Table 3.4 provides a comprehensive overview of the contributory factors to spousal violence in the study area. It includes

the total number of respondents who identified each factor as well as the corresponding percentage based on the total respondents.

Table 3.4 Contributory factors of spousal violence in Northern Accra Diocese

Number	Contributory Factors to Reported Spousal Violence in Northern Accra Diocese as indicated by respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Ethnic/Cultural perceptions	40	100
2	Gender differentials	38	95
3	Age differentials	15	60
4	Silence syndrome	40	100
5	Religion	32	80
6	Access to justice	34	85

Source: Fieldwork, 2020.

5. Normative Theological Analysis

The normative theological task of this research has thrown light on interpreting the prescribed norms and values concerning God's intention for marriage and, or spousal relationships. Also, the normative theological analysis has established that spousal violence has no place in Christian marriage, drawing attention to how the church, in particular, can help to address spousal violence. Three biblical texts relevant to spousal violence were chosen to illustrate the EDNA model and its application in the context of the Northern Accra Diocese in addressing spousal violence. Two texts in the Old Testament, namely, Genesis 2:18–24 and Second Samuel 13:1–22, and one text in the New Testament, namely, First Peter 3:1–7. The selected texts are explained based on biblical, theological, and moral values and norms relevant to addressing spousal violence in the Northern Accra Diocese. Consequently, the texts selected for this study

appeal for a fresh look at spousal relationships or marriage for spouses to understand God's intention and direction for their relationship. This research emphasized that spousal relationships must be free from violent engagements, and a Christ-like attitude and example must be the pivot of a spousal relationship. When this kind of commitment is affected, no matter the strain in the relationship, the result can be deep gratitude, joy, contentment, love and security. This analysis also indicates that spouses are to manage conflict healthily and that marital success can be sustainable if couples manage their problems healthily (Mbwirire 2017).

Consequently, this research reveals that when a man and a woman decide to become husband and wife, they do so as members of the body of Christ who is committed to a marital relationship, one that is very peculiar and distinct from the world, one that is subject to the scriptures and focuses on the mission of God (Afolaranmi 2022, 368–371). Paul advocated that husbands should not neglect or ignore their spouses and not be distracted from the mission of God (Eph 5:26–27). For the church, the sacred beauty of marriage and sex is to be maintained as a "Theo-logical" reality whether or not it can be maintained on the level of the world's abstract ethical or political whims. Spouses are to focus on eternity and live a life that exemplifies Christ dedicated to the glory of God.

6. Essential Factors in Addressing Spousal Violence

This research presented three essential factors contributing to designing a proposed strategy for the church to address spousal violence. This research observed that spousal violence is evident in almost every society but can be managed well. Spousal violence affects spouses of all classes and races and at every level of income and education (Mir and Naz, 2017;

Rasool 2015, 24–38). The first essential factor is that spousal violence affects humanity's physical and psychological condition. However, many victims continue to stay in such relationships despite the frequency of the abuse and how severe the violence is. Such situations direct that victims can be in such violent situations for as long as possible until they realise, they cannot continue living in such states anymore. Also, studies show that spouses who are unemployed and have relatively low education are not likely to find help easily (Danis 2021; Ishaku 2015, 250–264; Wathen and Macmillan, 2003, 589–600). Psychological responses include depression, hopelessness, guilt, despair, shame, low self-esteem and fear of losing control (Ronningstam and Weinberg 2013, 167–177). Such a level of psychological distress is the highest point of vulnerability. When the possible outcome of psychological challenges eventually becomes evident and uncontrollable, the victim then becomes more depressed, and self-esteem is lowered (Chaudhary 2016, 823–826). Thus, there is a need for psychological responses to manage such violent spousal conditions. If this process is handled correctly in terms of time and right actions, it will be difficult for the victim to leave such an abusive relationship.

The second essential normative factor is the application of the self-efficacy theory. This theory helps empower victims to heighten their self-efficacy against spousal violence. Self-efficacy has been linked to physical health functioning following trauma exposure (Meichenbaum 2017; Campbell 2002, 1331–1336). Concerning mental health outcomes, self-efficacy has been linked to suicidality among survival victims of spousal violence (Thompson et al. 2019, 282–297). Thus, high self-efficacy plays a protective role for spousal violence victims, paralleling the results of studies conducted among victims of various other traumas. Having presented a detailed discussion on the components of self-efficacy (master, vicarious, psychological, and persuasive), reacting to

the challenging task must be meaningful to spousal violence victims. Such task involves; choosing to end an abusive relationship, finding new ways for independence, attending to financial challenges to take care of the home, maintaining employment and many other challenges. To surmount such challenges, the self-efficacy level must be increased; victims must demonstrate persistence. This idea suggests that victims should spend more time working on themselves towards achieving their aim. Also, victims should positively respond to issues around them, not allowing past traumatic conditions to affect their lives. The third aspect, and sometimes the most difficult in surmounting such challenges, is the willingness to attempt a future task influenced by self-efficacy. An example is a spousal violence victim who has divorced and is going into another spousal relationship. Such conditions can be worrisome for many. One may choose not to be in an intimate relationship anymore or for a very long time due to fear of past violent actions. However, high self-efficacy can support victims to attempt another relationship with high confidence.

The third essential factor derived from this research directs that stakeholders (pastors, family members, counsellors, legal institutions, church and society) who prevent or support spousal violence victims must ensure they imbibe high self-efficacy in victims. These stakeholders must help to educate and adequately share knowledge about spousal violence across the entire nation. It must be effectively emphasized so society is watchful of the ideas, statements, and teachings they communicate. These teachings and utterances should heal victims and build healthy spousal relationships nationwide. It is important to note that the church, community and individuals need to be mindful of their teachings and practices about a spousal relationship to help minimise or eradicate spousal violence (Marsden 2018, 73–95). The relevant literature suggests

that spousal violence victims experience different psychological emotions based on fear, silence and shame. This assertion has been attributed to the fear of being rejected or divorced. These can be attributed to the community's pressures (Walsh, 2020).

Some victims consider the happiness of their little children or family satisfaction and eventually stay back and endure abuse in silence. To avoid such conditions, victims of spousal violence must rely on social support from health workers, counsellors, church leaders, and the community to make better decisions in addressing spousal violence. The stakeholders' moral support and financial contributions will positively address spousal violence within this context. Protecting victims from their perpetrators, educating the entire nation about spousal violence, and helping victims increase their self-efficacy are significant steps towards addressing the problem of spousal violence. The nation's prevalent issues of poverty, cultural practices, family and marriage dynamics, and political divisions contribute to an unfavourable environment that fosters spousal violence. This growing concern has garnered attention from the Church in Ghana, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), gender activists, social advocates, policymakers, and other stakeholders. In response to this issue, the study aimed to assess the current state of spousal violence within the Northern Accra Diocese and proposing a model that addresses it by incorporating normative theological, psychological, and sociological analyses derived from this study.

7. The ICC Pastoral Strategy

This research discovered the coping strategies employed by the ICC pastoral strategy, an extension of the Triple Helix model. This

comprehensive approach aims to establish an interconnected and attainable pastoral strategy aligned with the three main pillars of the ICC's pastoral initiative. Each pillar offers specific guidance for pastors in addressing spousal violence. At the Individual level, ministers are encouraged to employ the following strategies: seeking support from relevant groups, prioritising the safety of victims, developing contingency plans for emergencies, maintaining confidentiality, assessing the involvement of children and providing assistance, accordingly, engaging stakeholders, and offering uplifting prayers and fostering trust to create positive life situations. At the Church level, strategies to aid victims encompass addressing spousal violence during church services, fostering collaborative relationships among stakeholders, conducting awareness campaigns on spousal violence within local churches, promoting gender equity both within and outside the church, and providing regular training for clergy members on handling spousal violence issues. At the community level, the study acknowledges the influence of ethnic/cultural perceptions, patriarchal lifestyles, and injustice in spousal violence.

To address such issues, the research recommends preventive measures, both primary and secondary. Essential suggestions include securing support for victims from local government and stakeholders, implementing programs to strengthen social networks and educate communities, advocating for changes in social norms that contribute to spousal violence, and ensuring prompt and fair implementation of justice.

8. Conclusion

The results of this research established and proposed valuable suggestions for theological education, practice, and research within the

study area. They provide valuable insights that can guide the effective implementation of the ICC model, fostering comprehensive plans and programmes for its success. Furthermore, these findings can empower individuals serving in the Northern Accra Diocese by equipping Ministers and other church leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills to address spousal violence. The ICC pastoral strategy is a practical and comprehensive guide to address spousal violence, reflecting the study's findings. It incorporates the innovative Triple Helix model, which establishes a realistic interrelationship among the three main pillars of the strategy: Individual, Church, and Community. This valuable pastoral strategy can be implemented at the initial stage of addressing spousal violence, enabling Ministers to discover the underlying issues and propose practical solutions. The research emphasizes the significance of equipping Ministers in Northern Accra Diocese and other stakeholders with sufficient knowledge on spousal violence intervention.

Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of Ministers within the study area to acquire adequate knowledge concerning spousal violence, which can contribute to the long-term practicability of the ICC pastoral strategy. The community's attitude towards spousal violence necessitates a shift in attitudes and behaviours, focusing on the perception and treatment of victims. The research reveals the prominence of the self-efficacy theory, encompassing self-motivation factors, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and psychological reactions. Moreover, the study reinforces the religious nature of Ghanaian society, with respondents attributing their existence to the presence of God. Health professionals' advice significantly influences the respondents who often accept it unquestioningly. Consequently, they act upon the guidance provided by their health professionals or spiritual leaders without

verification or questioning. To surmount such unavoidable challenges, the Northern Accra Diocese should adequately equip its Ministers and other momentous church leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills to address spousal violence, including implementing the ICC pastoral strategy.

