

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

**THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN SPIRITUAL MATURITY:  
(A CASE STUDY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH GHANA, EBENEZER  
SOCIETY-BANTAMA)**

**PROJECT WORK**

**(LONG ESSAY)**

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**JUNE, 2019**

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY  
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THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY  
WITH ADMINISTRATION**

**JUNE, 2019**

## DECLARATION

I George Kwasi Dankwa, do hereby declare that this project work report is the result of my own original research expect for sections of which references have been duly and to the best of my knowledge on part of it has been presented to Christian Service University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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(Head of Department Theology)

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

To God be the glory for his grace and mercies. I am grateful to God for sustaining me for all these years of studies.

I also express my appreciation to go to Osofo Isaac Peprah and his wife Mrs. Cynthia Peprah Amponsah for their financial support throughout my studies at Christian Service University College I am also grateful to my family for their support and prayers. May the good lord bless them all.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study**

The quest for religious education has been the hallmark of many believers in human victory. Many great religious leaders have expressed the need for people to be educated on the traditions and practices of their religious faiths. True character development of Christian has been attributed to systematic training in the values and morals of many culture or religion or denomination.

In the same sense, Christianity seems to be influencing many people of different cultural backgrounds and many are beginning to realize the need for Christian education.<sup>1</sup> Many older people are seeking to be educated on moral and spiritual growth in a world plagued by diverse social and spiritual evils. This seem to explain why chaplaincies are being established in many areas and institutions including schools, prisons, the military as well as the hospital and clinics which are all aimed at the teaching of Christians values.

Within the church circles, concerns are also being expressed on how Christian can develop Christ-like attitudes or character and build strong relationship with one another, through fellowship and also with the society through evangelism.

Similarly, the greatest concern has been how Christians of today can be assisted to cultivate Christian character so as bring the best in them for the benefit of society. This is against the backdrop that the society seems to be plagued by many social evils which often involve Christians in greater percentage.

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<sup>1</sup> L.M. Russell, *Christian Education in Mission* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), 19.

Since the church has been mandated to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ, it has the task not only to proclaim it, but also to teach new believers to be obedient Disciples of Christ. Therefore, Christian education entails evangelism and discipleship. There is therefore the need for us to understand the church task in the education of its members to confirm to Christian standards and principles in order to cultivate Christian or godly character. The overall motive is to develop a people who can affect society for good in areas such as, political leadership, entrepreneurship, health, education and many others. The end result will be a peaceful society, desired by all people.

### **1.2 Statement of Problem**

The need to share the Christian faith in the core component of the Great Commission. Within this mandate is the church's task of evangelism and discipleship, which are aimed at educating people to cultivate and develop Christian values and character to effect society for good.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

- i. What are the Christian educational strategies of the church?
- ii. How is Christian education being carried out in the church?
- iii. What is Spiritual Maturity?
- iv. How does the Church doctrine implement Christian education?

### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The study aims at finding out the nature approach and impact of Christian educational programmes on members of Methodist Church Bantama Ebenezer Society. It seeks to present an understanding of the strategies, particularly in carrying out the Christian teaching concerning the nature of God and His requirement for mankind. Again, the

study seeks to examine the nature of the church's relationship with the society in terms of influence and character development.

1. To know what Christian education is.
2. To improve spirituality level of the church members
3. To develop spiritual growth
4. To improve the understand of the members spiritual maturity

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study is relevant for the following reasons. First, it will provide dedicated Christians, pastors and professional religious educators with the requisite knowledge and understanding of the techniques in the approach to Christian education in all its forms. Secondly, the study will help realize the impact of Christian education on spiritual maturity.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

Two main methods will be used to gather data for the study. These are primary method and secondary method. The primary method involves interviews using structure questions with key people who are willing to share information. Such as pastors, teachers, Bible study leaders, community leaders including chief and elders, through participation in the activities at the church, the researcher will gather relevant information by way of observation and involvement.

With respect to the secondary method, information will be sought from books magazines, journals, news as well as the internet.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

The study will examine some literature review in which the views of some authors whose works are vital to this research will be addressed. The views of these authors will be grouped into areas such as the concept Christian education, biblical basis for Christian education, the concept of spiritual maturity with biblical basis. These views are addressed under subheadings.

### **1.7.1 *Christian Education***

Miller writing on Education for Christian living, points out the Christian faith as it exists today is found in the church, an institution in which dwells the Holy Spirit, who ensures communion with Christ. Furthermore, he says the church has possession of a great truth, and within it are people of faith. He contends that one cannot acquire this faith except he or she is nurtured within the life of the fellowship.<sup>2</sup>

Miller again is of the view that once new believer enter new relationship with Jesus Christ, they embark on the process of sanctification. The eventual goal of this exercise, according to the writer, is for them to live a Christ like life. By this they live out their new found life within the context of their work and worship with other Christians.<sup>3</sup>

According to Russell, Christian education is participation in Christ's invitation to all people to join in God's mission of restoring humankind to their true humanity. The writer continues that Christ himself carries out this work, and is therefore, the teacher. Through the power of the Holy Spirit he extends this invitation, and he is continually at work carrying out God's purpose and plan for the world. The Christian educator,

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<sup>2</sup> R. C. Miller, *Education for Christian Living* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, INC, Eaglewood Cliffs, 1956), 50.

<sup>3</sup> Miller, *Theologies of Religious Education*, 65.

according to the writer, is also allowed to participate in the task of extending the invitation.<sup>4</sup>

In view of the writer, Christian believers are called to extend God's invitation. This means evangelism is the believer's educational task, of reaching the world with the saving grace of Christ. This purpose of God for the church; however, the writer does not explain this in detail; especially how the Christian educator can be a partner in carrying out God's purpose for the world.

Peter Addai-Mensah's work addresses the issue of the nature of Christian education. He says that Christian faith arises from Jesus Christ, but that alone does not constitute Christian education. Christian education is also concerned with human beings in other words, they are the subject and not the object of education. He explains further that Christian Religious education is purposely concern with the human person, how that person can live a full human life here on earth and here-after.<sup>5</sup>

The writer's views are very significant in examining the nature and approach to Christian education and its approach. This supports the study as I seek to examine the nature of Christian education and its approach. In the words of Wyckoff, the task of Christian education is the nurture of the Christian life. He explains that in order that such nurture may be effective in accomplishing its purpose, the church as a rule should adopt a well-planned teaching-learning process for its educational work.<sup>6</sup> The writer sees Christian education a nurture that involves building up the faith of new believers.

