

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KUMASI

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY



**LEADERSHIP TRENDS IN CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN GHANA: A
REFLECTION ON ACTION FAITH CHAPEL AND INTERNATIONAL
CENTRAL GOSPEL CHURCH.**

**PROJECT WORK
(LONG ESSAY)**

**BY
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JULY, 2015.

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**A long essay submitted to Christian Service University College, in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Theology with
Administration.**

JULY, 2015.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Long Essay has been prepared by myself, that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree, that the work is a record of what has been done by myself, that all quotations have been distinguished by either quotation marks or indentation and all the sources of information have specifically been acknowledged by means of footnotes.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God for the grace He gave me to go through the four years successfully. Also, to my sweetheart Mary Pinkrah who has been inspiration to me all these years, to Bishop Samuel N. Agyei Mensah of blessed memory (the first Methodist bishop of Obuasi) who encouraged me to further my studies, not forgetting Apostle S.V. Ansah, former Director of Finance and Administration (GCCCI) who encouraged me when he heard of my intention to further my studies, again, to my associated pastor Rev. Eben Oteng Marfo and the leadership of the Kumasi GCCCI who saw to the running of the church whilst I was in school and finally to my children Francisca, Jude and Lois for their patience because for four years the attention I had for them was divided.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Leadership trends in Ghana have areas of both similarities and differences. The differences are seen in the different titles, positions and responsibilities assigned by leaders in the various churches. There are also differences in the systems of administration from one church to another. Leadership is important for any organization that desires to grow and achieve its purpose of existence. Scholars emphasize the importance of leadership in different ways. George Barna after spending 15 years in researching all facets of American life concludes, “Nothing is more important than leadership”.¹ John Maxwell also postulate that, “everything rises and falls on leadership”.² These statements mean that no church, ministry, organization, or group can be successful without effective leadership. George Barna defines a Christian leader as follow: a Christian leader is someone who is called by God to lead; leads with and through Christ-like character; demonstrate the functional competencies that permit effective leadership to take place.³ In this definition George Barna emphasizes that every Christian leader possesses three distinct but related qualities. These qualities together combine to make somebody a leader. That is the leader is called by God, possess Christ-like character, and also functional competencies or skills.⁴

¹George Barna, “Nothing is More Important than Leadership”, In George Barna (ed.) *Leaders on Leadership*, (Ventura: Regal Books, 1997), 17 – 18.

² John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1993), viii.

³Barna, “Nothing is More Important than Leadership”, 25.

⁴Barna, “Nothing is More Important than Leadership”, 24.

The importance of leadership in the church and society is demonstrated in many ways in recent times. Seminars are being organized all over Ghana and other places with the aim of developing effective leaders. An example of such seminars is the Pastors and church leader's conference organized by Bishop Dag Heward-Mills of the Light House Chapel International every year. Another demonstration is the introduction of leadership as a subject in many Bible schools, seminaries and theological institutions in the country not excluding Christian Service University College. The influx of Bible schools and Seminaries itself shows the current interest for developing quality leaders for the church. The influx of books on leadership on the market further proves the importance attached to the subject.

However, one key phenomenon that is current surfacing in Ghanaian Christianity with regards to leadership is how different leadership trend style is adopted by pastors especially those in the charismatic spectrum. Trends are regular ways that something is done.⁵ It is what is considered to be the norm. In the last decades, there have been discussions on leadership styles and positions adopted by charismatic church pastors in the country. These discussions on position and roles also brings into light administrative structure as a factor contributing much to leadership trends. According to Robert C. Worley, structure is the arrangements of persons and resources in time and space.⁶ He further argues that Structure affects the behavior of persons, groups, and the congregation. Therefore the nature of structure in congregations requires positive, attentive governance. Structure cannot be taken for granted. It affects the involvement of

⁵Collins English Dictionary, (n.p: Haper Collins Pub., 2002).

⁶ Robert C. Worley, *Gathering of Strangers: Understanding the Life of Your Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 50.

all members and church professionals. As the governing board makes decision about structures, it affects aspects of the congregation's life and the involvement of persons in it.

In charismatic churches, most of the leadership styles adopted is one that pictures the leader as an icon. These churches are often built around personalities who are known as Head pastors or General Overseers. Because of the way their followers adore and treat them they have become icons in society in which they found themselves. The large followers these mega church pastors enjoys makes them icons in society that leads to personality cult. Personality cult is a system in which a leader is able to convince and control a group of people through the sheer force of his or her personality and they are often portrayed as god-like figure. This issue of personality cult is having either positive or negative impact which the church as a whole has not realised; and the researcher wants to research into this to find out the positive and the negative effects of this leadership trends and how the church or the congregation as well as the person or the leader himself.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The charismatic movement has been growing very quickly and spreading fast across many continents, including Africa south of the Sahara. This growth is evident in many ways. First, charismatic churches and movements have an impressive physical presence in African cities. The neo-Pentecostal or charismatic churches are mostly distinguished from the classical Pentecostal churches and the independent churches by features such as their predominantly youth membership, their use of English language for worship

services etc.⁷ In practice the charismatic churches place or emphasize ‘every-member-ministry’, than of the other Pentecostals. For instance Ghanaian charismatics make ‘personal spiritual power for every believer’ the hallmark of their theology and pastoral endeavors.⁸

Despite the above distinctive characteristics of this movement, one other major feature of charismatic churches is the leadership trends. These churches are often driven by personalities. Mostly, these personalities mainly happen to be the founders, leaders or the general overseers. In most cases, the church is run according to their visions, and their own theological orientations and beliefs. This has made some of the leaders of these churches covet so much power and influence in their churches and sometimes even in the political arena. They have become icons upon which the church thrives.

However, this leadership trend adopted by some leaders of the charismatic churches has led to some of them building a personality cult around them. In such situations the leaders of these churches are seen as icons and in most cases everything that goes on in such denomination are directed and centered on them.

This is a serious problem that many scholars and writers have not set their attention on to investigate. The researcher therefore takes this as an issue of concern and investigate the effect it has on the church and the members as well.

⁷Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum 2002), 96.

⁸J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism Ghana*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), 12.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. What kinds of leadership style are adopted by charismatic churches today in Ghana?
- ii. To what extent does this leadership style affect the church and members?
- iii. Why some Christians put their trust in their leaders other than God?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the study

- i. To know the kinds of leadership style adopted by charismatic churches today in Ghana.
- ii. To assess the effect of these leadership style on the church and members as well.
- iii. To find out why some Christian put their trust in their leaders than in God.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

The study focuses on the leadership trends in charismatic churches in Ghana. Two churches are selected as case studies; Christian Action Faith Ministries (C.A.F.M.) International Central Gospel Church (I.C.G.C).

1.6 Research Methodology

Generally, this research work is a qualitative study. A qualitative study is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic discipline, traditionally in the social sciences, but also in religious and theological research. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding and information of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior.

1.6.1 Methods of data collection

This research work cannot be undertaken in a vacuum. The researcher therefore collected data from both primary and secondary sources. The researcher in gathering the data from the primary source employed personal interviews and purposive sampling technique.