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Back to the Garden: Paul's Appeal to Adam and Eve as an Illumining Allusion to 1 Timothy 2:11–15

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Abstract

The context of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2–3 forms a crucial interpretive piece to the 1 Timothy 2:12 puzzle. Discerning the purpose of the couple's presence illumines the transcultural and diachronic implications for women teaching and learning in the ecclesia. To do so, the research applied an intertextual methodology starting with an exegetical analysis of Genesis and then inspecting the history of interpretation in Second Temple Judaism to present an exegesis of 1 Timothy 2:12 within the light of Adam and Eve. The allusion established a God-given authority and responsibility evident in the Creation and the tactic of the serpent to undermine such an authority and responsibility evident in the Fall. Theological implications were applied to women serving in the church

and para-church organizations in the respective activities of teaching and preaching transforming the church in the Global South and beyond.

1. Introduction

No text may be more disputed than 1 Timothy 2:12 which states, διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός ("I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man"). Paul's words are notoriously difficult to interpret but his further discourse is unexpected. γὰρ ("for"; v. 13) connects the prohibition (v. 12) to the creation of Adam before Eve (v. 13) and the deception of Eve (v. 14). Given the context of learning and teaching (vv. 11–12), the reference appears inapt. The intertextual allusion to Adam and Eve increases the urgency to address how the couple serves as an illuminating allusion to the illocution in 1 Timothy 2:11–15.[1] Accordingly, this article summaries the current state of scholarship surrounding Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13–14 and their allusive function, the contextual meaning of Genesis 2–3 that Paul may have drawn upon, the textual form of Paul's allusion and the traditions of interpretation of Genesis 2–3 in Second Temple Judaism and the New Testament, the allusion's function in the illocution of 1 Timothy 2:11–15, and the diachronic and transcultural significance of the illocution in theology and praxis.

2. History's Interpretation of Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13–14

[1] The discussion of women's roles in the church is often framed in the language of "prohibition" (e.g., Cooper and Caballero 2017). This creates an immediate negative connotation to the text while downplaying Paul's "positive plea" in verse 11. The label "illocution" is intentional and deliberative to move away from the terminology "prohibition."

First Timothy 2:12 has become the fulcrum in the women in ministry debate. As the primary text prohibiting women from teaching and preaching over men, one is hard-pressed to find a word that is not open to complex grammatical, lexical, and historical interpretive issues. Because the exegetical details in verse 12 are riddled with complexity, their context must provide interpretive guidance. Instead of providing overwhelming clarity, verses 13–14 compound the exegetical difficulties in verse 12. Scholars have sought to answer how Adam and Eve function in the text, how the events of the Creation and the Fall support verse 12, and what they contribute to the implications for women in ministry.

2.1. Traversed Waters

Prior studies have implemented diverse approaches to account for the allusion. For example, Towner (2006, 228) submits that the allusion corrected a false interpretation of the creation account circulating by heretical women in the Ephesian church. Other researchers have investigated the allusion as an illustration for the Ephesian's lives (Spurgeon 2013, 556), a contextual corrective (Celoria 2013, 21; Mounton and Van Wolde 2012,583; Westfall 2016), an analogy (Foster 2017, 53), midrash (Wall 2004, 82) or an attempt to establish a transcultural principle (Schieferstein 2021, 120). A common approach sees the presence of the Genesis text and concludes the transcultural nature of the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:12 (e.g., Cho 2020, 565; Gorven 2019, 225; Knight III 1992, 140; Merkle 2006, 547–548; Moo 1980, 62–83). The second view takes the reference to Genesis as only pertinent to the time of writing and labels it as a historical example (e.g. Celosia 2013, 23; Huizing 2011, 19; Kroeger and

Kroeger 1992; Peppiat 2019, 146; Perriman 1993; Towner 2006; Westfall 2016; Witherington III 1990).

2.2. A Distinct Approach

Although many writers have examined the appeal to Adam and Eve regarding universal norms or false teaching/gnostic mythologies, current research lacks a narrative critical approach to the Genesis text with a direct correlation to the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11–15. How one handles the Genesis text, precisely the allusion, becomes pertinent for an exegesis and application of verse 12 because Hays (1989) calls for studies that not only analyze matters of exegetical techniques and backgrounds; but also, the "meaning-effects" produced by Paul's allusions. Echoing Hays, Abasciano (2005, 7) writes that general descriptions of OT contexts must be supplemented by "detailed exegesis of the relevant Old Testament texts." This detailed exegesis then serves as the basis for their significance in Pauline literature.

Similarly, C.H. Dodd (1952, 126) advocates that NT authors employed a contextual method of exegesis. Quoted or alluded texts were pointers to the whole context rather than constituting complete testimonies in and of themselves. In any quoted, alluded, or echoed passage, the author relies on the OT context for their argument. Therefore, the interpreter gains a greater understanding of an author's use of the OT when the various allusive parts are studied separately in their OT contexts (Porter 1997, 64). Furthermore, an allusion may have greater emphasis than a quotation because the writer presupposed his reader's knowledge of the text (Osborne 2006, 167). This is not to say that Paul's specific points—Adam's creation first and Eve's deception—are irrelevant to his argument. Nonetheless, Dodd (1952, 126) makes an important point. An allusion

cannot be fully grasped without studying its original context. The author intends the reader to recognize the alluded marker, remember the original context, and connect one or more aspects of the predecessor to the new context (Beetham 2008, 30).

The study bolsters how Adam and Eve fit in the Pauline illocution through an intertextual methodology that focuses not only on the Jewish hermeneutic of Paul but also on how Paul uniquely uses the Old Testament in relationship to 1 Timothy 2:11–15. Most studies briefly mention one or the other, but no study synergistically analyses the two in answering the couple's function in the text and how their story relates to the pericope as a whole. From a discourse analysis perspective, an interpreter cannot isolate 1 Timothy 2:12. For example, developing conceptualizations of αὐθεντέω that neither take into consideration the dialogue before or after violate the demarcations that context virtually determines meaning (Silva 1983, 138). Thus, greater clarity on how Paul uses Adam and Eve and their purpose in the pericope will also shed light on some of the difficulties in verse 12 and the defining boundaries of interpretation. Within this framework, the discussion ensues.

3. Back to the Garden

The painting "The Fall of Man" by Jacob Jordaens (1640s) hangs on the wall in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. In the eerie colored, Jordaens represents how he envisioned the scene recorded in Genesis 3. Four centuries later, alluding to Adam and Eve conjures in people's imagination a picture of the events in the Garden of Eden. If asked to paint this picture, some would produce a veracious portrait of the events. For most, the details are fuzzy and crucial pieces of information would be lost. A narrative

critical approach to Genesis 2–3 unearthed the following. Genesis 2–3 is an elevated Hebrew prose narrative that presents the creation of man and woman and their subsequent downfall in such a manner that the characters have distinct agency and autonomy but are interdependent upon each other for the events that transpire.
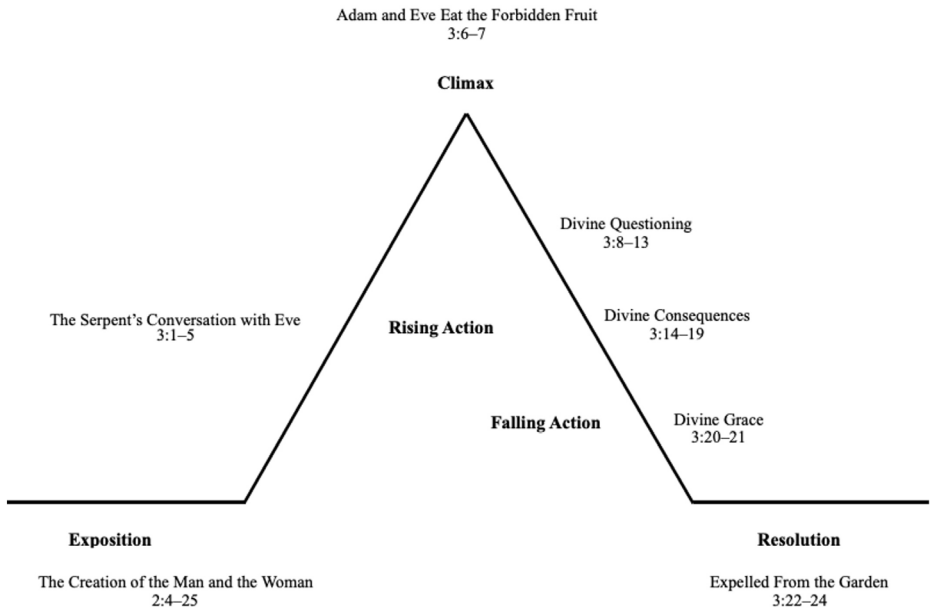
3.1. Men and Women are Similar Yet Not Identical

In one sense, the creation narrative presents men and women as essentially the same. Adam finds no suitable "partner" in the animals (Gen 2:20). In Hebrew poetic convention, the phrase עֶצֶם מֵעֲצָמַי ("bone from my bone"; v. 23) parallels וּבָשָׂר מִבְּשָׂרִי ("and flesh from my flesh"). The synonymous parallelism makes the saying emphatic which supports the man and the

woman's similarity. The prepositional phrase מֵעֲצָמַי ("from my bone") conveys the source material (Joüon 2003, 489). Adam is claiming that the woman is his flesh and bone (Reyburn and Fry 1998, 74–75). Unlike the animals, this new individual is "profoundly" and "essentially" like the man (Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III 1997, 113; cf. Giles 2014, 5). This truth is also reflected in the name Adam gives her, אִשָּׁה ("woman"), which is a world-play from אִישׁ ("man"; Wenham 1987, 70). The narrative emphasizes the woman's equality and similarity with the man, not her subordination or inferiority (Conway 2021, 35).