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<sup>4</sup> Russell, *Christian education in Mission*, 35.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Addai-Mensah, *Doing Christian Religious Education in Ghana Today, A Personal Approach* (Takoradi: St. Francis Press, 1998), 13.

<sup>6</sup> D.C. Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian education Curriculum* (Philadelphia: The West Minister Press, no date), 17.

The only point of department seem the writer does not elaborate on the process of the nurture; on issue which shall be addressed in the study.

#### *1.7.1.1 Biblical Basis for Christian Education*

Wilhoit and Dettoni point out that education for the Christian is grounded in God's mandates to parents and to the church and the community of faith. The task of facilitating spiritual development is more apparent in biblical mandates than is the general task of helping people learn.<sup>7</sup> The writer provides us with the basis for Christian education that is, the biblical basis. This is very significant for the study which examines the biblical foundation for doing Christian education.

Kienel writes the scriptures and many more declare that the Bible is reliable in every sense and carry with it the authority of God. He contends that because the bible claims to be the very word of God, the Christian must formulate his philosophy of education on the actual words and teachings of the Bible.<sup>8</sup>

The writer continues that Christian life is based on the teachings of the work of God, and this gives us the basis for doing Christian education. This is vital for the study in addressing the biblical foundation of Christian education. It supposes that all human techniques are secondary to the biblical basis of doing Christian education.

According to Pazimino, in order to think responsibly about and practice education, Christian, and in particular Christian educators, must carefully examine the biblical foundation for Christian education. He contends that scripture is the essential source of understanding Christian distinctive in education. Finally, the writer says that it is crucial for the Christian educators' thought and practices to be guided by God's revealed truths

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<sup>7</sup> John C. Wilhoit, & James M. Dettoni, *Nurture that is Christian* (Michigan: Baler Books, Grand Rapids, 1995), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Paul A. Kienel, *The philosophy of Christian School Education* (California: Association of Christian Schools International Wittier, 1978), 14.

as he seeks to be obedient to Christ in the task of education.<sup>9</sup> To be obedient to Christ, as a Christian disciple, is a biblical mandate, and this very important as we seek to examine the foundation for discipleship training as part of Christian education. Herold Loukes argues that the bible is the basis of Christian teaching. He explains that too many young people are taught what the teacher thinks the bible is not instead of getting down to a more positive appreciation of what it has to say. The writer contends that, above every things else, young people must be helped to see that though the Bible is an old book, and the problems of religion confronts for century upon century, the problems they face today are basically the same problems though found in different environments.<sup>10</sup>

Gangel is of the view that the horizontal fellowship between God's people is dependent upon the vertical fellowship between the individual Christian and his Lord. He explains that one of the purpose of the Church is that the world may see Christians living together in a harmonious love relationship which is demonstrative of the Christ they serve.<sup>11</sup> The writer points out the role of the Church in the spiritual upliftment of Christians. This is very vital for the study as we seek to examine how the Church's activities can lead to the spiritual growth of its members. He however does not specify how this can be carried out; and this forms the focus of the study. Since more writes that communication of the Gospel through religious education is one of the four functions by which a Church seeks to fulfill its nature and to transform its mission in the world. He concludes that education is an integral part of the total Church Mission and implements every other function.<sup>12</sup> To the author, the church exists for the spiritual growth of its members and

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<sup>9</sup> R.W. Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988), 17.

<sup>10</sup> H. Loukes, *New Ground in Christian Education* (London: SCM Press Ltd. 1965), 35.

<sup>11</sup> K. O. Gangle, *Leadership for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), 27.

<sup>12</sup> John T. Sisemore, *Vital Principles in Religious Education* (Tennessee, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), 18.

also the transformation of society. This is the task which is under study is very vital. Lebar asserts that essentially the Church is not a building, nor an institution, an organization, or a program. Rather, the church is essentially people; it is the body of Christ, whose members strengthens each other and works together in a given locality. She says further that it is natural to describe the local church in terms of its activities, its work, as an institution, but everything the church does is for sake of the people. All programming and organizing are means to the end effecting change in people.<sup>13</sup> In the view of the author, the church is a group of people who are to live for one another. The building up of the people and the improvement of relationship is what the church stands for and also is vital for study. According to Cully, the church's one great task is to perpetuate from generation to generation the good news of Jesus Christ. In this light, the writer is of the view that the educational task of church is with the emergence of the church itself. He explains that as soon as converts were won to the fellowship of Christ, some means were devised to nurture them in the faith.<sup>14</sup> The author points out that the Church has a mandate to nurture new believers in the Christian Faith. This is very significant as far as the study is concerned. However, he does not tell us he means by which these converts can be nurtured; an issue which will receive attention in the study.

### **1.8 Scope and Organization of the Study**

The study concerns the Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society, Bantama. It specifically seeks to examine the impact of Christian education methods on the lives of the people of the church. It is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the general

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<sup>13</sup> Lois E. Lebar, *Focus on People in Church Education* (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan 1968), 11.

<sup>14</sup> K.B Cully, *Basic Writings in Christian Education* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. No date), 8.



introduction which captures the introduction and background to the study, the statement of problem, the aim and objective of the study, the research methodology as well as the scope and organization of the study.

Chapter two will also look at the history and structure of Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama relevant, literatures from other people, books and journals which are relevant to the study. The third chapter addresses the impact of Christian education on Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society.

Chapter four will specifically analyze issues such as theology and Christian education, and spiritual maturity, as well as the implication of the church ministry on the spiritual maturity, as well as the implication of the church ministry on the spiritual maturity.

In conclusions the chapter capture the summary of the entire discussion, the general conclusion, as well as some recommendations.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

The discussion entailed an overview of the background to the study, the statement of problem, the aim and objectives of the study, the significance of the study research methodology and the scope and organization of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, the study addressed the introduction and focused on issues such as the concept of Christian education, biblical basis for Christian education, the church and its ministry, as well as the spiritual formation. In this chapter, the study will examine some background issues relating to the history and profile of Bantama community, history and structure of the Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society Bantama, the history of Christian education and the biblical pattern of Christian education.