1.6.1.1 Primary sources

The researcher used structured and unstructured interview. The personal interview includes having a personal interaction ‘one on one’ with a respondent. The interviews enabled the researcher and respondents to develop a personal friendship and rapport⁹ which also created a conducive environment for the researcher to meet the respondents face to face to elicit relevant pieces of primary information. Better still the researcher by this method interacted and sought further clarification to validate pieces of information already gathered. In such interviews, permissions were sought from the respondents to record relevant parts of the interview.

In addition, informal conversations, which in the context of this study took the form of unstructured interview, although was “time-consuming”¹⁰, made it convenient to access relevant information otherwise difficult to obtain, in a much more relaxed manner. In all the researcher interviewed 10 people.

1.6.1.2 Secondary sources

Looking at the focus and scope of the study, the researcher had to consult different secondary sources encompassing books, journals, articles et cetera relevant to this work.

⁹ Tom K. B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research*, (Ghana: Son Life Press and Services, 1999), 189.

¹⁰ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden: The Netherlands, African Christian Press, 2005), 5.

These are published materials of scholarly opinion. Data from the electronic media specifically the internet were also used.

1.6.2 Samples and Sampling Procedure/Techniques

In this study, the researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to select his respondents. In his work, *Research Methods Techniques of Social Research*, Tom K.B. Kumekpor states that in purposive sampling, “the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed but they are typical or they exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study.”¹¹ The categories of people that were interviewed included church members and pastors.

These respondents were selected on the basis that they possess relevant information and draw opinions that were considered to be essential to the study.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

In evaluating the data that was gathered during fieldwork, a qualitative analysis was employed. This method relies on the quality of the information based on its relevance to the subjects being studied rather than on the quantity of responses to a particular issue.¹² That is, instead of drawing from a large representative sample, the researcher sought to acquire in-depth and intimate information from relatively smaller group of people. This method of data analysis is also employed since the researcher dwells largely on interviews which are intended to elicit detailed information from individual respondents.

¹¹ Tom K.B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research*, (Ghana: Son Life Press and Services, 1999), 72.

¹² Barbara M. Wildemuth, ‘Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research’, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63 (1995), 881.

1.7 Literature Review

In carrying out any research, or study, it is vital to examine the views and opinions of some scholars who have carried out similar studies. This is significant in order to give a sense of direction to the study on hand.

What is Leadership?

Anthony D' Souza writes, leadership, both a science and an art, involves interrelating with people. The science of leadership develops valid concepts, principles, and processes to guide the day- to-day practices of leaders to bring about a more predictable end-results. The art of leadership, on the other hand, emphasises the skills of leadership, such as how leaders work with others and how they apply their knowledge and experience to achieve desired results.¹³ One can see that leadership is complex to define such that one has to combine knowledge and skills which also requires interrelation with other people in order to achieve desired results.

What is Christian Leadership?

What is Christian leadership? What should a Christian leader be like? There is no better example for Christian leadership than our Lord Jesus Christ. He declared, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). It is within this verse that we see the perfect description of a Christian leader. He is one who acts as a shepherd to those "sheep" in his care.¹⁴ A Christian leader should use Jesus as his yardstick and model. In other words a Christian leader should prepare to die for the flock. Jack Hayford in his book said that perhaps your reaction was one of despair. You said to yourself, "How can I become a spiritual leader? I feel so inadequate." Regardless of your

¹³ Anthony D'Souza, *Being A Leader* (England:Nuprint Limited, 1990), 69-70.

¹⁴ <http://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-leadership.html>, accessed April 7, 2015.

feelings of inadequacy, if God has called you to serve in leadership in His kingdom, He will provide all that you need to become the leader He has called you to be.¹⁵ This means that leadership is not ones feelings but is a call from God to serve in His kingdom.

In the view of Zacharias Fomum, Leadership is a call to spiritual imprisonment, to physical imprisonment, and to social imprisonment. There are some things that are forever banished because a man is a leader; some places to which he may never, never go again; some things that he may never own. Yes, there are things that he may never own. Even if they were to be given him, he never, never, never takes them. The stamp of leadership excludes him, put him aside completely, from certain things.¹⁶ This means that a Christian leader is not of himself but of God since it is God who called him. Thus the leader is accountable to God and does not own anything.

Power and Authority in Leadership

Olaniyi Daramola maintains that, Church leaders are called by God to serve His people and world at large. The position is not a political one that requires standing on a podium and campaigning. Nor should it be a business, which attracts the entrepreneur!¹⁷ The Christian leader is called by God. It is not like political campaign where the leader can maneuver his way through to put his agenda forward, neither it is a business where the leader would expect to see profit in order to be motivated which is a recipe for abuse of power.

¹⁵ Jack W Hayford, *Appointed to Leadership: God's Principles for Spiritual Leaders* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 159.

¹⁶ Zacharias Tanee Fomum, *The Shepherd And The Flock* (Yaunde, Cameroon: Christian Publishing House, 1998), 84-85.

¹⁷ Olaniyi Daramola, *Helping Leaders to be Accountable* in *Church Leaders Challenge: Book 4* (Ghana: Challenge Enterprises of Ghana, 2006), 19.

David Heywood writes, almost everyone has power over at least some others. To pretend otherwise can be extremely dangerous because it can lead to the abuse of the power we have but refuse to recognize. It [power] is the ability to influence people: to change their minds, their attitudes or their behavior.¹⁸ In the view of the author power can corrupt a leader if he or she doesn't recognise it.

1.8 Significance of the Study

Since there is comparatively little research work on personality cult in Ghanaian charismatic Christianity, this work will go a long way to address the concept and also contribute to academic knowledge on the subject of personality cult in charismatic Christianity through leadership trend.

As a church, there is the need to find out how certain behavior and practices affect Christian spirituality and growth. This work is very relevant in such times because the idea of personality cult which is rarely address in the church as an issue both in academia and religious circles has a long negative consequence for the future of Ghanaian and African Christianity. This work will go a long way to address such concerns and find a biblically balanced way in addressing the issue.

The work also seeks to come out with relevant concerns on the issue that will help individual Christians to adequately find a balanced and proper ways of choosing mentors in their Christian journey.

¹⁸ David Heywood, *Power and Authority*, accessed April 8, 2015, www.davidheywood.org/articles/Authority%20and%20power.pdf.

1.9 Organization of chapters

This research work is organized under five broad chapters. Chapter one has so far dealt with the introductory issues by giving the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, aim and objectives of the study, scope and focus of the study and the methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of the research as well. Literatures on the subject under study have also been examined. This was followed by organization of chapters, and significance of the study.

The second chapter looks at brief history of the charismatic churches. It takes a closer look at how the charismatic movement emerged in Ghanaian Christianity. The chapter also discusses the impact charismatic Christianity has had on Ghanaian religious landscape.

Chapter three basically deals with leadership patterns in charismatic churches focusing more on the two selected churches namely International Central Gospel Church and Action Faith Chapel. The chapter also seeks to discuss and outline other scholars view on the concept of leadership. The chapter will look at how the issue of personality cult is taking a centre stage in Ghanaian Charismatic Christianity.

Chapter four focuses on the analysis of the information that are gathered through interviews. This issue analysed in the light of certain key issues that will emerged in the chapter of the work.