Alternatively, the creation narrative presents the woman as distinct from the man. Her purpose is to be an עֵזֶר or a strong aid, a teammate, and a counter-partner to the man. עֵזֶר is used next in Exodus 18:4 to describe God as the עֵזֶר who saved Eliezer from the sword of Pharaoh. It is further used of the Lord (Deut 33:29; Ps 70:5; 121:2; 124:8; 146:5) and thirteen of the occurrences relate to declarations concerning the Lord's ability to save and deliver (Isa 30:5, Ezek 12:14; Harman 1997, 379). The expression כְּנֶגְדּוֹ (lit. "like opposite him"). Generally, כְּ is associated with the meaning "like" (Clines 1993, 347) and נֶגֶד with the meaning "in front of, opposite" (603). כְּנֶגְדּוֹ implies a level of complementary association (Walton 2001, 176). The English word "reverse" carries the sense of כְּנֶגְדּוֹ ("like opposite to him"). The woman is the opposite to what has previously stated. Thus, a helper "as his counterpart." The woman's creation is also unique. The author describes the creation of man (Gen 2:7) and animals (2:19) using the word יָצַר ("formed"). בָּנָה conveys that the Lord fashioned or built the woman from the rib he had taken out of man (Gen 2:22; Clines 1993, 229). Because the woman is created from the man but received a distinct role, Genesis 2:18–25 presents the man and the woman as similar yet not identical.

3.2. A Created Social Order

Next, the narrator implies a reversal of the created social order at the beginning of Genesis 3 as the pattern of speech is the snake, woman, man, and God. God brings this order back into place in the falling action of the narrative as man, woman, and serpent (Gen 3:8–13). This supports that Adam's naming of Eve (2:23; 3:20) demonstrates his God-given authority. A created social order is implicit through the narrative structure.

3.3. The Serpent Victimizes Eve

After skimming Genesis 3, it appears that the serpent spoke to the man and the woman to see who he could entice to eat the fruit. After analyzing the text, a different situation appears. The serpent victimizes the woman in his approach by saying אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה ("to the woman"; Gen 3:1). Despite the possibility of using the preposition לְ in the expression, אֶל specifics direction and indicates the direction of verbal communication (Joüon 2003, 486; cf. Clines 1994, 265; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 193). The man evades mention. The reader also knows that the serpent was more עָרוּם ("crafty") than any other wild animal (3:1). It is improbable that Adam was immune to Satan's nefarious tactics. Eve's deception reflects the serpent's choosing.

The serpent addresses Eve, but the Hebrew form is telling. The statement לֹא תֹאכְלוּ ("you must not eat"; Gen 3:1) is masculine plural. The question is better translated as "Did God really say you *both* must not eat from any tree in the Garden." The serpent brings Adam into the picture. Every following reference that the serpent makes to "you" in the verbs or the pronominal suffixes functioning as direct objects are plural (לֹא תֹאכְלוּ

["you must not eat"]; 3:1; לֹא־מוֹת תְּמֻתוּן ["you will not surely die"]; 3:4; אֲכָלְכֶם ["you eat"]; 3:5; עֵינֵיכֶם ["your eyes"]). It is not enough for Eve alone to eat. Adam must also eat. The downfall results when both the man and the woman eat. In accordance with his cunning fashion, the serpent only converses with Eve.

3.4. The Woman was Deceived

The woman recalls her dialogue with the serpent and concludes she was נָשָׁא ("deceived"; Gen 3:13). נָשָׁא refers to being deluded, deceived, or enticed (Clines 1990, 775; Holladay 2000, 248). The *hiph'il* הִשִּׁיאַנִי ("deceived") represents the serpent as causing Eve to participate indirectly as a secondary subject in the deception (Putnam 2002, 27). The Hebrew construction of Eve's response הַנָּחָשׁ הִשִּׁיאַנִי וָאֹכֵל ("the serpent deceived me and I ate"; Gen 2:13) reveals that the emphasis is on the serpent as he, the subject, is placed before the verb (Davidson 1902, 146; Joüon 2003, 162–163; Waltke and O'Connor 1990, 435). It is as if Eve cries out to God, "It was not my fault, I was deceived. Look there is the serpent! It was his fault." Consequently, Eve admits her sin but uses her deception as an excuse.

3.5. The Man is Held Primarily Accountable for Sin

Genesis 3:8–13 is a sentencing scene. Knowing that they were naked, the man and his wife hid in the Garden (Gen 3:8). The Lord God calls out to the man, "Where are you [singular]?" (Gen 3:9). The switch from the second person plural "you" (3:1, 3, 4, 5) to the second-person singular "you" emphasizes the individual liability of Adam despite Eve's involvement (Matthews 1996, 240). The rhetorical question prompts Adam to ponder

his wrongdoing. Adam replies that he heard God in the Garden and was afraid since he was naked. Then, the Lord questions Adam. Genesis 3 clarifies that the woman was deceived but God holds the man primary accountable for the sin. God directs his question to the man alone (Gen 3:9), even though his wife was with him.

3.6. The Woman's Consequences Relate to Her Two God-Given Roles

The woman was to help Adam in multiplying and subduing the earth (Gen 1:28; 2:18, 20). As an effect of sin, the woman will experience pain in childbearing and a breakdown in the relationship with her husband (3:16). Instead of being his helper, she will תְּשׁוּקָה ("desire") him. This is not a sexual desire. Rather, it is a desire to dominate and control. His response is not necessarily negative, but he will rule over her. Thus, the woman's consequences relate to her two God-given roles. Utilizing an intricately woven Hebrew prose narrative, Genesis 2:4–3:24 sets forth the account of the Creation and the Fall as events in which both characters, the man and the woman, have an interconnected part to play in the unfolding drama. A crystalized picture of Genesis 2:4–3:24 positions the article to summarize the textual tradition of Genesis in 1 Timothy 2:11–15 and how Second Temple Judaism and the NT interpreted or "painted" the picture.

4. An Interpretive Journey

The analysis of Genesis 2–3 fixed a clear picture of the issues, themes, and details of the Genesis text. Ancient interpreters investigated many themes in Genesis 2–3 but Paul's particular interest concerns the broader themes connected to the woman. Paul uses Genesis 2–3 as a recitation summary

highlighting comparable themes in the extra-biblical literature and his own interpretive tradition such as male and female creation, the deception of the woman, and the role of woman in childbearing.

4.1. Textual Comparison and Extra-Biblical Literature

The Pauline allusion closely follows the MT with one change. Differing from the LXX and the MT, the use of ἐξαπατάω ("deceived") points to the thoroughness of Eve's deception. The interpretive traditions generally preserve the sequence of the creation narrative. In Sirach and LAE/Apocalypse of Moses, the woman brings sin and death into the world. Jubilees and 1 Enoch presents a softer picture of Eve as a victim. Philo attributes the woman's deception to ontology. In 1 Timothy 2:13–15, Paul draws upon the creative sequence and Eve's deception.

4.2. New Testament

Despite carrying the broader themes, Paul differs from the extra-biblical literature in his interpretation of Genesis 2–3 in the NT. In Romans 5:12–15 and 2 Corinthians 11:3, the figures are used as a reference point for comparison. In Romans 5:12–15, Adam is used as a *synkrisis* or comparison between him and Christ as representative figures (Witherington III 2004, 141). As the "head" of the human race, Adam, not Eve, was charged with the ultimate responsibility for sin. Second Corinthians 11:3 further supports that not only women but also men can be deceived by the serpent's cunningness. In harmony with Paul's interpretive tradition, 1 Timothy 2:13–14 is not an exclusive use of the Fall to place the origin of sin on the woman nor to place Adam as "above" deception.

Paul's use of Genesis 2 in 1 Corinthians 11:8–9 is contained in an argument determining whether a woman should pray or prophesy with her head uncovered (1 Cor 11:5–6, 13). Paul uses the creative order, man from woman, to affirm that the man is the head (1 Cor 11:3). Since Paul qualifies a woman's authority or rights in verses 11–12 with a statement of mutual dependence, 1 Corinthians 11:8–9 is not an argument for the priority of man based on creation (Westfall 2016). Nevertheless, the order is significant for Paul as the order is significant in 1 Timothy. Paul uses the Genesis allusion to support men's and women's relationships in the gathered church (praying and prophesying were done in such a setting). The link between Paul's use of the Genesis passages in 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2 is authority in worship, who has authority, and how authority is designated when engaging in public worship.

Since Paul's appeal to Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13–14 falls within his interpretive tradition, a dominant query lingers. How do the exegetical conclusions of the Genesis text, the form of the allusion, and the interpretative traditions illumine the statement for a woman to learn in quietness, a prohibition to teach and exercise authority, and a reference to salvation in childbearing?

5. The Illuminating Allusion

5.1. Context

The interpreter's conclusions regarding the contextual matters of 1 Timothy direct the exegetical destination of the pericope. First Timothy 1:1 indicates its author with the phrase Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ("Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus"). Despite the increasing pressure of the

majority (Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972, 1–10; Harrison 1921; Houlden 1989), the pseudonymity of the PE has weaker support than its authenticity (Schnabel 2012, 403). As an amanuensis and the context account for the difference in style and vocabulary, the nature of the circumstances, namely the false teaching in Ephesus, accounts for the theological emphasis (Liefeld 2011, 26). Therefore, this study along with Guthrie (2015, 55), Knight III (1992, 4–6), and Yarbrough (2018, 86–90) affirms the internal testimony of the letter.[2] Paul wrote 1–2 Timothy and Titus in AD 62–68 likely with the aid of an amanuensis (Brannan 2016, Knight III 1992; Towner 2006).

Paul wrote to his spiritual son, Τιμόθεος ("Timothy"; 1 Tim 1:2), to correct false teaching in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2). Paul's instructions are situated amid the long personal history between Paul and Timothy (Rom 16:21; 1 Thess 3:2), but they are also intended for the household of God (1 Tim 3:1–13; 5:17–25). Paul charged Timothy to address the false teachers in Ephesus and to correct the improper praxis from their doctrine. Likely promoting a Gnosticizing form of Jewish Christianity, the central claim of the false teachers was the occurrence of the resurrection (Belleville 2009, 30; Kelly 1963, 12). One ethical implication of their doctrine was the prohibition of marriage (1 Tim 4:3). Women were avoiding marriage and childbirth, being idle, and spreading gossip (5:13–14). These key findings significantly direct the exegesis of 1 Timothy 2:11–15.

5.2. Discourse Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:11–15

A discourse analysis of 1 Timothy 2:11–15 reveals significant rhetorical features of the pericope. The asyndeton connection (i.e., connected without a conjunction) between the opening clause (v. 11) and the previous

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2 See Yarbrough (2018, 69–89) and Schnabel (2012, 403) for a comprehensive discussion of the authorship of the PE.

clause (vv. 8–10) moves the discussion from the generic γυναῖκας ("women"; vv. 9–10) to the more specific Γυνὴ ("woman"; v. 11; Levinsohn 2000, 119; Runge 2010, 20).