#### **2.2 History of the Methodist Church**

John Wesley (Rev.) was born on June 17, 1703, the 15<sup>th</sup> of 19<sup>th</sup> children to Samuel (Rev.) and Susana Wesley. John Wesley graduated from Oxford University and became a priest in the Church of England in 1728 beginning in 1729, he participated in the Holy Club, a religious study group organized by his brother Charles (1707-1788). Critics ridiculed the “Methodist” for their methodical study and devotion. Bound by covenant, the worshipped, prayed and studied-and visited prisoners and cared for the poor, orphans and the sick, emphasizing both personal and social holiness.<sup>15</sup> A turning point in Wesley’s life followed a two-year missionary trip (1735-1737) to Savannah, GA. On May 24, 1738, Wesley, then 34, attended a Moravian service at Aldersgate Street in London. Listening to the reading of Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he heard an explanation of faith and the doctrine of justification by faith. In 1739, Wesley

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<sup>15</sup> Albert C. Outler, *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 23.

accepted an invitation from his friend George Whitefield to preach in the open air to miners near Bristol. This led him to preach outside the church often to working-class people. Other Anglican clergy refused to follow his example, so Wesley allowed lay people to preach and teach. In 1743, as the number of societies grew, Wesley allowed lay people to preach and teach. In 1743, as, the number of societies grew, Wesley prepared “General; Rules” for the societies. They became the nucleus of the Methodist *Discipline*.<sup>16</sup>

Wesley is believed to have traveled more than 250,000 miles and to have preached more than 40,000 times. He died in 1791. He affirmed the Trinity, the Resurrection, the Ascension and the “sufficiency of Scriptures for salvation”. He did not believe in Purgatory and opposed the practice of clergy speaking in Latin or any language not understood by parishioners. He accepted only baptism and communion as sacraments. He used reason, tradition and experience as tools to derive the truth contained in Scripture. He considered the doctrines of justification and new birth to be fundamental. “In the moment we are justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus, we are as ‘born of the Spirit.’”<sup>17</sup>

### **2.2.1 *The Church in Ghana***

Methodism in Ghana took root in a soil which had been tilled, if intermittently, by successive generation of Christians of different denominations from as far back as the fifteenth century. When Joseph Rhodes Dunwell (Rev.), the first Methodist missionary to Ghana, arrived in 1835, he took his place in a line pioneers-priests of the Catholic Church from Portugal and from France, clergymen of the reformed church of Holland and of the Church of England, and missionaries of the Basel evangelical Missionary

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<sup>16</sup> Outler, *John Wesley*, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Outler, *John Wesley*, 24.

Society.<sup>18</sup> He arrived at Cape Coast, one of the principal towns in the coastal area, at a time when groups of African Christians were preparing, unaided, a place in which the seed of Methodism could flourish. It was the story of these African Christians and the news of fertile ground they were preparing which induced the Missionary Committee of the British Methodist Conference to send Dunwell to Ghana, then also known as the Gold Coast. Together with some of the local Christian pioneers, although he lived among them for only six months, Dunwell sowed the seed which has now grown into the mature of the Methodist Church, Ghana. The achievement was due not only to the efforts of the people of the land to understand the word of God, but also to a succession of missionary endeavours, the first of which began with the building of Elmina Castle, eight miles west of Cape Coast, in 1481.<sup>19</sup>

### ***2.2.2 History and Structure of the Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society Bantama***

In an interview with Samuel Amoah, he said; “like many other churches, in the country and elsewhere, Bantama started with few dedicated people, men and women of great faith and commitment. The founding fathers were all members of the Wesley society at Adum near the prisons. They trekked in the mornings and evenings to Adum for church service. The shortest possible route to Adum was through soldier line that is currently harassed by the soldiers, especially in the evenings.

The establishment of a branch church was the main solution to the problem enumerated above. A formal application to this effect was submitted through Bartels (Rev.), and addressed to Superintended Minister in charge.

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<sup>18</sup> R. M. Wiltgen, *Gold Coast Missionary History 1431-1880* (Illinois: Baker Books, 1956), 14-31.

<sup>19</sup> Wiltgen, *Gold Coast Missionary History*, 14 – 20.

The branch started as a cell unit Nana Ataa-Osekye of Apemanin offered her house as a place of worship. The house was adjacent to the Bikai Pharmaceutical Factory. Church Services were held for about seven years. The church moved to its present premises where, more spacious and modern chapel was built in 1963. the foundation stone was laid by Catechist J.B Baiden and completed during the term of office of catechist Adu Gyamfi. J. Fredrick Bart Addison, chairman of Kumasi District dedicated the chapel in November 13<sup>th</sup> 1963. He was supported by the Late W.K. Annin. Who later on, single handled built the Manse for the Church.”<sup>20</sup>

The following have served as Ministers at Bantama.

Very Rev. S. F. Oduro	1974-1976
Very Rev William Ofori	1976-1979
Very Rev K. A. Abaka	1979-1986
Very Rev S.E.A. Quarm	1986-1990
Very Rev Samson Yamoah	1990-1996
Very Rev E.E. Ackon	1996-1998
Very Rev. N.B. Abubekr	1998-2002
Very Rev. O.S.K. Boakye	2002-2006
Very Rev. Kyei Baffour	2006-2008
Rt. Very Rev. Omane-Acheamfour	2008-2013
Very Rev. Charles Aaron Ekuban	2013-2017
Recently Very Rev. Samuel Kwaku Poku	2017- to date

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<sup>20</sup> Interview with Mr. Samuel Amoah, An one of the church leaders, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2019.

Bantama Circuit has gone very far, and brought forth many Circuits, namely Kwadaso, Bohyen, Mankranso, Opoku kruom and Foase.

### **Organization of the Church**

- Women Fellowship
- The Methodist Guild
- The National Union of Methodist Singing Band
- Methodist Youth Fellowship
- Susanna Wesley Mission Auxiliary

### **2.3 The History of Christian Education**

From history it can be learnt that the nineteenth century brought about profound changes in the social, political and economic conditions of Europe and North America. The harnessing of science and engineering in England and Europe brought unparalleled growth in the textile and the steel producing industries. In North America, people migrated from their farms and began new careers in factories and manufacturing plants. In many of these plants the workers formed labour unions, which, in turn, forced concessions from the wealthy mine and factory owners.<sup>21</sup> The nineteenth century and a significant impact on the conditions that led to even further changes that emerged in the twentieth century.

Radical seeds of change had been sown throughout the nineteenth century, and a monumental harvest was about to begin. The world was in motion in every corner. Social migration, the emergence of large industrial corporations, new discoveries in

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<sup>21</sup> M. J. Anthony, *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001), 343.

medicine, science, and industry were having their effect on the world. Education was the recipient of new ways of thinking, and whose influenced America's thinking about how to educate the next generation also were having an indirect influence on religious education. Public education in North America was experimenting with new ways of instruction, and there as simply to way to prevent some of these new approaches to learning from spilling over into the way education was conducted in the church as well.

