



PhD thesis

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Ogunkolati, K.

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**MOBILIZATION OF LAY PERSONS FOR CHRISTIAN MISSION: A
CASE STUDY OF SELECTED PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES IN
SOUTHWEST NIGERIA**

BY

KUNLE OLABODE OGUNKOLATI

NOVEMBER 2023

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

ABSTRACT

The thesis is a descriptive narrative showing how the clergy and lay persons transmit and proclaim the gospel in specific and diverse ways using a multi-faceted strategy and a polycentric mission model. It looks at the origins and contours of lay and clergy understanding of mission and how it spread from the Roman Catholic, Protestant, Ecumenical, and Evangelical to Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity. The thesis is a case study approach that provides a broader understanding of lay ministry and clergy involvement in mission within the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) in Southwest Nigeria. The strength of the thesis lies in the large amount of data which has been collected and carefully analysed and by the immersion of the author in some of the activities of the two denominations which form the case studies. It uses thematic analysis as an empirical study. The thesis presents the role of lay persons as important to missiological conceptualization in the research, which offers new perspectives into centrifugal Pentecostal mission. It conceptualises lay and clergy missional practice from several dimensions, including mission as God's command, lay participation in God's redemptive work, Christ's command in the Great Commission, holistic mission, the spread of Christianity, mission and ordination, and the Holy Spirit missionary impulse. Further, the thesis explores mission mobilisation as the process which eliminates the 'reserved mentality' orientation in missional practice as imperative. It seeks to envision and educate God's people about his strategic plans. It explores mission in its fluidity as the lifeblood of these Pentecostal denominations. The thesis distinguishes theology as Spirit engagement rather than intellectual engagement through lay Pentecostal mission articulation from two panoplies, Christocentric and pneumatocentric; sodality and modality orientations. The shaping and understanding of mission theology underpinning their activities and praxis recognize lay persons'

uniqueness and strategic position for advancing God's mission in Southwest Nigeria. There are diversities, dissimilarities and unity in their missional ecclesiology. It is unusual to see a study of Pentecostal missions in a similar context with dissimilarities in practice because of the amorphous character of Pentecostalism.

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SOUTHWEST NIGERIA**

By

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Middlesex University**

November 2023

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any degree.

Signed Kunle Ogunkolati

9th November, 2023

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote

Other sources are acknowledged by mid notes or footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended

Signed: Kunle Ogunkolati

Date: 9th November, 2023

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if approved, to be available for photocopying by the British Library and for Inter-Library Loan, for open access to the Electronic Theses Online Service (EthoS) linked to the British Library, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organization

Signed: Kunle Ogunkolati

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DEDICATION

To my late Father Abraham Ogundoro Ogunkolati and my late Mother Florence Aina Ogunkolati.

When first the risen Lord of pow'r His chosen ones sent forth, A charge
he gave, that solemn hour, To preach His saving worth. "Go ye," said He,
"to all mankind;
Declare My Word, and ye shall find: These signs shall surely follow
them Who on My Name believe.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGO	Assistant General Overseer
CMB	Central Mission Board
DLBC	Deeper Life Bible Church
DLCF	Deeper Life Campus Fellowship
DLP	Deeper Life Lay Person
DLW	Deeper Life Lay Worker
DCL	Deeper Life Clergy
DLSO	Deeper Life School Outreach
DLICC	Deeper Life International Conference Centre
GO	General Overseer
GS	General Superintendent
GCK	Gospel Crusade with Kumuyi
HCF	House Caring Fellowship
IBK	Ibukun
IBTC	International Bible Training Centre
IFL	International Friendship League
LP	Life Press
MC	Mission Committee
MF	Mission Focus
OCMS	Oxford Centre for Mission Studies
PFN	Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
PCM	Pentecostal Charismatic Movement
RCCG	Redeemed Christian Church of God
RLW	Redeemed Lay Worker
RLP	Redeemed Lay Person

RCL	Redeemed Clergy
RBC	Redeemed Bible College
RM	Redeemers Ministry
RO	Region Overseer
STS	Search the Scripture
SS	Sunday School
SO	State Overseer
SRT	Soul Rescue Team
WC	Women Coordinator
WR	Women Representative
WFK	William Folorunsho Kumuyi

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses on the understanding and practice of lay and clergy Pentecostal missions of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) in Southwest Nigeria. The thesis explores *lay persons*¹ and *clergies*' involvement in Pentecostal mission and how they functioned in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) Nigeria as case studies. Their narratives are found in their sermons, church programme, mission magazines and denominational publications. Mission engagement with lay persons and the discourse it generated constituted the flowering of the Pentecostal revival, church growth and the spread of Pentecostal Charismatic Christianity in Nigeria in the 1980s and 1990s (Marshall 2009:81–84). Mission is crucial to spreading and expanding the Christian faith (Bosch 1991). The Church's mission is connected intrinsically with the salvation of the world through the involvement and participation of the laity (McClung 2017:10). Hendrik Kraemer, a Reformed theologian and Yves Congar, a Catholic Theologian, wrote extensively on the importance of Lay ministry and vocation (Kraemer 1958; Congar 1965). Contemporary mission scholars and missiologists such as Greenway and Monsma (2000), Timothy Tennent (2010), Christopher Wright (2010) and McClung (2020) argue that an inspiring vision for mission necessarily requires the mobilization of lay persons in the universal and local propagation of faith. David Bosch, in his seminal work on transforming mission, articulates that mission is the 'propagation of the faith, expansion of the reign of God, conversion of the heathen, and the founding of the new churches.' Mission, 'if not used in a univocal sense, mission had a fairly circumscribed

¹ The research uses the terms lay persons and lay people interchangeably.

set of meanings. It referred to: the sending of missionaries to a designated territory, the activity undertaken by such missionaries, the geographical areas where the missionaries were active, and the agency which dispatched the missionaries' (Bosch 1991:3). This and other actions which are deliberately engaged in spreading the gospel become a fundamental premise upon which mission is based in any given Church context. The mandate of the Church is never restricted to elucidation and exposition of the scripture to existing membership in liturgy, sacrament and worship but as a critical function of the Church to propagate the gospel effectively. The study of lay persons' involvement in contemporary Christian mission is significant to the spread and propagation of the Christian faith (Hahnenberg 2013; Lakeland 2007; Grace 2001; Rademacher 2002). Mission has profoundly shaped the life of the Church (Mead 2001)².

Several works of literature underscore lay persons' central role in the Church's mission. Various works have been written since the inception of Christian mission and lay studies as a discipline (R. H. Burgess 2011; Cozens 2010; Lovegrove 2003; Oenga 2014). The introduction seeks to lay the foundation for the missiological understanding of the lay congregational members in Christian mission as different from the clergy in church ministry. In his missional hermeneutics, Redford suggests that 'correct understanding and practices of God's mission is linked with correct mission hermeneutics' (2012:42). This is analogous to the fact that a clear understanding of the concept of the lay congregation concerning the Christian mission is of great importance for the present and future of the Church. However, a missiological exploration of the lay mission meets two significant difficulties. In the first place, there is such a vast sea of literature, and the

²Throughout this study, mission connotes 'committed participation of God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's mission'(Wright 2010) . Glasser and Engen assert that mission 'involves the encounter between the people of God and the nations as God's mission unfolds through human history. (Glasser & Engen 2003)

forecast is for more, that practically speaking, it is a daunting task ahead for rigorous research (Congar 1965; Lovegrove 2003; O'Meara 1999; Steinbron 2004). Moreover, much of the literature emphasizes motivations and techniques rather than providing the missiological foundations of the lay congregational members' mobilization for mission. Secondly, as Quill points out, the field constitutes a new object for missiological analysis (2012). I believe a missiological vocation of lay people for the congregational church members is yet to emerge. It is because lay people know more about 'what they do inside the church' than 'what they ought to do outside the church' concerning Christian mission. While considering the lay's involvement in mission, evangelism and follow up of new members for discipleship, Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) came to mind.

Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) is one of Nigeria's oldest and perhaps the most prominent independent conservative Pentecostal Church. Hackett and Ojo suggest that Deeper Life Bible Church is one of those churches with more holiness origins and has a much more stringent moral outlook (1998; 1988). Deeper Life began as a weekly Bible study group in 1973, which spread to other parts of Nigeria. When the first Sunday services were held in 1982, regarded as the foundation date, a new church was formed, which now has some 800,000 affiliates (Koschorke & Schjørring 2005; Isaacson 1990). The church denomination began as the result of the Bible study activities of its founder, Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi, who was born on 6 June 1941. He converted to Christianity at the Apostolic Faith Mission Tabernacle, Lagos, Nigeria, from where he was later excommunicated for conducting Bible study sessions as a non-ordained Christian.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) is another example of Pentecostal church that is on mission in Nigeria. RCCG was founded in 1952 by Prophet Josiah Akindayomi of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church. He was converted to the

Christian faith from the Yoruba traditional religion, particularly Ogun worship (god of iron), by the Church Missionary Society in the early 1920s (Ukah 2003; Ausaji, Ayuk 2002). The typical case of rejection of theological contributions by a lay person was the case of Josiah Akindayomi of the Cherubim and Seraphim Christian Movement, who spoke publicly in the community without permission from the clergy. The incident happened 28 years before 1952 when Josiah saw a Christian piece of literature tract written by the Apostolic Faith Church, and he decided to print it and use it for evangelism. As simple as 'it seemed to him being unschooled, he did not know he needed a copyright owner's consent. He was called before the leaders of the church and was found guilty of having printed the tract without the owner's consent. The rest of the tracts were retrieved from him and were burnt right before his eyes' (Bible-Davids 2009:123). The narratives provide an interesting introductory background to the research. I want to ask the following questions.

