

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES



**THE FULFILMENT OF THE CHURCH'S MANDATE OF EVANGELISM: A CASE
STUDY OF AKWATIA LINE AND BANKO ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

EDWARD OTU-ANSAH

NOVEMBER, 2018

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**THE FULFILMENT OF THE CHURCH'S MANDATE OF EVANGELISM: A CASE
STUDY OF AKWATIA LINE AND BANKO ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

BY

EDWARD OTU-ANSAH

(60000101)

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE
IN MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY WITH MANAGEMENT.**

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

NOVEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this thesis report is the result of my own original research, except for sections for which references have been duly made, and to the best of my knowledge, no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signature:

Date:.....

Edward Otu-Ansah

(Student)

Signature:

Date:.....

Mr. Emmanuel Twumasi Ankrah

(Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:.....

Dr. Samuel Adubofour

(Head of Department of Theology)

DEDICATION

To God be the glory for His boundless love and grace, for seeing me through this work. I dedicate this work to my sweet and lovely mother, Mrs. Rebecca Otu-Ansah who has been a strong backbone to my upbringing especially my academic pursuit. Jehovah show you much kindness on the land of the living. Mum, I love you so much. Again to all missionaries who are laboring on the field of souls. Your labour in the Lord shall not be in vain.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To put this work forward, my ultimate help came from the Gracious God. To Him alone be all the glory now and forever.

Eternally grateful to my mother, Mrs Rebecca Otu-Ansah for her selfless giving.

Many thanks to my supervisor, Mr Emmanuel Twumasi-Ankrah, for his quality coaching and supervision.

Special thanks to all my lecturers, Dr. Samuel Adubofour, Head of Theology Department, Dr. David Okine, Dr. Peter White, for making this work possible through their kind suggestions and guidance.

I am grateful to Miss Hilda Tracy Sackitey, Mr. Nimako Kwaku, Mr. Solomon Agyei, Miss Matilda Nyarko Sarpong, Miss Gifty Darko and siblings whose spiritual, moral and financial support has brought me this far. Thank you all

Forever indebted to Pastor Daniel Obah-Lateo, for his editorial assistance without which this work would not have not been completed. God bless you

ABSTRACT

A survey of villages in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana revealed that regular and effective evangelism was lacking in the area. Thus, this study investigated the level of knowledge and commitment of members of the Assemblies of God to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in the rural communities of the area. The Akwatia Line Assemblies of God Church in Kumasi and the Banko Assemblies of God Church in the Sekyere East District were selected for the study. A sample of 117 members and 3 senior pastors of both churches were selected to respond to the research questions. The mixed approach method of research was used to collect and analyze the data. The results of the study revealed that the mandate of evangelism was being generally fulfilled to some degree in the rural areas of the Sekyere East District by the Assemblies of God church of Akwatia Line and Banko. However, the commitment and frequency at which evangelism was done in the area was low. There was still a significant percentage of members of the church who though recognized evangelism as a mandate, were not practically and regularly committed to fulfilling it, especially in rural areas. While some members did not at all take part in evangelism in the rural communities of the Sekyere East District by the church, others took part but not on regular basis. The study recommends that continuous education on evangelism, regular evangelism strategy planning meetings, regular open forums on evangelism in rural areas, and reduction in indoor programmes or balancing indoor programmes with evangelistic and missionary outreaches in rural areas, among others, be done by the church in order to increase church members' knowledge and commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.

Key words: Evangelism, mandate, fulfillment, the Great Commission, rural

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3 Research Questions.....	7
1.4 Aims and Objective(s).....	7
1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study.....	8
1.6 Research Methodology.....	8
1.7 Literature Review.....	9
1.7.1 Meaning of evangelism.....	9
1.7.2 The mandate of evangelism.....	13
1.7.3 Approaches or models of evangelism.....	14
1.7.4 Taking the Gospel to Rural dwellers.....	16
1.7.5 Christians' commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.....	16
1.7.6 Rural Evangelism: The Perception of the Clergy.....	18
1.8 Significance of Study.....	20
1.9 Organization of Chapter or Structure of the Work.....	21
CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.....	22
2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 History of the Origin of Evangelism.....	22
2.3 Evangelism: A Mandate of Christ to the Church.....	24
2.4 History of Evangelism in Ghana.....	25
2.5 Pentecostals' Involvement in Evangelism in Ghana.....	31
2.6 Background of the Assemblies of God.....	34
2.6.1 History of the Assemblies of God in Kumasi.....	34
2.7 Brief History of the Banko Assemblies of God Church.....	37

CHAPTER THREE: THE CHURCHES AND THE MANDATE OF EVANGELISM.....	39
3.1 Introduction.....	39
3.2 Data collection and rate of response	39
3.3 Data presentation	40
3.3.1 Background information of respondents.....	45
3.3.2 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism	46
3.3.3 Practice and commitment to evangelism in general	48
3.3.4 Participation in rural evangelism	50
3.3.5 Respondents’ assessment of the church’s performance in rural evangelism.....	52
3.3.6 Respondents’ assessment of their own performance in rural evangelism	53
3.3.7 Background information of respondents.....	54
3.3.8 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism	54
3.3.9 Practice and commitment to evangelism in general	57
3.3.10 Participation in rural evangelism	59
3.3.11 Respondents’ assessment of the church’s performance in rural evangelism.....	61
3.3.12 Respondents’ assessment of their own performance in rural evangelism	61
CHAPTER FOUR: INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA	64
4.1 Introduction.....	64
4.2 Observation.....	64
4.3 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism	66
4.4 Whose task is evangelism?	67
4.5 Practice and commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism	69
4.6 Participation in rural evangelism	72
4.8 Respondents’ assessment of their own commitment/performance in rural evangelism.	75
4.9 Challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.....	75
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECCOMMENDATIONS.....	78
5.1 Summary of findings.....	78
5.2 Conclusion	79
5.3 Recommendations.....	81
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	82

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 3.1 Background information of respondents (Akwatiline Assemblies).....45

Table 3.2 Background information of respondents (Banko Assemblies of God).....54

Section B: Akwatiline Assemblies of God

Figure 3.1 Understanding of the meaning of evangelism.....47

Figure 3.2 Whose task is evangelism?.....47

Figure 3.3 Scriptural reference in support of claim.....48

Figure 3.4 Do you witness to unbelievers?.....48

Figure 3.5 Frequency of witnessing.....49

Figure 3.6 Reasons for not witnessing50

Figure 3.7 Active participation in the church’s rural outreaches.....51

Figure 3.8 Frequency of participation.....51

Figure 3.9 Assessment of the church’s commitment/performance in rural evangelism.....52

Figure 3.10 Respondents’ assessment of their own commitment in rural evangelism.....53

Section C: Banko Assemblies of God

Figure 3.11 Understanding of the meaning of evangelism55

Figure 3.12 Whose task is evangelism?.....56

Figure 3.13 Scriptural reference in support of claim57

Figure 3.14 Do you witness to unbelievers?.....58

Figure 3.15 Frequency of witnessing58

Figure 3.16 Reasons for not witnessing58

Figure 3.17 Active participation in the church’s rural outreaches60

Figure 3.18 Frequency of participation.....60

Figure 3.19 Assessment of the church’s commitment/performance in rural evangelism61

Figure 3.20 Respondents’ assessment of their own commitment in rural evangelism....62

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The last express command of Jesus Christ to His disciples, and for that matter the church today, before His ascension was this: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15KJV). By interpretation, this was a command to every believing follower of Christ to preach the gospel of Christ to the unbelieving in order for them to come to believe and accept Christ Jesus. Since it was a command from Christ the Lord to every one of His followers, it can be concluded that, as a whole, preaching the gospel of Christ to the unbelieving is a mandate to the church which is a body of Christians. Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines mandate as, “an authoritative command; especially a formal order from a superior court or official to an inferior one.”¹ Thus, the command to go out and preach the gospel is a mandate the church or Christians have obey.

In other words, preaching the gospel to every creature as Christ commanded is referred to as “evangelism.” In Lineamenta evangelism is referred to as “the process of bringing the Good news into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new.”² He adds that evangelism is effected when devotees send the teachings of Christ to others who are ignorant of this message and the latter in turn spread the salvific message.³ According to Roy Pointer, evangelism in the New Testament is announcing of the good news about Jesus, but then the practice of evangelism, both in the New Testament and

¹ Merriam Webster’s Dictionary for PC

² Lineamenta, *The Church in Africa and Her Evangelising Mission Towards the Year* (Vatican City, 2000), 46.

³ Lineamenta, 46.

today, embraces a host of different activities: so many activities, in fact, that the precise definition of evangelism is fraught with controversy.⁴

However, with reference to Scriptures, Christ and His disciples, evangelism in this study simply refers to the practice whereby the church or a believer of Christ, in response to Christ's command, makes a deliberate effort in various ways to preach the Gospel of Christ to an unbeliever, "baptizing those who believe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded" (Matt 28:19-20KJV). From the example of Christ and His disciples (Matt 9:35KJV), evangelism involves preaching the gospel of salvation to the lost (Matt 10:7KJV); healing the sick and diseases in the name of Jesus (Matt 10:1,8; Acts 10:38KJV); casting out devils and setting the oppressed free (Matt 10:1,8; Acts 10:38KJV); and baptizing and teaching those who believe to observe all things whatsoever the Lord commanded (Matt 28:20KJV).

Fulfilling the mandate of evangelism is a necessity as long as it is an express, urgent command, and heartbeat of Christ to the church. Evangelism is every Christian's mandate to fulfill. Christ Himself during His earthly ministry was fully involved in evangelism both in urban and rural areas. All the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – testify of Christ's evangelistic ministry while on earth. In the following references for example we read:

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 4:17KJV).

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt 4:23KJV).

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matt 9:35KJV).

⁴ Roy Pointer, *Growth Book*, (London: 1976), 50.

“And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee” (Luke 4:43KJV).

The apostles of Christ and their converts were also involved in evangelism as the Lord commanded. They made evangelism their priority. The Gospels and the book of Acts of the Apostles testify of this. In the following references, for example, we read:

“And he [Jesus] called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them” (Mark 6:7-12KJV).

And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen” (Mark 16:20 KJV)

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4KJV).

Like Christ and His disciples, the Assemblies of God, Ghana has a great history of evangelism and making disciples for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit as the Lord commanded. As a Classical Pentecostal Church it has played a key role in evangelizing and making disciples for Christ in Ghana. Classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana refer to those churches which are members of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC), now the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches (GPCC). The Assemblies of God is one of the most prominent Classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana. It was a founding member of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC). The founding member Churches were: Assemblies of God church, The Church of Pentecost, Elim Pentecostal Church, the Christ Apostolic Church, and the Apostolic Church. The Assemblies of God from the USA arrived in Ghana in 1931 and has been suggested by many to be the first

Pentecostal Church in Ghana. However, it is known to be the first missionary sponsored Classical Pentecostal Church in Ghana. The Assemblies of God is believed to have entered the country across the northern frontier from French-speaking Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Her mission work thus began in the northern part of Ghana from where it expanded to the south. The Assemblies of God, therefore, up till today has a very large following in the northern part of Ghana and people from northern descent in the south. Its longest serving Ghanaian Chairman, Rev. Dr. Simon Asore is of northern descent.⁵

Given its history, it is very important to know how committed the Assemblies of God is presently to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas of the country. With time, many Pentecostal churches are getting pre-occupied with non-evangelistic church activities in urban centres to a large extent that they are not effectively reaching out to souls in rural areas with the gospel. More indoor programmes to empower the spiritual and economic lives of church members are regular and more in today's classical Pentecostal churches than outdoor or outreach programmes designed and devoted to preaching the Gospel of salvation to dying souls in rural areas in Ghana in fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism given by Christ Jesus.

It is against this background that the researcher seeks to find out the present state of knowledge and commitment of members of the Akwatialine and Banko Assemblies of God to evangelism in rural areas.

⁵Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "The Church in the African State – The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana", *Journal of African Thought*, Vol 1, No. 2: 51; and Jones Amanor Darkwa, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, 13 (April 2004), Web.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The situation at Banko and its neighbouring villages in the Sekyere East District is evidence and an implication that the Assemblies of God and other Pentecostals, comparatively are doing less in fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.

A brief survey of villages in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region by the researcher revealed that regular and effective evangelism was lacking in the area, probably as a result of inadequate participation of urban churches. In an interview with Frank Osei, pastor of the Banko Assemblies of God in the district, it was realized that the church there would have made more converts and impact in that village and its neighbouring villages with regular evangelistic support from a well-established branch of the church in an urban centre such as Kumasi. According to him the Banko Assemblies of God was founded in 2003 with Osei Kofi, a founding member as pastor. The church, which began with twelve members, now had a membership of ninety people with Frank Osei as the head pastor. The church through her little efforts had been able to plant other three churches at Akrofoso, Atwea, and Beposo, its neighbouring villages. This implies that the Banko Assemblies of God could do better in reaching out to more souls in the area if it had regular support from a sister church from an urban centre.

Like the villages in the Sekyere East District, many villages in other parts of Ghana are yet to be effectively reached with the Gospel. In his article, *Mission Fields in Ghana: the Challenge of Unreached Peoples*, Richard Foli, observes that, “There is a general tendency of church leadership being pre-occupied with their immediate environment- “forgetting” people living in rural areas.” He reveals that although about 69% of Ghana’s population [according to the 2000 population Census] profess to be Christians, there are many distinct groups within the total population that are “unreached” by the Church and that this is a great challenge confronting the

Church in Ghana. Foli draws attention to three mission fields which he came up with in the course of his study of the Ghanaian church scene: a) the neglected mission field, b) the unnoticed mission field, c) the forgotten mission field. By “the forgotten mission field,” Foli refers to the great number of unchurched towns and villages in Ghana. He points out that The Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) survey reveals that 68% of the 21,000 rural towns and villages have no regular Protestant Sunday worship service. These 14,000 or so unchurched towns and villages constitute what is designated the “*forgotten mission field*” in his work. According to him, people in this “forgotten” mission field are mostly subsistence farmers and fishermen. They are mostly illiterates who are in the grip of traditional religious beliefs and practices. In terms of development these rural people lack good drinking water, electricity and health services.⁶

Consequently, souls in the area are getting lost to sin and the devil. If Christians or churches continue to do less of evangelism at Banko and other rural areas of the country, many rural dwellers will die unsaved for Christ and their blood will be required from the church as the Lord revealed through Ezekiel the prophet:

“When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand” (Ezek 3:18 KJV).

Thus, the study sought to find out the present state of the church’s commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas in the country.

⁶Richard Foli, “Mission Fields in Ghana: The Challenge of Unreached Peoples”, *Journal of Methodist University College, Globus-Liste.org*, accessed January 2017.

1.3 Research Questions

The main question this study sought to address was: “What is the present state of the church’s commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas in Ghana in terms of programmes and efforts towards rural evangelism?”

In addition, the study addresses specific questions such as: What is the level of knowledge, understanding, and participation of church members in rural evangelism? What are the challenging factors to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas by the church? What can be done to revive commitments to rural evangelism by the church?

1.4 Aims and Objective(s)

The main aim of the research was to investigate the present state of commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas of Ghana by the Assemblies of God church at Akwatia Line in Kumasi and Banko in the Seyere East District of Ashanti Region. Specific objectives were to:

1. Find out actual programmes and efforts the church has in place towards fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.
2. Find out the level of knowledge and understanding of church members about the mandate of evangelism.
3. Find out the mode of participation in rural evangelism by church members in fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism.
4. Identify the challenging factors to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas by the church.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

Geographically, the study was limited in scope to only the Akwatia Line Assemblies of God in Kumasi and the Banko Assemblies of God in the Sekyere East District, all in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

With regard to focus, the study focused on the fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism in rural areas of the country with Akwatia Line and Banko Assemblies of God Church as a case study. The study investigated the church's level of knowledge, commitment, and challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas. In other words, the study was designed to investigate the level of knowledge, understanding, and commitment of members of the Akwatia Line and Banko Assemblies of God to preaching the Gospel to souls in rural areas with the aim of discipling them for Christ in response to His command to do so.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study is a case study, which employed an integration of quantitative and qualitative research approach to collect data in order to understand and statistically describe the state of knowledge, commitment, and challenges of members of the Akwatia Line and Banko Assemblies of God to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.

Primary data was obtained from the leaders and members of both Akwatia Line and Banko Assemblies of God using structured questionnaires and interviews. Secondary data was collected from previous studies relating to the subject from both printed and online journal articles, books, magazines, newspapers, minutes of leaders' meetings etc.

The target population for the study included all the leaders and members of the Akwatia Line Assemblies of God in Kumasi and the Banko Assemblies of God at Sekyere East District. These

two Assemblies of God churches in the Ashanti Region were selected simple random probability technique.

A convenient sample of 130 members and 3 senior pastors of both churches were selected to participate in the study. The 130 members who participated in the study were selected using the simple random sampling technique, which implies that each member of both churches had equal chance of being selected. However, the leaders were selected purposively to participate in the study.

The data collected was statistically analyzed using Microsoft Office Excel. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to describe respondents' demographics as well as their responses and views on fulfilling the mandate of evangelism at Banko. Then, a critical analysis of the views of the respondents was done with reference to the literature reviewed.