Beyond these societal changes, the nineteenth century brought about radical new paradigms for thinking about education. Educational philosophers such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbat, and Dewey had left prominent marks on education across Europe and North America, Christian education thought and practice can be divided into three periods during the twentieth, each of which is influenced by several prominent personalities who helped to shape and direct its practice.

### ***2.3.1 Early Twentieth Century: Liberal Dominance (1900-1940)***

The turn of the century brought changes in the way people thought about the application of their faith to the complicated issues facing society. Revivalism, which was a prominent means of religious expression in the latter half of the nineteenth century, was being challenged by those who advocated a more balanced approach to spiritual formation.<sup>22</sup> Rejecting what they saw as radical conversion and transformation methods of revivalism, this new breed of religious educators embraced the teaching of social Darwinism, and sought to apply the tenets of the Christian faith to the more challenging issues facing America at the beginning of a new century. Rejecting the doctrines of evangelical theology and embracing both protestant liberal liberal theology and many of progressive education, the religious education movement attacked

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<sup>22</sup> Anthony, *Exploring the History and Philosophy of Christian Education*, 345.

revivalist piety and education provided by the traditional Sunday school. The religious education movement did not try to replace the Sunday school but rather attempted to bring to it a new approach to the teaching of religion. Again, we are told that:

Two of the leading figures of this new religious thinking were George Albert Coe (1862-1951) and William Clayton Bowyer (1878-1982). Coe was born into a minister's family in Mendon, New York. He attended the University of Rochester, Boston University, and the University of Berlin. His teaching career included appointment at the University of Southern California (1888-1891), Northwestern University (1891-1909), Union Theological Seminary (1909-1921), and the Teachers College of Columbia, from which he retired in 1927. Together with William Rainey Harper, Coe established the Religious Education Association (REA) in 1903 to advance the study of religion and apply it to public education.<sup>23</sup>

### ***2.3.2 Mid-Twentieth Century: Neo-orthodoxy Transition (1940-1970)***

Between the world wars, a theological movement known as neo-orthodoxy began to sweep across Europe. Before long its challenge to Protestant liberal theology was being felt in North America as well.

Neo-orthodoxy distanced itself from Protestant orthodoxy by its acceptance of modern critical approaches to the study of the Bible. It criticized liberal theology for ignoring fundamental biblical doctrines in its attempt to make Christianity relevant in the modern world.”<sup>24</sup>

### ***2.3.3 Late Twentieth-Century Development (1970-1999)***

During the close of the second period of twentieth-century religious education thought and practice, the neo-orthodoxy movement came to an end, and greater emphasis was placed upon development within the various mainline denominations. Leading the

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<sup>23</sup> Anthony, *Exploring the history and philosophy of Christian education*, 347, 352.

<sup>24</sup> Wikipedia. Neo Orthodoxy. Last Modified August, 4, 2019. Accessed October 9, 2019. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Orthodoxy>.



charge along these lines was a religious educator named John Westerhoff's III.<sup>25</sup> Westerhoff's primary contribution to religious education during this period of the twentieth century is his emphasis on the socialization process within one's spiritual formation. Reviewing his definition of Christian education, he emphasized that, Christian education is those deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort of the community of faith which enable persons and groups to evolve Christian life styles<sup>26</sup>.

## **2.4 The Biblical Patterns of Christian Education**

The biblical revelation of God's dealing with His people Israel, and the examples of Jesus and His apostles form the foundation for what we know today as Christian education. We look to the biblical records for both its origin and form. Its purposes, methods, and institutional expressions are rooted in the scriptures.<sup>27</sup>

Viewing the Bible as God's living word can recharge Christian education at its base. A good foundation is vital to the church ministry and authoritative theology. Such a theology does not spring from an existential based devoid of absolutes and certainties, but from revelatory truth. The view that the Scriptures are the authoritative Word from God rather than a means of stifling the human spirit allows us to become all that God intended in His creative process.

The teaching function of the church flows from the Bible. It does not ignore the contemporary setting and the development needs of the learner, but it finds its roots in the Word. What we think about God indicates what we do about education.

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<sup>25</sup> Uram, American protestant Neo – Orthodoxy and its search for Realism (1970 – 1999) last Modified October 9, 2019. Accessed October 9, 2019. <https://www.utp-journals/doi/pdf/10:3138/uram.8.4.277>.

<sup>26</sup> Anthony, *Exploring the history and philosophy of Christian education*, 347,352.

<sup>27</sup> Clark, *Christian Education: Foundation for the Future*, 31.

### ***2.4.1 Jewish Form of Education***

The roots of Christian education can be traced from Judaism. It might not be strange that the church claims a Judaic heritage in that the New Testament church was founded by the Jews, the New Testament was written by Jews (with the exception of Luke and Mark), and the Bible of the early church was the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament.<sup>28</sup>

God made Himself known to the Hebrew both in history and in His law. To the Hebrew the concept that God was the teacher emerged from the nature of God Himself. He was creator, covenanter, and sustainer. His will and wisdom were to be sought and cherished. Thus priest, prophet, king, sage, and scribe were all viewed as interpreters in one way or another of the grand drama of the Lord in history and in revelation. Through the bitter years of Exile, Judaism survived because of an ingrained respect for education. What the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem were to the devout, the synagogue became a school to the Jews in exile. It developed as one of those rare educational institutions that correspond with the nature of the faith it represents. The principal purpose of the synagogue was teaching. It was the center where the law was explained, expounded, and applied.

### ***2.4.2 Education in the New Testament***

Christianity takes its educational from a cluster of sources. The example and teaching of Jesus, the apostolic preaching and writing, and the embryonic style revealed in the biblical record of early Christian worship and fellowship primarily from the base of the New Testament education.

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<sup>28</sup> Clark, *Christian Education: Foundations for the Future*, 32.

As far as the apostolic tradition is concerned, the thrust of the Great Commission in Mathew 28:19-20 and its teaching pose a mandate upon the apostles. Pentecost turned timid followers into bold preacher-teachers. Those who responded to Peter's message that day continued steadfastly in the doctrine of Jesus Christ (Act 5:42). It is helpful to visualize the New Testament materials as forming three great emphasis: to be a teacher in the New Testament sense embodies the call to faith, the explanation of the faith, and elaboration on the moral and spiritual implications of the life of faith.