- First, what were the reasons for clergies' hesitation to lay persons participating in preaching and teaching at church services?
- Second, why were the two founders in these case studies disallowed from participating in mission at different times before the beginning of the two churches as African Indigenous Pentecostal Church in 1952 and 1973, respectively?
- Third, how can lay persons be involved in mission practice in the two case studies and what are the roles of lay persons in mission? The former refers to the participation of liturgy in the church by lay persons, while the latter probes lay involvement in the public mission. I will answer the first question in chapter two, section 2.3. The second question will be answered in chapter one in section 1.6.7. The third question follows in chapter four in the empirical analyses of the case study of the two churches, RCCG and DLBC, in sections 4.2 and 4.3,

respectively. These questions are critical to the research questions because they form the basis for lay mission mobilization, practical theology undergirding the beliefs of the two churches (RCCG and DLBC), and the foundation of their mission ecclesiology.

1.1 Theoretical Frameworks - Background and Relevance of Research

This research begins with an attempt to understand the theology of the laity from historical, contextual, and contemporary perspectives as it relates to the mission of the Church. Mission is articulated by the clergy and proclaimed by the laity. Although there have been different roles in the Church since New Testament times, Christianity did not have a clear distinction between clergy and laity for its first 150 years. However, a distinction between Christian people and Church leadership began to surface by the close of second century (Keating 2012; O'Meara 1999; Rowthorn 2000; Stevens 2000). The logical question to ask as I explore the participation and involvement of the laity in Christian mission is:

- when did the idea of a group of people in the church called the "laity" as distinct from and unequal to another group called "clergy" emerge and why?

I will attempt to answer this question in chapter two, provide my methodology in chapter three, and the empirical analysis of my data in chapter four, while the themes that emerged in the study will form the basis to develop chapters five, six and seven followed by the conclusion in chapter eight. From this premise, I now move to the approaches and overview of lay and clergy missions.

1.2 Approaches and Preliminary Overview

Approaches to understanding ministry and Christian mission are prevalent in contemporary mission studies. Two Evangelical Protestant scholars, Balia and Kim

‘enunciate multidimensional approaches to the understanding and practice of mission. They suggest that ‘mission is complex and multiple: *it involves* witness, proclamation, catechesis, worship, inculturation³, and interfaith dialogue’ (2010)⁴. Early theorists have focused mainly on the medieval understanding of lay ministry and Catholic lay apostolic perspectives with little emphasis on Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic dimensions of lay mission (Care 2011; Graham n.d.). A new approach is necessary because of the current wave of interest amongst the Evangelicals, Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in emerging missions (Kalu 2003:85)⁵. The new approaches will be explored in chapter seven of the thesis.

Identities of Laity and Clergy

The attempt to define two major concepts which dominate the entire spectrum of the thesis sets the stage for the preliminary understanding of the trajectory of this research. The first identity is the laity, and the second identity represents the clergy. The definitions of laity and clergy and their identities have been discussed and studied in different contexts (Connolly 2004; O’Collins 2011; Dickey & Fund 2003; Hoebel 2006; Oak 2006). The question of how to define and identify the laity and clergy has dominated academic debates on the subject. Scholars such as Neill and Weber (1963), Mouw (1980), Hall and Morsch (1995), Congar (1965) and Kraemer (1958) have often articulated these concepts according to their theological, ethical and ideological backgrounds in connection with their practices and conventions. Quill, a Catholic scholar, defines a layman’s identity

³Paul Gifford on African Inculturation Theology. Inculturation’ began in the early 1990s, promoted mainly by missionaries (for the Catholics, as a contribution to the 1994 African Synod of Bishops, which had inculturation as one of its main themes). Since then, missionaries have tended to back out of this field, leaving it to Africans for many of whom (particularly Catholic theologians) it has become a distinct theological project. As it has developed, therefore, it is less concerned with liturgy, art, music and organization (the missionaries’ ‘inculturation’) and more focused on culture itself. (Gifford 2008:19)

⁴ See another reference, Mission Today and Tomorrow (Kim & Anderson 2011).

⁵Kalu indicates how individuals and communities in the African Pentecostal movement are reshaping cultures and religious landscapes: re-invention of self and life journey, daily life in the domestic domain, arts and aesthetics and communication (Kalu 2003:100).

as follows: ‘a layman is a member of the people of God, is baptized and confirmed; is the recipient of charism; through whom Christ is visible in the world, and whose work differs in function from the cleric, in state of life, from the religious’ (2012:147). The identity of the laity is characterized by unique features and functions peculiar to their callings within the mystical body of Christ. Ratzinger describes a lay person’s identity as someone who is *not* a priest or *not* an ordained religious minister. In everyday speech, according to Ogden, a reformed theologian, “lay person” and “laity” have largely negative identities as connotations (2006:113). The laity appears to have a strong “over-againstness” toward the clergy. On the one hand, the clergy’s identity is “whereas the laity’s identity is not”. On the other hand, the “*clergy does, and the laity does not*”. Thus, nobody wants to be ‘an is not’ (Ogden 2003:59). Again, John Stott, an outstanding classical evangelical scholar, in his book, “One People”, laments how the word “laity” has been debased. According to him, “lay” is often a synonym for “amateur” instead of “expert” (1982). Laity refers to the ordinary members of the church who are not ordained as clergy, priests or pastors.

When the term is rendered in its everyday use, the word carries negative meanings. These various definitions have drawn the displeasure of the laity because it is unsatisfactory for lay people who may have great expertise in the service of the Church, just that it is not professional. Bosch, in missions’ paradigm shift, discloses that ‘from the very beginning, Protestant missions to a significant extent had a lay movement’. Lay persons are the operational basis from which the ‘*missio Dei*’ proceeds (1991:140). However, Kato, a lay congregational scholar from Africa, adds ‘the Greek word ‘*laos*’ meaning people, and its adjective ‘*laikos*’ represent the people of God. (2003:4). This often refers to all members of the church, the people of God, those called by Christ to be His disciples, trusted followers, brethren, and those sanctified by His blood to be the new Israel. These new people of God can be described and distinguished from others. They

formed distinctive groups among themselves because of the respective roles and services they rendered to each other during Christ's earthly life. This definition sets the agenda for this study's understanding and central focus. My question is, are there scholars in this Christian tradition who argue for both professionalism and the need for lay persons to be equipped for mission? It will be interesting to see the scholars who do not look at lay persons as inferior but give them responsibilities and also what is required for lay persons to function in mission like other professionals such as lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers of all levels.

The following overview examines a broad understanding of the clergy. The clergy functions as spiritual guides, leaders, pastors, teachers and church administrators (Mead 2001:58). The word clergy may have been derived from clerical- a hierarchical official within an organization. Ogden seems to have captured the historical origin of the word clergy when he looks at historical reasons for the distinction between the clergy and the laity (2010:37).⁶ The clergy were often understood to represent Christ to the congregation rather than the whole congregation representing Christ to the world. Formerly, 'the work of ministry, counselling, and mission was reserved primarily for the clergy who taught, cared for and administered settled flocks often as a hierarchical class set apart from or above the rest of the congregation' (Van Gelder & Zscheile 2011:155). Today, a clergy is surrounded by (and held accountable to) a large team of lay ecclesial ministers, full-time professionals 'who plan liturgies, direct religious education programme, lead youth groups, head social outreach, and coordinate thousands of lay volunteers serving in dozens of parish ministries' Hahnenberg (2010:4). Rademacher raised radical questions about the ubiquitous clergy. He examined the great questions of ministry disparity as

⁶The distinction between clergy and laity did not become full-blown until the fourth century when the Church adopted a secular model. In the Greco-Roman world, the Greek word '*Kleros*' referred to municipal administrators and '*Laos*' – to those who were ruled. As the gulf between these two grew, the '*Kleros*' the church became associated with the sacred, and the '*Laos*' with the secular (Ogden 2010).

follows: ‘how is it that Jesus himself did not come from a clerical line if churches are to be about clerics? Is the priestly ministry the only real, the consuming total, the final and compelling official ministry of the Church of Christ? (2002). It appears that one's position on these questions will go a long way to enlighten Christian community about some misconceptions or presuppositions about the laity–clergy relationship. In my view, Jesus is from the lineage of King David in contrast with the line of priesthood from the Levitical order, yet Jesus functioned both as Priest and King. In Israel, kings and priests were strictly distinguished by tribal descent; Judah was the kingly tribe while Levite was the priestly tribe. However, priesthood established by bodily descent is inferior to the priesthood established ‘by the power of indestructible life’ in Hebrews 7:16, which of course David did not possess (Crocker 2013:186).