The sentence Γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μανθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ ("Let a woman learn in quietness with all submissiveness"; 1 Tim 2:11) contains a topical frame and a main clause emphasis. Placing Γυνὴ as the topical frame grabs the reader's attention and highlights the ensuing discussion centers on a woman (Runge 2010, 210). On the other hand, emphasis takes what was already the most important part of the clause, independent of position, and places that part of the clause in a prominent position. By violating the expected clausal order, the reader quickly realizes the emphasized element. The prepositional phrase, ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ ("with all submissiveness") is placed in its default position (Dik 1997, 363). Thus, the "dominant focal element" of Paul's instructions to Timothy is a woman in quietness (Runge 2010, 272).

Paul also places emphasis on a woman's quietness by framing the discussion with the inclusio ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ("in quietness"; 2:11a, 12b). Previous research (Barker 2009; Belleville 2009; Cooper 2018; Grenz and Kjesbo 1995; Holmes 2000; Hübner 2015; Köstenberger and Schreiner 2016; Moo 2005) thoroughly investigates 1 Timothy 2:12a in regards to a woman teaching and exercising authority over a man. In contrast, the point-counterpoint also establishes 1 Timothy 2:12b, ἀλλ᾽ εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ("rather, she must be quiet"), as the primary corrective and concern. Therefore, it is consistent with the emphasis of the text to make 2:12b a prominent solicitude.

The discourse reveals a parallel pattern. ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ("in quietness"; 1 Tim 2:11) is in the second emphasized position with ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ ("in all submission") following the main verb μανθανέτω ("learn"). Verse 12 exhibits a parallel structure with διδάσκειν ("to teach") and αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise

authority"). διδάσκειν ("to teach") is in the emphatic position before the main verb parallel to ἐν ἡσυχία ("in quietness") and αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise authority") occurs after the main verb parallel to ἐν πάση ὑποταγῇ ("in all submission"). This pattern might suggest that ἐν ἡσυχία ("in quietness) is the corrective to διδάσκειν ("to teach") and ἐν πάση ὑποταγῇ ("in all submission") is the corrective to αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise authority").

First Timothy 2:11–12 is the theme line of the pericope (as indicated by the hortatory expression) and advances the entire argument (Runge 2016, 211). Verses 13–15 are the support for the theme line, offering important background detail. γὰρ ("for") is a strengthening connective associated with support for the theme line information and the default strengthening connective. However, it is important to assert that by itself γὰρ ("for") does not indicate a specific logical relation (Runge 2016, 250). The structure of hortatory discourse enables the interpreter to decipher the function of γὰρ ("for").

Hortatory discourse typically has two parts (Runge 2016, 232). The first is the theme line exhortations and the second is the expository material serving as the ground or support for the exhortation. Expository material within hortatory discourse supports the illocution instead of illustrating or exemplifying it. Verses 13–15 form the basis or grounds for the prohibition of women teaching or exercising authority in verse 12 (Guthrie and Duvall 1998, 48).

Verse 11

Significantly, verse 11 begins with the singular Γυνὴ ("woman/wife"; BDAG 2000, 208–209). Dunn (2000, 800), Hugenberger (1992, 341–60), Long (2015, 7), Westfall (2016), and Winter (2003, 97–122) propose that γυνὴ refers to a wife because of the childbearing imagery and first-century

context. However, in other Pauline writings where γυνὴ and ἀνδρός occur without an article or possessive pronouns, contextual matters determine the meaning (Rom 7:2, 1 Cor 7:1–2, 10–14; 11:2–15). Moreover, unless a noun is modified by a possessive pronoun or at least an article, possession is "almost surely not implied" (Wallace 2000, 215). If Paul was confining his prohibition in verse 12 to wives, he would likely supply the definite article or possessive pronoun with ἀνδρός ("husband") which would render "over her [or the] husband" (Moo 2005).

The third person imperative μανθανέτω ("learn"; 1 Tim 2:11) engages Timothy's volition (Levinsohn 2008, 82) and the present tense places a continual requirement on him to let a woman learn (Wallace 2000, 524). A woman should learn in a disposition of ἡσυχία ("quietness"; 1 Tim 1:11) not in gossip as the Ephesian women are characterized in 2 Timothy 5:13. ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ ("with full submission"; 1 Tim 2:11) is an attendant circumstance/accompaniment to the manner of quietness (Harris 2012, 120). ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ ("with all submissiveness") represents being in the state of submissiveness or subordination as opposed to the controller (BDAG 2000, 1042).

Verse 12

Having instructed Timothy to let a woman learn (1 Tim 2:11), a prohibition is given with the present tense ἐπιτρέπω ("I do not permit"). Glahn (2015, 462; cf. Gloer 2010, 142–143; Peppiatt 2019, 154) argues that the present tense carries a progressive action in English and should render the translation, "I am not allowing" (cf. 1 Cor 7:25). Throughout 1 Timothy, Paul is παρακαλέω ("urging"; 1:3; 2:1), and βούλομαι ("desiring"; 2:8) Timothy to action. Eleven of the first person singular active verbs in Paul's voice involve instructional language (Reed 1993, 107). ἐπιτρέπω ("permit/allow") occurs in a similar pattern in 1 Corinthians 14:34. The pattern is οὐ + ἐπιτρέπω + infinitive.

In 1 Corinthians 14:34, the verb ἐπιτρέπω is not expressing Paul's personal opinion, but the conduct of women in the church gathering, οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτρέπεται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν ("For they [women] are not allowed to speak"). The only difference in 1 Timothy 2:12 is the indicative verb is in the first person. The personal nature of the letter also accounts for the first person voice.

Towner (2006, 190) and Winter (2003, 204) argue certain "wealthy women" were embracing and promulgating a "heretical teaching" (Towner 2006, 200). The prohibition is not a general prohibition but specific to this historical and social situation. First Timothy is a response to women being led astray into apostasy and involved in false teaching (Witherington III 1990, 196). The verbal aspect of ἐπιτρέπω ("I do not permit") clarifies the historical situation. Exhortations done once or with immediate effect are encoded with the perfective aspects ("aorists"; Levinsohn 2008, 81). If Paul was addressing Timothy to command a certain group of women in the church to stop teaching heresy, the imperfective would have been appropriate. The present aspect of ἐπιτρέπω supports the general direction of the prohibition. [3]

As stated, Paul's exact prohibition lies in the two infinitives διδάσκειν ("to teach") and αὐθεντέω ("to exercise authority"; 1 Tim 2:12). Precisely defining αὐθεντέω remains challenging because it occurs neither in the Greek NT nor in the LXX and is rarely used in Greek literature. The general consensus (BDAG 2000; Belleville 2019; Hübner 2015; L&N 1989; LSJ 1996; Westfall 2016; Wolters 2016, 63) is that αὐθεντέω relates to authority but whether αὐθεντέω denotes a pejorative or an ingressive connotation remains disputed.

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[3] Additionally, the role of women in the Ephesian Hersey elsewhere in the PE is limited to their roles as victims and not teachers (2 Tim 3:6–7; Bloomberg 1996).

Westfall's (2014) thorough linguistic and lexicographical study determines with near certainty that αὐθεντέω carries a "negative" or "pejorative" sense in 1 Timothy 2:12 (Hübner 2015, 21). Despite numerous methodologies, Westfall fundamentally assumes that αὐθεντέω has a single basic semantic concept accounting for all its diachronic usages (145–146). While fundamentally valid, it is a methodological error to unwarrantedly or prematurely restrict the semantic field of a word (Carson 1996, 60). Therefore, it may be faulty to assume that the meaning of αὐθεντέω (and its derivatives) is understood in the light of all diachronic usages to conclude the meaning of the verb αὐθεντέω.

αὐθεντέω's cognate noun, αὐθέντης, is used in Greek literature in two distinct ways (Wolters 2016, 68). The two distinct usages may suggest the word has two etymologies. αὐθέντης is used in the elevated language of classical Attic literature (fifth and fourth centuries BC) and has the specific meaning of "kin-murder" or someone guilty of killing their flesh and blood (e.g., Wisd. of Sol. 12:6; Josephus 1987, 1.582; 2.240 Eumenides 1926, 42). Besides one debated exception, αὐθέντης occurs in Greek literature for the first time in the first century BC and means not "murderer" but "master" (e.g., Euripides's 1913, 442; Ptolemy 1940, 15.1.15, 15.1.31, 15.1.32, 15.6.141; 24.3.69, 24.4.87; Clement of Alexandria 1991, 2.8.38.3). This would suggest that αὐθέντης/"murderer" and αὐθέντης/"master" are built on different etymologies (Wolters 2016). Moulton further notes that the curious meaning of "murder" in classical writers comes from an entirely different word, derived from αὐτο-θέντης. If αὐθεντέω is derived from a noun with two distinct etymologies, then, its two usages should remain distinct.

The construction διδάσκειν … οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ("to teach … or exercise authority"; 1 Tim 2:12) also informs the meaning of αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise

authority"). Köstenberger's (2016, 135–145) detailed research demonstrates that οὐδὲ ("or") functions either to bring two negative or positive concepts together. Belleville (2019, 334) elucidates a flaw in Köstenberger's (2016, 135–145) conclusion. Because διδάσκειν ("to teach") and αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise authority") are infinitives (verbal nouns), an examination of correlative constructions must include nouns since syntactically substantival and verbal adjectives can function as nouns. However, Köstenberger's (2016, 135–145) research withstands scrutiny. He examines the exact infinitive construction of 1 Timothy 2:12: "(1) negated finite verb + (2) infinitive + (3) οὐδὲ + infinitive, and if available + ἀλλ' + infinitive." Any two infinitives joined by οὐδὲ represent either two negative or two positive concepts. Thus, Belleville's (2019, 334) research is not as analogous to the situation found in 1 Timothy 2:12 and is therefore not as strong as Köstenberger's (2016, 135–145) research. Since teaching is a non-domineering and generally positive activity in the PE (1 Tim 3:2; 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2; 2:24; Tit 2:1), αὐθεντεῖν follows suit.[4]

διδάσκειν ("to teach") and αὐθεντεῖν ("to exercise authority") are both related and yet distinct. The functions are related because the teaching Paul envisions is related to exercising authority in an ecclesial context (Köstenberger 2016, 150). Teaching would include the exercise of authority. Teaching is "irretrievably" intertwined with the role of elder or pastor (Carson 1996, 95). The corrective to a woman teaching or exercising authority is her being ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ ("in quietness"; Campbell 2015, 180; Heckert 1996, 23; Runge 2010, 92–93). Paul then draws upon Genesis 2–3 to support his argument.