Apostolic preaching formed the core of action, calling men and women to repentance. Emphasis were upon the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Paul in his preaching developed those faith-forming themes but emphasized another dimension Christ who is the first born of creation and reconciler of all things to Himself by His death on the cross to redeem mankind.

As regarding early Christian worship and Teaching, several themes, can be developed from the New Testament data, revealing the central importance of education in the life of the elderly church. In Acts we learn that the persistent behavior of Christians involved the apostles' teaching (koinonia), prayers, observance of the Lord's Supper, and compassionate caring-first to the saints, then toward all others. As Christianity moved outward to the larger Roman world it became necessary to emphasize family (primarily parental) responsibility in teaching. Furthermore, the pastoral epistles, particularly, outline ministerial duties and church responsibilities in regard to the education task.

The intense concern for communal sharing in primitive Christianity grew out of the Christian call to a life of discipleship. It was the corporate togetherness that edified. The Word was always central. Even music was viewed as pedagogical (Col. 3:16). The

life and work of the early church, as revealed in scripture, revolved in large measure around teaching. Yet there was always a compelling missionary impetus outward from the Assembly of saints to the surrounding world.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The discussion centered on background issues to Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama and the concept of Christian education. Issues addressed include the history and structure of Ebenezer Society Bantama, the Biblical patterns of Christian education as well as the history of Christian education. It is clear from the discussion that the church sees the concept of Christian education as a major factor in the development of the church. The nature and strategies employed in the Christian education ministry of Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society will be further examined as we move to the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF METHODIST CHURCH GHANA,**

#### **EBENEZER SOCIETY, BANTAMA**

##### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on some background issues relating to Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama and Christian education. Issues discussed include the history and structure of the Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society, Bantama the Biblical patterns of Christian education and the history of Christian education. In this chapter, an attempt is made to examine the Christian education ministry of the Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama. Issues to be addressed include the significance of Christian education, the Methodist of Christian education at Methodist Church Bantama Ebenezer Society and the impact of Christian education on the church.

##### **3.2 The Task of the Church's Educational Ministry**

The church seeks to meet the biblical imperatives of evangelism and edification (Mathew 28:19-20) through its total programme. Although both evangelism and edification occur in all aspects of that programme, edification frequently takes form in a more systematic way through the ministries or agency programmes that constitutes the church's educational ministry. The responsibility of the church includes both evangelizing to bring persons to Christ, and teaching them in his commandments and in the doctrines of the word. Implied in the Great Commission is the aspect of training and equipping. In all efforts to carry out this mandate the church has to direct all its programme in the direction of that purpose. The total church programme therefore consists of the complete programme that the church carries out to bring people to Christ

the savior and Lord, to equip them for growth toward Christ likeness and to equip them for effective service in the will of God. Every age level has to receive a proper and balanced emphasis in salvation, Christian growth, and service. This means that in the development of its programme, the church will seek to allow for the involvement of everyone. Every person possesses intellect, attitudes, feelings, will and capacity to relate to God and to others. In order to meet the needs of the whole person, the church's program is carried out in the ways through instructions in the scriptures, opportunity for worship, fellowship, evangelism and involvement in diverse activities of the church.<sup>29</sup>

### **3.3 The Significance of Education**

It has been established that Christian education is a continuous process that enables believers to live the Christian life in a more positive way which affects their conduct and the way they handle spiritual issues like prayer and Bible studies. Therefore, its significance cannot be overemphasized. In the first place, the Christian faith is a missionary faith, meaning that it must be proclaimed for all people to know about it and also accept it. In Mathew 28:19 we are commanded to preach and teach the good news of Jesus Christ. If we require people to receive the faith, then someone has to teach it. It is through Christian education that people of all background can relate to the Christian faith by accepting the doctrine of Christ.

Secondly, Christian education seeks to reorient people of what had already shaped their lives. In this way prejudices and antagonisms give way to agreement and understanding. In the third place, Christian education enables people to understand Christian steward.

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with Osei Akoto, In Coming Rev. Minister of Methodist Church Ghana. Ebenezer Society Bantama on 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019.

They come to realize that the Christian faith is a faith that demands accountability at all levels. People must be taught what is expected so that they can do things right. It is only when Christians get to know of what God requires of them, that they can become faithful. Therefore, Christian education seeks to inculcate accountability and faithfulness in the lives of Christians and all people. Christian education ensures quality growth and spiritual maturity in the personal lives of Christians and also in the corporate life of the church. People must be taught not only how to relate to God, but also how to create wealth in the physical world. If we desire right things to be done, then people must be taught how to go about them. Christian's education seeks to enlighten people so as to appropriate the faith. People are able to rise above ignorance and to become relevant in their societies. Christian education enables people to know the truth of how to live the Christian life in a victorious manner.<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, Christian education is very significant for the church in that it enables Christian's to recognize their sense of identity, and come to realize their uniqueness which ensures their loyalty and commitment to the Christian faith. Even though they are in the world they do not live according to its principles, their lives are governed by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. This significance of Christian education is underscored by the fact that, we live in a pluralistic world, made up of many faiths. Christian education enables Christians to know who they are, and distinguish themselves from all other. Again, the people of God are able to draw the line between truth and falsehood, the genuine from the counterfeit. Lastly, Christian education seeks to enable Christians to preserve the rich heritage of the Christian faith. People must be taught how to pass on the faith that they have received. In order to do that there is the

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Yaw Boateng, of Chairman of Men's fellowship Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama on, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.

need for us to repackage what we have received, to make it more relevant to the contemporary times and all cultural situations. We are to use history to chart a new course for the future that is to present the best to the incoming generation. We need to perpetuate the good Christian heritage by communicating it, showing love to all people, especially the non-Christians, and by teaching what is good.<sup>31</sup>

### **3.4 Christian Educational Methodist at Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama**

It has been noted that Christian education is and remains the task of the church. It is a mandate and not an option for the church and should therefore be treated as priority. The Bible says that a people without a vision will perish (Proverbs 29:18). In line with this it means Christian education has a purpose that is, to bring the Christian believers to the point of realizing their potential in God, in addition to their living full human lives. Furthermore, it means bringing the people to maturity in Christ, which impacts positively on their relationship with God and with others. Christian education is carried out at Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society through the following means or structures.