1.3 The Ordained and Non-Ordained Ministries

Ordination and non-ordination have been the traditional way to describe the legitimate involvement of people in Christian missions. Heward Mills from African Pentecostal and charismatic background opines that ‘a lay person is someone who maintains his secular job and yet is active in the ministry of the Lord Jesus. A full-time minister has abandoned his secular job to concentrate fully on the ministry’ (2005:7). Some ordained ministers apparently do not want to accept that lay people can contribute substantially to the ministry. Many ordained ministers are happy to maintain their lay people as mere financial supporters. They think, after all, what makes me unique if I can do my job? Likewise, the clergy wants to feel special as they perform their exclusive ministerial duties. However, Conway sees the lay and clergy ministry as collaborative rather than competing. He enunciates:

If the Church's mission is to continue, those who are now being ordained will have to collaborate with lay people who will either be ministering voluntarily or on a full-time or

part-time basis. It is vital, then, that the operative theology of ministry of those now being ordained is collaborative. Whether or not it is, and whether or not they will have the required personal and ministerial skills and attitudes required to implement it depends largely on the operative theology of those currently selecting and training them. (Conway 2014:154)

The narrative suggests that the clergy are ordained for the work of the church, whereas the lay congregational members are not ordained. The ordination of the clergy has been the only way the clergy assumed a legitimate authority for ministry. It is because the features of the engagement of the non-ordained ministry in Christian mission are critical for the completion of the Great Commission. Rademacher questions the autonomy of the clergy in terms of sacrosanct position held in ministry. He queries, 'does ministry need some kind of certification, installation or ordination? Are there officials and non-officials ministry'? (2002:74). In addition to certification for ministry, the growing recognition of the charism of leadership given to lay, ecclesial ministers is strengthened when there is some form of authorization to engage in ministry and carry out responsibilities on behalf of the local church. Long contends that where authorization is acknowledged:

It is given, which includes three steps or key elements: acknowledgement of the competence of an individual for a specific ministerial role (often called 'certification'); appointment of an individual to a specific position (in some dioceses called 'commissioning'), along with a delineation of the obligations, responsibilities, and authority of that position (and length of term, if specified); and finally an announcement of the appointment to the community that the lay ecclesial minister. (Long 2013)

The above position confirms the praxis in Catholic lay apostolate that the difference between lay vocation and lay role is just a mere function. It does not represent a substitution for ordained ministry. McDermott, a Catholic scholar reveals a rather disturbing side of the lay role and its functions in pointing out that 'despite all the talk about a vocation shortage, there is, in fact, no such thing in the Catholic Church. The real shortage is vocational discernment, a very different problem' (2007). He considered the vital role of the laity as a demand and supply function. According to him, the shortfall in the number of candidates for the priesthood, the consecrated life, and other forms of

Christian witness would quickly disappear if many more Catholics discern, accept, and live out their unique, irreplaceable callings from God as their vocations.

1.4 Roles of Laity and Clergy

The debate regarding the reception of the emerging role of the laity is just beginning. Any discussion about the laity cannot occur in isolation from the clergy; further tensions prevail in this regard. The role of the lay person as priest, prophet and king is incontestable from biblical and church history. Thus, Maloney admits:

Yves Congar was the first theologian to apply the threefold office of Christ—priest, prophet and king—to the laity by virtue of their baptism. As priests, the laity is called to sacrifice their ordinary lives to God. As prophet, the laity receives God's Word, penetrates its depths, and applies it to their life in the world and participates in and hands it on in the church's life. Their kingly office is fulfilled through their exercise of Christian service in the world. Congar's thought would significantly influence Vatican II's more positive teaching on the laity. (Maloney 2003:135)

We need to find out why clergy members are given to the Church. The answer to Ephesians 4: 11 and 12 are that they are given 'to equip God's people for the work of His service.' Another Catholic scholar found that:

The Corinthians letters show Paul performing this role with a very troublesome church. The clergy must perceive by faith that every believer has gifts from God. Otherwise, they tend to regard themselves as the only possessors of divine gifts. They organize the church according to their plans and shape people's faith according to their clerical concepts of God and His word. If believers manifest new gifts, clergy members sometimes become frightened and try to mould them into the existing stereotyped patterns of church life. (Lakeland 2003:316)

In the church, there is a diversity of ministry but oneness of mission. The lay ministry's growing and central role in the Christian mission can be characterized as both a boon and a burden. It is acknowledged that the growth of lay ministry in emerging missions is broad and unprecedented. Personal vocation and vocational discernment also are crucial to helping and mentoring the laity, along with everyone else, to understand and embrace their proper roles in carrying out the Church's mission (Grimes 1962; Maranta et al. 2003).

Mead, writing in his book, 'Once and Future Church', as an educator and priest from America with an Episcopal background, suggests that the laity are urged in their roles to participate in sacrament and worship; make the community better; take a position on a series of complex emotional issues; support the parish with tithes of time, talent and treasure, but, with little encouragement on engagement with the world as a real ministry, (2001:103). There exists an ambiguity of ministerial roles among the Protestant and Evangelical churches characterized by shifts in the focus of control between clergy and lay people. Monahan points out that 'in some cases, theological concerns have driven the redefinition of lay role. For example, some denominations and seminaries presently emphasize partnerships rather than hierarchical relationships among clergy and lay people. In other cases, practical concerns have driven the redefinition of lay roles. Because of a shortage and poor distribution of priests, lay people perform traditional clergy work' (Monahan 1999:85). This void has often been filled using volunteer or paid lay engagement acting in an ordained capacity when they are not ordained in mainline churches. Hai and Parrella suggest that 'the placid view of the laity's role outlined in lay apostolate functions is cumbersome when one considers the enormous difficulties encountered between bishops and politicians. The concept of devoting a Synod to the vocation and mission of the laity is questionable, as it will tend to reflect a dualism between clergy and laity' (2009; 2013). Thus the reflection of the roles of the laity has been perceived as a preoccupation for internal liturgical responsibilities in support of the leadership organogram and the hierarchical church structures. This understanding leads to the rediscovery of the functions of the laity in mission. The missional ecclesiology of the churches in my research rests on the functions of the laity.

1.4.1 Rediscovery of Functions of the Laity in Mission

The rediscovery of this role will prepare the church to confront the many challenges, opportunities and the uphill task of intra and inter-cultural missions. The Scriptural injunctions of the priesthood of all believers and the recognition of the talents and gifts of every believer in the mystical body of Christ by the clergy might hasten the completion of the unfinished task of local, generally referred to as the 'Great Commission' and global evangelization (Oak 2006; Ogden 2010; Stevens 2000). This position may alert a lay mobilizing church to change its priorities to engage in a sacrificial Christian mission to serve the community and the world.

Christian men and women not only live in society but also pursue a wide variety of jobs in the industry. Their contribution to their living and work is to bring them the attitudes and values they derive from the Christian gospel. In industry, they constitute the missionary outreach of the Church. The laity in the Church has been described as a 'sleeping giant' requiring a mission to wake up (Bevilacqua, A.J 1989). The call to awaken the sleeping giant was re-echoed by O'Conaill (2009:414), who saw it differently, as he emphasized that patronizing clericalism (the spiritual vanity of too many ordained clergy) needs urgently to be recognized and discarded as the most serious hindrance to the waking of the 'sleeping giant'. The need arises for integrating faith with a proclamation and Christian mission by the lay congregational members. Lay people can achieve this within the context of evangelization conceived as a mission to the world outside the Church.

I have so far considered the origin of the laity and clergy from the perspectives of Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals, excluding the Pentecostals. However, the emergence of Pentecostalism led to a new understanding and practice of laity and clergy concerning Christian missions, especially in Africa. Therefore, the study stretches to a connection

between Pentecostalism, Evangelicalism, Catholicism and Protestantism. In the next section, I examine the debate and origin of Pentecostalism in Africa, emphasizing Nigeria.

1.5 Pentecostal and Charismatic Mission in Nigeria

This section examines the debates on the role of Pentecostalism in Christian missions in Nigeria. It also investigates the historical roots, formation and diverse mission of Pentecostalism in Nigeria within the regional African context. The phenomenon of the Pentecostal mission in Nigeria is expanding more rapidly due to the movement's growth within the broader African context. The issues involved are critical to fulfilling both specific and general mission mandates. Marshall observes that 'Pentecostalism constitutes the single most important socio-cultural force in Southern Nigeria today' (2009:35). The sheer size of Pentecostalism in local and global perspectives in Nigeria can no longer be ignored in the future of Christianity in Africa (Anderson 2013a:45; Miller & Yamamori 2007:26). There is a constant flow of information and identical mission orientation between the local and global Pentecostals in Nigeria (Adeboye 2005:44; Bialecki 2015:179). Mission through the Spirit appears as the bridge between the two. With the emergence of global Pentecostalism, the latter depends significantly on the former. The story of the birth and the growth of the Pentecostal mission in Nigeria is far from being completed (Ayuk 2002:189; Kangwa 2016:21). Kalu, Ayuk and Marshall, in their studies on Pentecostal transformation and political spiritualities in Nigeria, pointed out that the experience and growth of Pentecostal practices may have permeated every aspect of Christianity in Nigeria (2002; 2002; 2009). How Pentecostalism affects individuals and society resonates with Cox's perspectives after his 'apriori' encounter with

Pentecostalism⁷. He describes ‘Pentecostalism as a symbol of dynamic response to the contemporary world which points the way to forms of human spirituality and religious practice that will become increasingly influential in the twenty-first century’ (2011:21).

1.5.1 Pentecostal-Charismatic Terminology and Typology

There are two interlocking ideas associated with the term ‘Pentecostalism’. These are charisma and Pentecost. Modern Pentecostalism takes its name from the Day of Pentecost narrative in Acts chapter two. The terms 'Pentecostals' and 'charismatic' are twin-words used interchangeably in Pentecostal mission theology. The label "Charismatic" is often used synonymously with "Pentecostal", and they are conterminous in the African context. Robeck and Yong clarify that although not all ‘Pentecostals and Charismatic share all the features as described, what binds them together is their belief that the gifts of the Spirit are available to the contemporary Church and that contemporary Christians ought to seek the power of the Holy Spirit’ (2014:133) for engagement in mission.

Different scholars have attempted to clarify their exact meanings. For example, Johnstone and Mandryk think that the word 'Pentecostals' should refer to 'Those affiliated with specifically Pentecostal denominations committed to Pentecostal theology, with a post-conversion experience of a baptism in the Spirit (2001:3). In the African context, Burgess uses the term 'Pentecostal' to refer to individuals who belong to mission-related Pentecostal denominations; those who belong to the older African-initiated churches (A.I.C.s) and those who belong to independent Pentecostal churches of more recent origin referred to as neo-Pentecostal (Burgess 2012:19). Whereas, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu defines Pentecostalism as the stream of Christianity that believes in, affirms and actively

⁷Cox traverses the history and journey toward realizing our current secular society in the modern city. He outlines its links with religion even before Christ and how religion has encouraged a secular response to change, particularly Christianity. Michael Stewart reviewed the 'Secular City'. . Harvey 2013 *The secular, city: Secularization and urbanization in theological perspective* Princeton University Press

promotes the experiential presence of the Holy Spirit as part of normal Christian life and worship. Its most distinctive element is Holy Spirit baptism, which, it is believed, must be manifested in speaking in tongues (2005:95; 2013; 2002:15).