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4 The PE mentions false teaching but the fact that the teaching is "false" does not necessitate a negative connotation to διδάσκειν ("teaching") analogous to αὐθεντεῖν. The act of teaching in and of itself conveys neutral connotations with the teaching either aligning or conflicting one's own subjective beliefs, values, and/or doctrines.

Verse 13–14

Inferring from the preceding discussion on discourse analysis, γάρ ("for") does not illustrate but signals the causal relationship between the two sentences. Paul's first allusion to Genesis 2–3 begins with the statement, Ἀδὰμ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη ("Adam was created first"; 1 Tim 2:13). "First is best" was a frequent rabbinic argument (Exod. Rob 21:6; cf. Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972, 47). The context of Genesis 2 gleaned a different picture. The narrative highlights last is "best" in that only with the creation of Eve did God see that it was "very good" (1:31; cf. 2:18). Genesis 2 crowns Eve as the pinnacle of the creation narrative as the majority of time is devoted to her (Gen 2:18–23).

Additionally, Paul uses the indicative verb form ἠπατήθη ("deceived"; 1 Tim 2:13) for Adam but uses the participle ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ("deceived") to describe Eve's situation (2:14). The choice to use an alternative verbal form conveys tremendous significance to the author's meaning (Runge 2008). ἐξαπατηθεῖσα functions as a nominative circumstantial frame [NCF]. The use of an NCF "backgrounds" the action concerning the main verb of the clause in order to ensure that the main action receives primary attention. The NCF ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ("deceived") reflects the writer's decision to prioritize the action of the main verb γέγονεν ("became"; Buth 2016, 277–278). The use of the participle effectively downgrades the importance of Eve's deception compared to her resulting state. The sentence has two main actions: Adam was not deceived and Eve's entry into a new state.

The passive voice of ἠπατήθη ("was deceived"; 1 Tim 2:14) and ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ("was deceived") is used with an unexpressed agent (Wallace 2000, 435–436). Genesis 3:1–5 clarifies that the agent of deception was the crafty נָחָשׁ ("serpent"; 3:1). γέγονεν ("became"; 1 Tim 2:14) is specifically used with the preposition ἐν ("in") to indicate a state of being (BDAG 2000, 198).

Eve became a sinner. Various inferences have been drawn from verses 13–14 to reconcile the statement that Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived. Westfall (2016, 107; cf. Belleville 2009, 55; Towner 2006, 235) concludes the reference to Eve's deception is possibly countering some gnostic ideas that considered women the "favored instrument of revelation" (Belleville 2009, 55). Grenz and Kjesbo (1995, 138), Keener (1992, 116), and Westfall (2016, 124) find similarity between the woman's perspective and the Gentiles in Romans 4:15. Since the command was not given directly to Eve, she was confused and deceived. Zevit (2013, 211) builds on this idea and notes the woman is not implicated in wrongdoing, unlike the serpent and Adam. After a detailed analysis of Genesis, Westfall's (2016, 124) and Zevit's (2013, 211) conclusions do not stand. Eve knew God's command (Gen 3:1–5).

Moreover, such an argument does not support the idea that women were prohibited from teaching because they were false teachers or uneducated (Guthrie 1990, 91). Schreiner (2016, 216) logically notes that if Eve was disadvantaged because she received the command second hand, then Adam muddled the commandment. If Adam was the one who misrepresented God's command, then a prohibition against a woman teaching in 1 Timothy 2:11–15 does not coincide with the historical context.

Schreiner (2016; cf Moo 1980, 62–83) argues that 1 Timothy 2:14 demonstrates the negative consequences that occurred when Eve usurped Adam's role as the spiritual leader and failed to respect her functional subordination to Adam. However, Eve was not usurping the role of the man in the Fall but the command of the Lord God. Yarbrough (2018, 184) makes the most compelling argument by suggesting that Paul's key point in 1 Timothy 2:14 is chronological. Adam was not the first to fall through deception, but rather Eve. The discourse of verse 14 implies a "first." Adam was created first and Adam was not deceived first.

The more natural reading of the text supplements the agent of the deception instead of the chronology. Adam was not deceived "by the serpent" (1 Tim 2:14; Gen 3:12) but the woman was deceived "by the serpent" (1 Tim 2:14; Gen 3:12). First Timothy 2:13–14 highlights Adam and Eve because of Paul's application to a man and a woman, but the context of the Genesis narrative substantiates this interpretation. Eve was the one who was deceived first, but she was the one who was deceived by the serpent. Eve then gave the fruit to her husband. Chronology is only relevant since the serpent gave the fruit to Eve.

If the devil's tactic at the beginning was to target the woman (Gen 3:1), then Paul does not want a repeat in Ephesus. Satan went through the woman to get to the man and trap them all in sin. That was the paradigm. The serpent targets the woman and in doing so overturns God's design: man, woman, snake (Gen 3:9–13). The result was sin. The false teachers, who were known as deceivers (2 Tim 3:13; cf. Eph 4:14–16), were doing the same thing. They were deceiving and gaining control over women who were burdened down by sins (2 Tim 3:6). By abandoning their God-given roles, widows were giving the enemy an opportunity for slander (1 Tim 5:14), and some had already turned to follow in the way of Satan (v. 15). The Genesis temptation also reminds the readers that while Eve was the one who sinned, God held Adam responsible (Gen 3:9, 17–19). In the same way, if the women lead the whole congregation into doctrinal error, God still sees the man as the one responsible for spiritual leadership.

Verse 15

Paul concludes the pericope with a statement regarding salvation through childbearing (1 Tim 2:15). The sentence functions bilaterally. First, it completes the story of Eve, the woman who was left as a sinner in 2:14. Paul

does not leave the woman in transgression but echoes back to the Genesis promise of a serpent crusher (3:15). He retells her story and states that she will be saved through childbearing despite her curse (3:16). Second, it includes the Ephesian woman in this promise. The false teaching in Ephesus encouraged a tendency in the women to refrain from marriage and childbearing. Although women are not permitted the task of teaching and exercising authority, Paul affirms that the Ephesian women will still be saved on the final day through the role of mothering if they continue in faith, love, and holiness with self-control.

The creation norm of Genesis in 1 Timothy 2:13–14 is not because of its presence in the text (at times, Genesis may be used not to present a creational norm) but because of the way Paul uses Genesis in 1 Timothy 2:13–14. First, he uses Genesis to establish the creation of Adam in Genesis 2 independent of the Fall and then the events that led to the Fall. Thus, the content, not the presence of Genesis, establishes the instructions as normative.

6. Implications for the Global South and Beyond

The transcultural and diachronic nature of Paul's illocution presents anthropological and ecclesiological implications which flow into counter-cultural praxis. Theologically, Paul's view of men and women coincides with the Creation account in Genesis 2–3. Genesis 2 portrays male and female relating in differentiation and unity (Lee-Barnewall 2023, 675). Eschatology does not supersede but transforms gender relationships in the ecclesial community.

With a view of Pauline anthropology and ecclesiology, the study did not support women preaching because of the definition of teaching in the

NT as an authoritative, doctrinal instruction consisting of the apostle's teaching or the OT, the definition of prophecy as a spontaneous speech which was weighed in the assembly (a process where women were to remain silent similar to 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Cor 14:34–35), and the definition of modern preaching as authoritative communication distinct from other Word-based ministries. Paul's use of Genesis (1 Tim 2:13–14) affirms that categories of consistency and experience are not his concern but rather content and context. Consequently, women are not restricted from teaching in para-church organizations, particularly the seminary because the ecclesial structure and authority are restricted to the church and the home as evidenced in Paul's use of Adam and Eve.

While seeking to return to the created and eschatological ordered good, some consciously or unconsciously adopt the cultural narrative that frames the text in terms of equality, subordination, and justice. Emphasizing feelings and power dynamics, postmodernism leaves the reader second-guessing the truth of 1 Timothy 2:11–15. Absolute negative freedom frames Paul's instructions as infringing upon personal rights and freedom. Feminism considers 1 Timothy as a patriarchal social construct squashing the equality of men and women. However, when viewed from a biblical worldview, 1 Timothy encapsulates the goodness of the created order, freedom in living under God's word, and the flourishing of men and women in the church.

As the epicenter of Christianity, the above conclusions are increasingly relevant to the church in the Global South. Women in the church are empowered to learn and equipped to serve (1 Tim 2:11–15). Because African Christian women are the foci shaping the church but also surrounded by false teaching, their theological education is not negotiable. A unique way to encourage learning, which addresses the challenges

women face, is online theological education. Where women have teaching and leadership skills, context and content should guide their ministries. As the church in the Global South, primarily composed of women, continues to shape Christianity, may its women theologize, worship, and serve in line with the will of their Creator. As humanity, created male and female, relate to one another in the church, they image God. That is the invitation. That is the mystery. And somehow, that is the glory.

7. Conclusion

The study entered a highly debated subject in the academy and the church, the role of women in 1 Timothy 2:11–15. The literature review highlighted the need to address the presence of Adam and Eve in the text and the difference they make in application. While historical reconstruction and linguistics can be debated, the syntax of a text brings greater evidence to the discussion. First Timothy 2:13–14 relies on a creational pattern not because of its presence in the text (at times, Genesis may be used not to present a creational norm) but because of the way Paul uses Genesis in 1 Timothy 2:13–14. He uses Genesis to establish the creation of Adam in Genesis 2 independent of the Fall and then the events that led to the Fall. Thus, the content, not the presence of Genesis, establishes the instructions as normative. By implication, women are encouraged in theological education but the 1 Timothy 2:11–15 illocution precludes women from eldership and key teaching roles in the ecclesia.