1.7 Literature Review

1.7.1 Meaning of evangelism

Evangelism is understood differently and practiced in different ways by different people. Also, a lot of literature exists on the meaning of evangelism or what evangelism should be. To start with, the term “evangelism” has been used interchangeably with “evangelization”, “mission”, “soul-winning”, and “witnessing”. According to Bosch for, the older term still dominant in mainline churches is “evangelism”, but both evangelicals and Roman Catholics have begun to give preference to the term “evangelization”.⁷ This however, remains contestable.

⁷ David J. Bosch, “Evangelism: Theological Currents and Cross Currents Today,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research Journals*, Sagepub.com, (1987): 1.

The word, “evangelism,” comes from the Greek word *euaggelion*, most literally translated in the noun form meaning, “gospel” or “good news.” In the verb form (*euaggelizesthai*), the meaning of the word changes slightly to “announce” or “bring good news.” The Greek word in its various forms appears fifty-five times in the New Testament. In addition to the before-mentioned translations, the Greek word is also translated as “preach.”

In Lineamenta, evangelism is referred to as “the process of bringing the Good news into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new.” He adds that “evangelism is effected when devotees send the teachings of Christ to others who are ignorant of this message and the latter in turn spread the salvific message.”⁸Miano, also talks about the good news in his definition of evangelism. He refers to evangelism as “the announcement, proclamation, and/or preaching of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), the good news of and about Jesus Christ. Therefore, the gospel is a communicated message – communicated in verbal (Luke 7:22) and/or written (Luke 1:1-4) form.”⁹ Like Lineamenta and Miano, Pointer notes that, “evangelism in the New Testament is announcing of the good news about Jesus.”¹⁰

Bosch, who tried to distinguish mission from evangelism, has a slightly different view. In the view of Bosch, “evangelism has to do with those who are no longer Christians or who are nominal Christians; it refers to the calling back to Christ of those who have become estranged

⁸Lineamenta, *The Church in Africa*, 46.

⁹Tony Miano, “*What is Evangelism?*” (California: Genesis Publishing Group, 2008), 2.

¹⁰Roy Pointer, *Growth Book*, 50.

from the church.”¹¹Kritzinger, a critic of Bosch, states that, “the search for acceptable definitions for evangelism and mission represents the core of David Bosch's missiological efforts during the 1980s.” He explains that, “in a seminal article Bosch listed twelve interpretations of "mission" and "evangelism" and their interrelatedness. Two years later he grouped these together into two major tendencies: (a) those who use mission and evangelism more or less as synonyms, and (b) those who distinguish between them in a number of ways.”¹²

Bosch's shortest definition of mission, first given in *Witness to the world* and subsequently repeated is: "Mission is the total task which God has set the Church for the salvation of the world." In *Witness to the world*, Kritzinger quotes Bosch to have stated the following:¹³

- Mission has to do with the crossing of frontiers ... It is the task of the Church in movement, the Church that lives for others ...
- Mission is the symbol of the Church moving towards the world.
- Mission takes place where the Church, in her total involvement with the world and the comprehensiveness of her message, bears her testimony in word and deed in the form of a servant, with reference to unbelief, exploitation, discrimination, and violence, but also with reference to salvation, healing, liberation, reconciliation and righteousness.

Now, in his various writings, Bosch gives the following definitions for evangelism distinguishing it from mission:

¹¹ Bosch, “Evangelism: Theological Currents”, 1.

¹²J.J. Kritzinger, “Mission and Evangelism: A Critical Appraisal of David Bosch’s View,” *Sabinet.co.za*, 1990. Web.

¹³ Kritzinger, *Sabinet.co.za*,

- Evangelism is the inviting and in gathering dimension of the total mission, whereas the other involvements represent the serving, self-emptying and humanising dimension
- Evangelism is the *core, heart or centre* of mission; it consists in the proclamation of salvation in Christ to non-believers, in announcing forgiveness of sins, in calling people to repentance and faith in Christ, in inviting them to become living members of Christ's earthly community, and to begin a life in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Evangelism is calling people to mission.
- Evangelism may be defined as that dimension and activity of the church's mission which, by word and deed, offers every person, everywhere, a valid opportunity to be directly challenged to a radical reorientation of their lives, which involves, *inter alia*, deliverance from slavery to the world and its powers, embracing Christ as Saviour and Lord, becoming a living member of his community, and being incorporated into his service of reconciliation, peace and justice on earth and integrated into God's purpose of placing all things under the rule of Christ.

However, worth noting is that, common to all the views and definitions of evangelism above is the Gospel (the good news about Christ) and the church's duty to take the Gospel to those outside Christ and the church in order to get them believe and transform. The church's response and commitment to this mandate in all areas including urban and rural areas, is the concern of this study. In this sense, my own operational definition of evangelism for the purpose of this study is, the good and regular practice whereby the church, in response to Christ's command (Mk 16:15), takes the total Gospel to every creature everywhere possible by any means possible so they can be saved from eternal damnation through the power of the Gospel.

1.7.2 The mandate of evangelism

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines mandate as, "an authoritative command; especially a formal order from a superior court or official to an inferior one." Most literature or teachings on evangelism emphasize that evangelism is a mandate for the church, in which case mandate means Christ's authoritative command or mission to fulfill. They refer to evangelism as the Great Commission with reference to Christ' command in Mark 16:15: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15KJV). Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals, Pentecostals as well as Charismatics recognize and stress on evangelism as the church's mandate, or mission, or greatest commission in their doctrines and writings.

To start with, the Catholic doctrine on evangelization has it that, "evangelization in the broad sense sums up the church's entire mission: her whole life consists in accomplishing the *tradition Evangelii*, the proclamation and handing on of the Gospel, which is the "power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16) and which, in the final essence, is identified with Jesus Christ himself (1 Cor 1:24)."¹⁴

Some individual authors have also argued in support of evangelism as the church's mandate and greatest commission. For instance, Bavinck's basis of evangelism as the mandate of the church is in reference to the Scriptures. From 1 Corinthians 9:16 he identifies the preaching of the good news as a mandate to the church and that it is not to be negotiated. He explains that Apostle Paul seldom refers directly to the missionary command of Christ as the motive of missions. To do so would have been superfluous, since the command of Christ lay so close at hand. Paul regards his

¹⁴ Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, December, 2007)

own work as an apostle as having been thrust upon him by Christ: “for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” And this necessity (anagke) is certainly the command of Christ; for it is Christ who drives Paul onward and holds him in an unbreakable grasp.¹⁵

1.7.3 Approaches or models of evangelism

There are several opposing views with regard to approaches to or methods of evangelism. Bosch is a critic of several approaches to or models of evangelism. Bosch criticizes the following models of evangelism as incomplete¹⁶:

1. The "*let us help you*" or "*presence*" model he finds "profoundly legitimate", because the church must first *be* there before it can get involved in evangelism. He summarizes and quotes, with approval, the stance adopted by the French "worker priest movement" in Le Havre, "We first have to *create room* for our witness by *identifying* with the workers, otherwise they are unable to hear the Gospel". He judges this view to be inadequate, however, because verbal witness is and remains an indispensable part of evangelism.
2. Other practitioners of evangelism say, "*let God help you*". Livingston calls this "*power evangelism*" Bosch suggests that this "*signs and wonders*" approach should not be dismissed too "globally", although he finds it too egocentric. What about the call to service?
3. A third group says, "*Hear the Word!*" This eminently Reformed "proclamation" approach emphasizes the perspective that the objective facts of the Gospel are to be communicated. The danger in this strategy, however, lies in its mono-dimensional nature.

¹⁵J.H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*, (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1960), 42.

¹⁶David J. Bosch, in Krizinger

4. In "*persuasion evangelism*" appeals are made to "*make a decision*". Salvation is presented as a wonderful "deal". Many practices accompanying this approach are inconsistent with the Gospel. Nevertheless, says Bosch, it should not be dismissed, because Christ is indeed the answer!

5. Hunter, whom Bosch follows in the description of the above models, chooses to appeal to people to "*become Christian disciples*". Bosch accepts this, on condition that it is well understood what it means to become a disciple of Christ!

6. One other conception Bosch deals with is what some call "*prophetic evangelism*". It is described as the calling "to unmask the principalities and powers". On this Bosch remarks: "that this kind of ministry is legitimate, is uncontested, but it is not *evangelism*. Principalities and powers, societies and nations can be challenged through the church's prophetic ministry, but they cannot *as* principalities, powers and societies repent and come to faith."

I do not agree with Bosch in his criticisms of the above approaches. I believe in the diverse approaches to evangelism as long as they result in the salvation of the sinner. Whichever way the gospel is presented, what is necessary in the end is whether it ushers people to personally accept Christ who is the centrality of the gospel. In my own view, any approach should be acceptable as long as it aims and succeeds at bringing the Christ-less to Christ for transformation. However, it is worth noting that no approach is complete in itself.

1.7.4 Taking the Gospel to Rural dwellers

Christ's command to the disciples and to all His believing followers is to "Go ye into all the world, [not excluding rural areas] and preach the gospel to every creature" [not excluding rural dwellers] (Mark 16:15KJV). This implies that the Gospel is for all humanity in the world including people in rural areas.

In the *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization* the authors explain that, "Every person has the right to hear the 'Good News' of the God who reveals and gives himself in Christ, so that each one can live out in its fullness his or her proper calling". It a right which the Lord himself confers on every person, so that every man and woman is able truly to say with Saint Paul: Jesus Christ "loved me and gave himself up for me" (*Gal 2:20*). This right implies the corresponding duty to evangelize: "If I preach the Gospel, this is no reason for me to boast; it is a duty for me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (*1 Cor 9:16*; cf. *Rom 10:14*). Thus, it is evident how every activity of the Church has an essential evangelizing dimension and must never be separated from the commitment to help all persons to meet Christ in faith, which is the primary objective of evangelization: "Social issues and the Gospel are inseparable. When we bring people only knowledge, ability, technical competence and tools, we bring them too little"¹⁷

1.7.5 Christians' commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas

Generally, it has been observed that the response and commitment of Christians to evangelism today is poor and ineffective. The authors of the *Doctrinal Note Some Aspects of Evangelization* observed, "there is today a growing confusion which leads many to leave the missionary

¹⁷ Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, December, 2007)

command of the Lord unheard and ineffective (cf. *Mt* 28:19). Often it is maintained that any attempt to convince others on religious matters is a limitation of their freedom. From this perspective, it would only be legitimate to present one's own ideas and to invite people to act according to their consciences, without aiming at their conversion to Christ and to the Catholic faith. It is enough, so they say, to help people to become more human or more faithful to their own religion; it is enough to build communities which strive for justice, freedom, peace and solidarity. Furthermore, some maintain that Christ should not be proclaimed to those who do not know him, nor should joining the Church be promoted, since it would also be possible to be saved without explicit knowledge of Christ and without formal incorporation in the Church."¹⁸

Rural areas are most often neglected in the practice and fulfillment of evangelism. Gary Farley in his book *Rural Evangelism* observed, "it appears that some evangelism strategists have written off places like Carrollton which is a rural area and the other declining communities of my county. They say let's focus where most of the people live and where a few well designed strategies can be used and transported from one suburbs to the next all across the nation. There is wisdom in this; but there is also error, and sometime a little arrogance."¹⁹

Like Gray, Richard Foli found the same thing in Ghana. In his article, *Mission Fields in Ghana: the Challenge of Unreached Peoples* Foli, observes: "There is a general tendency of church leadership being pre-occupied with their immediate environment- "forgetting" people living in rural areas." Foli reveals that although about 69% of Ghana's population [according to the 2000

¹⁸ Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization

¹⁹ Gary Farley, *Rural Evangelism* (Alabama: Pickens Baptist Association, Partner in the Center for Rural Church Leadership, 2007), 2.

population Census] profess to be Christians, there are many distinct groups within the total population that are “unreached” by the Church and that this is a great challenge confronting the Church in Ghana. Foli draws attention to three mission fields which he came up with in the course of his study of the Ghanaian church scene: a) the neglected mission field, b) the unnoticed mission field, c) the forgotten mission field. By “the forgotten mission field,” Foli refers to the great number of unchurched towns and villages in Ghana. He points out that The Ghana Evangelism Committee (GEC) survey reveals that 68% of the 21,000 rural towns and villages have no regular Protestant Sunday worship service. These 14,000 or so unchurched towns and villages constitute what is designated the “*forgotten mission field*” in his work. According to him, people in this “forgotten” mission field are mostly subsistence farmers and fishermen. They are mostly illiterates who are in the grip of traditional religious beliefs and practices. In terms of development these rural people lack good drinking water, electricity and health services.²⁰

1.7.6 Rural Evangelism: The Perception of the Clergy

The perception of the clergy on evangelism, and in particular, with regard to engaging in evangelism in rural areas is necessary to consider. Kevine argues that, “When pastors from liturgical and sacramental church backgrounds envision evangelism; they often see it as it has been defined by the Evangelicals. They picture in their minds altar calls and revival meetings, activities that are foreign to them. They struggle with the possibility that if they become active in evangelism; they will be thought of as “Evangelical” and will be forced to compromise their theological beliefs and their church traditions. They shy away from this prospect and turn their attention to other important congregational activities, leaving evangelism to someone else.”²¹

²⁰Richard Foli, *Mission Fields in Ghana*,

²¹Kevine E. Ruffcorn, *Rural Evangelism: Catching the Vision*, (Ausborg Publishing, 1994), 52.

In line with Kevine, I am of the view that in as much as the Clergy has some liturgical and sacramental duties to perform, the clergy will have nothing to do until people come to church and it is the people that constitute the church. The people can come to church mainly through evangelism and moreover Jesus made it clear that we should go into the world and make disciples. The clergy has to learn to combine both their sacramental duties and evangelism.

Kevine further states that, “Others may have different, yet equally false visions of evangelism. When the term “evangelism” comes up in their conversation, they picture themselves knocking on doors throughout their small town or rural community and asking friends and neighbors’ about their religious beliefs or encouraging them to be active again in the life of the congregation.”²²

According to Jim Petersen, “inherent in man is a craving for involvement in things of significance. There is nothing more significant or more adventurous than participating in the purposes of God- sharing in finishing His work. His work has to do with people. Jesus expressed feelings of personal fulfillment after talking to the Samaritan woman. “I have food to eat that you know nothing about...My food, said Jesus, “is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work” (John 4:32, 34). Jesus had been fed well by His conversation. As Christians we have a natural concern for evangelism.”²³

Theological beliefs, church traditions and other activities can easily replace rural evangelism since rural evangelism may not look attractive and appetizing to the clergy. The researcher points out that, the clergy needs to understand that a servant is not greater than the master. Jesus who is the head of the church set the example in Luke 8:1: “And it came to pass afterward, that he went

²² Kevine, 52.

²³ Jim Peterson, *Evangelism for Our Generation*, (NavPress Publishing Ministry, 1985), 151.

throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him”.

The researcher holds the view that, there is a huge fulfillment if a Christian aligns himself to God’s ultimate purpose for his life but we must also notice that it is not always the case that Christians fulfill God’s purpose for their lives. The fulfillment of God’s purpose is not automatic.

Real fulfillment comes when we engage ourselves in the Master’s business of evangelism. As quoted by Petersen that as Christians we have natural concern for evangelism. The researcher comes from the angle that, in fact, that is how it is supposed to be but in reality, many Christians are heartless when it comes to the issue of evangelism. Accounting to this unconcern includes: the cares of this life, crave for materialism, lack of compassion for the lost and many more.

1.8 Significance of Study

The results of the study are important both for theory and practice. The study has provided empirical evidence on the state of commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas of Ghana by the Assemblies of God church at Akwatia Line in Kumasi and Banko in the Seyere East District of Ashanti Region. It has provided hitherto non-existing empirical information about the level of knowledge and understanding of church members about the mandate of evangelism and especially challenging factors to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas by the members of the church. These findings of the study serve as a source of empirical information for the leadership of both churches studied to understand the members’ views on rural evangelism. Thus, the information serves as a guide to the leadership of the church in planning or making policies regarding rural evangelism.

Beyond the Akwatia Line Assemblies of God Church, other Pentecostal churches in Ghana that wish to fulfil the mandate of evangelism in rural areas can use the results of this study as a reliable source of information to guide their planning, preparation, and organization of members of the church. The results of the study also calls for Pentecostal churches to see the need to reach rural dwellers with the gospel with urgency as it provides some evidence of the inadequacy of the gospel in rural areas using Banko as a case. It calls churches in urban centres to understand how the churches have less fulfilled the mandate of evangelizing rural areas for Christ.

Finally, the results of the study adds to the body of empirical literature on evangelism in Ghana for researchers, the clergy, and missionaries. The results of the study can be used as basis for further studies on fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas in Ghana.

1.9 Organization of Chapter or Structure of the Work

The study is divided into five chapters: Chapter One is the introduction and background of the study giving a review of the topic, statement of the problem, research questions, aim and objectives, scope of the study, research methodology, literature review and significance of the study. Chapter Two is background, concepts, and definition of terms of the study. Chapter Three concentrates on presentation of research findings. Chapter four analyzes the research findings and views of respondents. Chapter five is a general summary of the study, conclusion, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the history of the origin of evangelism, the mandate of evangelism, history of evangelism in Ghana, Classical Pentecostals involvement in evangelism in Ghana, and background of the Assemblies of God, the case study.

2.2 History of the Origin of Evangelism

Evangelism as a Christian practice has a long history. If evangelism is simply referred to as all efforts and activities geared towards reconciling humanity to God (2Cor 5:18-20) then we can trace the history of its origin to the Garden of Eden right after the fall of man. God the Father was the originator of evangelism when after the fall of Adam and Eve the Father came down to seek and reconcile them to Himself (Gen 3: 1-16). God made and announced His provision to reconcile fallen humanity to Himself; the provision God made was the seed of the woman – Jesus Christ – as stated in Gen 3:15 which says:

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (KJV).