Miller and Yamamori, in their seminal work on the face of global Pentecostalism, identify various expressions of Pentecostalism. They are categorized as typology. Modern Pentecostal expressions and types of Pentecostalism are classified as follows:

- (i) Classical Pentecostalism which includes denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Church of God in Christ. The Assemblies of God denomination traces its roots to the religious revivals of the late 1800s, but, more particularly, to the prayer meeting referred to earlier at Bethel Bible College in 1901;
- (ii) Indigenous Pentecostal denominations- Pentecostal denominations that have no connection with North America;
- (iii) Independent Neo-Pentecostal churches- Pentecostal churches that may have one or more offshoots but have not evolved to the organizational state of a denomination and typically resist that formulation;
- (iv) Charismatic renewal movement - whose origins are often linked to St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California; and
- (v) Proto-charismatic Christians.

All these expressions represent the global face of Pentecostalism (Miller & Yamamori 2007:27–29). However, the above typology appears as a global classification of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity⁸. Various Pentecostal-Charismatic organizations in

⁸Some holiness groups like the Association of Pentecostal Churches of America (APCA) and the Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene (PNC) used the term as a synonym for holiness. However, holiness groups, such as the Nazarenes, gradually stopped using it because it acquired a new meaning. William Kostlevy, ed. *Historical Dictionary of the Holiness Movement*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 63. Groups that grew out of revivals in the first decade of the twentieth century and emphasized

the African context refer to typology within the movement. There are different types of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Nigeria. These are Classical Pentecostal churches, such as Assemblies of God, the Africa Independent Churches (A.I.C.s) such as Cherubim & Seraphim and Christ Apostolic Church, the Charismatic movements within the mainline churches, such as the Catholic Charismatic and more recent independent Neo-Pentecostal Churches (N.P.C's) such as Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC), Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Living Faith Church, and the Lord's Chosen Charismatic Revival Ministries (sic), based in Nigeria. As noted by Ojo (2018), the contemporary Pentecostal-Charismatic organizations show exciting variety. Some are large, while others are small. Each has its uniqueness and often appeals to different classes of people. Using the paradigm of power and piety, two major impetuses of the Pentecostal religion. Ojo attempted to classify the movements into six distinct groups. First, the Faith Seekers are conversions, manifesting this attitude with vigorous evangelistic activities directed at the individual. Second, the Faith Builders: this group relies on harnessing the potentials of the individual, but which are construed as divine favours. Third, the Faith Transformers resemble the conversions but are more concerned with seeking the conversion of large and isolated ethnic groups rather than individuals. They are traditionally the mission-sending agencies sending full-time missionaries to work among "tribal" peoples. Fourth, the Reformists: are those who have been influenced by Pentecostal spirituality and are found within the mainline Protestants. They are literalists who see their denominations as their religious inheritance, which must be improved upon. Fifth, the Deliverance churches. They constitute a new phenomenon within Nigerian Pentecostalism. They are preoccupied with healing and thus act as "forensic experts", viewing African cultural roots as being responsible for the

"Baptism in the Holy Spirit," as evidenced by speaking in tongues, began to refer to themselves as Pentecostals. Scholars now generally refer to these groups as classical Pentecostals. (Chevalier 2020:1)

contemporary dislocation in the lives of individuals and society. Finally, the Modernists, the old Aladura (African Independent Churches) members who believe they must present their faith in a more acceptable form to a more enlightened society (Ojo 2018:85–87).

My research examines the third group in the classification and typology, the Neo-Pentecostal Churches (N.P.C.s), of which are the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the Deeper Life Bible Church in the Southwest, Nigeria. In the next section, I will review the mission foray of Mainline Churches and indigenous mission agencies with their contributions to lay mission in Nigeria. The growth of Nigerian churches occurred because of the missionary impulse and mission of these churches. Except for the Baptist Mission, some indigenous mission agencies were born from the teachings received from the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the Deeper Life Bible Church.

1.6 Nigerian Context: Mainline Churches and Mission Agencies in Southwest Nigeria

Over the past several centuries, missionary outreach efforts of nearly every major Christian denomination found fertile soil in Nigeria. Protestant missions began in earnest in the mid-nineteenth century. The Church Missionary Society of London trained and deployed the enslaved people formerly as evangelists in Western Nigeria, resulting in flourishing Anglican and Methodist churches. Subsequent outreach by Baptist, SIM, Lutheran, and Christian Reformed missions gave birth to denominations with adherents numbering in the millions today. For example, the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), a denomination spawned by the work of SIM International, counts some 6 million members in Nigeria (Effa 2013:214). Thomas Jefferson Bowen, a Baptist minister from the Southern American Baptist Convention and a pioneering Baptist missionary in Nigeria, acquired a high degree of proficiency in Yoruba to such an extent that he produced a literary work. Much was also done in developing Yoruba, the people's

indigenous language. The missionaries also provide industrial education. Various vocational training centres were opened in different places for men and women alike. Men were taught such vocational skills as carpentry (Fatokun 2007:105).

1.6.1 Nigeria Baptist Mission Foray

The historical accounts of mission in Nigeria included the role of the Baptist Church. The spread of the Baptist Mission across different parts of Nigeria was due to the missionary work of lay people. The lay persons worked with the clergy for follow-up of converts and witnessing to villagers and communities in Ogbomoso, Southwest Nigeria. Most clergy were on part-time engagement with the Baptist Church in tent-making ministry. The clergy lived in the cities and supported their families and the church during the week. The lay people took over the work of evangelization and visitation on behalf of the clergy without acrimony. When the clergy returned at the weekend, the lay people would vacate the leadership role for the clergy. Ajayi writing on the place of Baptist mission enterprise in Nigeria remarks:

The spread of Baptist work to Northern Nigeria was quite fascinating. It would be recalled that while the pioneer American Baptist missionaries, especially Thomas Bowen and William Clarke had been desirous of spreading the gospel work to the region around and north of the Niger River, that is, the entire geographical enclave covered by the Sokoto caliphate, that area for long remained a no-go area for Christian Missions. The 1914 amalgamation of northern and southern Nigeria created greater avenues for mass geographical mobility and relocation across the two erstwhile independent regions. Specifically, there was mass exodus of lay Baptist missionaries of Yorubaland extraction, notably those from Ogbomoso, to every nook and cranny of Northern Nigeria to trade or pursue their vocations. (Ajayi 2011:24)

The lay persons took the gospel to the now more accessible Zungeru, Kaduna, Zaria, Kano, Jos, and other communities. As Ogbomoso, in particular, had at that time become a stronghold of Baptist work, most of the traders from the town were of the Baptist denominations. The extension of the frontiers of the Baptist denomination geographically towards Northern Nigeria. The drift of civil servants of Southern Nigeria can be credited to these traders. The movement of the civil servants of Southern Nigerian origin who

were transferred to the North added a fillip to consolidating and expanding Baptist work in the area. By the time of the centenary celebration of the Baptist enterprise in Nigeria in 1950, the work had spread all over the country (Ajayi 2011:24; Bamigboye 2000).

The commencement of mission activities in Nigeria was evidenced by the springing up of indigenous denominational mission outfits such as the Evangelical Missionary Society of Evangelical Churches of Winning All, (EMS of ECWA) and Para-church mission agencies such as Calvary Ministries (CAPRO), Christian Missionary Foundation (CMF), and others.

1.6.2 Calvary Ministries (CAPRO)

The first charismatic organisation in West Africa to adopt a mission orientation was the Calvary Ministries (CAPRO), which was established in early 1975 with international headquarters in Jos, Nigeria. The founders were principally graduates of the universities of Southern Nigeria, who were then undergoing their' compulsory one-year National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). Ojo writes:

The principal actors and leaders were Emeka Onukaogu and Niyi Beecroft, who were graduates of the University of Ife, Ile-Ife; Gbola Durojaiye, a graduate of the University of Ibadan; Peter Ozodo, a graduate of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and Bayo Famonure, a graduate of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. All of these had been exposed to the Charismatic renewal on their campuses. (Ojo 1997:542)

These people at the time the CAPRO started were not ordained ministers, in contrast with Pastor William Kumuyi of DLBC with the Apostolic Faith Church, and the late founder of the RCCG, Josiah Akindayomi in the former church where he served, who were denied the right to ministry work because they needed to be first ordained before starting ministry such as CAPRO (Calvary Ministries) led by Peter Ozodo which now has ministries in unreached tribes in Nigeria, Gambia, Niger, and Senegal. CAPRO's ministry has extended to West Africa, East and South Africa and Europe. The unique

leadership methods of CAPRO (Calvary Ministries) today is through rotational leadership of their directors of missions. Mathew Aderounmu as director led the CAPRO team to Cape Town 2010 for the Lausanne Conference held in Africa for the first time. Samuel Obutu is the current leader of CAPRO in Nigeria. The ministry has adopted missionary funding by faith and through tent making ministry of the various missionaries in Nigeria and across Africa. CAPRO adopted operation Joshua, Christian Volunteer service and Kairos, as the study of God's redemptive purpose as the means of training workers as a significant mission approach.