#### **3.4.1 *Sunday School***

Sunday tends to be a day on which most people choose to worship the Lord and seek instruction from His Word. The Sunday school for many years has served the purpose of instructions. It was originally meant to teach lower class children to read and write and later to teach the Word of God to both the unchurched and the church. Today, the Sunday school has been identified as “the church at study”, involving people and the Word of God and training them to study it together. It is a school that meets on Sunday and offers opportunity for the church to gather together for the purpose of

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Henry Amponsah Antwi (Rev.) second Minister of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama on, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.



instruction in the Word of God as well as for worship. It is also a school which has the purpose of carrying out a systematic teaching and learning of the Bible. Again, because it is a school, it is structured to meet the needs of all age levels. At Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama, the structure includes youth, teenagers and children. This is meant to reach the people at their comprehension levels. The different classes are led by lay leaders who have been trained, and often meet for preparatory classes or workshops.<sup>32</sup>

#### **3.4.2 Age Group Meetings**

These are meetings of interest groups involving instruction, fellowship, worship and evangelism. They include men's department, women's department, and youth department and music department. In all these meetings the objective is for instruction in the Word of God, fellowship, recreation and evangelism.

#### **3.4.3 Specialized Ministries / Organization**

The church gives opportunity to everyone to harness their potentials. In this sense they are assisted to learn through various activities and programmes. These include music, instrumentation, choreography or drama, and prayer. Through these activities, the people come to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge in handling issues in the church. This is very relevant to the overall goal of spiritual maturity and service in the church.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Interview with Sunday Leader, Acheampong of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama on, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Men's Fellowship Leader Mr. Francis Mensah and Women's Fellowship Leader Mrs. Sussana Amoah on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2019

### **3.5 The Impact of Christian Education on Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama**

It has been established that Christian education seeks to build up the spiritual lives of Christians. In line with this Wyckoff Campbell has indicated that the task of Christian education is the nurture of the Christian.<sup>34</sup> In order that such nurture may be effective in accomplishing its purpose, the church as a rule rejects reliance upon haphazard means and adopts a reasoned and planned teaching-learning process for its educational work. In this section we shall attempt to examine the impact of the Christian education on Methodist Church Ghana Society, Bantama. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of Christian education methods and activities, there is the need to examine the impact it makes.

#### **3.5.1 *Character Development***

Through spiritual formation that results from discipleship, the youth are able to understand the Christian life in their relationship to God. Spiritual formation results from the instruction in the Word, fellowship and prayer. Together with character development is the enhancement of spiritual growth as mentioned earlier. The new converts gain new insights from learning from others in the group and they understand whatever they learn. It is only in the group that they tend to learn the biblical values for their lives.

#### **3.5.2 *Development of Skills and Capabilities***

The vacation camps and youth meetings offer the youth the opportunity to discover and develop their individual talents and skills in vocations and ministries available to them. It is at these meetings that some youth are able to play musical instruments, and also

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<sup>34</sup> D. C. Wyckoff, *Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, no date), 17

learn to teach and preach the Word of God. Some also learn entrepreneurial skills in industrial vocations, such as printing, writing, and broadcasting, the making of pastries and confectionaries as well as woodwork.

### ***3.5.3 Meeting Personal Needs***

It is a fact that the youth are very energetic and desire opportunities to express themselves. The small group fellowship, the Sunday school bible studies, recreation, annual youth vacation camps as well as the weekly youth meetings offer the youth the opportunity to fellowship, share ideas, relax and learn. They enjoy the satisfaction of a supportive climate among equals, the desire to make friends and developing a sense of belonging and also as channel for spiritual maturity.<sup>35</sup> Again they also enjoy an increase in their confidence level in the Christian faith, and find acceptance and care especially those who come from homes social problems.

### ***3.5.4 A Sense of Ministry / Organizational Involvement and Service***

The spiritual growth experienced by the members is usually accompanied by recognition of gifts in members who observe the ministry of lay leaders with the group. This awareness that they are God's gift to the Body of Christ enhances their sense of value and mission. This is demonstrated by the active involvement of the members in outreach carry out evangelism, distributing tracts and speaking to their colleagues about the good news of Jesus. Again, some are involve in hospital ministry where they visit the sick at hospitals to share the Word of God with them and also minister to them physically. Other also visit the orphanages with the Jesus care message and this has enhanced the image of the church.

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<sup>35</sup> Interview with Ernest Ekuban Guild Chairman of Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society, Bantama on, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2019.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The chapter examined the task and methods of Christian education at Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama. It addressed issues such as, the task of the church's educational ministry, the significance of Christian education, Christian education methods at Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama, and the impact of Christian education on the members. It has been established that the church exists to educate, and her educational ministry may take a variety of forms. However, the overall objective of equipping the saints and causing the growth of the church remains a major priority which needs to be pursued.

In whatever form the Christian education ministry may take the Word of God must remain paramount. Christian education as a ministry remains a major task of the church. This shall be examined in detail as we move to the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS OR DATA COLLECTED**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, we set out to discuss the Christian education ministry at Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama. Issues addressed includes the purpose of Christian education, Christian education methods and the structure and impact of Christian education on members of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to examine the theological implications of Christian education for the church. Issues to be considered in this section include the implications of theology for Christian education, Christian education as a catalyst for ministry, Christian education and church growth as well as the changing society and its implications for the Christians.

#### **4.2 Theological Implications of Christian Education**

It is very imperative for the church in all its activities and programmes to be theologically minded. What this means is that “it is imperative that the church become a people who understand who are, who God is, what God is about in the world and what God is calling us to be in the world.”<sup>36</sup>

The most crucial question is that, is theology very critical to our concerns as a church? Is it very relevant for the church to adopt a theological perspective in all its approaches? It is a fact that every Christian needs theology in order to live as a disciple of Christ. But this idea can have real meaning if it is seen as directly related to the living witness

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<sup>36</sup> D. Parker, *Theology and the Church* (ERT Vol. 30, No. 1, 2006)

of Christians, individually and collectively. What then is Christian theology? What role does it play in the life of the church? Is it about the ministers? Christian theology is reflecting on and articulating the God-centered life and beliefs that Christians share as followers of Jesus Christ, in order to bring glory to God through the life of Christian. If theology is to make a valuable contribution to church life, we must move beyond all negative perceptions to discover how the local church can develop theological tasks around living with and responding to God.