The Patriarchs and the Prophets, from Moses to John the Baptist, became the evangelists God the Father used as instruments to call fallen humanity back to Himself for fellowship until the coming of Christ. Peter referred to Noah, a patriarch, as a preacher of righteousness (2Peter 2:5). Noah preached righteousness and warned the people of the flood that was to come.

The prophets continued to preach and to reconcile sinful man to God until the coming of Christ Jesus. Jesus took the baton after his baptism and temptation in the wilderness and began to

preach the kingdom of God and calling humanity to repentance for forgiveness and entrance into the kingdom. In Matthew 4:17 we are told: “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” We also read it in Mark 1:14-15 which says: “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (KJV).

Jesus continued to preach the gospel of the kingdom in cities, towns, and villages to the masses and individuals until His death. In Matthew 9:35 we read: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (KJV). During His earthly ministry Jesus made evangelism His priority. He was fully involved in evangelism both in urban and rural areas with His disciples. All the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – testify of Christ’s evangelistic ministry while on earth.

The apostles of Christ and their converts for Christ were also involved in evangelism as the Lord commanded. They made evangelism their priority. The Gospels and the book of Acts of the Apostles testify of this. In the following references, for example, we read:

And he [Jesus] called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them” (Mark 6:7-12 KJV).

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. (KJV)

Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

2.3 Evangelism: A Mandate of Christ to the Church

Before His ascension Jesus Christ commissioned and handed the mandate of evangelism over to His immediate disciples and all His believing followers to continue to preach the Gospel till He returns to take away His people and judge the world. He demanded of His disciples to take the Gospel of salvation to every part of the world to every creature. In the following passages of Scripture, He commands his believing followers (all true Christians) to fulfill the mandate of evangelism till He returns:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen (Mark 16:15-20).

2.4 History of Evangelism in Ghana

The history of the evangelization of Ghana begins with the history of Christianization of Ghana. This is said to have begun with the Portuguese European explorations in the 15th century.²⁴ Among these explorers were Catholic Priests commissioned by a Papal Bull to create "Holy faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and lead in this faith all souls desirous of being saved."²⁵ The Portuguese landed in Shama in 1471 where they symbolized their presence by planting a cross on its shores before they moved to Edina (Elmina). There they were enchanted by immense deposits of gold wealth. This glittering attraction diminished the urge to evangelize, since the clerics themselves became entangled in trade rather than evangelization. In 1482 the Portuguese erected a castle in Elmina to fortify their interest in the lucrative gold trade, which was later to expand to include slaves and other items.²⁶

As a result, conversion of the Africans remained virtually negligible until the arrival of Portuguese Augustinian and French Capuchin monks in Elmina during the latter part of the 16th century. However, the Dutch conquest of the Elmina castle in 1637 saw the intensification of the slave trade. This greatly frustrated the renewed attempt at Christianity, its survival precisely Roman Catholicism.

Protestant attempts to revive the evangelization process, through intensive education, began with the Dutch Moravians in 1742, followed by The Church of England's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1751.

²⁴Brigid M. Sackey, "Evangelization of Ghana: Historical and Contemporary Roles of Women," *Paper presented to the Women's Committee of the Christian Council of Ghana*, February 1992.

²⁵S.K. Odamtten, *The Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development 1820-1880* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1978), 23.

²⁶Hans Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 12.

The Moravian Missionaries in Ghana

After the apparently unsuccessful attempt by the earliest Roman Catholic missionaries in gaining a foothold in the colonies, the Moravian United Brethren Mission sent out two missionaries in what was to become the first serious attempt at evangelizing the natives. In the 1730s, two Moravian missionaries Chretein Protten and Henrich Huckuff arrived in the Gold Coast. Protten was actually of both Dane and Ghanaian descent. Born in 1715 in Christianborg to a Dane father and a Ghanaian mother, he was educated first in Christianborg castle and later in Denmark. Protten worked till his death in 1769 but did not win many converts. In 1742, another mulatto, Jocabus Elisa Johannes Captain was sent by Moravians in Holland to Ghana. Born to an Ivorian mother, he was sent as a young boy to Holland and educated at the University of Leyden. He became the first African to be ordained into the Protestant priesthood since the Reformation. In Ghana, he started two schools in Elmina in 1742 for mulattos and one for black natives but both collapsed after his death in 1747.²⁷

Anglican Missionaries in Ghana

Next to follow the Moravians to the Gold Coast was the Church of England Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. In 1754, the Society sent Rev. Thomson to Cape Coast. After five years of hard work with little success, he returned home an invalid. What he is best remembered for, nevertheless, was the sponsoring of three Cape Coast boys to be educated in Britain. Unfortunately, two of them died in Britain, leaving Philip Quacoe the only survivor. He successfully completed his education in Britain and returned a fully ordained priest of the

²⁷Robert Aboagye Mensah, "The Protestant Experience, in Ghana," *The Journal of African Christian Thought*, vol. 1, No. 2, December 1998) 34; Jones Amanor Darkwa, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation", *CyberJournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 13(April 2004), Web.

Anglican Church to work in Cape Coast in 1766. He also could not convert many natives in Cape Coast where he worked till his death in 1816. His main contribution, however, was the school he established and ran till his death. From 1828, the representative of the Colonial Administration revived the school and was continued by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel till their activities ceased in Ghana in 1904.²⁸

By 1828, the Basel Mission (now Presbyterian Church of Ghana) had consolidated its missionary activities among the Akuapem, gradually extending to other peoples of the Eastern region. The Wesleyan Methodist settled in the coastal region in 1834. Meanwhile the Bremen Mission (Evangelical Presbyterian Church) entered the Volta region from Togoland in 1847, and finally the Roman Catholics staged a successful come-back to the coast in 1880, and entered the north of Ghana, which had already been Islamized in 1806.²⁹

Basel Missionaries in Ghana

The lack of success of earlier missionaries in the Gold Coast was evidenced by the fact that by the beginning of the 19th century, very little headway had been made in the evangelization of natives. It was only from 1828 onwards when the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society sent out a team of four missionaries to Christianborg in Accra that Christianity and western education could be said to have begun in southern Ghana. The Basel Evangelical Missionary Society was invited by the Danish Government to Christianborg to help meet the educational and spiritual needs of the mixture of mulatto and white population that was growing in Christianborg. The interest of the Basel missionaries, however, seemed to be in the indigenous population rather than on the issues of European soldiers' promiscuity. A compromise on the two interests,

²⁸Aboagye Mensah, "The Protestant Experience", 35; Amanor Darkwa, "Pentecostalism in Ghana"

²⁹Aboagye Mensah, 35; Amanor Darkwa

nevertheless, became a necessary condition for permission by the Danish authority for inland work.

In 1828, four missionaries arrived in Christianborg from the Basel Missionary Society in Basel, Switzerland. They were Karl F. Salbad, Gotlieb, Holzwarth, and Johannes Henke all German and Johannes Schmidt a Swiss. The slowness of communication in the 19th century delayed the relay of the information concerning their early deaths so much so that before news of the death of the last one reached the headquarters of the Mission Board, a decision had been made to send reinforcement.

In 1832, three others arrived in the Gold Coast. They were Andreas Riss and Peter Jager from Denmark and Christian Friedrich Heinze, a medical doctor from Saxony. Dr. Heinze was to study the greatest risk to survival of western missionaries – tropical diseases – and make recommendations for preventive measures. Incidentally, he was the first of his team to die, leaving the two Danes. Not too long after that, Riss became a lone Basel missionary when he buried Jager after his death through illness. He himself nearly followed if a native herbalist who saw him in his initial convulsions had not saved him. Undaunted Riss penetrated inland and built the Basel Mission's first inland station in the Gold Coast at Akropong, the capital of the Akwapim State. By dint of Riss' hard work, in Akropong, it soon grew to become the nerve center of the Basel Mission in Ghana.

With the help of freed slaves from Jamaica who were brought in on the advice of Riss, the Basel Missionary work began expanding to nearby towns such as Aburi and in eight years positive signs of growth had begun appearing. At this time, about forty native Christians, besides the West Indians were gathering for service both at Akropong and at Aburi. From the 1850s,

considerable progress was achieved in the spread of the Christian faith far inland to Kwahu, Akim and Asante to the extent that in 1869 the total membership of the Basel Mission was 1,851 from 8 mission districts and 24 congregations.

This great achievement was through the additional effort of later missionaries like Ramseyer and his wife and a host of natives who were trained and ordained catechists and priests of the Basel Mission. Chief among these were Mohenu, a former fetish priest, Boakye, Reindorf (a mulatto and a historian), Ablo, Quist, P. Hall, Koranteng and Date, in 1917, after the 1st World War, Britain's, suspicious of the Basel Missionaries resulted in the replacement of the Basel missionaries by Scottish ones. This became significant in setting the stage for the missionary work began by the Basel Mission to become the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast.

Bremen Missionaries in Ghana

Another Missionary Society, which worked in close collaboration with the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society, was the Bremen Mission (Northern German Lutheran Mission). From 1847 onwards, Bremen missionaries settled and worked among the Ewes at the eastern side of the Gold Coast, an area, which covered what was later to be, designated "Dutch Togoland." Out of the Bremen Mission emerged the present day Evangelical Presbyterian Church. This has lately been split into "The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana" and "The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana."³⁰

³⁰ Aboagye Mensah, "The Protestant Experience", 36.

Wesleyan Missionaries in Ghana

The introduction of Methodism was the second most serious attempt at evangelizing the natives of Gold Coast, the first one being the efforts of the Basel Evangelical Society. The Roman Catholic had made an unsuccessful attempt earlier while the Bremen effort began sometime after the Methodists had begun work in earnest.

Before the Wesleyan Missionary society sent the first mission to the Gold Coast, what was later to become the Methodist Church of Ghana had begun as a Bible Band called the “Society for the promoting of Christian knowledge” by two natives, Joseph Smith and William de Graft at Cape Coast. The first missionary sent by Wesleyan Missionary Society in London to the Gold Coast was Joseph Dunwell. He arrived in the Gold Coast in 1835 and died the same year after some tremendous work. Joseph Smith and William de Graft continued the work until two more missionary couples arrived. They also died shortly after their arrival but did work hard while they lasted.³¹

The successor, Thomas Birth Freeman, who was a mulatto, was the person who pushed Wesleyan missionary work from Cape Coast and its surroundings far inland, reaching as far as to Asante. No wonder he is referred to as the father of Methodism in Ghana. The death of his wife only 6 months after arrival in Ghana did not deter him. His warm heart for Africans caused him to push for the expansion of the Church in Ghana. In 1838, a chapel was built in Cape Coast and within two years, there had been additional hundred members.

Through one of the graduates of the Cape Coast castle schools by name James Hayford, Methodism reached the Asante State. After graduation, he worked for the British Administration

³¹ Aboagye Mensah, 36.

in Kumasi. He first began by holding services with the Fantes in Kumase. Freeman used this contact to open a mission station for the whole of the Asante State. Political antagonism between the British and the Asantes caused a suspension of activities in 1872, which was later, resumed. By 1900, the mission in Kumasi had become fully established and enlarged with a European missionary station there.

By 1919, Methodist congregations were found in most towns in the south as well as in the north towards Asante and Brong States. With much difficulty due to opposition from the Chief Commissioner, Wesleyan expansion began in 1919 and reached parts of northern Ghana. Conversion to the Methodist church was given a great boost by the evangelistic preaching of two African Evangelists, William Harris who preached along the coast from Liberia through Ivory Coast to Ghana, and Samson Oppong who also preached in Asante and Brong.³²

2.5 Pentecostals' Involvement in Evangelism in Ghana

Pentecostalism in Africa and Ghana grew through evangelism. Like Christ and His disciples, classical Pentecostals in Ghana have a great history of evangelism, making disciples for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit as the Lord commanded. In earlier years, anyone who believed in the possibility of the gifts of the Holy Spirit described in the New Testament as being available to believers today was considered a Pentecostal. Pentecostals were those who believed that the "Bible Pattern" of baptism in the Spirit was an experience subsequent to salvation and evidenced by the ability to speak in tongues and manifest the other gifts of the Holy Spirit as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12. In addition, was the compelling sense of God's presence in their liturgy, worship and personal lives, and an urgency to reach the lost of this world for Christ. In Ghana, the Classical Pentecostals are those who belong to churches which are members of the

³² Aboagye Mensah, 37.

Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC) which is now the GPCC. The founding member churches were: Assemblies of God church, The Church of Pentecost, Elim Pentecostal Church, the Christ Apostolic Church, and the Apostolic Church.³³

Classical Pentecostals have played a key role in evangelizing and making disciples for Christ in Ghana through revival and renewal through the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals have contributed greatly to the growth of evangelism in the world, Africa, and Ghana. In his article, *Evangelism and the Growth Pentecostalism in Africa*, Allan Anderson accounts that in many parts of the world, Pentecostals are notorious for rather aggressive forms of evangelism and proselytism, and Africa is no exception. From its beginning, the Pentecostal movement was characterized by an emphasis on evangelistic outreach, and Pentecostal mission strategy placed evangelism as its highest priority. Evangelism meant to go out and reach the ‘lost’ for Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. The beginnings of North American Pentecostalism in the Azusa Street revival of Los Angeles resulted in a category of ordinary but ‘called’ people called ‘missionaries’ fanning out to every corner of the globe within a remarkably short space of time. ‘Mission’ was mainly understood as ‘foreign mission’ (mostly from ‘white’ to ‘other’ peoples), and these missionaries were mostly untrained and inexperienced. Their only qualification was the baptism in the Spirit and a divine call, their motivation and task was to evangelize the world before the imminent coming of Christ, and so evangelism was more important than education or ‘civilization’. Pentecostal missiologist Grant McClung says that early Pentecostals had a ‘last days’ mission theology’ as follows: ‘Premillennialism, dispensationalism, and the belief in the imminency of Christ’s return forged the evangelistic fervor of the movement in its infancy’. Premillennialism

³³Jones Amanor Darkwa, “Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation”, *CyberJournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 13(April 2004), Web.

rose to prominence in the late 19th Century, and the idea that the gospel must be preached to all nations before the imminent return of Christ was fueled by the *Scofield Reference Bible* and the writings of AB Simpson, both popular among western Pentecostals at least until the seventies.³⁴

Writing about the Classical Pentecostal roots of the Charismatic or the Neo-Pentecostal movement in Ghana, Amanor explains that just as it was in Europe, North America, South America and Asia, the renewal, which was brought about by the Pentecostal movement was initially looked upon with mistrust by the historic Churches, and that some of them went to the extent of branding it satanic, warning their members to have nothing to do with it while others, with caution neither criticized nor were open to it. However, the transformed lives and the sense of the nearness and reality of God, which was characteristic of the Pentecostals became contagious and soon infected some of the clergy and members of these Churches. Pentecostalism, therefore, in this manner, also gradually crept into the historic Churches, eventually resulting in what became known as the Neo-Pentecostal or the Charismatic movement. The role of the charismatic movement as a new and rapidly growing form of Christianity in the world, particularly, in the developing world is increasingly being acknowledged. In Africa, this movement, which emerged only in the 1970s, is fast becoming the most significant expression of Christianity in the continent, especially, in the cities. According to Allan Anderson, we cannot understand African Christianity today without also understanding this latest movement of revival and renewal.³⁵

³⁴ Allan Anderson, *Evangelism and the Growth of Pentecostalism in Africa*, (UK: University of Birmingham), 58.

³⁵ Jones Amanor Darkwa, "Pentecostalism in Ghana"

2.6 Background of the Assemblies of God

The case study, the Assemblies of God, is one of the most prominent Classical Pentecostal Churches in Ghana. It was a founding member of the Ghana Pentecostal Council (GPC). The Assemblies of God from the USA arrived in Ghana in 1931 and has been suggested by many to be the first Pentecostal Church in Ghana. However, it is known to be the first missionary sponsored Classical Pentecostal Church in Ghana. The Assemblies of God are believed to have entered the country across the northern frontier from French-speaking Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Her mission work thus began in the northern part of Ghana from where it expanded to the south. The Assemblies of God, therefore, up till today has a very large following in the northern part of Ghana and people from northern descent in the south. Its longest serving Ghanaian Chairman, Rev. Dr. Simon Asore is of northern descent. The Assemblies of God has been known to be missionary minded; it has been involved in evangelism and church planting across the country.³⁶One of her priority reason for being is to be an agency of God for evangelizing the world.

2.6.1 History of the Assemblies of God in Kumasi

It is generally believed that the Akwatia Line Assemblies of God church (Lighthouse Central Assemblies of God) in Kumasi began in 1944/45. In 1944, the first American missionary to be stationed in Kumasi, Rev. John Burdette Wiles arrived. He was housed at Dr. Poku's house (former Luv FM) where he began his apostolic ministry. It is not clear who the first converts were, but that early congregation met at Rev. Wiles' residence for church, prayer meetings, and evening Bible classes. Bro. Dadson acted as his interpreter at that time.³⁷

³⁶Asamoah-Gyadu, "*The Church in the African State*", 52.

³⁷ From the Church's historical documents, Light House Assemblies of God, Akwatia Line, Kumasi.