1.6.3 Christian Missionary Foundation

Reuben Ezemadu founded the Christian Missionary Foundation (CMF). He was a charismatic leader who shared the vision and strategy of evangelisation with passion from the Christian Union and the Student Christian Movement. He made a mission foray to locations outside Ibadan in Idere, an evangelistic outreach that resulted in the founding of the CMF. Ojo remarks:

Shortly after the mission to Idere, Reuben Ezemadu, one of the leaders of CSSM, sent out a proposal for the formation of an organisation to be called Nigerian Christian Missionary Foundation;' which would prepare Nigerian Christians for missionary work (Ezemadu 1981). On 13 September 1981, the inaugural meeting of CMF was held at Idere. (Ojo 1997:544)

CMF was established solely as the missionary arm of Christian Students Social Movement (CSSM) with the aim of identifying areas in Nigeria and abroad where there are needs for preaching the gospel and stimulating and mobilizing Christians for missionary assignments in various fields in such areas.

1.6.4 Fullstature Missions International (FMI)

The Fullstature Mission International (FMI) was started in June 1992 in Ibadan at a gathering of about 100 lay people in the house of the vision carrier. The founder, Pastor

Isaiah Lawon shared with the lay people present at the gathering his passion for the neglected people groups and reclaiming the mission mandate for lay people who were not doing much in the denominations they were presently in. The name and vision of this new organization was to be Fullstature Mission International.

Fullstature Missions International (FMI) of Nigeria both trains and sends out long-term missionaries to Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Togo and Nigeria, and also receives, Short Term Mission (STM) teams to work with these, Long Term Mission (LTM) teams. Isaiah Lawon is their International Director. He described the role the STM teams play in helping them reach un-reached people groups. The STM teams serve in several capacities: in medical mission, in teaching and equipping, in assistance to farmers with input, in evangelism, building and missions awareness, Bible distribution and material and financial supply. Wan and Hartt add:

The working relationship between STM team and our organization have produced profound changes reinforcing the desire to see the ends of the world evangelized. This has brought the team to see the situation differently and then become challenged to do more for the fields. Some of these have become missionaries because of the trips. (Wan & Hartt 2008:20)

Isaiah Lawon pastors a very mission-oriented church in Ibadan Nigeria. He oversees the leadership of Fullstature Mission International and has served in the leadership of the Nigeria Evangelical Mission Association (Borthwick 2012:15). The critical aspect of their history is that 90 per cent of FMI's members are people lay, with a strong desire to reach the unreached as the primary goal of the new ministry. The lay involvement is seen in the fact that all the people apart from the founder were not theologically educated or ordained when they joined the mission group. They perhaps took qualifications and ordination for granted. The essential qualification of FMI members is spiritual, namely salvation, sanctification and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Their typology rests on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the gospel. Inclusion of workers in pastoral work for them is having a remarkable testimony of walking with God. The

Church explains its involvement in market place ministry by repeated reference to the term ‘the cultural mandate’. According to this argument, Christianity should seek to be ‘culturally relevant’, in other words, consciously inhabit the secular world to proselytize. CHC overtly contrasts this approach from Christianity that separates itself from secular culture to protect and uphold religious values and beliefs (being ‘in the world but not of the world’). According to Church communications, this more traditional orientation is ineffective in spreading the Christian message.(Yip & Ainsworth 2016:448).

My research is focused on lay ministry engagement with the Pentecostal Christian mission in Southwest Nigeria. This is a comparative case study of lay Christian mission in Deeper Life Bible Church and Redeemed Christian Church of God, Southwest Nigeria. Nigeria is the most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa, with a population Lynch put at over 180 million in 2006 but now over two hundred million. This constitutes approximately one quarter of the total population of Africa (2006).

1.6.5 Nigeria Geography

The country is naturally divided into three by the Niger and Benue rivers, which flow from the Northwest and Northeast to meet below the new capital of Abuja in the centre of the country. The three principal ethnic groups, the Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo, make up about 70 per cent of the population and inhabit the northern, western and eastern regions, respectively. Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo are the three national languages, and British English is the official language (Miller & Yamamori 2007:30; Ayegboyin & Ukah 2002:69).

Figure 1.1 Map of Federal Republic of Nigeria



Figure 1. Map of Nigeria Showing 36 States and Federal Capital Territory

[Source: Ulrich Lamn] (UCL)

Nigeria embodies historical, cultural, ethnic, religious, social, and linguistic affinities and diversities. Its religious landscape is highly complex and dynamic, comprising a multiplicity of religious traditions, including the indigenous religions, the various strands of Christianity and Islam, and newer Spiritual Science movements. These religious traditions have mutually enhanced and transformed each other in a highly competitive context (Adogame 2010; Lynch 2006). In contemporary terms, Yorubaland stretches across Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti, and Kwara of Nigeria and parts of the French-speaking Republics of Benin and Togo (Olayinka 2020; Falola & Genova 2006).



Figure 1. 2 Map of Southwest Nigeria

[Source: Ulrich Lamn] (UCL)

Since the early twentieth century, Yoruba studies have gained international attention because of the ethnic group's rich culture, political strength, and riveting history. However, the triangular rivalry among the Hausa/Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba has dominated Nigeria's political landscape since independence. Nigeria is constitutionally a secular state with freedom of religion. This may not be unconnected with the type of rule that the British met when they encountered the people of Northern Nigeria. Muslims are dominant in the Northern States and important in Western Nigeria (Barrett 1982).

1.6.6 The Location of the study as Vital to Christian Mission in Nigeria.

The study is located in Southwest Nigeria comprising Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Osun states among the Yoruba. The two churches in the case study began in Lagos and spread to the whole Southwest of Nigeria in a short period of time (Marshall 2009). The history of Christian mission among the Yoruba ethnic group began in the nineteenth century (Ajayi 1969:125; Falola & Genova 2006:9; Peel 2003:11) and is linked with the arrival of foreign missionaries from England. Foreign missionaries were the first Europeans with whom the Yoruba had contact in Nigeria's early stage of Christianity as briefly mentioned

earlier. The European mission comprising the Church Missionary Society, Methodist Missionary Movement, Presbyterian Mission, and the American Southern Baptist Mission among the Yoruba communities between 1841 and 1875 can be regarded as the preparation and sowing of the seed of change. The abolition of the slave trade was a precursor to Thomas Fowell Buxton's programme of Christianity, commerce and civilization as a remedy to Africa's problem of the slave trade. It was a viaduct for missionary outreach to the world (Etherington & Maxwell 2004). Peel suggests that 'the missionary exemplified a new social action, which evangelicalism helped to be. The great cause was the antislavery movement in which individual evangelists were well to the fore, which led directly to the missionary engagement in West Africa, first in Sierra Leone, and then to what is now Nigeria' (Peel 2003).

Foreign missionaries were the first Europeans with whom the Yoruba had contact in Nigeria's early stages of Christianity. The first Anglicans in Nigeria freed enslaved people from Sierra Leone, and in 1842 the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) also expanded from their project in Sierra Leone. By 1853, mission work had begun at Abeokuta, Lagos and Ibadan. In 1864, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, the first African Anglican Bishop, was consecrated, although he was replaced by a European in 1891 (Barrett, 1982:258). The nascent Christian mission was connected with the 1841 European exploration of Africa. The role of lay people in the growth of Christian missions expanded when the missionaries left. Laymen were either appropriating or partnering with Europeans to plant the Christian faith in Nigeria. Reed in his study on partnering or mission appropriation, pointed out:

The Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) had long developed a partnership theory between foreign mission and autonomous local churches. Henry Venn, its great mobilizer and mission strategist (1841-72), conceived of missionaries acting as mentors of fledgling churches and as soon as they could govern themselves through committees and councils, the missionaries would move on to unchurched fields. The post-euthanasia of mission relationship between

church and mission would be one of 'partnership in which missionary and local church workers participated in a mutual enterprise. (Reed 2010:7)

This position reveals the original intention of the mission paradigm for an African mission agency in relation with early European missionaries. The adoption or rejection of Christian faith by the natives in Nigeria is intrinsically linked with the appropriation or partnership with the missionaries.

Samuel Ajayi Crowther accompanied Henry Townsend to Abeokuta. At the same time, other European missionaries such as David Hinderer, John Friedrich Scho, and John Raban remained in Badagry, Lagos, for the continuation and nurturing of the mission enterprise (Grimley & Robinson 1966). The early period of the evangelization of western Yoruba was also the period of unrest occasioned by invasions of Abeokuta, Ibadan and Badagry by the warriors of Dahomey on the one hand and the Yoruba idiosyncrasy on the other hand. African culture and traditional religion saw Christianity as an affront (Oduyoye 1992). Although, at various times, customs relating to marriage and inheritance and the traditional cults and divinities were seen as constituting a disruptive force to mission work. The traditional leaders in Yoruba land first disliked the missionaries because of their arrogance and contempt for a particular aspect of Yoruba culture. By the 1900s, the mission had become firmly established. Evangelism and church planting were the mission's priorities throughout this period (Collins 1993:37). The period under study witnessed the foundation, growth and, subsequently, maturity of the mission. The colonialist's background against which the mission laboured presented a fertile field for the missionary endeavour (Ijagbemi 1986). However, the interesting point was that the British colonial administration regarded the Church Missionary Society and its counterparts, despite this revolutionary posture, as stabilizing and not a disruptive force. Many emerging actors in frontline Christian missions among the Yoruba tribe began their careers by employing foreign missionaries. For instance, David Hinderer ordained Daniel

Olubi,⁹ David an Abeokuta Christian convert as the leader of the C.M.S. Ibadan mission (Peel 2003:39).