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Ethnicity And Urban Christian Mission: A Study Of The Meridian And West Volta Presbyteries Of The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

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Abstract

This thesis examined the urban mission praxes and the mono-ethnic orientation (Ewe culture) of the Meridian and West Volta Presbyteries of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana (EPCG). The 175 year old mainline church has a well-designed vision and mission statements to reach out to others as an agent of the Great Commission. However, it has been unable to serve the needs of a heterogeneous population, leading to its branding as a mono-ethnic Church.

Applying Osmer's model (2008), the study findings showed that God's purpose of the mission is biblically based (Jeremiah 29:4-7; Acts 10, 11). Mission in a multi-ethnic urban space should embody the ideal aim of reaching out to all. The thesis proposes the adoption of organizational change and multicultural Christian witness as a missional strategy. This is because God's call to mission and the cross of Christ include accepting the diversity of people, which is the reality in this globalizing world.

1. Introduction

The dominant Ewe ethnic identity of the EPCG congregations in the multi-ethnic urban centres of Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions in Ghana has been the focus for this thesis. The thesis explored the relationship between ethnicity and urbanization, on the one hand, and Christian mission, on the other.

The EPCG originated from the Volta Region (mainly inhabited by Ewes and a few non-Ewe speakers) in the Trans-Volta Togoland (TVT), now part of the southeastern part of Ghana. It was established by the German missionaries whose headquarters was based in Bremen, Germany; hence, it is best known in Ghana under the name, Bremen Mission (Debrunner 1967, 111). The German missionaries could not communicate effectively in English, and though there were many dialects in the region, they consciously developed the Ewe language for mission instruction. This made it a mainly mono-ethnic church; whether home or away, it has continued to be steeped in Ewe culture in terms of liturgy, language and music in worship.

The strong ethnic sensitivity that permeates the EPCG in Ghana may be largely attributed to the varied colonial political and religious

administration of the TVT. The political rivalry in the1850s and 1860s (Germany, England and France scrambling for the Ewe land) and the civil wars (Ashanti in 1872–1874) affected the missionary activities and impacted the EPCG. Atakro (2008:94) states that the German missionaries were deported during WWI and the Scottish mission took over the Ewe church administration and instigated their self-governance. The missionaries, between the periods 1847–1919, trained the indigenous Ewe leaders. Subsequently, though unintended, EPCG expanded the mission activities into other urban areas including the Accra-Tema urban area after the migration of its members due to socio-economic factors. Ewes are among the over 50 ethnic groups in Ghana, such as the Akan, Ga, Dagomba, Frafra, Ga Adangme which are now found in the urban areas. Apart from Akan (39.7%) and Ga-Adangme (27.4%), Ewes formed the third largest (20.1%) of the ethnic population of 3,849,837 in Greater Accra as noted in the 2010 Population Census (Ghana Statistical Service 2012, 31).

The study showed that some pioneer socio-economic migrants from Ewe land who were EPCG members fellowshipped with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions. They later seceded due to their dissatisfaction with the PCG regarding the limited usage of the Ewe language during church services. Therefore, they began to explore having the EPCG established in urban spaces to cater largely or solely to the ecclesiastical needs of Ewes. EPCG Amakom, in Kumasi, was established in 1944 in the Ashanti Region, and the Accra New Town EPCG in 1955 with the latter expanding to seventeen congregations in the Greater Accra Region by the late 1960s. In 2014, the Accra–Tema Metropolis was subdivided into the West Volta Presbytery (WVP) and Meridian Presbyteries (MP), which comprised 52 and 56 congregations respectively.

Members of the newly established EPCG (first generation) in the urban areas mostly have had a previous relationship with the Church by circumstance of birth and family identity in the Volta Region. However, a few others were also converted to the Church because of their ethnic orientation. The leadership of the EPCG managed its urban mission with their Ewe cultural identity as a comfortable means of worship as the church crossed cultural borders. The EPCG has a vision "to be a dynamic agent of God, leading in the Great Commission to bring light where there is darkness and transform our world into the likeness of Christ, and be self-sustaining." The mission of the EPCG is also "to propagate the Gospel holistically by empowering our members Spiritually, Materially and Socio-Culturally, to be effective agents of the Great Commission." However, it seems the practices of members do not align with the vision and mission of the EPCG which propounds the Great Commission to all. The question is, should a church reflect and commit to the ethnically diverse population in which it is located?

The main problem undergirding this research is that the mono-ethnic composition of the EPCG has affected its mission and expansion. The EPCG, in its urban mission, has limited appeal to other ethnic groups and this has impacted the attainment of their vision and mission in the pluralistic urban space. Urbanization has transformed the dynamics of the Christian mission. The main research question is: How can EPCG with its closed ethnic identity reach out in a multi-ethnic urban context, in response to the Biblical mission mandate?

The study analyzes this problem, by applying Osmer's theory and vigorously investigates the urban mission praxes of the EPCG, explores the biblical reflection and postulates how to reach out to all segments of the urban space to fulfil the missional mandate of the Great Commission.

It further examines the implications of the concepts of mission and urbanization, considering the Ewe ethnic identity of the EPCG, and the prospect of building an all-inclusive church.

2. Methodology

The research employs various methods and approaches from Social Science and Practical Theology. Richard Osmer's (2008) model of theological reflection, which has four steps, was adopted as the theoretical framework. Swinton and Mowat (2016, xiii) state that social science has offered Practical Theology the necessary access to the nature of the human mind, human society and culture, the broader dimension of church life and implications of politics and social theory for our understanding of the working creation.

Fieldwork was conducted in the last quarter of 2020 in the WVP and MP in the Greater Accra Region, and Amakom EP Church in the Ashanti Region. The purposive sampling method was applied in selecting the participants (Pastors, Catechists, Youth, Women and Men Fellowships) for the research, as they are best placed to help answer the research questions. This helped gather "rich information" (Patton 2002, 230) because the participants are responsible for managing and implementing mission activities in the congregations. In the first instance, interviews were conducted with district pastors, catechists and Presbyters from the congregations in Accra-Tema in the MP and WVP, using a structured interview guide. Further, focus group discussions of five participants were used to obtain additional information from the above locations. The snowball technique was used in selecting the participants for this activity.

In all, 94 respondents participated in the study. 37 interviews were conducted in WVP, MP and Amakom EPCG, Ashanti Region. Among these were 34 interviews in congregations in the Greater Accra Region using structured interviews, with three semi-structured interviews in Amakom. Eleven focus group discussions were held involving 57 respondents. Ten of the focus group discussions involved fifty participants in the Greater Accra Region. Subsequently, one focus group discussion of seven participants was conducted in Amakom EPCG.

The thesis comprises eight chapters. Chapter 1 covers the context, methodology, and theoretical framework and Chapter 2 looks at the literature review. The historical development of the EPCG and the socio-economic setting of the Greater Accra Region was discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 discusses the fieldwork and research findings; Chapter 5 ascertains the rationale for EPCG's urban mission and Chapter 6 is based on theological reflection on urban missions. Mission strategies were discussed in Chapter 7, and Chapter 8 dealt with the conclusion and recommendations.

3. Summary of Literature Review

The study discussed the concepts of ethnicity, urbanisation, mission and mission-related theories such as concepts of "Missio Dei" (God's mission), and "koinonia" (fellowship), to ascertain the relationships and implications for missional activities. The available secondary materials in the study area were discussed.

Ethnicity is describing the make-up, or qualities of a group of people, most especially how they see themselves as one people and show loyalty to their membership. It has to do with a social organization which might

have its own religion, homeland and language in comparison with other groups (Tharcisse Gatwa 2005, 15). It appears that the EPCG is an ethnic church as it carries within itself the germ of nativism due to ministering to a majority who are Ewes and share the knowledge of a common cultural identity.

There is linguistic diversity in the urban space with many ethnic groups occupying the common geographical space of the Greater Accra Region. While there is a perception that urbanization could deepen primordial feelings of ethnicity, research shows that inter-ethnic integration in the urban area occurs. In Ghana, an urban settlement is officially defined as any settlement with a population of 5,000 or more. According to the 2010 census, Ghana is becoming increasingly urbanised because of rural-urban migration, natural population increase in towns and cities, and the reclassification of rural jurisdictions to urban once they surpass the threshold populations of 5,000 (GSS 2013; World Bank, 2014) in (George Owusu and Martin Oteng-Ababio 2014, 314–315).

Sarfo (2014) has explained that immigration increases the heterogeneity of urban populations, and it invariably dilutes the indigenous culture, and impacts ethnic groups who migrate to the urban space. Zhijun (2004, 14–15) has noted that the development of spiritual life is a consequence of urbanization; therefore, any discussion of urbanization must consider religion, especially where the factors that create stability in the rural areas are weakened in the urban space (Zhijun 2004, 14–15). There is no doubt that the "Homogeneous-Unit-Principle" (HUP), adopted by the EPCG to form a mono-cultural church has worked up to a point for the establishment of EPCG in the Accra-Tema urban area. However, as the urban area continues to become more heterogeneous and multicultural, the approach needs to be revised. According to Bakke and Hart (1987, 138),

this common perception of homogeneity is incompatible with biblical teaching, and they offer practical ideas (close interaction with other ethnic groups) for developing a multicultural Christian witness. The purpose of God in mission must be informed by strategic planning theory from the social sciences. Aboagye-Mensah (1993, 132), in his view of promoting multi-ethnic unity in the church, states that God expects the church to be where all ethnic groups meet and accept each other with equal dignity. He, therefore, charges all African churches to take the scriptural text in Ephesians 2:11–18 and Paul's theology of multi-ethnic witnessing more seriously. Both Gentiles and Jews have been reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ who is the Lord for all.