In the 1945 with the church population increasing rapidly, Rev Wiles' residence was too small to accommodate it. Consequently, the church rented Kwasi Tando's cinema house (now Evangelical Church of God). As the work became too difficult for Rev. Whiles alone with the ever-increasing population, Rev Tachie was brought down from Tamale to act as the first native pastor.

With effective evangelisation more and more souls were won to the Lord and there arose the need to acquire more permanent accommodation. Rev Wiles bought the present site (at Akwatia Line in Kumasi) from the Asantehene, Nana Agyeman Prempeh II, at a ground rent of one shilling in 1949. Indeed, the original plot stretched from Dr. Kyei's hospital area to ECM area. The original idea of Rev. Wiles was to use part of the land for a technical school, an idea that was aborted after he had to return to the United States of America to take care of his sick wife.

The central church has, since its birth, been in the forefront of the battle to win souls for the kingdom of God. It has been blessed with pastors, leaders and members whose vision of a "World for Christ" has not dimmed. This vision has been manifested in various ways, but particularly in evangelism, Bible instruction, education, benevolence and hospitality.

The Akwatialine Assemblies of God church (Lighthouse Central Assemblies of God) has a tradition of 'mothering churches, both within the limits of Kumasi and in the surrounding towns and villages'. This tradition started during the years of Rev. Whiles where dedicated members joined him in his jeep to hold crusades in the villages. Churches like Kwadaso, Nsenie and Apatrapa, Duase, Danase are a testimony. The tradition has continued since then. City-wide evangelism began in earnest in the early 1970's with the construction of Faith Assemblies of God at Krofrom (New Tafo).

The story behind the construction of Faith Assemblies of God is interesting enough to warrant a re-telling. After the construction of Central church and the mission bungalows, a debt of 3000 US dollars was owed to the foreign missions board of the Assemblies of God, America – a debt that central church could not easily repay. There was even an attempt to sell the mission bungalows to defray the debt. Finally, the foreign missions board agreed that instead of the debt repayment Central Church could build another church at Krofrom. This began the story of Faith Assemblies of God.

In the 1980's and 90's with the church population constantly exceeding 1000 and with members scattered all over Kumasi, branch churches were started at places including Bantama, Amakom, Asokwa, Ayigya, Oforikrom, Dichemso, Ahodwo, South Suntreso and Suame. In addition Central Church mentioned "preaching points" at Asafo, Akwatialine, Asawasi, Ashanti New Town, Old Tafo and Central international school. All these churches look up to central as the mother church.

In recent times, churches have been established at Fumesua, Kwamo, Kotei, Ayeduase, Tikrom, Jachie-Pranso, Kentikrono, Juaben, Kumawu, Banko etc. Personal evangelism as well as mass crusades continue to receive serious attention.

The Pioneering Fathers of Central Church envisioned it as a centre for training and education, not only of pastors and church leaders but also of technocrats. Indeed, the original reason for procuring the large tract of land to house the church made room for a technical school also.

While that dream has not materialised the church has continuously encouraged and sponsored the training of several pastors now working with the Assemblies of God, Ghana, while others have found work elsewhere. The first Bible school of Southern Ghana now situated at Saltpond

actually began in the church basement and then the parsonage of Central Church. Among notable pastors to have graduated from the Kumasi Bible School are Rev. Gyanfosu, Rev. OpareKwafo, Rev. Fokuo, Rev. Afful and Rev. Ackah.

The realisation that the development of the soul should be complemented by a concurrent development of the mind led to the establishment of the Lighthouse school system now encompassing a kindergarten/ Nursery, Primary school and a Junior Secondary School making central church the first in Ashanti to have an educational unit. The church has actively encouraged and supported the activities of both the Assemblies of God Student Union and the Assemblies of God Campus Ministry.

2.7 Brief History of the Banko Assemblies of God Church

Banko Assemblies of God was founded in 2003 in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region. Banko is in a rural area. The Banko Assemblies of God Church was founded by the Akwatia-line Assemblies of God Church under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Appiah Kubi. Mr Osei Kofi was the first pastor of the church who was sent by the Akwatia-line Assemblies of God Church leadership. The church, which began with twelve members, now has a membership of ninety people with Frank Osei as the head pastor. The church through her little efforts has been able to plant other three churches at Akrofoso, Atwea, and Beposo, its neighbouring villages.

2.8 Conclusion

Evangelism is an old Christian practice whose origin can be traced to God the Father in the Garden of Eden, then to Jesus Christ and His disciples. The church – the body of Christ, has grown in the world through evangelism. It is a mandate Christ gave to the church to fulfill in every part of the world by every Christian. However, rural places in Ghana are being left out in

the preaching of the Gospel, planting and establishing of churches for worship. Urban churches are pre-occupied with their immediate environments forgetting people living in rural areas. Research has revealed that at least about 14000 villages in Ghana are without Protestant churches, and this is a great challenge to the Church in Ghana regarding evangelism.

Classical Pentecostalism has experienced growth in Ghana through effective Holy Spirit filled evangelism. However, nowadays, one can observe that Classical Pentecostals are growing cold in their efforts to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism by reaching out to the world with the Gospel of salvation, especially to souls living in rural areas of the country. With the passage of time, classical Pentecostals are getting pre-occupied with non-evangelistic church activities in urban centres to a large extent they are not effectively reaching out to souls in rural areas of the country up to expectation (as Christ expressly commanded). More indoor programmes to empower the spiritual and economic lives of church members are regular and more in today's classical Pentecostal churches than outdoor or outreach programmes designed and devoted to preaching the Gospel of salvation to dying sinners in rural areas in Ghana in fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism given by Jesus Christ.

It is against this background that this researcher seeks to find out the present state of knowledge and commitment of the Akwatia-line Assemblies of God and the Banko Assemblies of God to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHURCHES AND THE MANDATE OF EVANGELISM

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the researcher's main findings from the field. Structured interviews and questionnaires were the main instruments the researcher used to collect the views of the respondents. A total of 130 members from the two churches were chosen to participate in the study and give their views concerning the mandate of evangelism in general and evangelism in rural areas in particular. In addition, 3 leaders (pastors) of the churches – 2 from Akwatia Line and 1 from Banko church – were interviewed.

3.2 Data collection and rate of response

To collect and analyze primary data, structured questionnaires and interviews were designed and administered among the target population, the two Assemblies of God churches at Akwatialine and Banko. From the registry of the churches, the membership of the Akwatialine Assembly stands at about 1,016 while that of Banko stands at 90. A representative sample of 100 members was chosen from the Akwatialine church while a sample of 30 was chosen from the Banko church. Thus, 130 questionnaires were given out to the two assemblies to fill.

The number of questionnaires that were completed and returned to the researcher totaled 117 (representing a response rate of 90%). The number completed and returned from the Akwatialine church was 92 while that of Banko was 25. All the questionnaires received were considered valid and therefore used in the study.

3.3 Data presentation

The data collected is categorized into three (3) and presented in 3 sections: A, B, and C. Section A presents the responses of the pastors of both churches, who were interviewed by the researcher. Section B presents the responses of the members of the Akwatialine assembly, while section C presents the responses of the members of the Banko assembly. In sections B and C the background information of the respondents is first presented, after which their views are presented in line with the objectives of the study.

SECTION A

RESPONSES OF THE PASTORS

The researcher interviewed three pastors: the pastor and associate of the Akwatialine assembly and the only pastor of the Banko assembly. Following are their responses the questions on the mandate of evangelism and the fulfillment of the mandate in rural areas:

Respondents: The Pastor and Associate of the Akwatialine Assemblies of God

Observation

To start with, the researcher stated his observation that the church nowadays seemed to give too much attention to organising internal or indoor programmes, such as prayer and fasting for personal breakthrough, than going out with the gospel, especially to rural areas to save souls into the kingdom. They agreed that too many indoor programmes nowadays in the church was one major hindrance to evangelistic outreaches, especially to rural areas.

Level of knowledge and understanding of church members about the mandate of evangelism

According to the pastors of the Akwatialine church, their members, had adequate knowledge and insight about evangelism as a mandate Christ gave to the church and every believer, because it was part of the doctrines of the Bible the Assemblies of God believed, taught and practised.

The church's programmes and efforts to fulfil the mandate of evangelism in rural areas

According to the pastors, the church had programmes towards fulfilling the mandate in rural areas. These included once a month house-to-house witnessing; one crusade every six months in rural areas; quarterly medical outreach through witnessing; and the policy of 'plant one church every year in a rural area.'

Also, according to the pastors, the church had resources such as a projector for gospel video show, musical instruments, tracts, clothing, and personnel among other things, towards evangelistic outreaches.

How often the church organizes rural outreaches

Two times every year the church organized an evangelistic outreach to preach the gospel to souls in a rural area and plant a church there.

Members' participation in rural evangelism organised by the church

The pastors stated the fact that generally, their members' participation in the church's organized rural evangelism was not very encouraging; few members, they said, were usually actively involved. However, the majority gave financial support to the evangelism team for the outreach.

Evangelism training programmes

The researcher asked what evangelism training programmes the church had for members, especially members who were very willing and ready for outreaches.

In response, the pastors said, they had school of evangelism, seminars, weekly leadership training, para-church groups such as ‘Great Commission’, through which members are trained for evangelism. They added that the church had Bible studies training manuals such as, “You are My Witness” which taught and guided members on evangelism. Then, the church’s Sunday School classes were occasionally used to teach members on outreach.

Challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas

According to the pastors, the church faced several challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas, and these often include inadequate funds, limited time because of too many indoor programmes, lack of commitment to the vision on the part of members, which made it difficult to get personnel to follow up and disciple the new converts, and the challenge of helping to find jobs for some of the new converts who come jobless and could not continue to be jobless.

Assessment of the church’s commitment

Finally, the researcher asked the pastors about their own assessment of their church’s level of commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism as given by Christ in Mark 16:15. In response the pastors said their commitment was good above average, however, there was more room for improvement.

Respondent: Pastor of the Banko Assemblies of God

Observation

According to the Banko Assemblies of God Pastor he had also observed that the church in general nowadays was too given to organising indoor programmes often focused too much on already saved members of the church than going out with the gospel to reach more other souls for Christ.

Level of knowledge and understanding of church members about the mandate of evangelism

According to the Pastor, members of the Banko church had sufficient knowledge about evangelism because they had often been taught about it at church services, only that the majority were usually not able to witness regularly on their own without the church organizing them for that purpose.

The church's programmes and efforts to fulfil the mandate of evangelism at Banko and its neighbouring villages

According to the Pastor, at least twice every month the church organized a co-operate evangelism at Banko and its neighbouring communities, usually on Fridays.

Members' participation in the evangelism organised by the church

The Pastor stated that, generally the members' participation was encouraging; often majority of them were involved in the evangelism programmes organized by the church.

Evangelism training programmes

The researcher asked what evangelism training programmes the church had for members, especially members who were very willing and ready for outreaches.

In response, the Pastor said, the church organized occasional evangelism training seminars for the members, and send those were willing to evangelize to the church's school of evangelism to learn and be very effective.

Challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas

The pastor mentioned several challenges including lack of regular support from urban churches, lack of funds, engagement in other church activities, and the fact that in a rural church like Banko, many of the members are not spiritually well developed, knowledgeable and deeply rooted in the faith enough to be effective in evangelism.

Assessment of the church's commitment

Regarding the church's commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism as given by Christ in Mark 16:15 on the whole, the Pastor said it was good above average. But more efforts are required to equip members for better.

SECTION B:

RESPONSES OF MEMBERS OF AKWATIALINE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

3.3.1 Background information of respondents

The background information of respondents included their gender, age, spiritual state, and age of their membership of the church (i.e. how long they had been members of the church). The information is summarized in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 Background information of respondents

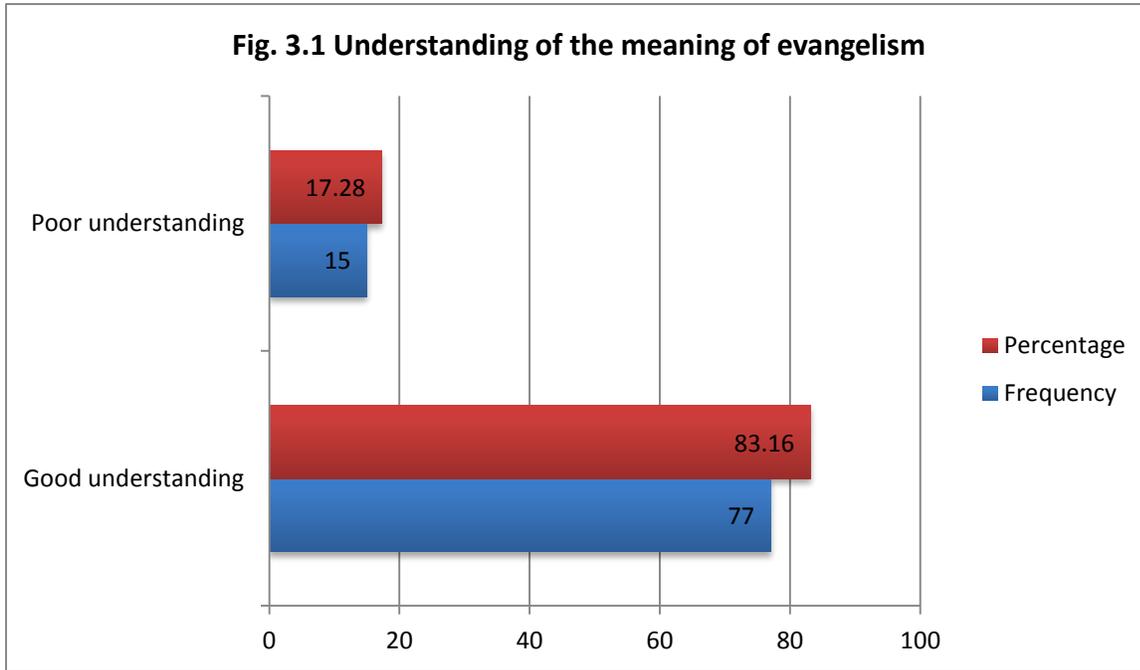
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender of respondents		
Male	49	52.92
Female	43	46.44
Ages of respondents		
15-19 years	13	14.04
20-35 years	40	43.2
36-49 years	31	33.48
50 and above	8	8.64
Spiritual state of respondents		
Born again (Christian)	92	100
Not born again	0	0.00
Age of membership in the church		
Less than 1 year	5	5.4
1-10 years	16	17.28
More than 10 years	71	76.68

From Table 3.1, it can be seen that the majority of the members (52.92%) who took part in the study were female; those aged between 20-35 years were also formed the majority of the respondents. All the respondents stated that they were born again. Finally, 76.68% being majority of the respondents had been more than 10 years in the church as members.

3.3.2 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism

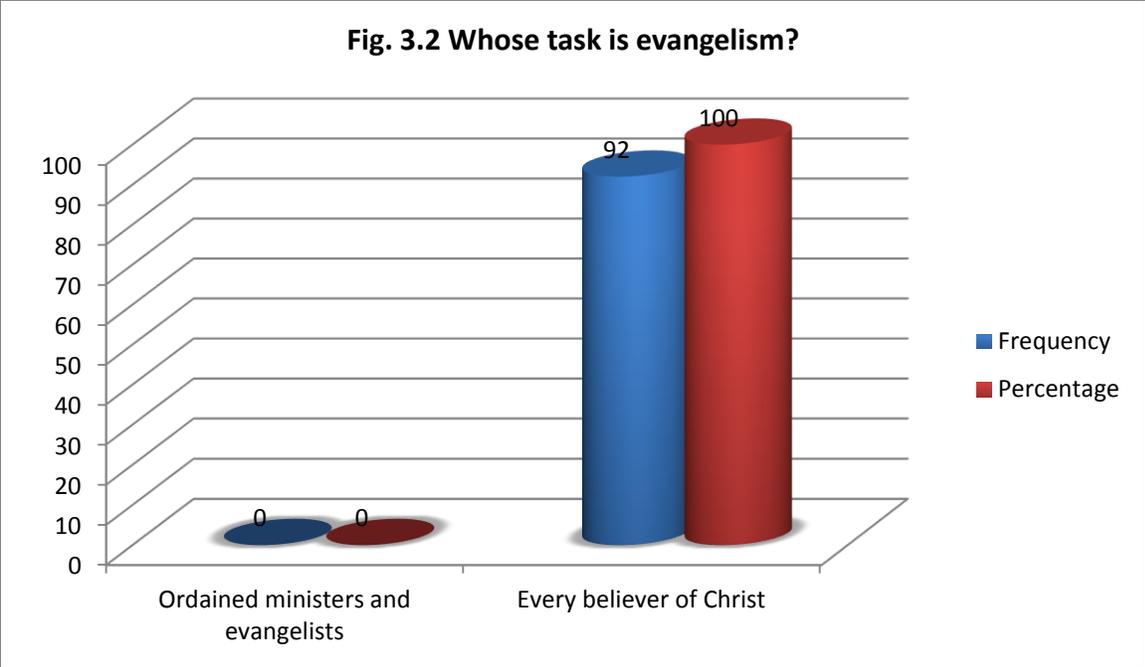
First of all, the respondents were asked to define or state what they understand by evangelism.

Figure 3.1 below shows their level of understanding or knowledge about the meaning of evangelism.