In order to know and respond to God, it is essential that we discover the Bible and its place in the life of the church, not just in individual Christian lives. The Bible does not only give us information about the life and words of Jesus (as gaining Bible knowledge) but rather we seek to encounter God in a way that will shape and direct our lives, individually and corporately. Gangel writes that “horizontal fellowship between God’s people is dependent upon vertical fellowship between the individual Christian and his Lord. He notes that one of the purposes of the church is that the world may see Christians living together in a harmonious love relationship which is demonstrative of the Christ whom they serve.”<sup>37</sup>

Christian education has always been a concern of the church, for it is the means by which men and women are nurtured in Christian life. Christian education is concerned with God’s good gifts of salvation and eternal life. Through his means people can participate in the gift of God’s love. It is time for the church to search out ways that will allow God’s children to participate fully in the gift of love and nurture offered them by God. Conversion, discipleship and service in God’s church constitute the fundamentals of theology that are to be expounded through Christian education. It is

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<sup>37</sup> K. O. Gangel, *Leadership for Church Education* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), 27.

very significant that we realize and remember the most important thing in life that is personal relationships that is, one needs to be rightly related to God, to oneself, and to others. God seeks to redeem estranged, sinful persons back to himself and this is the basis of Christian theology, and the oil for the church's educational tasks.

#### **4.3 Christian Education as a Catalyst for Ministry**

Essentially the church is not just about a building, institution, organization or programme. Rather the church is about people. This means that all that the church seeks to achieve and all that it does is about people. All the programmes and activities are meant to effect changes in people. As far as the study is concerned, it is essential that we examine what the church does and can do for its members. If the members are perceived as the church, then it is essential that the church positions itself to elevate its members to levels of responsibility. The task of the church in this instance is therefore very crucial. Against this background, the crucial questions that need to be answered include; what is the place of the members in the church's programme. "Does the church see the need to harness the gifts and potentials of the members? Is the development of members a priority to the church?

The church programme can provide much that its members cannot get elsewhere, such as Bible instruction, in Sunday school, worship in church services, training in youth programmes, instruction and training in Vacation Bible school and annual youth camps, fellowship, recreation, evangelism and missionary service, which are all church-related activities geared towards their spiritual and moral upbringing. Kuzma poses the question that, how can our children develop godly characters in society that does not know the meaning of integrity? For him, discipline for good behaviour is not enough. Rather, he suggests ways to instill integrity and help develop distinctive character in

the children in spite of them growing up among corrupting influences. He points out that true character development must begin from the inside of the person with correct motives, unselfish desires, and pure thoughts. These all come as a result of having a close relationship with God. In the light of this, the church must strive to develop its members through its programmes in order to ensure discipleship, and spiritual growth for the youth.

#### **4.4 Christian Education Discipleship and Church Growth**

It is of a fact that the church exists to carry out the mandate of God on earth. The redemption of the world is the chief concern of God. This is the central doctrine of the Christian tradition and this was what the incarnation sought to achieve and this was the purpose of the cross. The Great Commission, comparing the last words of Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry, describes what must be done if the purposes of God in Christ are to be carried out.

Included in the Great Commission is the task of discipleship. This entails the teaching of the new believers in Christ on how to walk in the new-found faith in Christ. But what is the relationship between Christian education, discipleship and church growth? It is significant to understand that the growth of the church is always brought about by the action of the Holy Spirit. As the New Testament Church, so today, the Holy Spirit leads, convict of sin, converts, build up, calls people into various ministries and sends out people into the harvest field. McGavran has observe that the concern of Christians today must be to understand the workings of the Holy Spirit and to be open to His leading. In



his view, the Holy Spirit builds up the church, extends and nurture it. “Men are the channel through which He works”, he concludes.<sup>38</sup>

It is essential to understand that every effort which causes growth in the church for example, teaching is the will of God. It is also vital to note that a failure to understand how God extends His church might seem to result from humankind’s self-will, pride and ignorance and this can either delay or prevent the gathering of souls into the church. When people come into the church, they need to be given a sound footing in their new-found faith. This is only possible as they go through a systematic programme meant to instruct and equip them with the basic tenets of the Christian faith. It is essential that the total church programme be made relevant for every believer to ensure spiritual growth. When this happens, it will produce a sound atmosphere of fellowship and nurture and every member of the church will be happy belonging to the church. It is very important that we equate church growth with the quality of the total church programme, and its relevance for the entire church. We read in Acts 2:44 “that every day, the Lord added onto the church, those who were being saved. What was the secret of this growth? We are told in Acts 2:42 that the total church programmes involved fellowship, instruction, prayer and sharing. A church that exists to seek the betterment and spiritual growth of its members is bound to succeed and grow.

As the Body of Christ, the church draws its life from Christ by the Spirit through the scriptures, which also gives its commission to manifest him and minister to the world. The emphasis is always on people. Human beings are to receive Christ; they mature to the stature of the fullness of Christ through the church’s educational ministry, and are to reflect Christ and also witness. This is the pattern for the growth of the church. It

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<sup>38</sup> D. A. McGavran, *How Churches Grow: The New Frontiers of Mission* (New York: Friendship Press, 1970), 55.

seeks to bring people into the church, equip them and send them out to bring others into the church. Thus, the church arena becomes the platform for the dissemination of the will and purpose of God. Thus, people are given the opportunity to be grounded solidly in the Christian faith, possess it and pass it on to others. It can therefore be concluded that Christian education is a critical factor in the growth of the church and needs not be underestimated.

#### **4.5 The Changing Society and its Implications for the Christian**

The world, in which we find ourselves as a people, is no longer a world of yesteryears. It is a world of change, a world in which events shape the lives of humans and a world where human beings, nations, and even the church are in constant movement. It is significant to note that the church cannot change the events, as we live in a world that is exploding in a technological “revolution”. But, as Christians, we believe human beings have been set free by God to shape his own destiny. Our job is to be part of this world and seek to bring about God's purpose.

As far as Christians are concerned, there are many ideas and events that are shaping their lives in this fast-changing world. The advance in technology has caught up with everyone, with the youth not exempted. In a world where the social network of communication has taken a new turn, and consisting of the Facebook and the WhatsApp systems, one cannot prevent a Christians do not swayed into using the technology for evil purposes? In the same view, the use of iPad gadgets is catching up with Christians and its use should be tailored towards credible and moral purposes.

In line with this, it presupposes that the world and for that matter the society is becoming sophisticated and Christians are to be positioned in such a way that they can effect positive changes in the society. If this will happen, then, there must be a system

or programme to equip Christians with the necessary tools to live in the changing society. It is for this that the church's total programme becomes very crucial. There is much that Christians can do and if they are equipped in their relationship with God then they can bring about positive changes in the society. The society we live in seems to be witnessing too much delinquency on the part of the youth, but the church has what it takes to prepare a youth who can turn things around.