As a concept, missions are founded on scripture, which presupposes a sender, or a person(s) sent for an assignment through the Great Commission. Le Grys (1998, x) says the mission is any activity which presents to those outside the community of believers the group's convictions, values and practices, intending to persuade them to accept these values as their own. Amaladoss (1994, 65), is also of the view that mission refers to the task for which the missionary is sent and the territory where he/she is sent. It further refers to the sending process and indicates a global movement. In theological terms, mission might mean the propagation of the faith to non-Christians (Bosch 1991; Domeris and Smith 2014). Johnstone (2000) and Barth (2009) give further meaning to the Great Commission by explaining it as evangelistic, teaching and church-planting activities.

Christian mission, according to Adadevoh (2011, 163), comes from the Great Commission and is essential for bringing the Good News to people in every nation. He sees mission as making disciples of all nations to mean not only the discipling of individuals but also of communities to ensure they build themselves on godly principles, honoring Christ. Oosthuizen

(1968, 222) claims that the message of Christ is supranational and supra-cultural because the theme of the message is that God in Christ reconciles the world to himself. Evangelization refers to the carrying forth of the Good News to every sector of humanity so that by its strength it may enter into the hearts of men and renew the human race (Amaladoss 1994, 65).

The need for creative urban ministry is more urgent now than before and the church cannot ignore the reality of heterogeneity in the city (Thomas 2004, 145). The core duty of every church is to work consciously for the 'reintegration' of communities. Taking a positive and national attitude toward the cultures.

4. Findings

4.1. Situational Context

The first stage of Osmer's model is the descriptive-empirical task that addresses the question, "what is going on?" The core of this thesis is that the EPCG should transform its urban mission to host communities from an Ewe mono-ethnic mould to a more multi-ethnic orientation due to its presence in a multi-cultural cosmopolitan urban space.

During the research period as an insider observer of urban mission activities of the EPCG, I identified some challenges, such as logistics, lack of personnel, religious pluralism, finance and language barriers, and requested from the respondents if they shared similar views. Their responses partially confirmed my assumptions, as they stated language barrier, finance and logistics as some of the prevailing challenges. The current situation of the urban mission is described below.

4.1.1. Mode of Worship

An interview session with a pastor to discover the uniqueness of EPCG indicated that "it is more of an ethnic-based church that communicates more in the indigenous Ewe language." This point was re-emphasized in that the EPCG appeals more to the conservative Ewe speakers who live or work in urban areas. Another respondent stated, "With the EPCG, our culture is very predominant in our worship. Our music and local gospel songs are unique to us." For instance, the use of Ewe language in church hymns, music, and dance, such as Agbadza, Kenka, Borborbor etc., in worship makes the church mono-cultural.

For instance, the Ewe language, like any other mother tongue; transports ideas in mission and gives expression in the form of symbols to our innermost feelings. However, in urban missions where society is multi-lingual, the mother tongue should be advocated with discretion. A WVP Synod report (Evangelical Presbyterian Church 2018, 53) from the South La EPCG congregation in the heart of a Ga community noted that "our inability to use Ga/Twi language during service to attract predominantly Ga speaking members of the community in which the church is located is impacting us negatively." The study noted that some work has started in promoting an all-inclusive mission because the EPCG church has translated EP hymns into Akan for the Akan-speaking worshippers, titled "Evangelika Presbyterian Asafo asore dwom nwama" and Bible readings are currently presented in Twi and English languages on Sundays. However, in most cases, the Church is seen as an avenue for the second-generation urban Christians to improve their proficiency in their mother tongue, and therefore are unwilling to promote other ethnic languages, not even the host local language.

4.1.2. Ethnicity

It was evident that the EPCG was practising the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP) theory, proposed by Donald McGavran and Wagner (1990) in its urban mission. The homogeneous unit of society is that group which has a people consciousness, and its members think of themselves as a separate ethnic group, tribe, caste, or class. He pointed out that "men and women like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers" (McGavran and Wagner 1990, x and 69). McGavran and Wagner (1990) are of the view that evangelization should be to homogenous populations. This was discussed to help explain the Christian mission approach adopted by the EPCG and to identify the strengths and challenges of the situation from the context of urban missions.

The study found that though there are missional challenges with the mono-ethnic nature of the EPCG, there are positive dimensions associated with it. The Ewe people enjoyed stability through the centralised control of the mission activities they managed right from their establishment in the host communities. Also, there is a sense of belonging and solidarity, social support or a safety net and cultural identity among the Ewes in the host cities of Accra-Tema and Kumasi in Ghana. In times of joblessness and economic hardships, the EPCG members benefitted from their social networks, building trust or sharing business ideas. As a mono-ethnic faith institution, they formed welfare associations - assisted in shelter and lodging, provided emotional support to each other, spiritual upliftment for nominal members, and avenues for social mobility due to the Ewe ethnic bonding.

According to Callahan (1990, 106 and 108), hitherto, people came in search of a church community they could call home and build relationships. They came longing for, yearning for, and hoping for a sense of roots, place of belonging, sharing and caring. The ethnic identity of EPCG no doubt provided a bastion in the urban space and an opportunity for take-off, and it has survived for over 60 years.

4.1.3. Pastoral Care

The EPCG has impacted the host urban communities in areas such as education, welfare, evangelisation and conversion; despite the urban mission limitations. The West Volta Synod Report (2018, 46, 69, 87) states that the youth groups periodically embark on home visits and counselling of backsliders to revive their acts of worship, wayside and dawn preaching exercises in the local communities in Accra to win souls for Christ. This is corroborated by Bakke and Hart (1987, 58) that, to revive the church, people tried means such as media, radio, print and blitzes of all kinds on television.

Other minor roles played included advocacy by making the voice of the people heard before policymakers in the state and ecological management (such as cleaning the environment and tree planting). It is noteworthy, that in the 2nd and 3rd General Assemblys, decisions were made to enact a policy for the members on climate change as a collaborative effort on the looming catastrophe affecting the world. Community health screening is also being implemented, as well as providing relief donations to health Centers such as Hope Setters Autism Centre in Tema Community 11, Pantang Psychiatric Hospital and Accra Psychiatric Hospital. The Christian Youth Builders (CYB), the youth group

of the EPCG makes annual blood donations to 37 Military and Korle-bu Teaching Hospitals. The Church also occasionally gives cash and kind support to Nsawam Prison.

4.1.4. Membership decline

Some church leaders admit that membership continues to dwindle within the central parts of the Greater Accra Region. A male Presbyter, mentioned during an interview, that the numbers of the congregations are reducing due to internal migration to new settlements in suburbs around Accra.

4.2. Rationale for Situational Context

In applying the second stage of Osmer's model of the interpretative task, the thesis addresses the question, "why is it going on?" It draws on theories from the arts and sciences to interpret reasons for the phenomenon, thereby providing an understanding of the situation. The empirical research findings on ethnicity and urban mission activities of the EPCG in the Accra-Tema and Amakom areas were interpreted. Based on the analysis of data drawn from leadership, change management and other management theories, the rationale for the situation of urban mission in the EPCG was discussed.

4.2.1. Unintended Mission

The Accra-Tema and Amakom areas were not originally planned mission fields for EPCG. This is based on a historical mission agreement between

the Basel and Bremen mission in the late 19th century, which requested the Bremen missionaries to remain east of the Volta. Additionally, the Ewe group found its own church to accommodate their Ewe Christians, to mitigate their displeasure at ethnocentric sentiments from the PCG membership. In an interview session with Gilbert Ansre, a retired minister, he added that the rationale for missions in these presbyteries initially aimed at self-enhancement and satisfaction of the ecclesiastical and socio-cultural needs of its members.

4.2.2. Maintaining Cultural Heritage

Most church leader respondents displayed conservative ideas pointing out that the status quo should be maintained and the EPCG should function within the mono-ethnic group. They stated that Ewe language usage during adult services should be continued to encourage young adults to hear and learn more of their mother tongue to sustain the Ewe language in the host community. The first-generation EPCG migrants maintained that they feel more comfortable using their mother tongue in their worship services, thus providing a basis for the current situation. It became clear that their cultural heritage and mission mandate were in conflict. One can hardly separate language from mission as shown by the investigations in the field. All attempts to openly embrace the call to be agents of the Great Commission were falling on deaf ears. This is not strange, as Yang (2012, 7) has noted that first-generation migrants (internal/international) are more likely to maintain their culture and preserve their traditions. For example, many take pride in wearing their traditional costumes and using their language. However, God's call to mission is a call into a community of faith and the local church leaders need to be more sensitive to the role God

would have them play in shepherding the potential missionaries in their congregations (Reeves 2004, 130–131).

The theologians; Newbigin (1994), Le Grys (1998); Ter Haar (1998); Shenk (2000), and Bosch (2009); among others, share their views on the mission concept of Missio Dei to mean God's mission. According to Newbigin (1994, 17), it is of greatest importance to recognize that the mission remains God's mission. Even Jesus speaks of his words and works as not his own, but those of his father. In his reflections on the biblical mission model from the New Testament perspective in "Landmark Essay in Mission and World Christianity," Bosch (2009, 13) claims God is the initiator of mission, and his will is what should be accomplished in missions. There is a church because there is a mission, not vice versa. As a human instrument, therefore, the church's mission is to plan and pray for the will of God to lead in missions. Participating in mission is participating in the movement of God's love towards people since God is a fountain of sending love to all people. The EPCG, therefore, needs to reach out to all.

4.2.3. Systematic Language Policy

When asked whether the EPCG needs a language policy, most of the respondents claimed that there was a need for a language policy. Since there was no consensus on whether a policy existed, it was necessary to ascertain if there was a need for one. The leaders provided several reasons to justify the need for a clear-cut language policy to guide urban missions. The respondents mentioned that the language policy should be based on one or two languages common to the mission field. A pastor mentioned, that "a language policy would enable EPCG to be more proactive and also to critique the policy and find acceptable ways of handling non-

Ewe speaking communities." In answering the question another Pastor stated, "Yes, there is a need for a language policy because it will ensure the evangelisation of more people and the growth of the indigenous community in which the EPCG is located and satisfy their needs." This is corroborated by Acts 2:8–11 where believers from different geographical locations could understand the message of God in their own languages.