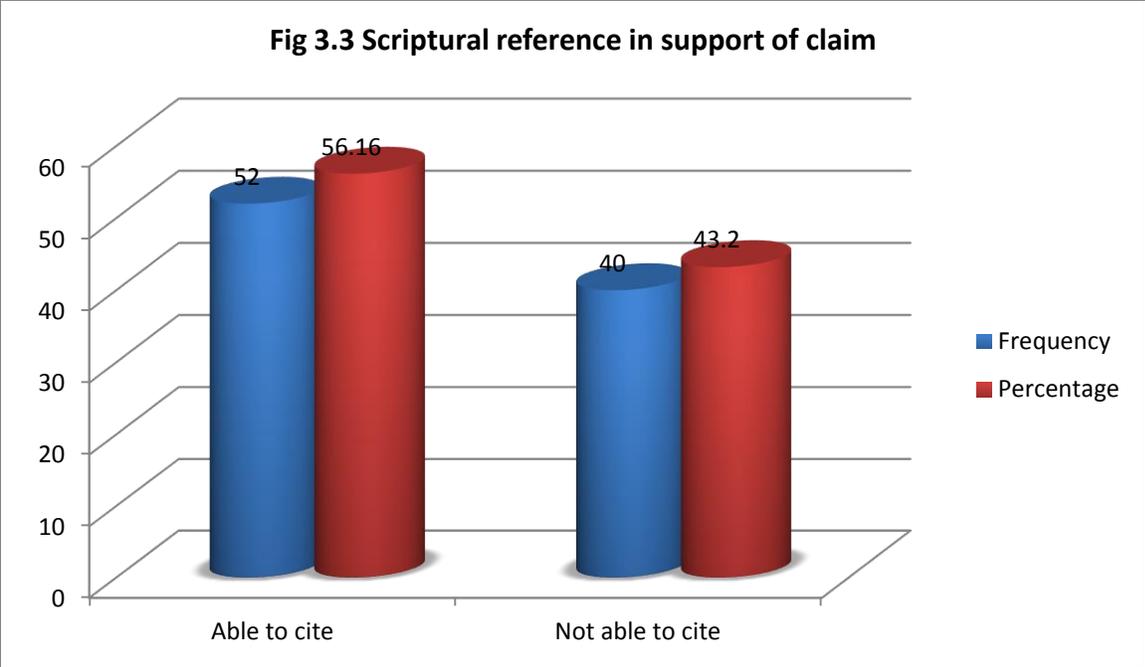
It can be seen from the Figure that 83.16% being majority of the respondents had a good understanding of evangelism per their definition and explanation of what evangelism means.

Secondly, the respondents were asked to indicate whose task was evangelism – whether it was for ordained ministers and evangelists or for every believer of Christ. Figure 3.2 below gives their responses:



It can be seen from Figure 3.2 that all the respondents agreed that evangelism was the task of every believer of Christ.

To further find out the level of respondents' knowledge about evangelism, they were asked to cite scriptural references in support of their claim of whose task evangelism was in the church. Some were able to cite a reference while others could not. Figure 3.3 below gives information of the percentage that was able to and that which were not able to cite:



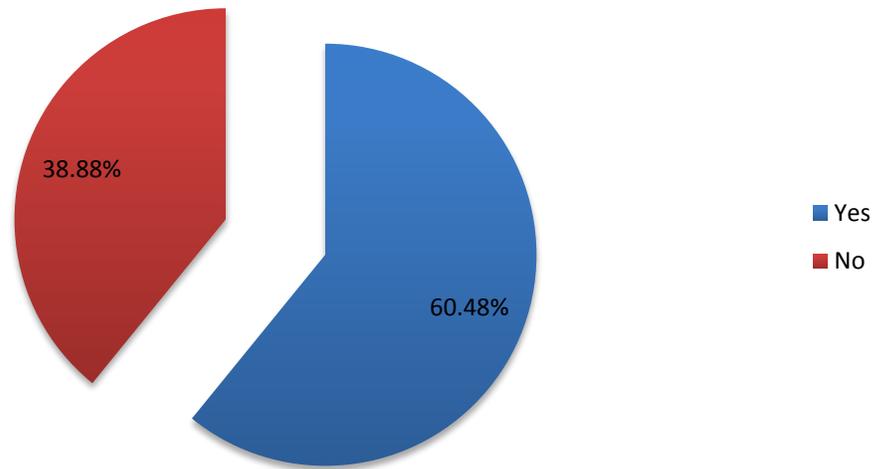
It can be seen from Figure 3.3 that the 56.16% being majority of the respondents were able to cite a correct scriptural reference in support of their claim, while the remaining 43.2% could not.

3.3.3 Practice and commitment to evangelism in general

To find out respondents’ practice and commitment to evangelism in general, they were asked to tell whether they do witness to unbelievers or not and the frequency at which they do witness.

Figure 3.4 below shows how many do witness to unbelievers and how many do not:

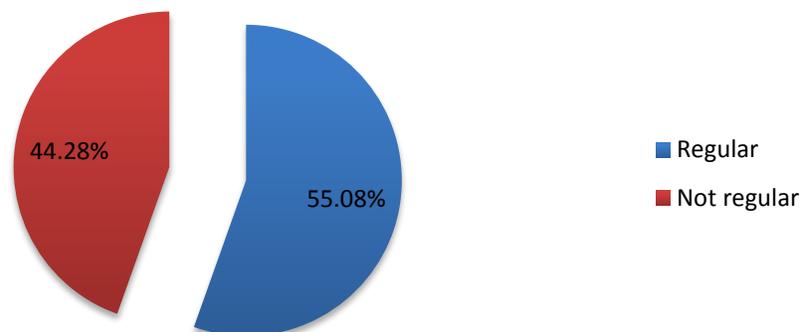
Fig. 3.4 Do you witness to unbelievers?



As shown in Figure 3.4, about 60.48% of the respondents affirmed that they did witness to unbelievers, while the remaining 38.88% agreed they did not.

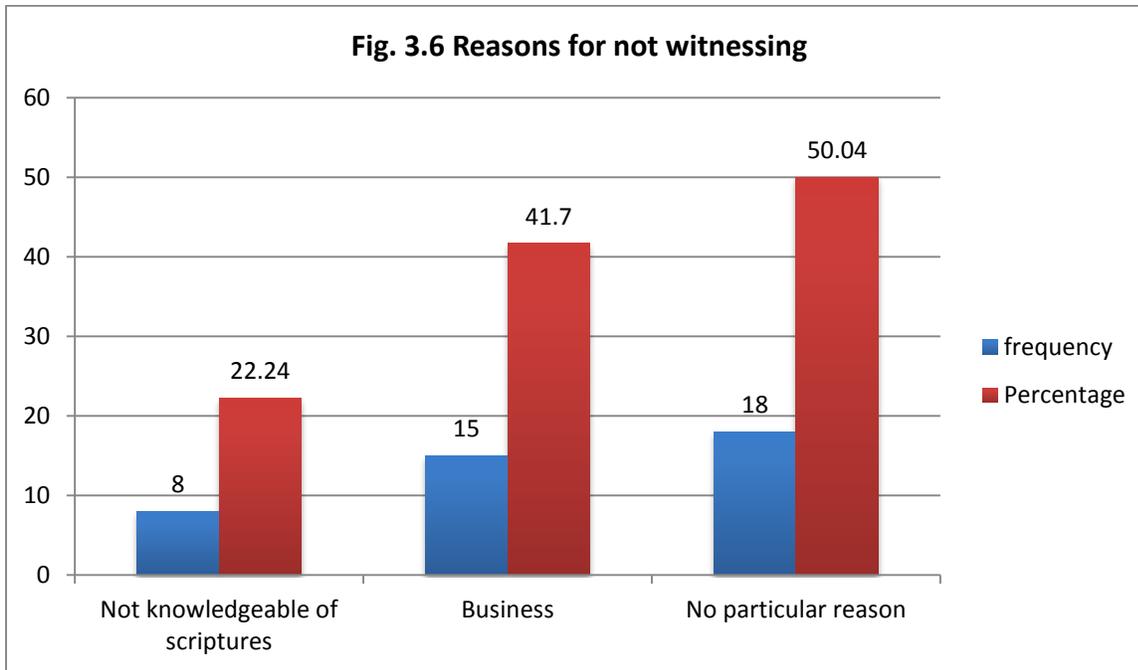
Further, Figure 3.5 below also shows respondents' frequency of witnessing to unbelievers (i.e. whether regular or not regular).

Fig. 3.5 Frequency of witnessing



As shown in Figure 3.5, the majority (55.08%) of those who witnessed did it regularly. However, the remaining 44.28% agreed that though they did witness, they did not do so regularly.

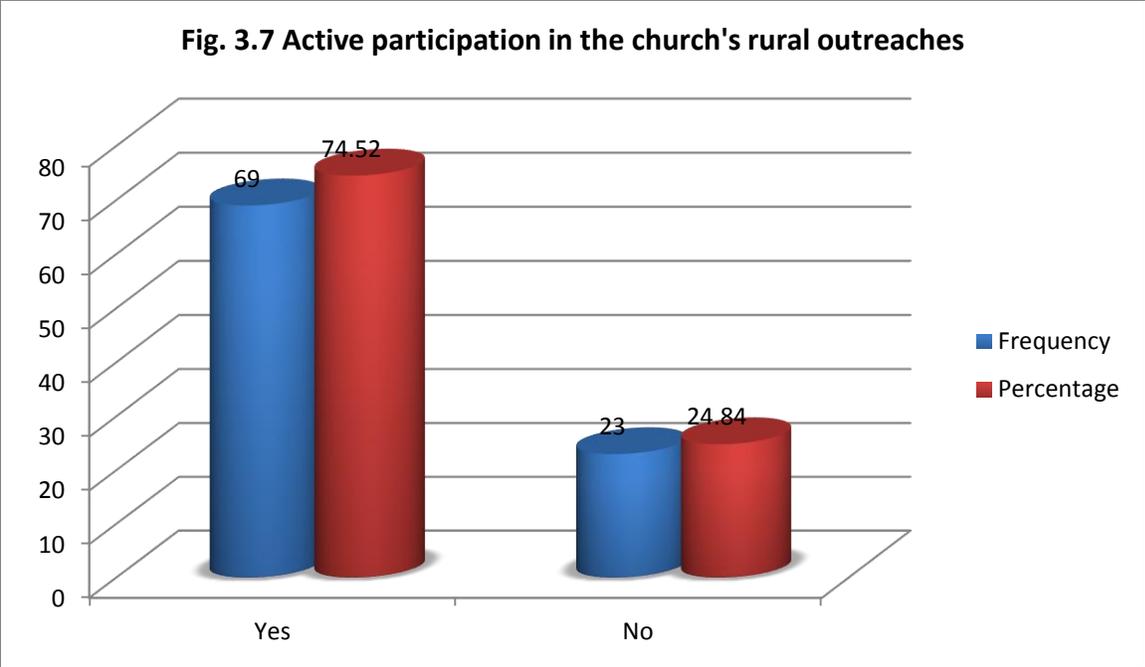
Also, those who did not witness at all to unbelievers were asked to state reasons for not witnessing. Fig. 3.6 below summarizes their reasons given for not witnessing:



It can be seen from Figure 3.6 above that the majority (50.04%) of the respondents who failed to witness had no particular reason for their failure. The reasons the others gave for not witnessing included: business (41.7%) and inadequate knowledge of the scriptures (22.24%).

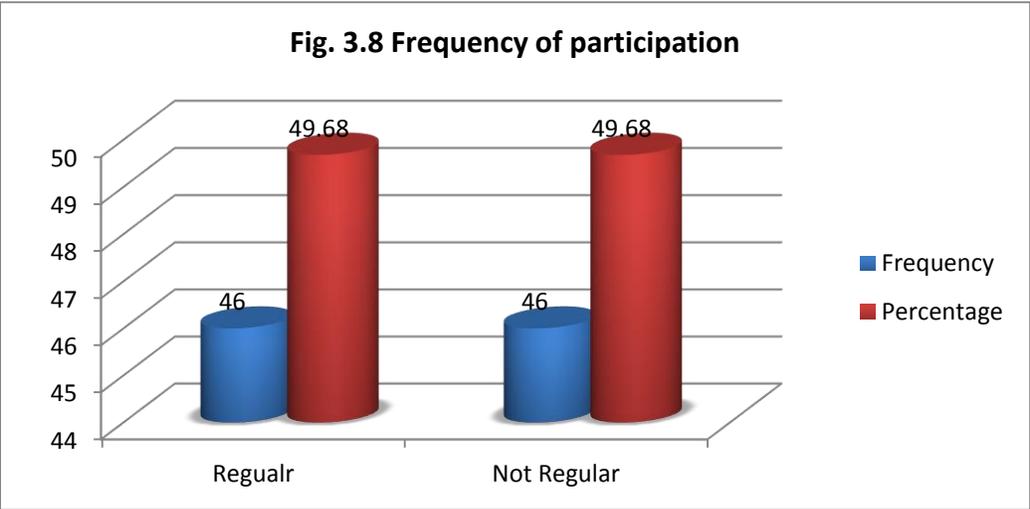
3.3.4 Participation in rural evangelism

Respondents were asked to show whether they took active part in their church's organized rural outreaches or not, and how regular they did so. Figure 3.7 below shows the percentage of those who did take active part in them and those who did not:



It can be seen from Figure 3.7 that 74.52% being majority of the respondents affirmed that they took active part in their church's organized rural outreaches to witness to souls. However, about 24.84% did not.

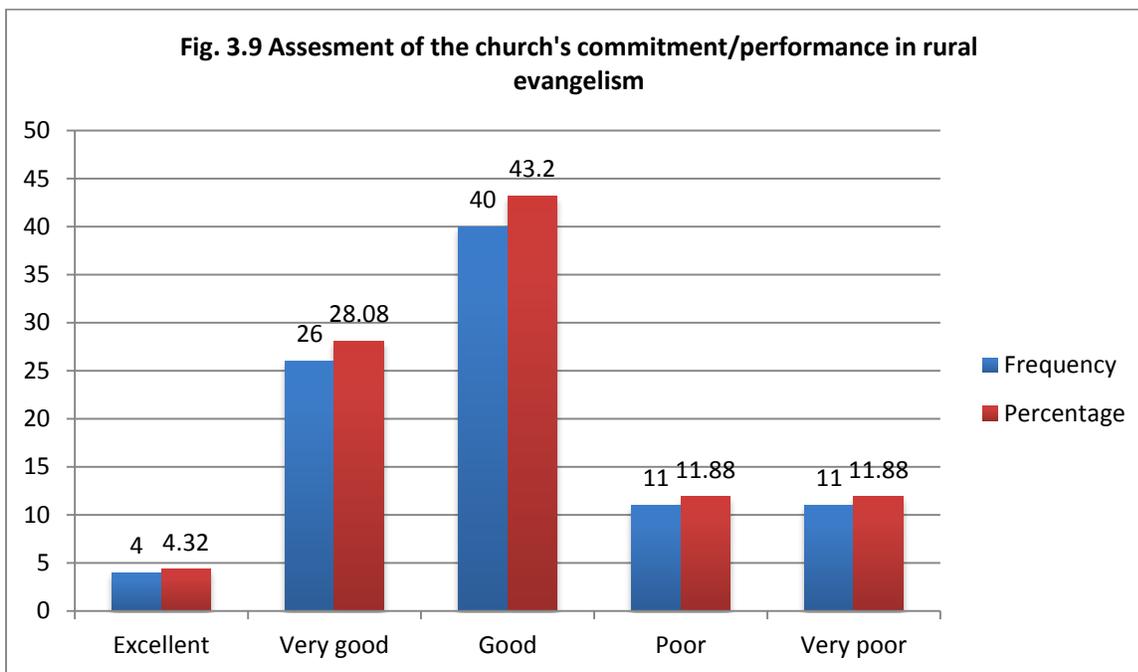
Further, the respondents who took active part in the outreaches were asked to indicate the frequency of their participation. Figure 3.8 summarizes their responses:



It can be seen from Figure 3.8 that the percentage (49.68) of the respondents who were regular was equal to that of those who were not regular. Thus, one half of the respondents were regular while the other half were not regular.

3.3.5 Respondents' assessment of the church's performance in rural evangelism

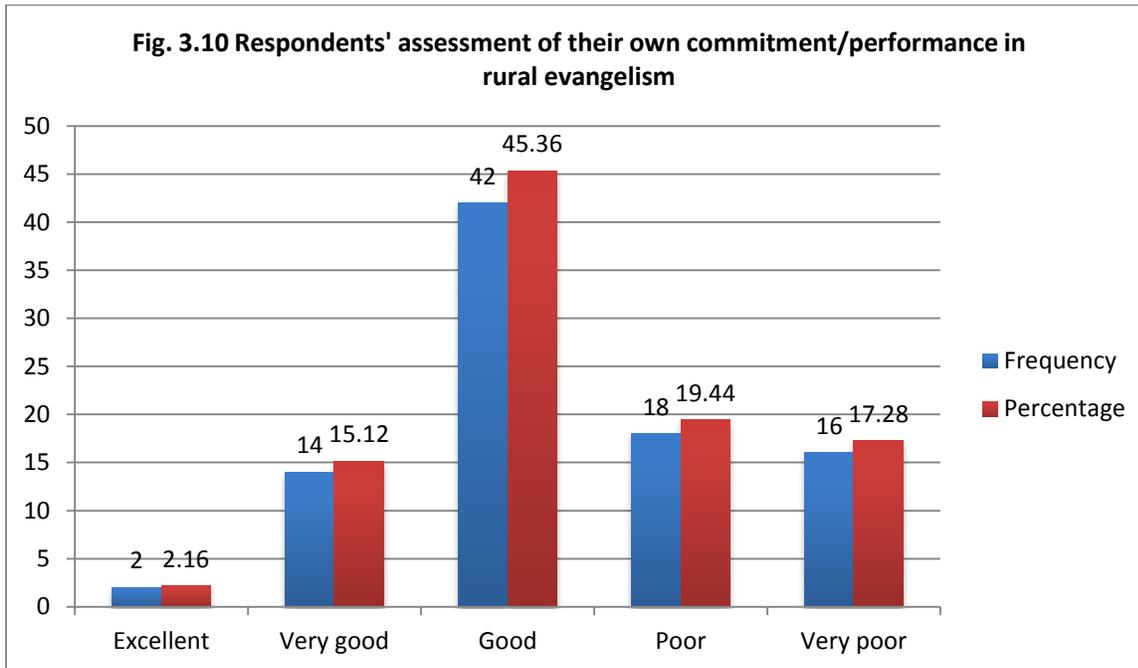
Respondents were asked to assess their church's commitment and performance in rural evangelism based on their own observation. Figure 3.9 below summarizes their assessment or ratings:



It can be seen from Figure 3.9 that the majority (43.2%) of the respondents could only rate the commitment of the church's commitment to rural evangelism as 'good'. Only 4.32% of the respondents could rate it as excellent. Also, in the view of a total of 23.76% of the respondents, the church's commitment to evangelism in rural areas was even poor. This implies that there was more room for the church to improve on her commitment to rural evangelism.