The Chapter five which is the last consists of the summary of the study, conclusions and the recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE IMPACT OF CHARISMATIC CHURCHES IN GHANA

2.1 Introduction

Charismatism is a type of worship characterized by a quest for inspired and ecstatic experiences such as healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues. In other words, it is a movement of Christian evangelicals who uphold the operation of the spiritual manifestation of the gift of the Holy Spirit as narrated in Corinthians 12:4-11, and Romans 12: 6-8. This chapter entails a brief overview of historical background of charismatic churches in Ghana. The chapter also discusses some of the factors that led to the emergence or precipitated their development and again looks at the impact this type of Christianity has made in Ghana.

2.2 Charismatism and Its Worldwide Influence

The history of Pentecostalism globally, started as “.... an evangelical charismatic reformation movement”.¹⁹ Its root is traced to Topeka, Kansas in 1901 and to Charles Fox Parham, a former Methodist Preacher. Parham, on experiencing the reality of *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) in his Bethel Bible school formulated a basic Pentecostal doctrine, which is the doctrine of tongues speaking being the initial evidence of baptism in the Holy spirit. Teaching that tongues were a supernatural impartation of human languages for the purpose of world evangelization, Parham

¹⁹ Vinson Synan, *In Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 899.

also advocated that “missionaries need not study foreign languages, since they would be able to preach in miraculous tongues all over the world”.²⁰

Pentecostalism was however launched as a worldwide movement through William J. Seymour, an African American student of Parham and a Holiness preacher from Houston, Texas. Seymour preached that *glossolalia* was evidence of Holy Spirit baptism and was expelled from his first Los Angeles parish. He however, continued preaching until he and a small group experienced *glossolalia*. A lot of people were attracted to the meeting so he had to hire a bigger mission space, a run-down building of the African Methodist Episcopal church at 312 Azusa street in Los Angeles. The Azusa street revival, which lasted for about three years, (1906 -1909), embraced people of all classes, race, sex, and promoted leadership of women according to Synan.²¹

The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements has emphasized that the 20th century witnessed the emergence and phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal, charismatic, and neo-charismatic movements. These three waves of Pentecostalism, which constitute one of Christianity’s greatest renewals, have impacted every segment of the church in virtually all countries of the world with new vitality and fervor.²²

²⁰Vinson Synan, *The century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal*. (1901-2001). Synan documents the explosive growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians throughout the twentieth century, telling the stories of the people who were most involved.

²¹See also V. Synan, *Evangelical Dictionary of theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001) pg.899.

²²The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements not only include a wealth of information on pre-20th- century Pentecostalism, it’s also places special emphasis on these movements outside the U.S and Western Europe. Indeed, it is in these other nations and regions that modern movements of the Spirit have experienced their most phenomenal growth.

In reality, however, modern Pentecostalism did not begin on January 1, 1901, in Topeka, KS. There is evidence however to suggest that not all Pentecostal outbursts around the world may be causally linked to North American initiatives. Pentecostal outbursts in India, for example, is said to have predated the North American experience by at least forty years, taking an indigenous course with little or no Western missionary involvement.²³ More recent scholarship has demonstrated convincingly that Pentecostal outpourings occurred in other parts of the world notably Africa, England, Finland, Russia, India, and Latin America well before the 20th century. What is new in 20th century Pentecostalism is its spectacular growth and its impact on the larger Christian world.

2.3 Neo-Pentecostalism (Charismatism) in Ghana

Neo-Pentecostalism or charismatism in Ghana is part of the broad global phenomenon of Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism, as it manifested in Ghana, is broadly defined to embrace the African Independent Churches (AICs), the evangelical Pentecostal movement also known as the classical Pentecostals and a third strand which is, the “charismatic Renewal movement or the neo – Pentecostal movement”.²⁴ The neo-Pentecostal/charismatic movement emerged in Ghana in the 1970s. Larbi sees its emergence as the aftermath of the evangelical/charismatic renewal in the 1960s and the 1970s.²⁵ Most of the charismatic ministries have developed into independent churches with some becoming very huge in less than a decade.

²³ Gary B. McGee, ‘*Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Leadership*’, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol. 20, 3 (1996), 112- 117.

²⁴ E. Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, (Accra: Blessed Publication, 2001). pg.57

²⁵ Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 89.

In Ghana the neo- Pentecostal movement has manifested itself in three main forms. The first being the independent charismatic churches (and it is on these churches that the issues that are being assessed in this research are centered). In Ghana, they refer to themselves as the Charismatic ministries. There are secondly, the non-denominational or trans-denominational fellowships like the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) and Women's Aglow. These are also referred to as the Para-church Movement making up the second wave.²⁶ The third are the renewal groups within the traditional western missionary churches. An example of such is the Charismatic Renewal movement. Larbi adds a fourth one, which are the Prophet/Healer-centered Pentecostal Prayer Camps.²⁷ This is currently designated as Neo-prophetic or deliverance ministries in Ghana.

The neo-Pentecostal Churches has a theological distinctiveness that is not as evident, at least not to the same degree, in the other versions of Pentecostalism. They are also distinguished from the classical Pentecostal churches and the independent churches by features such as their predominantly youth membership, their use of English language for worship services etc.²⁸ In practice the neo-Pentecostal churches place or emphasize 'every-member-ministry', than of the other Pentecostal. Ghanaian neo-Pentecostals, make 'personal spiritual power for every believer' the hallmark of their theology and

²⁶J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, "Pentecostalism in Context: An intercultural perspective on 20th century 'Waves of Renewal' within West African Christianity", In *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 1, Dec. 2002, 11. Asamoah-Gyadu categorizes them in terms of waves, a metaphor likening the emergence of Pentecostal innovation and creativity in Africa in terms of waves on the seashore.

²⁷Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 89.

²⁸Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002), 96.

pastoral endeavors.²⁹ They also share forms of worship and a common set of beliefs. These include the belief in the need for personal conversion (to be “born again”), biblical inerrancy, and the emphasis of spontaneous inspiration by the Holy Spirit, expressed through spiritual gifts like miracles, healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*). In the view of Olupona, “Charismatic churches are evangelical churches founded by African leaders who have adopted radical spiritual conversion, often called “born again”, through baptism of the Holy Spirit, recalling the day of Pentecost. As in the prophetic independent African churches before them, the charismatic churches emphasize speaking in tongues, divine healing, and miracles. In addition, they profess that the material success and prosperity of their members are signs of divine grace and benevolence”.³⁰

2.4 Factors that Led to the Development of Charismatic Ministries in Ghana

The charismatic ministries in Ghana emerged within a specific historical and socio-economic context. Some of the factors which constituted the upsurge and growth of the charismatic churches can be situated in social, economic, theological, and political context. Scholars like Philomina Njeri Mwaura argues that, “modern charismatic churches and now new religious movements generally, can be linked to economic, theological, cultural and political trends”.³¹ Gifford has also argued that the upsurge of Neo- Pentecostal Churches can be linked to economic situation in Africa since the

²⁹J.K Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), 12.

³⁰ Jacob, Olupona, “Africa, West (Survey),” In Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Mass (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Revised and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 11-21.

³¹ Philomena N. Mwaura, “The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious Scene in Africa: The Case of Kenya” In *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a sacred Heritage*, (eds.) AfeAdogame, Roswith Gerloff and Klaus Hock, (NY: Continuum Int. Publishing Group 2008), 186.

1980s.³² Again, Mwaura argues that “economic deprivation occasioned by poverty, bad governance and abuse of human rights in Africa of the 1980s led to people seeking solace and welfare in the churches for they provided material, spiritual and social support”.³³ This is because; these movements were seen to be very pragmatic in finding solutions to life debilitating issues, such as hunger and poverty.