Most of the respondents explained that the English language should be made mandatory in worship services and church meetings. To a very senior Reverend Minister the following was mentioned, "one of the means to achieve EPCG mission and vision statement is to adopt a multi-lingual policy, which is well documented, to reach out to other ethnic groups." According to him this will curtail the EPCG challenge of outsiders calling it a "self-contained" church, only operating with the Ewe people's worldview. One of the respondents wanted a more systematic and robust approach when he explained that "we need a language survey in our churches in Accra-Tema so that we can decide which additional one to adopt for our services." He further added that "the Church of Pentecost adopted the multi-lingual approach, and the impact is great and obvious. We can do the same." They also stated that the multi-lingual policy would guide the EPCG to attain the Great Commission mandate. According to them, to be able to propagate the Good News to others, one needs to adopt new skills, such as the language used to reach out to other ethnic groups. They explained that this approach was crucial and necessary for church growth and development. Even though there seemed to be extracts of language policies derived from the Synod's major decisions, they were not comprehensive, not well disseminated and not fully implemented, so most respondents were unaware of it and, therefore this contributed to the situation at hand.

4.2.4. Pastoral Recruitment

The method of pastoral recruitment also contributed to the situation at hand. This is because most ministerial candidates and catechist were largely selected from the Ewe ethnic group. An example was given of a non-Ewe speaking Minister who was rejected from ministerial training until he learnt the language.

4.2.5. Strategic Direction

Comparative analysis of three older congregations in Accra-Tema and Amakom indicated that though the congregations are aware of their mission and vision statements, there is no conscious attempt to implement the strategic plans of the EPCG at the time of this study. Their cultural heritage and strategic mandate are in conflict. The vision and mission seem to be a second priority to most of the Presbyters interviewed. There seems to be a disconnection between the strategic direction of the church in terms of the mission agenda and the route that the elders ascribe to. In other words, there is limited understanding of the mission mandate of all-inclusiveness, even though the mission and vision point to the Great Commission for all. The leadership of the congregations were more interested in sustaining their ethnic identity (Ewe) and maintaining the continuity of their cultural heritage.

The respondents were making efforts to penetrate another cultural domain without appealing to the indigenes, but only to their own, to achieve the objective of evangelisation. They seem to be in a quandary as to how they can get other ethnic groups to join them and at the same time

does not lose their identity as a church and an ethnic group. The above reflects the rationale for the situation in which the EPCG finds itself.

4.3. Theological Reflection

The study applied the normative reflection task of Osmer's model, in an attempt to discern God's will for the existing situation, looking at "what ought to be going on," through prophetic discernment. This involved theological interpretation, ethical reflection and good practices of EPCG's urban mission. According to Gariboldi and Novotny (1987, 3 and 9), theological reflection is a mode of pastoral theology which is the conscious effort to bring together all human resources in the study of God, aiming to align the formation of the Christian and the Christian relationship to humanity. Though the early church was mainly ethnic Jews, other Gentiles joined by the response of the Apostles through the Holy Spirit's empowerment. Instances of multi-ethnic approach in the book of Acts were discussed: Peter in defence of preaching to the Gentiles (11:18–24), Paul's preaching to the non-Jews (21:17–26), and as stated instructively in Acts 11:20; "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."

According to Reeves (2004, 115), the Lukan narrative of the converted Ethiopian eunuch and the first converted Gentile, Cornelius challenge the early church to move beyond ethnic boundaries. God would have envisaged the EPCG to be functional in its urban mission as believers with well thought out plans to serve other ethnic groups by creating opportunities for them to worship and fellowship in their indigenous culture. This will be consistent with how the Apostles came

to an understanding to reach out to the non-Jews. It was evident from the biblical perspective that mission, whether home or away from home of origin, should embody the ideal aim of reaching out to all. There should be no barriers to membership based on racial, linguistic, social, educational or economic considerations. The EPCG must be transformative, to reflect the will of God and the needs of the people in the urban space.

4.4. Response to Situational Context

In developing a mission strategy, faith institutions must undergo some processes. The final stage therefore answers the question, 'how might we respond?' to the situation at hand. Certain considerations provide the plan of action for the process of change, using relevant strategies which are the practical working out of the will of God within a cultural context. Missionary strategy should be characterized by bible-centeredness, efficiency and relevance (McGavran 1970, 15), with Biblical-critiqued strategies and well-defined goals (Rheenen 1996, 140).

The research draws on the field of leadership and organizational change theories to inform strategic thinking about planning and implementation of appropriate responses. The following are recommended strategies and programmes that can be adopted to transform the EPCG into a multi-ethnic mould to contextualize the church in its multi-cultural environment.

5. Recommendations

The Accra-Tema and Amakom metropolises are diverse, multi-cultural or multi-ethnic cities in Ghana due to in-migrations, out-migrations and

trans-migrations of distinctive groups. The character of the churches in the cities are primarily increasingly demonstrating cultural heterogeneity in their life and works. To transform from the HUP and be heterogeneous would need a strong direction, focus and leadership drive. Urban churches must develop their thinking strategies about their multi-ethnic communities to effectively honour their Lord (Bakke and Hart 1987, 136). The recommendations, emulate partly the Antioch model (Biblical model of urban mission)—evangelisation through the lay leadership, every member a minister, care for new believers, witness to oneness in Christ, compassion for the urban poor, balanced leadership, elimination of racial and ethnic barriers and mission for others (Thomas 2004, 146–153). The research recommended Lewin's (1947) 3-step model—unfreeze, move, refreeze. This organizational change approach redirects, a continuous process of change to a multi-ethnic mould by promoting effective communication and empowering all members using the vision, mission and strategy to embrace and sustain new ways of urban mission.

I agree with Yang (2012, 123) that "becoming a multi-ethnic church requires flexibility and openness to growth, change and ongoing learning". The study subscribed to the four critical questions posed by Rosado (2006) in multi-ethnic Christian witnessing; the Where Question—Vision: "Where are we headed? The What Question — Values: 'What are we becoming?" the Why Question—Mission: "Why do we exist?" and the How Question—Programmes/Strategies: "How do we get there?" The EPCG, therefore, needs to re-orient itself to its vision, develop appropriate values that reflect the ethics and behaviors acceptable for such a transformational process, address the raison d'être of the EPCG, taking cognizance of the multi-ethnic urban space and proposing diversity of strategies/programs to meet the desired outcomes. The study

then suggested a comprehensive strategy involving evangelism (reaching urbanites with the gospel), discipleship (helping converts grow in Christ), incorporation (integrating disciples into new churches), and social action (attention to human needs). The key is for the EPCG to be mindful that the church is intentionally seeking to be open to others, welcome, and meet the gospel's call to diversity. It suggested among other programs and activities such as:

i. Holy Spirit empowerment and dependence on God: Understanding the concept of Missio Dei (God's mission), not what members desire. The EPCG must respond by seeking the face of God for the Holy Spirit's direction as to where to begin and how to achieve the ideal in urban mission.

ii. Improve financial and logistical support: Members should show their commitment to achieving Christian mission activities.

iii. Attitudinal change: EPCG needs to end some cultural practices in their urban mission. The Clergy, Catechists, Presbyters, group leaders, and general membership need to appreciate the transition from a mono to a multi-ethnic mould so that they do not consciously or inadvertently undermine the successful implementation of the change process.

iv. Support services: The EPCG must look beyond itself and share its faith with other ethnic groups by providing continuous support services to achieve its mission (why we exist) and vision (where we want to be). Members must function intentionally as a community and family for the unreached through caring teams, house groups, cell groups and ministry to people in crisis and the elderly (Bakke and Hart 1987, 152).

v. Review of organizational structures and procedures: Organize church programmes around specialized ministries in

discipleship, evangelization and Bible study for growth. The church must use approaches such as Evangelistic pulpit figures, charismatic renewal movements, community language-based churches, relationship building or social connections (house congregations or cell groups), and task-oriented committees, among others. According to Hayes (2010, 213), these changes must be carefully planned and executed in a predetermined period.

vi. Training: Although the English language is ideal in some situations, individuals would prefer to hear the Word of God in their own languages. Leaders need to be trained to have additional local language skills (preferably Twi) to enable them to embrace more members needing salvation. Trained sign language teachers, brail teaching facilitators and teachers for special people should be employed to work in a well thought out and friendly environment to achieve the Great Commission.

vii. Mission for the vulnerable: The ministry of all-inclusiveness will not be achieved if the church denies fellowship to the vulnerable and physically challenged such as the deaf and dumb, visually impaired, and crippled, among others. There should be provision of suitable infrastructure for the physically challenged within congregations.

viii. Multi-lingual policy: This should be introduced in all congregations in the suburbanized communities to suit the urban context. This will illustrate the cross-cultural mission used by Paul in his mission to the Gentiles (Acts 15:12).

ix. Affirmative action: The recruitment of pastors/catechists should be from all ethnic persuasions, applying an affirmative action

approach, and they should be given equal opportunities to function in the church. The church's leadership must reflect the diverse local membership so that other ethnic groups are not marginalized and are motivated to remain in the fold.

The suggested programmes and approaches, if applied properly in the Accra-Tema and Amakom metropolis, would help the EPCG to achieve the mission and vision of the church, for inclusiveness in accordance with the purpose of God.

6. Conclusion

No congregation is a true colony of heaven on earth if it denies membership to a person because of racial, linguistic, social, educational or economic considerations (Shenk and Stutzman 1988, 138–139). It is apposite for a mission to establish homogeneous churches, but this must be seen as a process whereby the church may well transform into a heterogeneous mould to adapt to its urban situational setting. The EPCG needs to identify that the Great Commission, the cross of Christ and the triune God includes accepting the diversity of people. This is particularly significant in the twenty-first century globalizing world, where the reality of multi-cultural diversity is unquestionably one of the most crucial global issues.

The study proposes a future research agenda on urban missions in other communities including comparative studies of urban missions in mainline churches. A further study in the theology of all-inclusive missions and an investigation of other urban spaces to explore the

processes other mono-ethnic churches used to transform into multi-ethnic orientation would be worthwhile.

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