3.3.6 Respondents' assessment of their own performance in rural evangelism

Finally, respondents were asked to assess or rate their own commitment and performance in rural evangelism. Figure 3.8 below shows their assessments or ratings:



As shown in Figure 3.10, the majority (2.16%, 15.12%, and 45.36%) of the respondents could rate their own commitment as being 'excellent', 'very good', and 'good' respectively. However, a significant percentage of 36.72% agreed that their commitment/performance was poor.

SECTION C:

RESPONSES OF MEMBERS OF BANKO ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

3.3.7 Background information of respondents

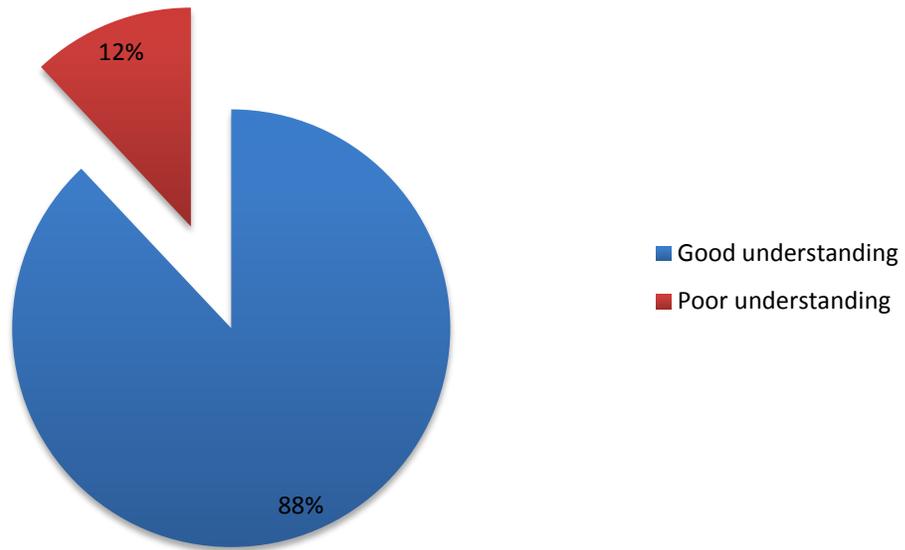
The background information of respondents includes their gender, age, spiritual state, and age of their membership of the church (i.e. how long they have been members of the church). The information is summarized in Table 3.2 below:

Item/Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender of respondents		
Male	13	52
Female	12	48
Ages of respondents		
15-19 years	5	20
20-35 years	12	48
36-49 years	5	20
50 and above	3	12
Spiritual state of respondents		
Born again (Christian)	25	100
Not born again	0	0.00
Age of membership in the church		
Less than 1 year	3	12
1-10 years	10	40
More than 10 years	12	48

3.3.8 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism

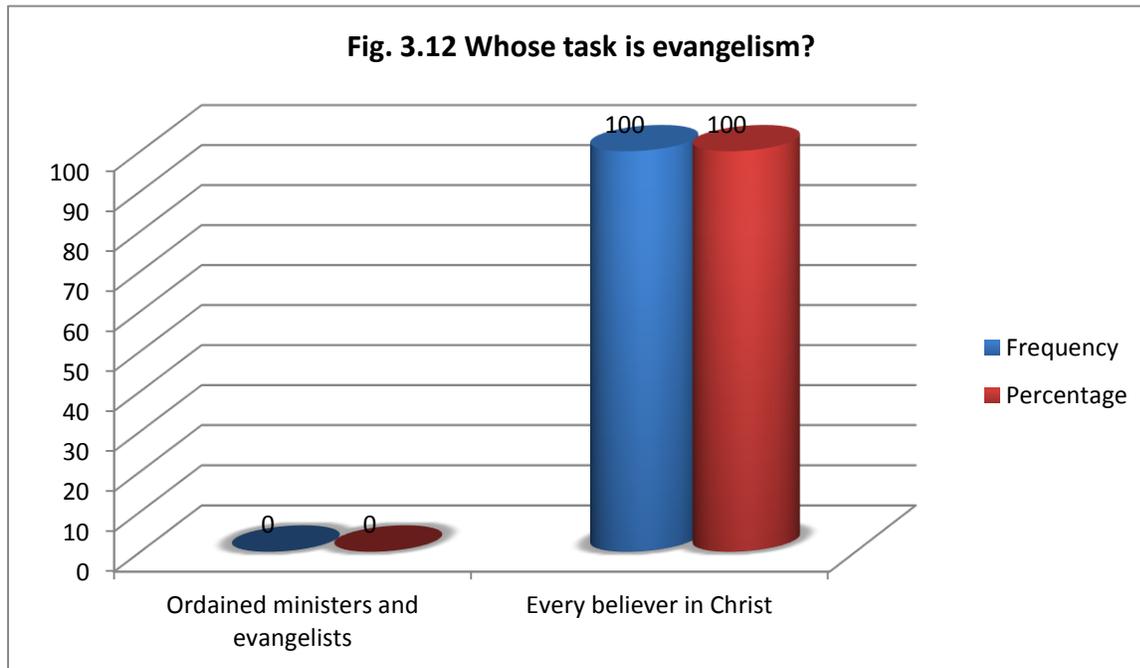
Respondents were asked to define or state what they understand by evangelism. Figure 3.11 below shows represents the percentage of those who have a good understanding of the meaning of evangelism as compared to those who do not.

Fig. 3.11 Understanding of the meaning of evangelism

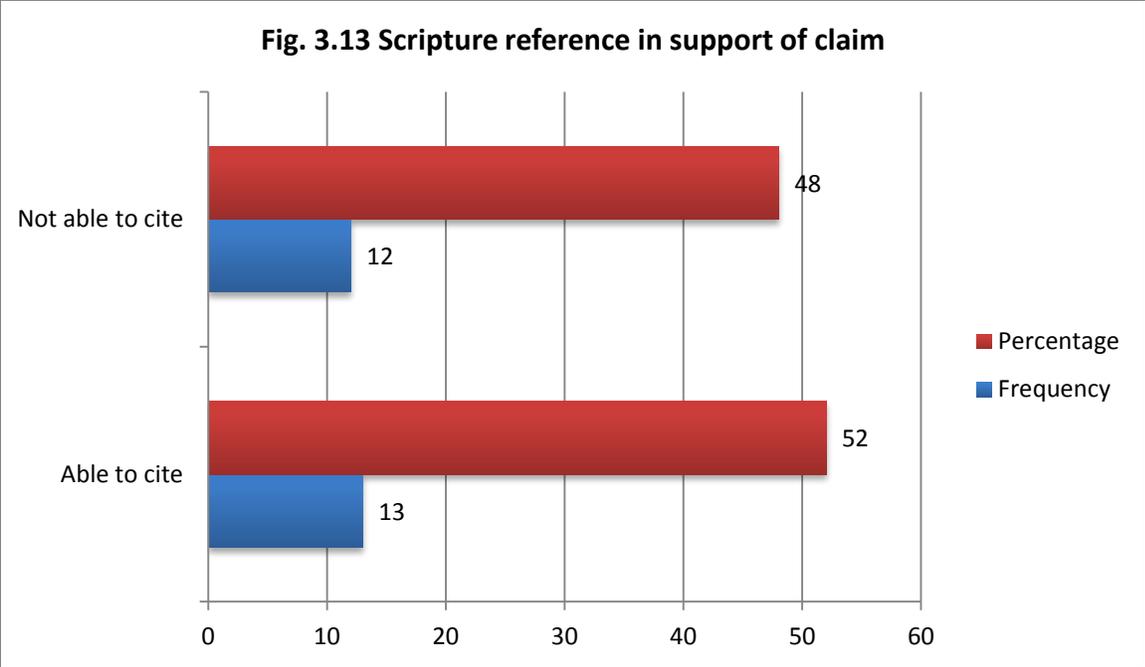


Respondents were asked to indicate whose task to do evangelism – whether it was for ordained ministers and evangelists, or for every believer of Christ. Figure 3.12 below gives their

responses:



To further find out the level of respondents' knowledge about evangelism, they were asked to cite scriptural references in support of their claim of whose task evangelism is in the church. Some were able to cite a reference while others could not. Figure 3.13 below gives information of the percentage that was able to and that which was not able to cite.



3.3.9 Practice and commitment to evangelism in general

To find out respondents’ practice and commitment to evangelism in general, they were asked to tell whether they do witness to unbelievers or not and the frequency at which they do witness.

Figure 3.14 below shows how many do witness to unbelievers and how many do not:

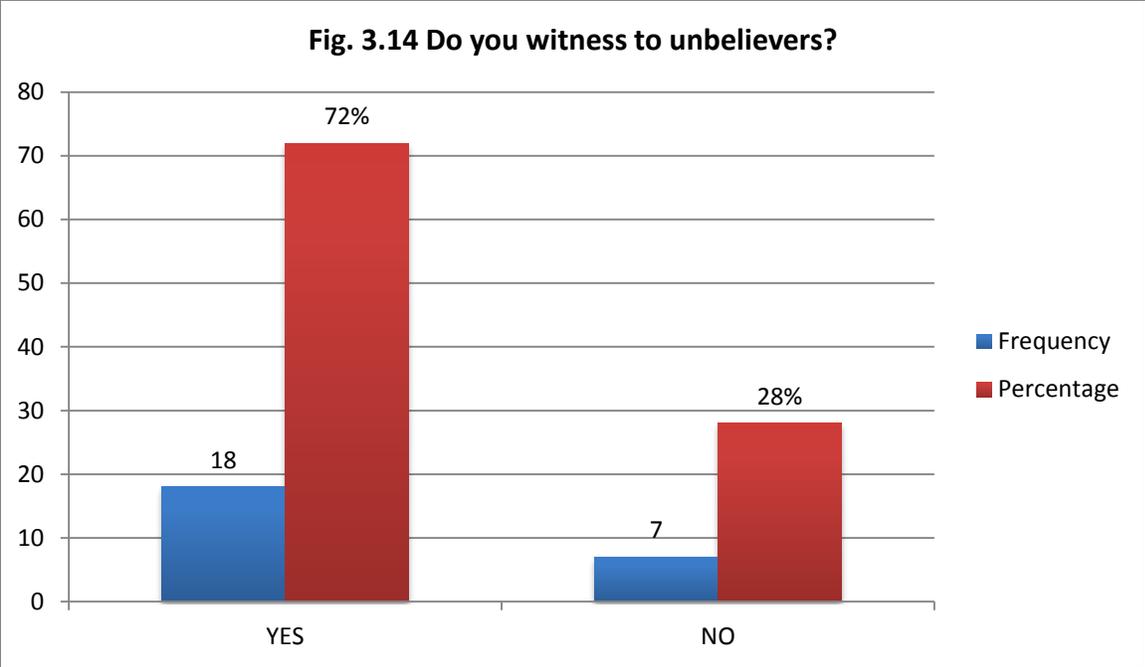
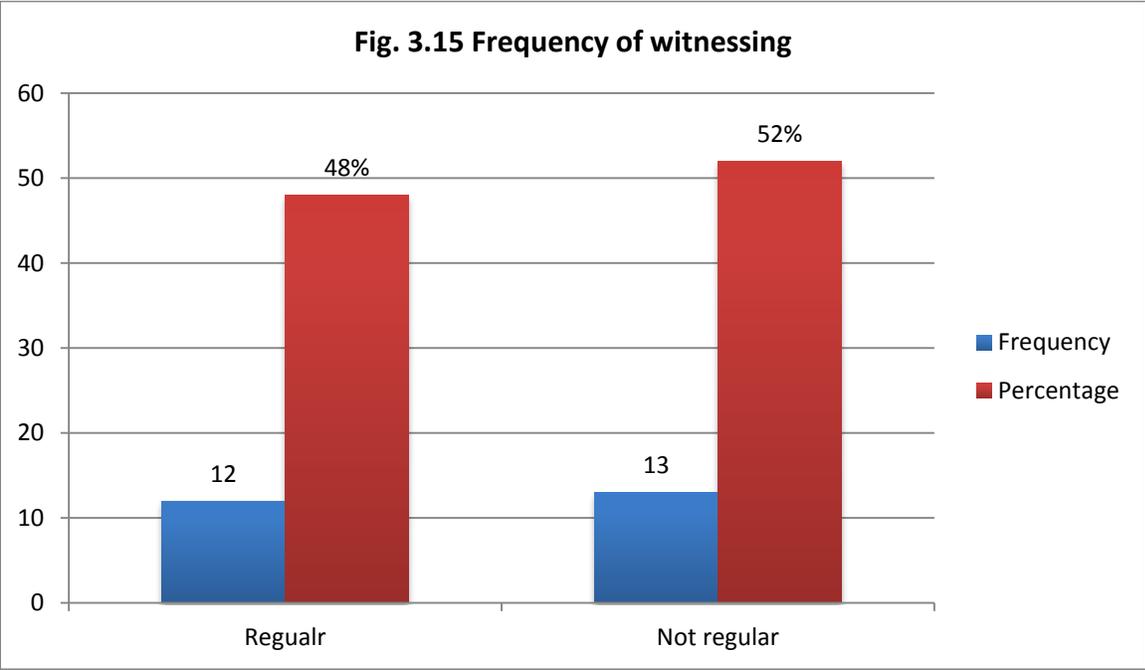
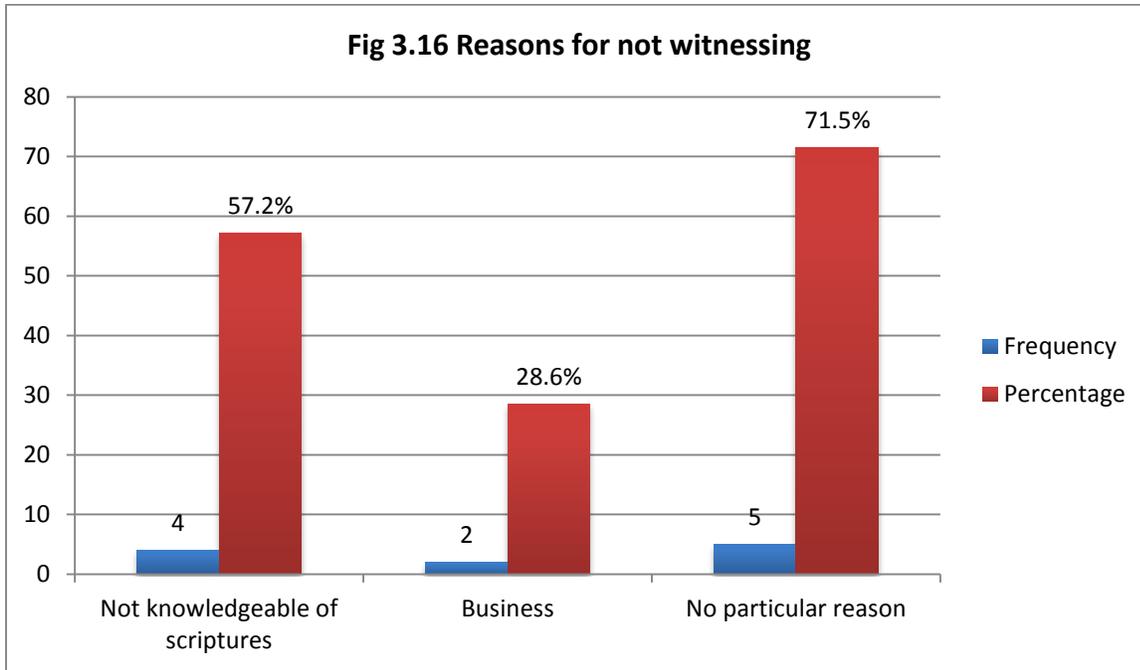


Figure 3.15 below also shows respondents' frequency of witnessing to unbelievers (i.e. whether regular or not regular).