The society is not only changing in terms of technology, but also in terms of social relationships. People define themselves by those things which so appeal to them. This means that people are no longer satisfied with what they have but seek to discover new things that so interest them. In line with this, Russel has suggested that, in a modern pluralistic society where there is no one pattern of social relationships, there should be a pluralism of church structures. In his view many people no longer find their interest at where they reside. Often vocation, sports, arts, politics and many other interests become their center of concern.<sup>39</sup>

It is significant that the church discovers ways of meeting these changing interests especially as they affect the youth. This presupposes that the structure of Christian education should take cognizance of these changing interests and make positive arrangement that can keep the Christian youth on course in the Christian faith. The extent to which Christians can adapt to this fast-changing world depends on their level of commitment to the Christian faith. This will ensure that they develop the necessary "shock absorbers" in order to cope with the changing patterns of society.

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<sup>39</sup> Russel, *Christian Education in Mission*, 40.

#### **4.6 Analysis of Data**

As a result of effective weekly bible classes the church has seen a significantly growth numerically the Sunday school has a seen a growth of 20% children to 22% the Adult has also increased for 910-1009 which is about 30%. The growth have also seen an increment of 15% in growth from 230 up to 253.

The men's fellowship has also increased from 105 to 145 while the women's fellowship has also experienced some increment from 120 up to 160 an increase of 24%. The evangelism and visitation team have also intensified their programs by going out to the public three times in every week to reach out for more souls. The Sussana Wesley organization has also seen more women joining them three more teachers have also joined the Sunday school. The spiritual maturity level of the church has also experience dramatic change which is very encouraging.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The discussion entailed an analysis of the theological implications of Christian education to the church. It addressed issues such as the implications of theology for Christian education, Christian education as a catalyst for discipleship and church growth, and the changing society and its implications for Christians. It is significant to note that Christian education constitutes a participation in Christ's invitation to all people to join in God's mission of restoring humans to their true humanity. Through the church. Christ is continually at work in order to carry out God's purposes and plan for the world. Therefore, the task of Christian education is a partnership with God in His mission for the world. Also, as Christian families live together with sound biblical principles, such as Bible studies, there is bound to be spiritual growth in the lives of each member. Again, it is essential that the youth especially the students take advantage

of Christian programmes in schools so as to bring them to maturity in Christ. Example of such programmes includes scripture union meetings and school church services. A clear understanding of the task of Christian education is very critical for the survival of churches and Christian homes in today's world.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter entailed an analysis of the theological implications of Christian education for the church. It examined issues such as the implications of theology for Christian education, Christian education as a catalyst for spiritual maturity, the relationship between Christian education, discipleship and church growth and the changing society and its implications for the spiritual maturity. The chapter closed on the note that Christian education is an involvement in God's mission in restoring humankind to his true humanity and a clear understanding of this is very critical to the survival of the church.

This chapter concludes the entire study on the impact of Christian education on the members of Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society. It entails a summary of the general conclusion of the study, and some recommendations.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

The study examined the impact of Christian education programs on the spiritual maturity on Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society. It was divided into five chapters with subdivisions where necessary. The study commenced with the general introduction and addressed the background to the study, the statement of problem, the aim and objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the research methodology. Also, the scope and organization of the study was outlined.

Chapter two examined the history and structure of the Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society, the history of Christian education and the biblical pattern of Christian education. Furthermore, the work considered the Christian education ministry of the

Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society and examined issues such as the significance of Christian education, the methods of Christian education at Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society, and the impact of Christian education on the members of Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society.

An evaluation of the church's Christian education programmes examines the involvement of the members; and examines the theological implications of the Christian education on the church with particular reference to the members. Finally, the conclusion of the study capture the summary of the entire study, the general conclusion to the study as well as some recommendations.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study examined the impact of Christian educational programmes in the lives of the people of Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society. It has been established that Christian education involves every activity of the church's total programme. The center of the curriculum is a two-fold relationship between God and the learner. The curriculum is both God-centered and experience centered with theology as the driving force. The purpose of Christian education is to bring the individual into a right relationship with God and his fellows within the framework of the fundamental Christian truths about all of life.

Within this framework, the individual recognize his or her basic needs in the perspective of God's activity. The experience of the people at Bantama Ebenezer Methodist Society clearly demonstrates that the church exists to bring people into the kingdom of God, equipping them for works of ministry, while causing the growth of the church body for the building up of itself in love. Members have come to realize that living for Christ in the fellowship of his church is of much greater value to them and

will remain their focus. Therefore, Christian education is very critical to the survival of the church in this fast-changing world.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### ***5.4.1 Monitoring and Evaluation***

It is essential that the church carry's out a regular check-up of its total programme. This is necessary for the leadership to discover the state of the church, her departments and ministries. By doing so it will offer the church's leadership to know at first hand areas that needs support, direction and guidance and even make some changes where necessary. Some departments might need additional budgetary provision and other activities might also crop up which need to be addressed. Evaluation leads proper supervision, planning and management of the church. To ensure a good evaluation, an effective reporting and monitoring system should be put in place. This involves clear cut system of documentation to ensure proper record keeping and setting of achievable goals and targets.

### ***5.4.2 Leadership***

It is quite evident that the success of every organization or institution largely depends on good leadership. For the church to experience growth in every dimension, it is very imperative that an effective an efficient leadership be put in place for every department or group in the church. This means that there should be a leadership of vision, determination, and much more commitment and availability to ensure the success and proper function of every programme or activity. Again, it is very imperative that the leadership of the church work together as a team to pull the entire church along the path of growth and success.



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## **PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED**

Ernest Ekuban Guild Chairman of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society Bantama.

Mr. Francis Mensah and Women's Fellowship Leader.

Mr. Kofi Acheampong, Sunday school teacher of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society Bantama.

Mr. Samuel Amoah, one of the under of the Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society, Bantama.

Mr. Yaw Boateng, Former Chairman of Men's fellowship of the Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama.

Opanin Kwadwo Brefo, an elder of Bantama community.

Osei Akoto, in coming Minister of Methodist Church Ghana, Ebenezer Society, Bantama.

Rev. Henry Amponsah Antwi, second Minister of the Methodist Church Ghana Ebenezer Society Bantama.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What can you say about your age?
2. How long have you been in the church?
3. What is your occupation?
4. What is your educational level?
5. What programmes or activities of the church are you involve in?
6. What are the reasons for your involvement?
7. In your opinion what is the relationship between the church and the community?
8. How do you relate to other believers within the church?
9. Are there any challenges you face as a member of the church?
10. What attempts have been made to meet these challenges?
11. Do you have any other information to share?