Larbi has laid emphasis on the fact that neo-Pentecostalism or charismatic renewal saw great development in the 1960s and 1970s and became new independent Pentecostal churches, and grew within first decade from their emergence. He said something about what Gifford observed on the Ghanaian religious scene. That the initial membership of the neo-Pentecostal or charismatic churches were members from the evangelical fellowships that existed in the country already. The revival resulted in the proliferation of several non-denominational evangelistic association in many part of the country. These associations included Ghana Evangelical Society (GES) by Agbozo, the Hour of Visitation Choir and Evangelicalistic Association (HOVCEA) and others. In addition, there were other Christian fellowships working in the second circle institutions and the Universities like Scripture Union (SU) and University Christian Fellowships (UCF). These two fellowships really prepared students so much that they had real intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ and this affected their families back home any time they were on holidays or vacation; these students with the help of other matured Christians came out with what they called Town Fellowships. This became necessary because the understanding these students had on campuses made it difficult for them to join any other existing church so the Town Fellowships became their source of inspiration. It was

³² Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role*, (London: Hurst and Co., 1998), 324.

³³ Mwaura, *The Role of Charismatic Christianity in Reshaping the Religious Scene in Africa*, 186.

basically through these para-church organizations and other inter-denominational fellowships like Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, and Women Aglow International emerged in Ghana in the 1980s that Pentecostal spirituality entered the mainline churches.

Another significant factor was the Nigerian factor spear-headed by the late Benson Idahosa of the Church of God Mission, who offered scholarships for the training of most of the independent charismatic ministers in Ghana at his Bible school in Benin City in Nigeria. All the above contributed immensely to the proliferation of many non-denominational evangelistic fellowships and associations many of which later developed into churches, mainly the charismatic. Many also started as churches outright.

Very characteristic of these evangelical groups were their emphases on biblically sound and balanced doctrine such as the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and practice, the centrality of the death of Christ to the gospel and salvation by faith through Christ alone. There was also the emphasis on the need for lives to be changed, hence the need for the total commitment of all truly born again Christians to evangelism. Many Christians who graduated from the universities and other institutions where these evangelical groups existed therefore went out with a burning desire for soul winning. This group of Christians believes in worship as the Spirit leads and directs. They believe that wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is liberty which includes a free style of worship; hence in a charismatic adoration there is shouting, dancing, running, jumping, crying or even lying prostrate. There is freedom of adulation instead of laid down rules for devotion.

2.5 Impact of Charismatism on Ghanaian Christianity

Taking into consideration the number of leaders and the people that have followed them since the emergence of the neo-Pentecostal or charismatic churches until now one cannot dispute the fact of the positive impact that the charismatic churches have made on the Christianity and the religious landscape in Ghana. What the charismatic believers claim to have received have brought great impact in the lives of many and through that many souls also have been won to Christ. One sees a number of established charismatic churches as a result of this outpouring.

This Charismatic renewal, has impacted other strands of Christianity in both Nigeria and Ghana.³⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu has argued that “this new type of Christianity, as a result of its media presence, continues to have a much more diffused impact on African Christianity in particular and popular culture in general”.³⁵ The presence of the new Pentecostal/charismatic movements has literally transform the religious culture of Christianity in Africa, leading to what may be referred to as religious ‘Pentecostalization’ and ‘Charismaticization’³⁶ of African Christianity.³⁷

The movement has attracted many people to the saving knowledge of Christ, from all walks of life from ordinary people to university dons and business gurus. The old

³⁴ Hackett, Rosalind, I.J., “Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana”, *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28(3): 1998, 265.

³⁵ J.K., Asamoah-Gyadu, *Pentecostal Media Images and Religious Globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa*, 66.

³⁶ “Pentecostalization” and “Charismaticization” is used to refer to situations in which non-Pentecostal or non-charismatic churches are affected by this renewal movement especially in the mainline churches. See also for example Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002).

³⁷ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “From Prophetsim to Pentecostalism”: Religious Innovation in Africa and African Religious Scholarship, In Afe Adogame, Ezra Chitando and Bolaji Bateye (eds.), *African Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa: Emerging trends, Indigenous Spirituality and the Interface with other World Religions*, (Eng. Asgate, 2012), 161-173.

mentality that it is only the poor or the failures that go to church or become pastors has given way to new notions of ministration. Now we see artists, sporting personalities, media men and women, medical doctors, university professors, etc attending church as a serious activity or donning in priestly gown. Nowadays charismatism has made Christianity popular and attractive across the country, the continents, and the globe. It has increased Christian population in Ghana to the extent that cinema halls and factories premises have been converted to worship centers.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the emergence and the influence of charismatic Christianity in Ghana. As part of the discussion, the researcher has also highlighted some of the basic doctrinal emphasis of the movement. As part of the researchers own observation, it can be concluded that the stern emphasis on theological issues and the effort to evangelize and interprets issues from the primal views has made them to have central place in Africa and particularly Ghanaian Christianity.

CHAPTER THREE

LEADERSHIP TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL GOSPLE CHURCH AND ACTION FAITH CHAPEL

3.1 Introduction

There are a number of different approaches, or ‘styles’ to leadership and management with the churches system of governance. The style that individuals or a church use will be based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others.

Charismatic leaders have some leadership traits that inspires people to follow them. This chapter basically deals with the concept of charisma, charismatic leadership style and its dangers. The chapter also discusses the leadership trends in charismatic churches in Ghana focusing only on the two selected churches.

3.2 An Overview of Charismatic Type of Leadership

Charisma has assumed one of the most debatable important term in leadership. In leadership, charisma can be viewed as a set of capabilities, or personal attributes, such as: the ability to project confidence, an inner sense of purpose, the capacity to engage others and the skill in articulating ideas, vision, and goals.³⁸

The Greek word *kharis* refers to grace and kindness, with the ancient mythological figure *Charis* representing the very human qualities of charm, beauty, and creativity. Grace encompasses esteem, regard, virtue, elegance, and gratitude. The word charisma or

³⁸Brian Evje, “Understanding Charisma”, <http://www.inc.com/brian-evje/understanding-charisma.html?cid=readmore> (Accessed on 12th March, 2015).

charism is from the Greek *charisma* which means favour or gift. One can trace the word also to the Greek word *chairein*, meaning to rejoice or give thanks. Charismata is the plural (again, from Greek syntax), and it has a peculiar meaning in relation to Christian doctrine. The plural form denotes an extraordinary power given to a Christian by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church. The charismata, in Christian belief, represent the manifestation of Pentecostal experience, and can be traced to the Old Testament days. In 2 Samuel 6, King David was so filled with charismata when the Ark of God was brought into the city that he danced almost to the point of nudity, which made his wife spiteful of him. In a charismata experience, as in the case of King David, one doesn't really care about his surrounding or what people say of what one is doing. A case in point is Jesus' own examples when he went about doing well, teaching the word, performing miracles on the Sabbath and whipping money changers in the temple without a thought of what people might say. He even became friend of the poor, the weak, the unclean, the sinner, etc. His was a drastic change in the mode of worship in the true charismatic spirit. In John 4: 24, Jesus declared the true worship of God. Truly speaking, charismaticism in the church started at the very inception of the church on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit baptism descended on the people of all walks of life who were eventually thought of being drunk.