1.6.7 Selected Churches' Founders

The founder of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) was the Reverend Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi. Josiah was born in 1909 into the Akindayomi family in Ondo State, Nigeria. From early childhood Josiah's parents noticed unusual things about him. When he was sick, allegedly his sickness, that usually defied traditional medicine, the most common treatment for sickness in those days-would abate and subsequently disappear once he was bathed with ordinary water. He was converted into Christianity from Yoruba traditional religion, particularly Ogun worship by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in Ondo town in the early 1920s. Some years later he joined the Eternal Sacred Order of Cherubim and Seraphim movement (C&S), one of the early Aladura movements in Yorubaland and rose to the rank of apostle and prophet. Josiah Akindayomi, an illiterate but powerful preacher left the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and founded the RCCG. At the time of his death in 1980, the group had grown to have 39 branches in the Southwest region of Nigeria. Before Josiah died, he had appointed a successor, Dr Enoch Adeboye, who was then a lecturer at the University of Lagos, Nigeria who took over office as leader in 1981. It was during this period that the church rapidly expanded both in Nigeria and outside the country. By the middle of the year 2000, the RCCG had more than three thousand branches, with close to a hundred of these established outside the country (Ukah 2003:1,15; Effa 2013:216).

⁹Daniel Olubi was a strong antagonist of the missionaries before his conversion to the Christian faith. He vowed to kill any white missionary who dared the shrine where he was a traditional religion's apprentice. However, Olubi became a close confidant of David Hinderer and a leading African mission agent. See Anna Hinderer's manuscript of 'Seventeen years in the Yoruba country: Memorials of Anna Hinderer, wife of the Rev. David Hinderer, C.M.S. missionary in Western Africa, (1782:152-157).

The Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) was founded by Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi. He was born in 1941, in Nigeria's Western Region, Erin Ijesa, Osun State, into a family that knew the Bible was very important as the word of God. They would rise early in the morning to sing hymns, read the Bible, and pray. Deeper Christian Life Ministry was established in the University of Lagos in 1973 amidst the growing enthusiasm for evangelism among college students. Its establishment also reflects on the post war reconstruction programme in the country as many old structures were pulled down to make way for an emergent new society. Although this was also the period of the spread of the charismatic revival in colleges and universities in Western Nigeria, Deeper Christian Life Ministry did not in any way represent the mainstream of evangelical Christianity or the spreading charismatic revival. Deeper Christian Life Ministry began as a Bible study group in early 1973 in the official residence of Kumuyi in the College of Education, University of Lagos. The Bible studies were held every Monday evening at 7.00 p.m. Through Pastor Kumuyi's publications and retreats the message of holiness and sanctification was spread all over Nigeria. This holiness code has become a defining feature for Deeper Life Christians in Africa and abroad. In 1983 Deeper Life experienced a dramatic growth through House Fellowships known as 'home caring fellowships', and by February of the same year 15,000 house fellowships were established all over the country (Ojo 1988a; Marshall 2009; Isaacson 1990; Ojewale et al. 2021).

1.7 Research Problem

The modern lay movement and concern for the release of lay persons for Christian mission finds its origin in the pre-Reformation era. Numerous arguments have advanced in support or against the appropriate role of lay congregational members concerning the

Christian mission. Howard Grimes¹⁰ wrote about the rebirth of the laity, Paul Lakeland argued for the liberation of the laity, whereas Stevens and Zmud canvassed for the abolition of the laity (Grimes 1962; Lakeland 2003; Stevens & Zmud 1999). Furthermore, scholars as well as observers from African mainline churches and various denominational strands have raised concerns about the response of African Churches on the future of lay Christian mission in Africa and the Global South (Kato 2003; Msangaambe 2011; Oenga 2014). According to Duke Oenga (2014:3), within the three streams of Christian praxis (ecclesiological, missiological and the Kingdom of God), there is an interactive tension in lay ministry that requires constant and consistent coordination for any credible theological praxis to emerge. Chatha Msangaambe, writing from an Anglican Malawian lay mission context, retorts that ‘on analyzing the governance in the Nkhoma Synod, it seems that there is a problem that has been created by the fear within the clerical leadership of losing control, or sharing power with the ruling elders (2011:134). The space between the teaching and ruling elders widens as the former want to use the latter rather than equip them’. Mark Gibbs and Ralph Morton, in *God’s Frozen People*, indicate that the ‘Church has failed to articulate or build a sufficiently robust theology of the laity because it has been too preoccupied with its maintenance and so to value any alternative forms of lay ministry that do not take place on its premises’ (1965). In essence, this points to a lack of a manifesto for the empowerment of lay people and role ambiguity (Martin 2004; Monahan 1999). Church members speak freely about what they do inside the Church for ministry but have difficulty saying what they do in ministry outside the Church.

¹⁰Lewis Howard Grimes (1915-1989). Minister, Army Chaplain, and seminary professor, Howard Grimes contributed to the development of Mainline Protestant Christian education during the turbulent years following World War II. He was a professor of Christian education for over 30 years at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University.

The relationships between the laity and hierarchy remain a fundamental problem in the Church. The two selected Churches' founders, Pastor William Kumuyi, Deeper Life Bible Church, and Josiah Akindayomi, Redeemed Christian Church of God had hierarchical conflicts with leadership of their various churches concerning the spread of the gospel because they were deemed un-ordained or unqualified. It is easy to pass this off as a narcissistic concern with internal Church structures when the main task of the Church is a ministry to the world. It appears that exclusive reliance upon a professional ministry is no longer possible if the Church is to make any future progress in the world. I have observed that the lay congregational members in Africa have a minimal impact on the society, when they are not empowered. Some lay people opine that ministry is the work of a specialized group and is not their calling. Lay men and women think the clergy should alone do mission. The reality of the existing paradox between clergy-driven and lay-driven missions calls for empirical research. Having highlighted the role played by mainline churches in mission in Nigeria through their lay-clergy cooperation, this study progresses to examine how the Pentecostal churches in the case studies of this research handled their lay-clergy relationship for optimal mission growth.

1.8 Aim and Objectives

This research investigates and documents the role of lay persons and clergy in RCCG and DLBC and their missional practices. The central objective is to extend the general concept of the participation and involvement of lay and clergy to a specific missiological role of believers in the Christian mission. The specific objectives include (but are not limited to):

- (i) Investigating how the lay persons and clergy conceptualize involvement in Christian mission,

- (ii) Exploring the mobilization of lay persons for Christian mission
- (iii) Describing how lay persons understand the theology underpinning Christian mission and,
- (iv) Assessing the mission approach for lay mission by the selected Pentecostal churches.

The specific aim is to examine the RCCG and DLBC that have the unique practice of deploying lay persons as the epicentre of mission along with the guidance of the clergy. The two churches share this common mission paradigm. More importantly, the two churches were founded by lay persons who later deployed lay persons and trained them for mission. This case serves as an example to add to the existing body of knowledge and broader scope of missional ecclesiology in African missiology.

1.8.1 Research Questions

The central research question for the thesis is:

- How do the Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay persons' involvement in mission?

Secondary questions are:

- 1) How does the RCCG mobilize the lay congregation for mission?
- 2) How does theology of mission influence the lay Pentecostal mission in the DLBC?
- 3) What is the lay Pentecostal mission approach in RCCG and DLBC?

1.8.2 Scope of Research

The research presented here is limited to understanding the mission of lay persons and clergy among the RCCG and DLBC in Southwest Nigeria. These will be the leading voices within the two Pentecostal denominations. It is also helpful to confirm that this thesis will have its limitations about the lay Pentecostal mission. The thesis cannot define total mission concepts and missiological practices but will offer additional insights into missiological debates in the context of African Pentecostal missions. This defined scope to RCCG and DLBC is important as Nigerian Pentecostal influence has spread globally. Their members travel to different continents especially the West to study, work or for tourism, and have established worship centres along their routes where they settled. Inquiry into a subject of this magnitude requires an extensive field of research, but limited to areas that can be fully assessed within the time frame of this research, hence focusing on the Southwest Nigeria. Therefore, the scope of this research is confined to Southwest Nigeria, where the early European Christian missionaries first engaged Nigeria.

1.8.3 Justification for the Study

The history of Christian missions has been written predominantly by the missionaries who brought Christianity to Africa. The missionaries taught the lay African agency their mission methods in the indigenous context. The Sierra Leonean returnees, who were predominantly lay people under European missionaries' tutelage, initiated the Yoruba nation's evangelization. Given the susceptibility of the European missionaries to malaria, Christianized freed slave agents assumed an important role in the propagation of the evangelical and philanthropic intentions of the Church Missionary Society (Thomas 2013). The lay people were significant because they were at the centre of the Christian mission.

This thesis replicates and extends contemporary mission research and adds to the body of knowledge on lay Christian mission. The indigenes wrestled with the appropriation of the Christian faith and the question of ultimate reality of 'who is Jesus'? J. D. Y. Peel wrote extensively on the theme of missionaries' endeavour and the religious encounter between Christianity and the Yoruba people, and the Comaroffs on 'Of Revelation and Revolution' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991). Few attempts have been made to explore the real story of Christian mission from lay people as an African agency for evangelization. Yet, there is growing literatures on African agency, including the laity and Christian mission, especially studies that focus on African Pentecostal / Charismatic Christianity. However, studies exclusively on DLBC and RCCG mobilization of the lay congregation are yet to emerge in Southwest Nigeria.

1.8.4 Contribution to Pentecostal Mission

My thesis will make the following contributions to the Pentecostal mission studies in Nigeria and Africa.

- (i) I will contribute to the debate on missiology and the role of the laity in Pentecostal missions.
- (ii) In the study on Pentecostals in Nigeria, several studies and books were written by Matthew Ojo, Asonzeh Ukah, Ogbu Kalu, Nimi Wariboko, Richard Burgess and Ruth Marshall. However, only a few focus on lay Pentecostalism in Nigeria, and my research will fill this gap.
- (iii) Studies about RCCG are many, but there are relatively few on DLBC. My thesis will contribute to DLBC's engagement in mission. RCCG has been over-researched, but there is few published research on DLBC. My case study on DLBC is unique for this purpose.