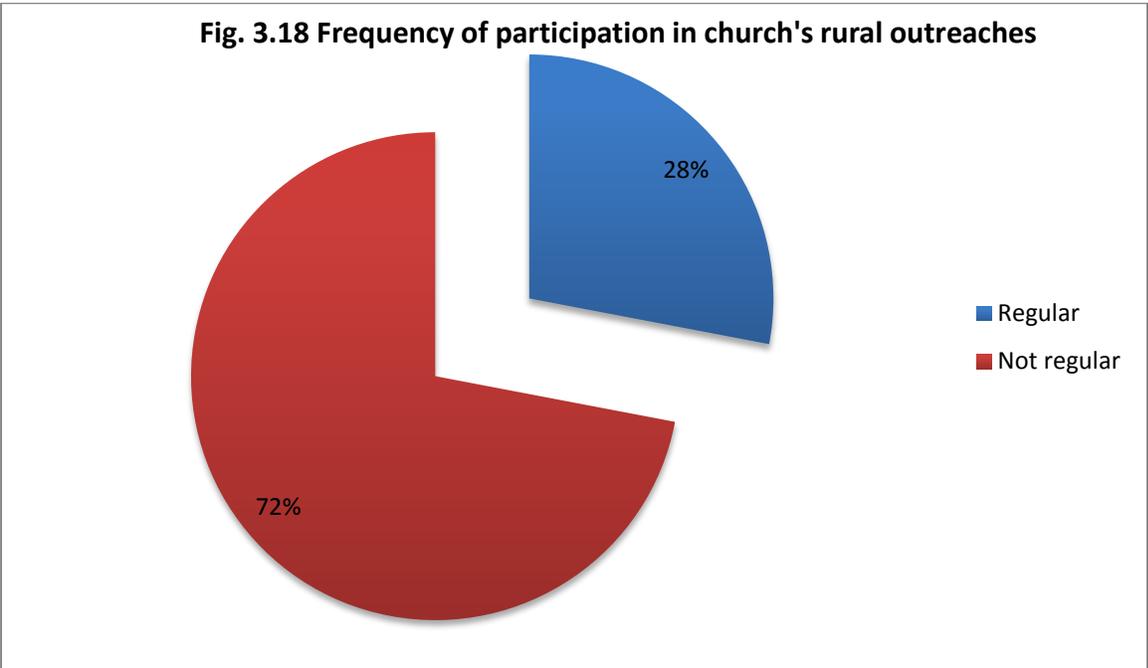
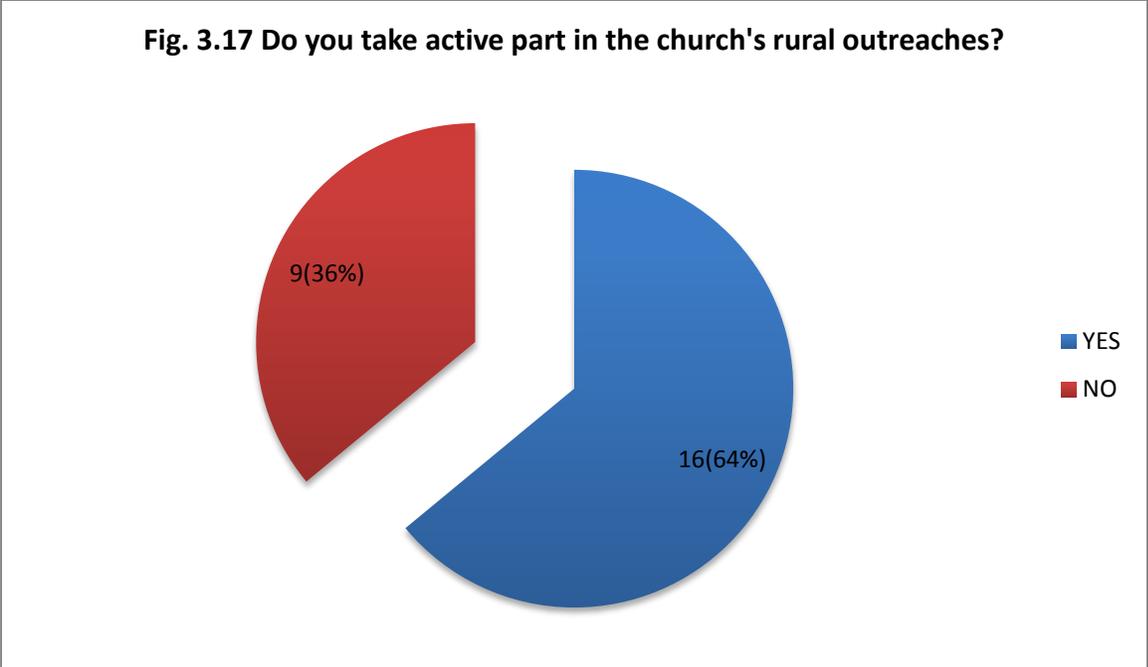


Those who do not witness to unbelievers were asked to state reasons for not witnessing. Fig. 3.16 below summarizes their reasons given for not witnessing:



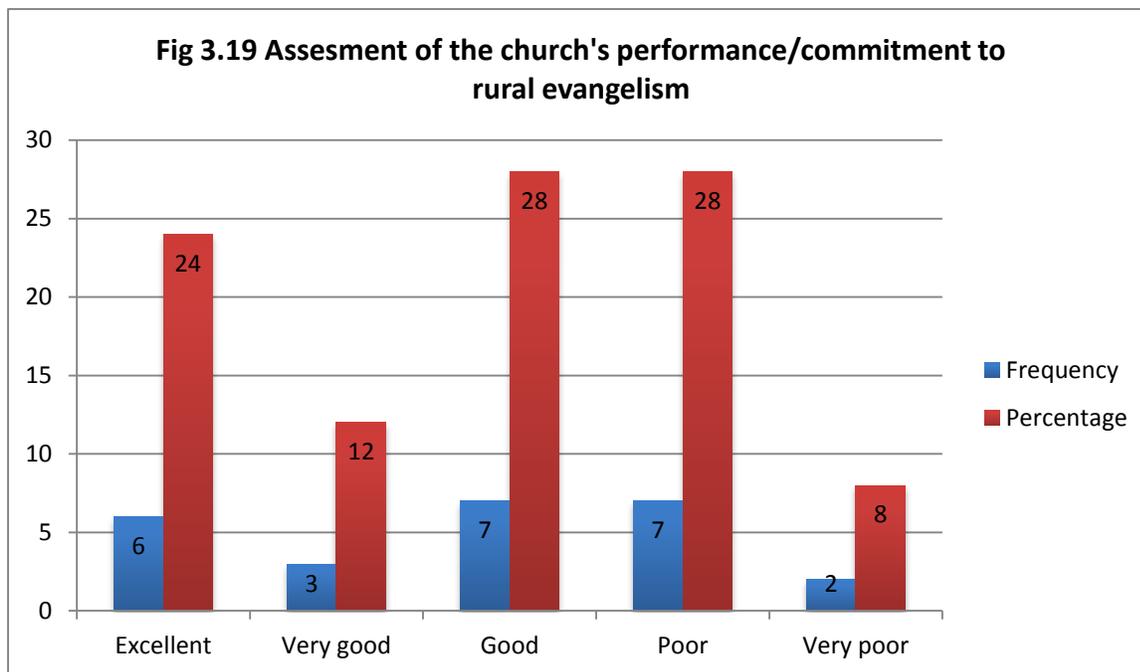
3.3.10 Participation in rural evangelism

Respondents were asked to show whether or not they take active part in their church's outreaches organized to reach their community as well as other rural communities and whether they are regular or not in doing so. Figure 3.17 below shows the percentage of those who do take active part in them and those who do not, while Figure 3.18 shows those who are regular and those who are not:



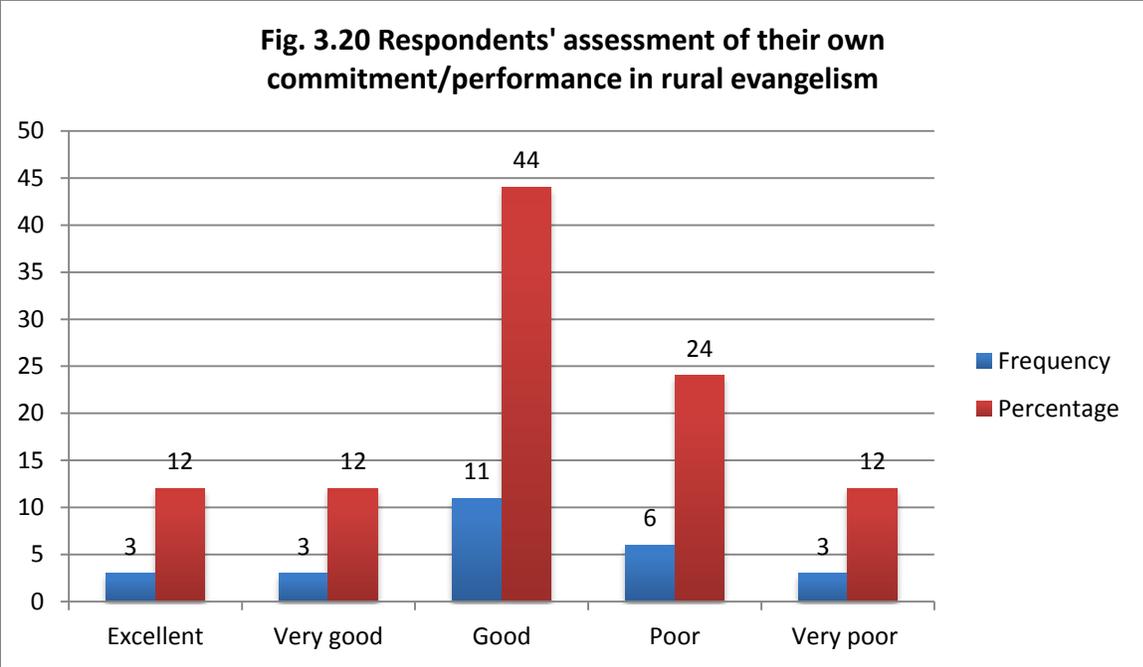
3.3.11 Respondents' assessment of the church's performance in rural evangelism

Respondents were asked to assess their church's commitment and performance in rural evangelism based on their own observation. Figure 3.19 below summarizes their assessment or ratings:



3.3.12 Respondents' assessment of their own performance in rural evangelism

Finally, respondents were asked to assess or rate their own commitment and performance in rural evangelism. Figure 3.20 below shows their assessments or ratings:



Conclusion

The chapter has presented the views, knowledge, and experiences of the members of the Akwatia Line and Banko Assemblies of God regarding the fulfilment of evangelism in rural areas. The chapter has revealed that, majority of the respondents who represented the membership of the two churches had a significant amount or enough knowledge on evangelism as the church’s mandate.

A good number of the respondents did affirm that they did witness to unbelievers, however, they did not do so regularly as expected. Reasons for those who did not evangelize at all to unbelievers include business and inadequate knowledge of the Scriptures.

Per the respondents’ assessment of the churches’ performance and their own performance as individuals in rural evangelism, their performance was good. However, there was more room for

both the churches and the members as individuals to improve on their commitment to rural evangelism.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the interpretation and analysis of the data gathered and presented in chapter three. It is a critical analysis of issues that emerged out of the findings of the study, especially the views of the respondents.

4.2 Observation

The researcher's observation that the church nowadays seemed too given to organising indoor programmes and ceremonies, such as prayer and fasting for personal breakthrough, that focused too much on already saved members of the church than evangelistic programmes, was not different from the observation of the pastors of the Assemblies of God at Akwatialine in Kumasi and Banko in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region; it had their support.

The pastors agreed that too many indoor programmes focusing on developing already saved members for personal success had become one of the major hindrances to the fulfilment of the mandate of evangelism, especially in rural areas. This observation of the researcher and of the pastors is in line with the observation of Felix and Cletus. According to these authors, the primary task of Christians in the world is to go into the world in order to preach the Good news to all creatures, a command which was given by Jesus Christ (Mark 16: 15-16), yet "it seems that

the attention of many Christians is now directed towards fulfilling their own will to the detriment of the Gospel.”³⁸

In the researcher’s opinion, the church has been unbalanced in terms of the flock in the church and the flock outside the church. Much time, resources, and knowledge have been given to the flock inside the church, but very little is given to the flock outside the church in bringing them into the fold. But Jesus Christ our Lord said, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16).

The church has to equally fulfil her responsibility towards the flock both inside and outside the fold. According to Rainer, Donald McGavran, the father of church growth saw the most important task of the church to be evangelizing the lost and concurrently establishing indigenous churches in which disciples would grow. Other than this, the church is unbalanced.³⁹

It is also worth noting, according to church growth researchers such as Wagner and Rainer, that evangelism is indispensable to church growth. According to Rainer, the two words used to describe the central activity of the book of Acts of the Apostles are evangelism and church growth, and that “evangelism in Acts is the communication of the good news of Jesus Christ through verbal proclamation and lifestyle witness, with the intent of leading a person or group to salvation in Christ. It is also vitally interested in the post-conversion activity commonly known

³⁸ Felix Ehimare and Cletus Enwefah, “Christian Evangelism and its Implication on Church Growth: An Evaluation”, *A paper presented at the 6th Quadrennial International Conference of the International Association for Mission studies (I.A.M.S) in Port Dickson, Malaysia, July 31-August 7, 2004.*

³⁹ Thom S. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth, History, Theology and Principle* (Nasville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 22.

as discipleship. Church growth is the building of the church primarily through evangelism. While church growth writers of our era speak of other kinds of growth (e.g., transfer growth and biological growth), Luke is concerned with the growth of the church that comes from the making of new disciples.”⁴⁰

4.3 Knowledge about the mandate of evangelism

A specific objective of the study was to find out the level of knowledge or understanding about the mandate of evangelism by members of the Assemblies of God at Akwatia Line and Banko. This was significant to the study to the extent that knowledge gives ability. It is believed that knowledge is power. Church members who do not possess a good knowledge about evangelism as a mandate can least fulfill it as a mandate. Thus, the respondents who participated in the study were asked to define or state what they understand by evangelism.

The responses received revealed that majority of the members of the Assemblies of God at Akwatia Line and Banko had good and commendable understanding of the meaning of evangelism from scriptural perspective. About 83.16% of the members of the church at Akwatia Line could be said to possess a good understanding of evangelism from scriptural perspective while about 88% of the members of the Banko assemblies of God also possessed a good understanding of the meaning of evangelism from scriptural perspective.

All the pastors interviewed strongly stated that their members had a good knowledge about evangelism as the church’s mandate. According to the pastors, their members have adequate knowledge and insight about evangelism as a mandate Christ gave to the church and every

⁴⁰ Thom S. Rainer, “Church Growth and Evangelism in the Book of Acts,” *Criswell Theological Review*, 5.1 (1990),59.

believer, because evangelism was part of the doctrines of the Bible the Assemblies of God believed, taught, and practised.

Generally the respondents understood and referred to evangelism as the act or practice whereby a Christian reaches out to a non-Christian with the gospel of Christ with the aim of winning them to Christ and into the fellowship of Christians. Their definitions included ‘the gospel’, ‘the good news’ about Christ, and outreach. Their definitions of evangelism were in line with the definitions or meaning giving to evangelism by authors such as Lineamenta, Miano, and Pointer. According to Lineamenta, “evangelism is effected when devotees send the teachings of Christ to others who are ignorant of this message and the latter in turn spread the salvific message.”⁴¹ Miano, also talks about the good news; he refers to evangelism as, “the announcement, proclamation, and/or preaching of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), the good news of and about Jesus Christ. Therefore, the gospel is a communicated message – communicated in verbal (Luke 7:22) and/or written (Luke 1:1-4) form.”⁴² Like Lineamenta and Miano, Pointer notes that, “evangelism in the New Testament is announcing of the good news about Jesus.”⁴³

4.4 Whose task is evangelism?

It was necessary to further find out the level of knowledge the church had about evangelism as a mandate with regard to who was responsible for evangelism or whether evangelism was mandatory for every Christian or not. Thus, respondents were asked to show whose task was evangelism – whether it is for ordained ministers and evangelists in the church or it is for every believer of Christ.

⁴¹Lineamenta, *The Church in Africa*, 46

⁴²Miano, *What is Evangelism?*, 2.

⁴³ Pointer, *Growth Book*, 50.

The views of the respondents supported the scriptures and the arguments of authors such as the authors (the Catholic episcopal) of the *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects Evangelization* and Bavinck. According to these authors, evangelism is the church's mandate – a mission for every believing follower of Christ. According to the Catholic episcopal, evangelism “in the broad sense sums up the church's entire mission: her whole life consists in accomplishing the *tradition Evangelii*, the proclamation and handing on of the Gospel, which is the “power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16) and which, in the final essence, is identified with Jesus Christ himself (cf 1 Cor 1:24).”⁴⁴

Bavinck's basis of evangelism as the mandate of the church is in reference to the Scriptures. From 1 Corinthians 9:16 he identifies the preaching of the good news as a mandate to the church and that it is not to be negotiated. He explains that Apostle Paul seldom refers directly to the missionary command of Christ as the motive of missions. To do so would have been superfluous, since the command of Christ lay so close at hand. Paul regards his own work as an apostle as having been thrust upon him by Christ: “for though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” And this necessity (anagke) is certainly the command of Christ; for it is Christ who drives Paul onward and holds him in an unbreakable grasp.⁴⁵

In both local assemblies of the church (Akwatiale and Banko) there was a 100% response stating that evangelism was a task or mandate to be fulfilled by every believer in Christ and in the church.