According to Brian Evje, historically, the word *charisma* was associated with supernatural elements. Charisma, then, is seen as a gift or talent from heaven that gives an individual the ability and the authority to rule others.³⁹He argues that this is the definition claimed by politicians who say they have a divine mandate, by religious

³⁹EVje, "Understanding Charisma", 2.

leaders who express a divine calling, and by those who believe that leaders are born with a genetic predisposition to lead.⁴⁰ By extension, these beliefs compel the rest of us to be led with little objection, because the leaders know best.

Evje argues further that, current understanding of charisma signifies an individual with personal appeal, magnetism, charm, confidence, and the ability to draw people into a vision or around a purpose. In his view, one can say someone is charismatic if the person is a persuasive public speaker, especially if he or she is good in promoting a larger vision. In this sense Charisma is sometimes described as “leadership presence,” or the way in which a leader physically conducts himself or herself to attract attention.⁴¹

A very useful tool in the effort to understand and cultivate charisma is “grace.” It is a word and approach that is strong enough to re-define the role of charisma in leadership, and to support the frameworks of organizational health that seek to remove the leader from his or her traditional pedestal. The Charismatic Leader gathers followers through dint of personality and charm, rather than any form of external power or authority.

3.2.1 Method and Approach of charismatic Leadership

Charismatic Leaders pay a great deal of attention in scanning and reading their environment, and are good at picking up the moods and concerns of both individuals and larger audiences. They then will hone their actions and words to suit the situation. Pulling all of the strings Charismatic Leaders use a wide range of methods to manage their image and, if they are not naturally charismatic, may practice assiduously at developing their

⁴⁰Evje, “Understanding Charisma”, 2.

⁴¹Evje, “Understanding Charisma”, 3.

skills. They may engender trust through visible self-sacrifice and taking personal risks in the name of their beliefs.⁴²

Charismatic leaders will also show great confidence in their followers. They are very persuasive and make very effective use of body language as well as verbal language. Deliberate charisma is played out in a theatrical sense, where the leader is 'playing to the house' to create a desired effect.⁴³ Many politicians use a charismatic style, as they need to gather a large number of followers. Many group of people uses this kind of leadership are politicians, Religious leaders as well as cult leaders.

Leading the team Charismatic Leaders who are building a group, whether it is a political party, a cult or a business team, will often focus strongly on making the group very clear and distinct, separating it from other groups. They will then build the image of the group, in particular in the minds of their followers, as being far superior to all others. The Charismatic Leader will typically attach themselves firmly to the identity of the group, such that to join the group is to become one with the leader. In doing so, they create an unchallengeable position for themselves.⁴⁴ According to Evje, Musser notes that charismatic leaders seek to instill both commitment to ideological goals and also devotion to themselves. The extent to which either of these two goals is dominant depends on the underlying motivations and needs of the leader.⁴⁵

⁴²"Leadership Styles" - http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm (accessed on 15th March, 2015).

⁴³"Leadership Styles" - http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm

⁴⁴"Leadership Styles" - http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm

⁴⁵"Leadership Styles" - http://changingminds.org/disciplines/leadership/styles/leadership_styles.htm

3.2.2 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership

There are many issues and problems that is associated with charismatic type of leadership. First, Leaders can become addicted to charisma. According to Evje, this is a variant on the adage “absolute power corrupts absolutely.”⁴⁶ A leader who employs too much charisma can come to rely on this ability as an end unto itself. Picture a leader who can inspire a group, or promote a vision, or simply want to walk into a room as the center of attention, all with seemingly little effort. The recognition, validation, and basic positive feedback generated by charisma is a heady mix – and can tempt a leader to capture this reaction first and foremost, rather than face situations that are more challenging or unpopular. In essence, charismatic leaders can charm themselves.⁴⁷

Secondly, Organizations can become addicted to the charismatic leader. Just as leaders are susceptible to their own charisma, organizations can become addicted, too. An overly-charismatic leader draws focus from the rest of the organization by demanding (subtly or dramatically) attention for him- or herself. When the focus shifts to the personal characteristics of the leader, accountability is diminished. The followers can become overly dependent on the leader for all manner of large and small directions and decisions. The most extreme example of group dependency? Which brings out the idea of cult.⁴⁸ A less extreme situation is often found in organizations where too many things must pass through the leader, and no one is ever quite certain what to expect as a reaction. The enterprise loses the ability to be resilient in the face of changing realities.

⁴⁶Brian Evje, “3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership”, <http://www.inc.com/brian-evje/three-dangers-of-charismatic-leadership.html> (Accessed on 12th March, 2015).

⁴⁷Evje, “3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership”, 2.

⁴⁸Evje, “3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership”, 3.

It's too busy waiting for the leader to decide what to do, and believing that the leader knows best.

Thirdly, charisma grows for its own sake and forgets its purpose. This is what happens when both the leader and the organization are addicted to charisma. Typically, organizations with big visions are led by people who display significant charisma in order to keep the vision moving forward. In many cases, the bigger the vision, the more the organization tilts towards the "visionary," thus increasing the risk of charismatic addiction and organizational dependency. The challenge expands if the company grows, because followers tend to believe that the charismatic leader is responsible for any success. After all, haven't these same followers endowed the leader with tremendous power? The leader must supply more charisma to keep the dynamic humming; the need shifts to growing charisma, not the organization's ability to grow itself.⁴⁹

3.3 Leadership Trends in the Two Selected Ghanaian Charismatic Churches

The two churches that were selected as part of this study include Duncan William's Action Faith Chapel International and Mensa Otabil's International Central Gospel Church. These two churches happen to be part of the leading charismatic churches in Ghana.

Trends of leadership in contemporary Ghanaian charismatic churches times not uniform. While others seem to practice the Episcopal system of governance, other practice the presbytery type of governance. For example the Action Faith Chapel International

⁴⁹Evje, "3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership", 3.

practice the Episcopal system of governance and the International Central Gospel Church, the presbytery type of Governance.

However, most charismatic churches adopt the Episcopal system of church governance. Of late a few of the leaders have even been gone further to assume the title Bishop, Presiding Bishop, and even Archbishop. Duncan Williams of Christian Action Faith Ministries International and Charles Agyin Asare of The Perez Chapel International are examples. Others like Mensah Otabil of the International Central Gospel Church prefer a more simple title, Head Pastor or General Overseer. Most of the Charismatic churches are still led by their founders. Unlike the Historic and Pentecostal Churches, they are not elected into office for number of years. They rather seem to be in office for life.

These polities ascribe positions and responsibilities of leaders. While older churches are mostly denominational and have hierarchical structure, many of the newer churches generally are non-denominational and with flat structure. Leadership in the many charismatic churches are organic rather than structural. These churches have senior pastors assisted by host of associate pastors. The senior pastor is the visionary who is creative in dreaming and casting the vision of the church. The senior pastor is the man of God, who is believed to receive his vision from God. To assure the congregants that the vision is from God they may simply say, “God told me to do this or that. Once the vision is cast it is accepted by all and the laity works out how to realize it. Those who do not accept the vision may prefer to leave the church rather than fight the senior pastor over it. This is because it is believed that it is not proper to fight a man of God, especially over a message he claims to have received from God.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the issue of leadership particularly paying attention to charismatic style of leadership and its dangers and approaches. The chapter has also looked at the practice of church leadership or governance in the two selected churches. From the discussion, it can be argued that charismatic church pastors are getting or attracting a lot of people into their churches due to the leadership style adopted by them.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEADERSHIP TREND IN CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN GHANA: THEIR IMPACT AND THEIR ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the impact and problems associated with some current leadership trends within Ghanaian Pentecostal and charismatic churches. The chapter discusses and analyzes how some leadership traits among some pastors have led them to become icons with a lot of fans. The chapter deals with issues such as the impact of charismatic leadership in Ghana by drawing implications from that of Duncan Williams and Otabil. It further touches on how charismatic leadership can create a kind of personality driven and self-centered Christianity among pastors and congregants.