1.8.5 Structure of this Thesis

The thesis is presented in eight chapters. Chapter one is the introductory text to the whole thesis. It begins with the concepts and meaning of the laity and clergy. Then, it discusses the roles of the laity and the clergy in God's mission. Finally, it traces the beginning of Pentecostalism in Nigeria and distinguishes RCCG and DLBC as church denominations from mainline churches in Nigeria. Chapter two traces the theology of the laity to the Church's first century when there was no apparent distinction between the people of God and the Church leadership when they were engaged with God's mission. It examined the clerical dimension of the Church influenced by Neo-Platonic imagery. It also reviewed the context of lay mission from Evangelical, Protestant and Pentecostal strands of the Christian faith. Finally, it overlays the broader discussions presented in chapter one by specifying the situations of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church and the emergence of Pentecostal missions in Nigeria. Chapter three discusses the research methodology of the thesis as a qualitative case study research. Chapter four presents the data from primary sources. The interviews were analyzed with themes from the actual voices of the lay persons from the Redeemed Christian Church of God and Deeper Life Bible Church. It also examines the tension the selected churches navigate as they deal with the onerous mission responsibilities between the laity and clergy. Lastly, it looks at the comparative analysis of the RCCG and DLBC mission paradigms. The fifth chapter explores the mobilization task by studying the Redeemed Christian Church of God as a case study. It demonstrates how the mission is played out through the mobilization of lay people for the Pentecostal mission in the RCCG context. The interviews were analyzed based on the various themes that emerged from the data. The sixth chapter explicates the theology underlying the mission praxis of the Deeper Life Bible Church. It looks at the central theme of soteriology, Christology, and eschatology that has been voiced through the experiences of members and the founder of the DLBC and how they navigate the mission through lay persons. Chapter seven considers the mission approaches of RCCG and DLBC with the modality of the Church in contrast with sodality- mission agencies outside the scope of the two

denominations. The eighth chapter summarises the contributions of the thesis to knowledge and suggestions for further research.

1.9 Summary

This chapter has presented a general introduction and features of the research. It has briefly surveyed the historical background of the lay and clergy and explained their identities and how they have functioned in the church. Their roles have highlighted the difference between ordained and non-ordained ministries as lay and clergy. Next, it gives a summary of the emergence of Pentecostalism in Nigeria. The aims and objectives of the research are outlined, followed by the central and secondary research questions. The profiles of the selected church founders are provided along with the fact that both founders were lay persons when the two churches were founded. I proceed to chapter two to review the relevant works of literature for the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature on the relevance of lay and clergy studies on involvement with Christian mission. It explores their involvement with missions from the lens of Ecumenical, Protestant, Evangelical, and Pentecostal Charismatic Christianity. The chapter looks at mission through the various lenses of interdisciplinary discourses on lay and clergy participation in Christian mission by staying abreast of the changing paradigms in global, regional, and local missions with a strong focus on the Pentecostal character of missions. The subject of the chapter will be treated in two parts. First, I will sketch the development of lay and clergy involvement with mission from the Catholic, Evangelical Protestant perspectives and Mainstream Churches in Nigeria. The second part will explore the Pentecostal mission, as indicated above. Various studies on clerical and lay activities in the Church have been written since the inception of the Christian missions from diverse Christian traditions. Such studies include: Hendrick Kraemer, Yves Congar, Graham Ward, Paul Lakeland, Simon Cozens, Mark Gibbs and Thomas Ralph, Chatha Msangaambe, Richard Burgess and Ruth Marshall. Lay persons' involvement in contemporary Christian mission is critical to spreading and propagating the Christian faith (Kraemer 1958; Congar 1965; Graham n.d.; Lakeland 2003; Cozens 2010; Gibbs et al. 1965; Msangaambe 2011; Burgess 2008; Marshall 2009). Mission has profoundly shaped the life of the Church (Mead 2001). Their involvement appears to be instrumental to the mission. The mission is integral to the Great Commission (G.C.) of Christ.

2.1 Christian Mission: Lay and Clergy Conversation

The debates on laity concerning Christian mission and ministry in the Church began in the Early Church. Positive descriptions of the laity were common in the first two

centuries of the Church. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian described the laity as common believers in contrast to the clerical hierarchy (Doohan1992). This definition of the laity was intensified by three development in the Early Church: (i) Neo-Platonism's influence on several Church Fathers, (ii) the growth of monasticism, and (iii) the clerical dimension of the Church, (Hahnenberg 2013:10; Perkins n.d.). The definition of the laity as common believers may have been influenced by Neo-platonism's imagery, lexicon, and Greek popular culture as mentioned by Souprios, M. A. (Souprios 2013:219). Again, Greek Philosophy influences the Christian doctrine, especially the merger of Christianity and the idea of Plato. Vlach notes that 'Platonic thinking influenced significant theologians of the early church. It was true for the Christians of the Eastern church, particularly those in the Alexandrian tradition, such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen' (Vlach 2010:3). As Jeffrey Burton (Russell 1999) states, 'The great Greek fathers of Alexandria, Clement and Origen, firmly grounded in Scripture, were also influenced by Platonism and Stoicism'.

Neo-Platonism was an active philosophy for about 400 years. As the last phase of pagan philosophy prevalent in the early centuries of Christianity, Neo-Platonism was the school of ancient philosophy that initially opposed and soon profoundly influenced Christian thought and theology (Emilsson 2003:356). Most significant is the fact that the Church fathers were set in the complex cultural environment of the Roman Empire. This means that drawing on its unique sources of revelation, Christian theology did not take shape in a vacuum. The atmosphere in which it had to grow and develop was crowded with religious, philosophical and even theosophical notions (Kelly 2000:5,6). One of the influences was allegorising the scripture (discovering hidden meaning) to show that truths set forth revealed religion were identical to those of the philosophers (Kelly 2000:9). In the neo-Platonism, the tendency to make God transcendent was carried as far as it could

go. Platonism fully developed this as its main inspiration but incorporated Aristotelian, Stoic and even oriental elements, which flourished from the middle of the third century.

Two features of neo-Platonism deserve to be mentioned as expounded by Plotinus. It represents an optimistic attitude to the universe. Material though it is, the world as we know it is good in his eyes; it is created and ordered by the higher soul held together by Nature. Though matter is evil, the visible universe reflects the intelligible order (Kelly 2000:21). Pervading all reality at its different levels is the ardent longing for union with what is higher and ultimately *One* itself. Their more refined view was that reality emerged from “the First” in coherent stages, in such a way that one stage functions as the creative principle of the next. So the human soul fired by the heavenly Eros of which Plato spoke in his symposium is in three stages: (i) purification, by which he meant it must free itself from the body and beguilement of sense perception, (ii) the second rises to the level of mind and busies itself with philosophy and science returning its self-consciousness and (iii) the final stage consists in mystical union with the *One*, it is mediated by ecstasy, and when this occurs the awareness of the distinction between subject and object is lost (Kelly 2000:22). These are the probable elements that influenced various doctrines in the Church during the early Church, and multiple understandings of Christian doctrines first went through the prism of neo-Platonism before the emergence of the Renaissance and Enlightenment. A document marking the beginning of this emergence, historians point to a letter written in A.D. 96 by Clement in the name of the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth. The second figure staunchly committed to the priesthood of the laity is the African Tertullian (c. 160 c. 220). Tertullian, in contrast to Justin Martyr, does acknowledge the existence in the Church of two categories of people: the laity, which he calls plebeians, that is, the common or ordinary people, and the “priestly” or “ecclesiastical ordo” that is, the class of Bishops and presbyters. On the other

hand, Lakeland, a Catholic lay scholar, narrated and analyzed how the current situation came about. He emphasized that for the first two centuries of the Church there was no lay-clergy distinction either semantically or conceptually (Lakeland 2007:69). Lakeland acknowledged that the language of the lay-clergy distinction that emerged in the third century has a history and that the terms did not come out of anywhere. Overall, however, his strategy is to paint a picture of an Early Church with no lay-clergy distinction in support of the position that such a distinction is not essential to the Church but that it consists of historically-contingent structures. The Church of today is free to revise it or to do away with it as it sees fit and as the contemporary situation and the Holy Spirit may demand. While I agree with Lakeland that lay-clergy had no distinction until the third century. I believe that learning from the historical antecedents of the lay and clergy involvement in mission from the early Church should redefine the contemporary Church's approach to mission.

2.1.1 Existing Lay and Clergy Debates

Yves Congar and Hendrik Kraemer were the leading scholars in the existing theology of the laity. The former represented the Roman Catholic tradition, the latter the Dutch Reformed Church (Kraemer 1958; Congar 1965). Congar argued that 'at the bottom, there can be only one sound and sufficient theology of the laity, and that is a 'total ecclesiology'. In Congar's day, the dominant Catholic ecclesiology equated the church with its hierarchical institution and with the members of the hierarchy. Congar rejected that understanding of the Church and asserted the rightful place of the laity within the Church.

In contrast to a 'hierachology', a 'total ecclesiology' was preferred, while he rejected the exclusive identification of the Church with any one dimension of the Church.

Thus, Congar's proposed total ecclesiology was a striking alternative to the dominant Catholic ecclesiology of his time (Hai 2009:4). Congar's theology leads toward an ecclesiology in which distinction and ranking are not noticeable. Congar's theological approach begins with 'communion' among God and human beings and then applies this concept analogously to the sacrament, ministry, ecumenism, and church–world relations. Communion ecclesiology has taken on significant importance as the key to a proper understanding of late in Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant circles (Newbigin 2006:43).