The respondents were further asked to cite a scriptural reference to support their claim of whose task evangelism was in the church. Though many could not, it was the majority that was able to

⁴⁴ Doctrinal Note

⁴⁵Bavinck, *The Science of Missions*, 42.

cite correct references in support of their statement. About 56.16% of the members at the Akwatialine assembly were able to cite a correct reference while the remaining 43.2% could not. Similarly, 52% of the members of the Banko assembly were able to cite correct references in support of their claims while the remaining 48% could not.

The leadership of the church had played a good role in feeding the members of the church with knowledge concerning evangelism as a mandate and how to fulfil it. In the interview with the pastors the researcher asked them what evangelism training programmes the church has for members, especially members who were very willing and ready to take the gospel out. In response, the pastors explained that they had school of evangelism, seminars, weekly leadership training, para-church groups such as 'Great Commission', which were specialist in training members yearly. They added that the church had Bible studies training manuals such as, "You are My Witness" which taught and guided members on evangelism. Then, the church's Sunday School classes was occasionally used to teach members on outreach.

This implies that, members of the Assemblies of God at Akwatialine and Banko assemblies were not ignorant about the mandate of evangelism. They recognized evangelism as a Bible doctrine as well as a mandate for the church and every Christian in the church who was a believing follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, they had no excuse not to fulfill it.

4.5 Practice and commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism

It was significant for the study to find out the practice of evangelism in the church by the members. Some observers and authors on evangelism have observed that generally the response and commitment of Christians to evangelism today is poor and ineffective. For instance, according to the authors of the *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization*, "there is

today a growing confusion which leads many to leave the missionary command of the Lord unheard and ineffective (cf. *Mt* 28:19). Often it is maintained that any attempt to convince others on religious matters is a limitation of their freedom some maintain that Christ should not be proclaimed to those who do not know him, nor should joining the Church be promoted, since it would also be possible to be saved without explicit knowledge of Christ and without formal incorporation in the Church.⁴⁶ The current study has found this to be true; there is some lethargy and lack of regular commitment to evangelizing by many Christians.

The participants of the study were asked to tell whether they do witness to unbelievers as the Lord commanded in Mark 16:15 or not. Also, they were asked to indicate the frequency at which they did witness. The responses reveal that about 60.48% of the members of the Akwatialine assembly did witness to unbelievers in order to win them to Christ. Similarly, 72% of the members of the Banko assembly did witness to unbelievers in fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism.

The frequency at which a Christian witnesses to unbelievers in order to make them disciples of Christ is also necessary to the fulfillment of the mandate of evangelism. The frequency of the urban assembly, the Akwatialine assembly, was higher than that of the rural assembly, the Banko assembly: 55.08% and 48% respectively. Generally, in both assemblies, those who did witness to unbelievers regularly, according to the answers given, were more than those who did witness to unbelievers but not regularly.

⁴⁶ Doctrinal Note

In the Akwatialine assembly, about 38.88% of the members did not witness to unbelievers as required of all believing followers of Christ. Similarly, about 28% of the members of the Banko assembly failed to witness to unbelievers as required of Christians.

Those who did not witness to unbelievers were asked to state the reasons for not doing so. It was significant to find out the factors that prevented many Christians from witnessing to unbelievers in response to the mandate of evangelism. Two major reasons were given by the respondents for their failure to evangelize: lack of knowledge of the scriptures, and business. Some members of both the urban church and the rural church failed to witness for reason that they did not have enough knowledge of the Scriptures about the Gospel to be able to preach to unbelievers.

The second excuse the respondents gave for their failure to witness was their business, which is a common excuse in most areas of life. They failed to preach either they feel too occupied with their businesses or academics that they had no time left to make some efforts to preach the gospel.

Still a majority had no particular reason or excuse for not evangelizing; which meant they just didn't witness. In the urban church (the Akwatialine assembly), about 22.24% indicated that they were not able to preach the gospel because they have no enough knowledge of the scriptures; 41.7% indicated it was due to their business; while 50.04% said it was no particular reason. In the rural assembly (Banko assembly), it was 57.2%; 28.6% and 71.5% respectively.

In the researcher's opinion, having knowledge about evangelism without committedly practicing it in reality is not enough. Committedly practicing the knowledge one has about the mandate of evangelism is what Christ commanded and expects of His followers (Mark 16:15-20):

4.6 Participation in rural evangelism

The main aim of the study was to investigate the knowledge and commitment of the church nowadays to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism (Mark 16:15) also in rural areas, but not only in urban areas of the country.

The authors of the *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization* maintain that, “Every person has the right to hear the ‘Good News’ of the God who reveals and gives himself in Christ, so that each one can live out in its fullness his or her proper calling. It is a right which the Lord himself confers on every person, so that every man and woman is able truly to say with Saint Paul: Jesus Christ “loved me and gave himself up for me” (*Gal 2:20*). This right implies the corresponding duty to evangelize: “If I preach the Gospel, this is no reason for me to boast; it is a duty for me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (*1 Cor 9:16*; cf. *Rom 10:14*). Thus, it is evident how every activity of the Church has an essential evangelizing dimension and must never be separated from the commitment to help all persons to meet Christ in faith, which is the primary objective of evangelization: “Social issues and the Gospel are inseparable. When we bring people only knowledge, ability, technical competence and tools, we bring them too little”⁴⁷

Thus, the participants of the study in both the urban and rural assemblies (Akwatiline and the Banko Assemblies of God) were asked questions regarding their participation in evangelism at rural areas. The respondents were asked to show whether or not they took active part in their church’s outreach programmes organized for rural areas, and how regular they did so.

Gary Farley in his book *Rural Evangelism* observed, “it appears that some evangelism strategists have written off places like Carrollton which is a rural area and the other declining communities

⁴⁷ Doctrinal Note

of my county. They say let's focus where most of the people live and where a few well designed strategies can be used and transported from one suburbs to the next all across the nation. There is wisdom in this; but there is also error, and sometime a little arrogance.⁴⁸

In Ghana, Gary's argument is supported with the findings by Richard Foli who found that, "There is a general tendency of church leadership being pre-occupied with their immediate environment- "forgetting" people living in rural areas." Foli revealed that although about 69% of Ghana's population [according to the 2000 population Census] profess to be Christians, there are many distinct groups within the total population that are "unreached" by the Church and that this is a great challenge confronting the Church in Ghana.⁴⁹

However, contrary to the findings of Gary and Foli as well as the researcher's assumption before the survey, the rural areas have not been ignored in the preaching of the Gospel. Majority of the respondents stated that they took active part in the church's evangelistic outreaches for rural areas. In the Akwatialine assembly (the urban assembly), which was the researcher's main focus, about 74.52% of the respondents said yes to the question, meaning that they took active part in their church's evangelistic outreaches organized occasionally to reach out to rural dwellers with the gospel. However, the percentage recorded for the frequency of participation in the rural outreaches was less than 50%, which to some extent is not encouraging.

The information given by the pastors of the Akwatialine church regarding their members commitment and participation in rural outreaches organized by the church was that generally their level of participation is often not very encouraging, not up to expectation giving their level

⁴⁸ Farley, *Rural Evangelism*, 2

⁴⁹Foli, *Mission Fields in Ghana*,

of knowledge about the mandate of evangelism. Comparatively few members, they said, were usually actively involved. However, the majority gave financial support to the evangelism team for the outreach.

On the other hand, in the rural assembly (the Banko assembly), about 64% of the members were actively involved in preaching the gospel in their community and in other rural communities around them. However, the frequency at which they did evangelize was not encouraging; about 72% were not regular in the participation.

The information given by the Banko pastor with regard to his members' participation in the evangelism programmes organized by the church was not different. According to him, generally the members' participation was encouraging; often majority of them were involved actively.

4.7 Assessment of the church's commitment/performance in rural evangelism

The respondents were asked to assess their church's commitment and performance in rural evangelism given their own observation and satisfaction as the criterion for assessment. They were asked to rate the commitment and performance as excellent, or very good, or good, or poor, or very poor. In both assemblies, majority of the respondents rated the church's performance as good; meaning that the performance was neither poor nor excellent.

In the Akwatialine assembly, 43.2% of the respondents rated their church's commitment and performance as good, 28.08% rated it as very good. In the Banko assembly, 28% rated it as good while 12% rated it as very good. But 24% believed it was excellent. The percentage that rated the performance of the church in both assemblies below good was far less than 50%. In conclusion, there is still more room for improvement by the church in rural evangelism.

In the interview, the pastors too were asked about their own assessment of their church's level of commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism as given by Christ in Mark 16:15. In response the pastors said the commitment was good above average, however, there is more room for improvement.

In agreement with the pastors, the church has been good in its teaching and practice of evangelism. However, the church could do better. Much has been done, but there is much more to be done, since the survey also found a significant percentage (though not up to 50%) of the members not actively involved in evangelism general and evangelism in rural areas in particular.

4.8 Respondents' assessment of their own commitment/performance in rural evangelism

Similarly, the respondents were asked to assess or rate their own commitment and performance in rural evangelism. In both assemblies, less than 50% of the respondents rated their commitment and performance below good. Those who rated exactly good were 45.36% for Akwatialine and 44% for Banko. However, in the Akwatialine assembly, 19.44% rated poor while 17.28% rated very poor. Only 2.16% rated excellence. In the Banko assembly, 24% rated poor while 8% rated very poor. In conclusion, there is still more room for improvement for many individuals in the church in rural evangelism.

4.9 Challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas

The last specific objective of the study was to find out the challenges faced by the church in the attempt to fulfill the mandate of evangelism in rural areas.

According to the pastors of the Akwatialine church, the church faces several challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas, and these often include inadequate funds, limited time because of too many indoor programmes, lack of commitment to the vision on the

part of members, which made it difficult to get personnel to follow up and disciple the new converts, and the challenge of helping to find jobs for some of the new converts who came jobless and couldn't continue to be jobless.

The Banko church pastor who was in the rural area also mentioned several challenges including lack of regular support from urban churches, lack of funds, engagement in other church activities, and the fact that in a rural church like Banko, many of the members were not spiritually well developed, knowledgeable and deeply rooted in the faith enough to be effective in evangelism.

4.10 Conclusion

In light of the literature reviewed on evangelism, the chapter has presented a discussion on the findings of on the churches involvement in fulfilling the mandate of evangelism, especially in rural areas in Ghana. The main discovery is that the researcher's observation that the church nowadays seemed too given to organizing indoor programmes and ceremonies, such as prayer and fasting for personal breakthrough, that focused too much on already saved members of the church than evangelistic programmes, was not different from the observation of the pastors of the Assemblies of God at Akwatia Line in Kumasi and Banko in the Sekyere East District of the Ashanti Region; it had their support.

The responses of the pastors also confirm the views of the researcher and of other researchers that the primary task of Christians in the world is to go into the world in order to preach the Good news to all creatures, a command which was given by Jesus Christ (Mark 16: 15-16), yet it seems that the attention of many Christians is now directed towards fulfilling their own will to the detriment of the Gospel.

It can be concluded that to some extent the church has been unbalanced in terms of the flock in the church and the flock outside the church. Much time, resources, and knowledge have been given to the flock inside the church, but very little is given to the flock outside the church in bringing them into the fold. But Jesus Christ our Lord said, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of findings

The study has revealed a number of facts about the fulfillment of the church's mandate of evangelism in rural areas by the Akwatialine Assemblies of God including the following:

The pastors' observation and agreement about the fact that the church nowadays is often too given to organising indoor programmes that focus too much on the flock inside the church to the neglect of regular evangelistic programmes that target the flock outside the church to bring them to Christ.

Majority of the members of the Assemblies of God at Akwatialine and Banko have a good and commendable knowledge about evangelism as mandate of the church and every Christian, from scriptural perspective.

The leadership of the Assemblies of God has played a good role in feeding the members of the church with knowledge concerning evangelism as a mandate and how to fulfil it.

The Assemblies of God church has evangelism training programmes and materials including school of evangelism, evangelism seminars, weekly leadership training programmes, para-church groups such as 'Great Commission', which are specialist in training members yearly, Bible study training manuals such as, "You are My Witness" which teaches and guides members on evangelism, and the church's Sunday School classes, which are occasionally used to teach members on outreach.

At least about 60.48% of the members of the Akwatialine assembly do witness to unbelievers while about 64% of the members of the Banko assembly do witness to unbelievers.

In the Akwatialine assembly, about 38.88% of the members do not witness to unbelievers as required of all believing followers of Christ while about 28% of the members of the Banko assembly fail to witness to unbelievers as required of Christians.

The major reasons for which some fail to evangelize are lack of knowledge of the scriptures, and business. Others for no particular reason fail to evangelize.

More than 50% of the members of both the Akwatialine assembly and the Banko assembly do occasionally participate in rural evangelistic outreaches organized by the church.

Generally, the churches' commitment to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism as given by Christ in Mark 16:15 is good above average according to the members and their leaders, however, there is more room for improvement to do better.

The church is faced by several challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism in rural areas, and these often include inadequate funds, limited time because of too many indoor programmes, lack of commitment to the vision on the part of members, which makes it difficult to get personnel to follow up and disciple the new converts.

5.2 Conclusion

Evangelism as a mandate, or mission, or the greatest commission of the church is being fulfilled by the Assemblies of God church in both urban and rural areas. However, the commitment and frequency at which it is being fulfilled in rural areas is at a low rate. The majority of those who did witness did not do so regularly. There was still a significant percentage of members of the

church who, even though recognize evangelism as a mandate, were not practically committed to fulfilling it. There were those who did not evangelize at all even at their neighbourhood. Church members' commitment and participation in rural evangelistic outreaches organized by the church was not up to expectation as compared to the knowledge they possessed about evangelism as a mandate which the church must fulfil in all parts of the world to every creature.

The researcher's observation that the church nowadays seemed too given to organising indoor programmes and ceremonies, such as prayer and fasting for personal breakthrough, that focused too much on already saved members of the church than evangelistic programmes was confirmed by the pastors of the Akwatialine and Banko Assemblies of God. The pastors agreed that too many indoor programmes focusing on developing already saved members for personal success have become one of the major hindrances to the fulfilment of the mandate of evangelism, especially in rural areas.

Thus, it is valid to conclude that the church was unbalanced in terms of the flock in the church and the flock outside the church. Much time, resources and knowledge were given to the flock inside the church, but very little was given to the flock outside the church in bringing them into the fold. Jesus Christ our Lord said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). The church has to equally fulfil her responsibility towards the flock both inside and outside the fold.

5.3 Recommendations

In order to effectively fulfill the mandate of evangelism in rural areas, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Continuous education about evangelism as the church's mandate, mission, or greatest commission in the world and that it is every believer's task.
2. Regular evangelism strategy planning meetings by the leadership of the church to reach rural areas with the gospel effectively.
3. Regular open forums on the prospects, progress, and challenges to fulfilling the mandate of evangelism
4. Reduction of indoor programmes or a balance of indoor (non-evangelistic programmes) with evangelistic and missionary programmes.
5. Discipleship of weak evangelizing members by strong evangelizing members.
6. Building up of strong follow-up and discipleship teams for new converts.
7. Celebration of heroes of rural evangelism in the church to motivate others to the task.
8. Creation of strong funds for rural evangelism.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aboagye, Mensah Robert. "The Protestant Experience, in Ghana." *Journal of African Christian Thought*, vol. 1, no. 2, December, 1998: 34-42.
- Amanor J. Darkwa. "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation." *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, 13(April 2004).
- Asamoah-Gyadu, Kwabena. "The Church in the African State – The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana." *Journal of African Thought*, Vol 1, No. 2) 51-57.
- Bavinck, J.H. *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1960.
- Bosch, David J. "Evangelism: Theological Currents and Cross Currents Today." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research Journals, Sagepub.com*, 1987) 1.
- Debrunner, Hans. *A History of Christianity in Ghana*. Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967.
- Ehimare, Enegho Felix, Enwefah. Cletus, "Christian Evangelism and its Implication on Church Growth: An Evaluation." *A paper presented at the 6th Quadrennial International Conference of the International Association for Mission studies (I.A.M.S) in Port Dickson, Malaysia, July 31-August 7, 2004.*
- Farley, Gary. *Rural Evangelism*. Alabama: Pickens Baptist Association, Partner in the Center for Rural Church Leadership, 2007.
- Foli Richard. "Mission Fields in Ghana: The Challenge of Unreached Peoples." *Journal of Methodist University College*.
- Kritzinger, J.J. "Mission and Evangelism: A Critical Appraisal of David Bosch's View." *Sabinet.co.za*, 1990.
- Lineamenta. *The Church in Africa and Her Evangelising Mission Towards the Year*. Vatican City: 2000.
- Merriam Webster's Dictionary for PC
- Miano, Tony. *What is Evangelism?* California: Genesis Publishing Group, 2008.
- Odamtten, S.K. "The Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development 1820-1880." Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1978.

- Peterson, Jim. *Evangelism for Our Generation*. NavPress Publishing Ministry, 1985.
- Pointer Roy. *Growth Book*. London, 1976.
- Rainer, Thom S. "Church Growth and Evangelism in the Book of Acts." *Criswell Theological Review*, 5.1 (1990): 57-68.
- Rainer, Thom S. *The Book of Church Growth, History, Theology and Principles*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993.
- Ruffcorn, Kevine E. *Rural Evangelism: Catching the Vision*. Ausburg Publishing: 1994.
- Sackey, M. Brigid. "Evangelization of Ghana: Historical and Contemporary Roles of Women." *Paper presented to the Women's Committee of the Christian Council of Ghana*, February 1992.