4.2 Leadership Trends in Christian Action Faith Ministries and International Central Gospel Church

Charismatic churches are the most recent category of churches to emerge on the religious scene in Ghana.⁵⁰ The first of such churches in Ghana is the Christian Action Faith Ministries (CAFM) and the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC). Within three decades, these two churches have grown large with branches in many cities and large towns in Ghana and abroad. The leaders of these two big charismatic churches in Ghana have become icons and are cherished by their followers including members outside their churches.

⁵⁰Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 3.

In an interview with Nicholas Mensah (Rev.) said that the founder of CAFM, Duncan-Williams, [unlike many other charismatic church leaders in Ghana] did not have any formal education.⁵¹ However, because of his charismatic leadership he has been a pacesetter in charismatism and mentor many charismatic leaders in Ghana. In addition, he is the first charismatic leader to be ordained bishop and later Archbishop in the Country.

On the other hand, Dr. Mensa Otabilis a lecturer, author, consultant and a motivational speaker. He is the founder and general-overseer of the International Central Gospel churches, which has a network of local assemblies in Ghana, Europe, the United States, Canada and other parts of Africa.⁵² He serves as Senior Pastor of 'Christ Temple', ICGC's mother-church, in Accra, and also is the Chancellor of Ghana's premier private University: The Central University College (CUC). Dr. Otabil presents a radio and television program called "Living Word" where he addresses life-issues, such as religion, education, economic development, family life, and politics.

As do most charismatic churches, the ICGC and the CAFM leans heavily on the personality, vision, and charisma of its founders and leaders, Mensa Otabil and Duncan Williams. These two personalities are not only the founder and leader, or 'general overseer'; they are the public face, the embodiment of the church. For example in daily speech the general public often uses Otabil and Duncan synonymously with Action and 'Central'. Most members of these two churches first encountered the church through their media ministry and public appearance. Their regular TV appearance has made them a

⁵¹ Interview with Rev. Nicholas Mensah, a pastor of Action Chapel on 12th April, 2015.

⁵² An interview with Fergusson Anthony Bentum (Rev.), International Central Gospel Centre at Sefwi Wiaso in the Western Region, 4th June, 2015.

celebrity with many fans. Every week they receive hundreds of letters and e-mails, from people from different denominations and religious convictions.

4.3 Leadership Achievements of Mensa Otabil and Duncan Williams

Charismatic churches in Ghana have now developed into mainstream Christianity in Ghana. Most of them started as single churches but as a result of their enthusiasm for mission work and evangelism, have become one of the leading churches in Ghana. Two of such churches include Duncan William's Christian Action Faith Ministries and Otabil's International Central Gospel Church. These two churches despite their initial small beginnings have developed to become big churches with huge Administration set up that sees to the running of the activities of the church including how the finances of the church are managed.

They have also instituted church boards whose work is to monitor and ensure things are done properly in the church to avoid any kind of distraction and to also make sure that right things are done to glorify God.

These two charismatic churches have advanced to discipleship and training of their members. Mostly, members who joined these churches for the first time are allowed to go through a series of teachings termed as new beginners classes. After the training, they are officially accepted into full membership of the church.

In terms of education, both the ICGC and the CAFM have contributed a lot by putting up the Central University College and the Dominion University College respectively. Despite the fact that they did not take into consideration the importance of theological

education prior to any major ministerial work, they have now changed their stands and have established theological institution for the training of their own people and outsiders.

4.4 The Impact of Duncan William's Leadership

Duncan Williams entered late Bishop Idahosa's Church of God Mission International Bible College in Nigeria to be trained as a pastor. After training he returned to Ghana and wanted to work as an evangelist in the Church of Pentecost. Having not been trained by the church, he was denied a place therefore he began a home cell fellowship in his father's house in 1978. His mentor Idahosa encouraged him to start a church, and in 1979 he founded Christian Action Faith Chapel in Accra.⁵³

Many youth got attracted to Duncan Williams' church due to the remarkable liberal and spontaneous worship, miracles, healings, new style of preaching and Holy Spirit baptism that occurred there. The young Duncan Williams (now Archbishop) mentored and trained some leaders like Bishop Dag Heward-Mills who was in the Music ministry, Rev. Ampiah Kwofie first pastor in charge of evangelism ministry, and Rev. George Abaka Johnson.⁵⁴

Today, most charismatic church pastors in Ghana refer to him as their "father" and a mentor in their ministry. Duncan Williams apart from church polity have also engaged himself on issues that confront national development.

4.5 The Impact of Mensah Otabil's Leadership

Mensa Otabil is often seen as an exception in the wide and still expanding field of charismatic preachers. Public opinion in Ghana is not always favourable about the

⁵³Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 53.

⁵⁴Interview with Rev. Nicholas Mensah, a pastor of Action Chapel on 12th April, 2015.

charismatic explosion, but newspaper editorials, radio panel lists and ‘the man in the street’ often praise Otabil for his vision and set him apart from the numerous self-proclaimed, money-greedy ‘men of God’ who indulge in all kinds of immoral practices.⁵⁵

And it is remarkable that, contrary to the general conditions in the country, Otabil has come to be accepted, respected and considered opinion leader by not only Charismatics and Pentecostals, but even the Orthodox faithful and the old intelligentsia who would normally have nothing to do with ‘mushroom’ churches.⁵⁶ Otabil’s credibility and respectability which have earned him a place among intellectual and national leaders are themselves issues of good lessons for all to take.⁵⁷

Otabil has also attracted quite some academic attention and scholars similarly portray him as not representative of charismatic Pentecostalism in Ghana. Paul Gifford devotes a whole chapter to Otabil in his book on *Ghana’s new Christianity* and singles him out as the one charismatic figure with a structural focus on social awareness, and thus an exception to his doubts about charismatic Christianity’s ability to foster socio-political change.⁵⁸ This echoes his earlier exemption of Otabil from his view of charismatic churches as being easily co-opted by the government.⁵⁹ The Ghanaian theologian Emmanuel Larbi, who also devotes a chapter to Otabil, writes that ‘the distinctiveness of Otabil’s theology [...] seems to set him aside from all other neo-Pentecostal preachers in the country.’⁶⁰

⁵⁵Marleen, De Witte, *Spirit Media: Charismatics, Traditionalists, and Mediation Practices in Ghana*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Amsterdam, Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2008, 87.

⁵⁶ Mushroom Churches are churches which does not have congregation of ten people.

⁵⁷De Witte, *Spirit Media*, 89.

⁵⁸Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 197.

⁵⁹Gifford, *African Christianity*, 11.

⁶⁰Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*, 348.

Behind this public and academic image of Otabil, however, is a strategic mode of representation, almost in a marketing fashion. In the face of harsh competition in the field of religion today, Otabil consciously wants to present himself as different from all the others, as special, as more distinguished and sophisticated and he has over the years developed certain ‘trademarks,’ of which his ‘distinctive theology’ is only one, closely tied to his distinctive style.⁶¹

Two things strike the eye and the ear about Otabil’s self-presentation in relation to the charismatic pastors in Ghana: his name and his dress. In contrast to other big names of the charismatic scene, such as Nicholas Duncan-Williams, Charles Agyin-Asare, Dag Heward-Mills, and Sam Korankye-Ankrah, Otabil does not use any English name. This is significant in Ghana, where almost everybody has an English, ‘Christian’ name and not using it is a conscious choice. For Otabil ‘name is just a PR (Public Relation)’ in that it doesn’t determine your behaviour, but is a very public sign about yourself.⁶² He used to have an English name – which one is a well-kept secret – but he decided to drop it. His four children have all-African names as well: Sompaa, Nhyira, Yoofi Abotare, and Baaba Aseda.⁶³ In accordance with his African name, Otabil is publicly known for his African dress. Whereas most charismatic pastors in Ghana wear suit and tie.

4.6 The Emerging Problem of Personality Cult in Ghanaian Charismatic Church Leadership

There are many issues and problems that are associated with charismatic type of leadership in Ghana. One disadvantage of charismatic type of leadership is that, one can become

⁶¹De Witte, *Spirit Media*, 89.

⁶²De Witte, *Spirit Media*, 89.

⁶³De Witte, *Spirit Media*, 90.

very addictive to the dictates of the leader, on the other hand leaders can also become addicted to charisma. According to Evje, this is a variant on the adage “absolute power corrupts absolutely.”⁶⁴ A leader who employs too much charisma can come to rely on this ability as an end unto itself.

As part of the study, the researcher embarked on an informal conversation which took the form of unstructured interviews with people regarding current leadership trends among charismatic churches in Ghana. This was to find out how people or individuals think about charismatic church leadership in the country. As part of the interview, one issue that emerged strongly was the idea of personality cult. According to the respondents,⁶⁵ the way some charismatic church leaders carry themselves in the Ghanaian public, especially some with military escort, and sometimes the process one needs to go through before seeing a man of God is something that does not augur well for Christian leadership among the charismatic churches because that was not the way our Lord Jesus Christ did in His earthly ministry, that is the 'historic Jesus'. Beyond such ridiculous antics, the greater dilemma is how many attendees of such churches would unwaveringly deny that a cult of personality is being intentionally fostered.

However, the following nine (9) signs, which are not in any particular order, shows in one way or the other some kind of personality cult at work in some churches in Ghana.

- The church leaders or pastors demand for special treatment, special honor, and special recognition. In other words, there is an active cultivation of being treated

⁶⁴ Brian Evje, “3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership”, <http://www.inc.com/brian-evje/three-dangers-of-charismatic-leadership.html> (Accessed on 12th March, 2015).

⁶⁵ Interview with Action Faith Chapel and International Central Gospel Church Members on 10th March, 2015 and 11th April, 2015.

differently than others. The leaders and especially the general overseers are seen as the anointed men of God and they are untouchable. There are pockets of breakaway from the original churches by some of the members who think they also have power to start their own churches.

- The church's website or media outlet such as billboards is focused on an individual. A person's quotes, their picture, their books, their activities, their blog, etc. It's pretty clear who, not what, the "church" is about.
- No one is allowed to question the leader without retribution. There is a "thin skin" evident toward any and all critics, who are often written off as "haters" or simply those who are envious. There is a bubble that prevents constructive criticism.
- The line between "look at what God is doing" and "look at what our leader is doing" is almost non-existent. In other words, God isn't getting the glory, an individual is.
- The name of the leader and the name of the church are inseparable. The leader is as much of a brand – or even *the* brand - as the ministry.
- Image is paramount. Clothes, camera angles, prepared one-liners, manipulation of media; the leader is presented, handled and then "performs" as a carefully handled celebrity.

- There is no sense of team leadership, team teaching or team mentality. There is a single person or leader, and then there are implementers. No one is to question the leader's vision. It is seen as God-given, sacrosanct, and thus anything the leader says or does in pursuit of that vision is never to be questioned.
- The person travels in an entourage, often with personal security, and is seldom accessible.
- Their speaking and teaching often revolves around themselves (there is even a name for it – “narcisgesis” instead of “exegesis”), and guest speakers feel compelled (and sometimes *are* compelled) to laud the leader as part of their presentation.

One conclusion that the researcher can draw as far as the above points are concerned is that, the leadership traits of some charismatic church pastor's falls within some of the above mentioned points. The argument here is that some institution can become addicted to the charismatic leader. Just as leaders are susceptible to their own charisma, people can become addicted, too. An overly-charismatic leader draws focus from the rest of his or her congregants by demanding (subtly or dramatically) attention for him- or herself. When the focus shifts to the personal characteristics of the leader, accountability is diminished. The followers can become overly dependent on the leader for all manner of large and small directions and decisions. The most extreme example of group dependency? Which brings out the idea of cult.⁶⁶

In today's church where too many things must pass through the leader or the pastor, and no one is ever quite certain what to expect as a reaction. The church or the members in

⁶⁶Evje, “3 Dangers of Charismatic Leadership”, 3.

the church loses the ability to be resilient in the face of changing realities. They become too busy waiting for the leader to decide what to do, and believing that the leader knows best.

To be very critical here, Christian pastors are servants, not rock stars. They equip people for ministry as opposed to basking in the adulation of others watching them perform. But even more pressing is that all glory and attention should be on making God famous, not a person. Fame should not be cultivated in the name of “influence;” if anything, it should be feared in view of pride coming before a fall. In sum, cults of personality can lead to heresy creep. With a leader firmly entrenched in people’s minds as God’s superstar. Few cults of personality end well, and when they don’t, the wider church and Christianity itself suffers a black eye. There is the need for the church to abandon such dangers which seem to be very dangerous to the future of church leadership.

4.7 The Problem of Charismatic Leadership

In Ghana, there has been a lot of challenges with how some leaders of the charismatic churches portray themselves in exercising their leadership skills.

Many charismatic leaders are beginning to show yet another sign of the type of extremism that is often passed off as religion in many Pentecostal and charismatic churches which often become personality cults organized around one single charismatic founder and leader. Church members who attend these personality driven churches usually are seeking two things; a sense of social identification and a need to seek God or spiritual fulfillment in their lives. Yet members of these churches often tend to overlook some extremist political or social views that the charismatic leader often espouses that

substitute for the traditional preaching about religious issues presented in more established churches.

The problem with many charismatic churches compared to the more structured and traditional churches such as the Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants, is that often no real formal leadership structure is maintained. Most charismatic leaders establishes a personality driven church and dictates the beliefs of the church, which often may involve more politics than any genuine religious message.

4.7.1 Trusting in God than in Human

On danger of charismatic leadership is the tendency for people to trust in the leader and not God. It is the nature of man to trust himself. This started with the distrust of the word of God that the devil introduced into Eve (Genesis 3:1-8), and since then, humanity took the turn into disobedience, being a symptom of distrusting God. But we see that displayed throughout the scriptures. When God told the children of Israel that he was going to take them to the Promised Land (Exodus 12:25), they chose to trust their own fear since they spoke and acted based on it and not on the word of God (Numbers 14:1-38).

The word of God says it is wrong for us to put our trust in man (Jeremiah 17:5-8). And in the book of Hebrews we read that we should look unto Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2). The psalmist wrote, “I will lift my eyes to the hills from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth (Psalm 121:1-8).” With God is the unlimited resource. He is the one from whom everything created is sourced.

First of all, we should put our trust in God for salvation. It is foolhardy that after God - made a way to Himself through Jesus, men still seek to reach God through other means of self-improvement and works and activities.

Paul, speaking of the Jews said that they were ignorant of the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and therefore went about establishing their own righteousness (Romans 10:1-20), through self-effort. They trusted in their own works seeking to be justified through it.

While Jesus was unveiling the secrets of the kingdom of God to the disciples, he gave them the story of the Pharisee who stood up boldly in the temple counting his various points of righteousness (Luke 18:9-14). The Pharisee mentioned his tithing, his fasting and his piety, being a quintessential self-righteous person. The Bible concludes that such a person trusts in himself and was therefore condemned. He even compared himself with another, seeing himself as superior. To the limit that you see yourself as superior that is the limit of self-righteousness in you.

The Bible says that the eyes of the Lord runs to and fro the earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is set on him (2Chronicles 16:9).

The great divide between Christianity and other forms of “spirituality” in the world is because in the others, everything starts with self-effort and if at all there is a “god” involved, there is no personal relationship with such personae. There is a heavy investment of self-effort involved with no particular guarantee of attaining the desired goals. There is a heavy investment of self-effort, that leaves many frustrated and in a search for that elusive goal of spirituality.

In Ghana today, there seems to be a lot of self-imposed trust from some men of God than in God himself. On radio and television, some men of God after performing miracles portray themselves as the purveyors of the anointing or the miracles and not God. On many occasions, the emphasis is put on the man of God than in God himself. This situation has led a lot of Christians in Ghana to put their trust in their pastor or some men of God than God himself. Consequently, some men of God have become demigods to some Christians. It seems therefore that without them, nothing could be done or happen in their lives.

The question one might ask is, why this is the situation now? From the researchers own point of view, it looks like some Christians have not been built well on the proper understanding of scriptures for their lives. This stands to mean that they have inadequate knowledge on the word of God and this makes them believe their pastor to be source of the anointing other than God himself.

Again, some pastors turn to portray themselves as the carriers of the miracles to the extent that after the performance of a miracle they turn to shower praises on their names than attribute the miracle to God. When the prophet prophesy and it comes to pass they don't tell the people that God is behind all that so the people see them as the power behind all the miracles and signs

The researcher is the opinion that, no situation should be strong enough to shake us from our trust in God. Job passed through difficult situation but said of God he slays me I will still trust him (Job: 15-16). That can only happen if God is more real than what we feel, or even what we think (1John 3:19-20).

Relationship with and receiving from God is hinged on trust. While at the house of Mary and Martha, after their brother Lazarus was dead and buried and there was great mourning. He needed them to believe that all hope was not lost though it seems so, saying that if they would believe they would see the glory of God (John 11:1-45). And eventually Jesus raised their brother from the dead after four days in the tomb.

Trusting in oneself leads to boastfulness as one sees a lot of men of God in Ghana do. Paul asked, “What do we have that we were not given?” Since God is our source, therefore he should be the object of our focus and attention and not man. God has extended and is continuing to extend his love towards us in Christ Jesus. Therefore we can trust him implicitly with our lives, with our waking and sleeping, with our going out and coming in. You can trust him with your decision-making as he always wants to lead us besides still waters as our shepherd (Psalm 23:1-2), and there is the promise that as we trust him we will always find pasture (John 10:1-11).

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the issues of leadership in charismatic churches and its associated challenges. The chapter touched on issues such as the achievement of charismatic leadership in the country as well their contribution to the development of the church in Ghana. One issue that strongly came up as part of the discussion is the issue of personality driven churches or cult that seem to emerge in charismatic leadership in the country.

The researcher is of the opinion that if all these challenges are put under proper checks and balances, it will go a long way to help foster church unity and development in the country.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

On the whole, this study has looked at leadership trends in Ghanaian charismatic churches. The study was carried out by using two churches namely International Central Gospel Church and Action Faith Chapel, as the main focus of the study. Chapter one of the study dealt with the background issues such as statement of the research problem, research question and the significance of the study. The study also employed qualitative approach in analyzing the issues that were very central to the study.

Subsequent chapters of the study basically dealt with the emergence of charismatic churches in Ghanaian Christianity. In recounting the emergence of the charismatism in Ghana, the study touched on historical background of charismatic churches in Ghana and the various factors that precipitated the development of charismatic Christianity in Ghana. The study also highlighted the impact of charismatic Christianity in Ghana.

Again, the study also touched on different approaches, or ‘styles’ to leadership and management with the charismatic church’s system of governance. In bringing out the various types of charismatic leadership and its associated problems, the work pin point out that the style that individuals or a church use will be based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others. It was also said that Charismatic leaders have some leadership traits that inspires people to follow them.

5.2 Conclusion

There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn from the study. As part of the researchers own observation, it can be concluded that the theological emphasis and the effort to evangelize and interprets issues from the primal views has made them to have central place in Africa and particularly Ghanaian Christianity.

Again the charismatic type of leadership that most of the leaders of the charismatic church adopts makes them more attractive to a lot of people and thereby drawing more members to their churches.

In assessing the leadership trends among charismatic church today in Ghana, the study found out that the charismatic churches through their leadership has contributed a lot to the development of Ghanaian Christianity. They have been able to champion special leadership skills and instill some kind of enthusiasm among the Ghanaian youth about Christian ministry that has gone a long way to help increase people desire to serve the church. However, one challenge that came up as a result of their leadership is the issue of personality driven or cult that seems to be associated with their kind of leadership style.

5.3 Recommendations

The researcher wish to make the following recommendations based on the findings that were made in the study;

- A systematic biblical doctrine on leadership should be taught to enable people to understand the biblical concepts of leadership and apply them to their lives.
- Christian leaders should be made to understand that their leadership position must not be used wield power at the expense of God's own power. Their leadership

position should be a channel that God will use to bless people but not to crave attention for themselves.

- Christians should be taught to put their faith in God in all matters of life and not men or women of God. That the ritualizing and idolizing of leaders to the detriment of building people's faith in Christ should be avoided.
- Finally, it is also recommended that Christians should be made to understand that, the effectiveness of a person's leadership depends on moral uprightness and enhanced spirituality achieved through fasting, Bible study and prayer.

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PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED

An interview with Fergurson Anthony Bentum (Rev.), a district pastor of International Central Gospel Centre at Sefwi Wiaso in the Western Region, 4th June, 2015.

An interview with Nicholas Mensah (Rev.), a pastor of Action Chapel on 12th April, 2015.

Interview with Action Faith Chapel and International Central Gospel Church Members on 10th March, 2015 and 11th April, 2015.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you see the trend of charismatic leadership in Ghana?
2. Have they made any positive impact?
3. Is there any negative aspect of their leadership?
4. Why do people put their trust in some of these men than God?
5. What are the dangers associated with this type of leadership?
6. Do you envisage any break when these leaders are off the scene?
7. If so what should be the solution?