Kraemer disagreed with Congar's position over the indispensability of total ecclesiology when describing a theology *of* and not only *for* the laity but to adequately describe the place of the laity in the Church. He saw this as a central task, arguing that it was not simply an "interesting intermezzo" but essentially reworked our idea of what it means to be Church together with major implications for both leaders and laity. Kraemer, as a lay theologian, linguist and missiologist, captured several key concerns, arguing that the laity occupied a hugely significant position as those who bridged the world and the Church and needed to be equipped for this task:

The laity should...not be seen primarily as the needy, ignorant and helpless, but as that part of the church that has to carry the brunt of the burden of encountering the world in and around themselves, and to voice and incarnate the church's or better, Christ's relevance to the whole range of human life. (Kraemer 1958:114)

So, the laity needed to be encouraged and resourced to live well in those contexts, for they exist as the daily repeated projection of the Church in the world (Kraemer 1958:170). Kraemer notes further:

If the specific place of the laity in the world is at the frontiers, where the real dialogue between church and world becomes an event, the laity at large needs a new orientation, a new grasp of the whole realm and scale of the reality of Christ, and new equipment. (Kraemer 1958:172)

However, these contrary positions presuppose a laity-clergy dichotomy, which has come to the fore within the contemporary study of lay Christian mission. I want to state that

dichotomy is an apparent contrast between the lay and clergy in terms of office and ministry and not because of war. On the other hand, the understanding of the theological and historical development of the lay–clergy framework is essential to lay mission hermeneutics since Leslie Newbigin argued that the lay people are the hermeneutics of the Church (2006:78). Later still, Mark Gibbs and Ralph Morton authored the revolutionary *God's Frozen People*, but little of substance was published until Mouw in *Called to Holy Worldliness* attempted a short sequel to Kraemer (1965;1980). Mouw's writings challenged theologians to consider the significance of the laity's contributions to the Church. Rather than viewing those contributions as secondary issues, they should be elevated to primary status. Secondly, Mouw believes that adequate theologizing about the laity must result in a theology for *the* laity: 'It must be a theological engagement for which the needs, dilemmas, and problems of the laity set the agenda. Moreover, it must be carried on with the clear goal of building up the laity for their ministries in the world' (1980:46). This proposed theology of the laity would be pertinent to the reality experienced by the laity in the present and future ministry participation. Thirdly, Mouw proposed that reflection on lay issues ought to include theology by the laity. His proposal suggested that the laity should be involved in discussions about their theology (1980:76–89).

Key elements within Mouw's and Kraemer's proposals point toward a theology that recognizes the role, value, worth and contributions of laypersons from a biblical perspective. Such a theology combated some of the myths about ministry that have been present in the Church. Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch encapsulated many conceptions about lay ministry into what they call "The Ministry Myth": Ministry is just for 'ministers,' *ministers* here mean only full-time ministry professionals (1995). Another classical scholar in the same school of thought but with a contrary position, arguing in contrast to

the previous assumptions, is Maloney. He lamented the subsumed position of the laity as an object of ministry with no entitlement to divine representation: ‘this entitlement to act apostolically is not generally recognized, nor is it generally encouraged, particularly at higher levels in the church. At these higher levels, the primary concern is with the order, conformity, and control. In time, the concern with order, conformity, control, orthodoxy and elimination of dissent tend to override other considerations’ (2003:132).

2.1.2 Insightful Contributions to the Lay Debate

Congar and Kraemer postulated nuanced ecclesiological hierarchies in lay–clergy roles in Church ministry. However, I advocate for mission beneath ecclesiology, below the hierarchical and institutional levels. The debates about the laity’s participation in the Christian mission have focused on what the laity can and cannot do. The laity has been subsumed as an appendage of the clergy without a voice. While Congar’s intellectual work on the theology of the laity advocated total ecclesiology, Kraemer reversed this theory by emphasizing the theological foundation and motivation of the laity’s place and meaning as inherent in the nature and calling of the Church. Karl Rahner from the Catholic lay apostolate canvassed for the vocation of the laity, while Lakeland, a Catholic lay scholar, proposed the liberation of the laity (2000; 2007). I see a problematization of the theology of the laity in the Christian mission and propose the mobilization of the laity in the same context. The present research contemplates a new lay mission mobilization paradigm. I see the possibility of lay persons not only as receivers but givers of ministry rather than remaining as a passive entity at the receiving end. Again, this process is dialogical, which returns us to a lay model of vocation as the transformative engagement between God, the Church and the world (Green 2010:116).

2.1.3 Development in Clericalism

The present-day Pentecostals engaged lay persons in Christian ministry; once baptized in the Holy Spirit, they are released for ministry or engaged without ordination to be ministers. Thus, clericalism does not appear as the overarching concern of the Pentecostals, but clericalism offers support for the laity. The problem of clericalism in Pentecostalism has yet to remove the lay vocation to the world and the priesthood of all believers. Despite the fundamental difference between the laity and clergy, the professionalized caste, with its hierarchical gradations (Kreider 2007:95), has indisputable authority over the latter. Though the difference has been created by ordination and inductions, there is increasing participation in mission by lay professionals (Kärkkäinen 2000:154; Po 2004:59).

The Pentecostal emphasizes baptism of the Holy Spirit, not on ordination as it were, which is empowerment to do the work of the ministry; thus, anyone can be a minister once baptized in the Holy Spirit. Fettke observes that ‘no distinction is made between professional ministers (those who preach) and lay people. On the day of Pentecost, when people were filled with the Holy Spirit for service, the apostles were joined by several non-apostles. All were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). When Peter explained this event in his Pentecostal sermon, he said that all who would believe “will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38), presumably also to be witnesses to the gospel (Fettke 2010:23). One theology of mission very central and cardinal to the denominations under study is the indispensability of the priesthood of all believers as the main focus of its ecclesiology. The assumption is that there is no form of license or approval required from the church authority to proclaim the saving faith of Jesus in the neighbourhood. This is a very strong theological pedagogue which significantly influences the mission praxis. The theology underpinning the mission of Deeper Life

Bible Church teaches, trains and empowers the laity and releases them to the community for God's mission. This may be the heart of its Pentecostal theology. It saves the way that not only the clergy or the professionals are ecclesia appointees for the outward ministry of the church to the world. It was initially the mentality of the lay persons that the clergy were professionals; they were paid for pastoral work in the church. Hence, lay persons have a minimal role in the ministry of the church. This has often been discounted in the past owing to the pressures of clericalism and a passion for control. Yet, thankfully, this situation is changing. Paul's word is being heard about how that 'to every believer, there is a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good' (1 Corinthians 12.7), and also St Peter's word that 'like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, we can serve one another with whatever gift anyone has received' (I Peter 4.10), (Pinnock 2006:159).

Pentecostals tend to read through the lens of Lukan- Acts for their mission. They have drawn upon Luke and Acts of the Apostles to shape their theology and practice. Momentum for their practice and belief is found primarily in the book of Acts, a favourite text of the Pentecostals. Through Bible studies, sermons and devotional works, the early Pentecostals recognized the importance of Lukan narratives for providing not only a strong motivation to seek the empowerment of the Spirit but also to supply a biblical pattern for contemporary believers (Mittelstadt 2004:11). According to Fetteke, there are no two tiers of lay and clericalism. Clericalism is not new — it has existed in the Church since the first distinctions between an ordained clergy and the laity evolved. Indeed, not all (or even most) clergy are affected by clericalism. The New Testament does not make a distinction between charismatic and non-charismatic believers. All are baptized into the body of Christ by one Spirit, and all experience the Spirit. Life in this community is necessarily charismatic, so all participate in the gifting (Pinnock 2006:160).

Drawing upon Pentecostal theology, there is little Clergy / Laity difference other than the expression and intention for the latter's active participation in ministry. Pentecostals in Africa, including Nigeria, have Bishops, Prophets and Elders designated leadership in Pentecostal churches wielding staff of authority in numerous church structures. Clericalism is within the structure of Pentecostals but may need to be seen clearly in RCCG and DLBC. In Africa, Pentecostal traditions of clericalism are a relatively new development, especially in Nigeria's context. For example, with the emergence of Pentecostal revival in the 1940s under the leadership of Joseph Ayodele Babalola, there was not a significant form of ordination. People were recognized as Pastors and Evangelists based on how they functioned. However, recently, Margaret Idahosah, the wife of the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa of the Church of God Mission Nigeria, was ordained as Bishop. In contrast, Pastor Enoch Adeboye of RCCG and Pastor William Kumuyi of DLBC do not bear the titles of Bishops despite having thousands of leaders under their ministries.

2.1.4 Cultural Norms in Southwest Nigeria

The gospel is embellished and interpreted by the locals in their cultural contexts. The locals assimilate the truth of the gospel from the cauldron of culture. Theories of culture teach us that cultural contact generates a spectrum of responses best understood within the totality of the culture (Kalu 2008:16). Christianity has become more integrated into the indigenous Nigerian culture. An emerging problem is intra-pluralism, or differences within Christianity (Uzoma 2004:654). Politics, economics, and culture are not isolated aspects of societies: they influence each other and blend in ways that are sometimes indiscernible (Falola & Heaton 2008:12).

The Nigerian culture, especially in Southwest Nigeria, might have been responsible for the difference between the clergy and the lay persons. Southwest Nigeria, in particular, is a culture-conscious civilization. Yoruba culture is deeply hierarchical, and this has made an impact in Prophet, Bishops, and Apostles titles attached to church leadership, which bears a kind of distinction between the lay persons and the clergy as a norm in the context of Southwest Nigeria's missional practice. This is one theological norm relevant to Southwest Nigeria. The hierarchical structure of Yoruba culture is a hermeneutical issue which has possibly framed the problem of clericalism in this context. Yoruba culture has influenced church structure in mainline churches and even Pentecostals. Respect and special honours are accorded to elders within the Yoruba culture. The children are expected to prostrate or kneel to greet parents and older adults. This culture of integrity and respect for elders resonates in Nigerian churches, emphasizing unqualified submission to church leadership, even though it is enunciated in the scripture as well. Overall, the people are sympathetic to the local culture, which made them forbearing and accommodating towards each other and the church leadership.

Solution

Instead of harping on denominational hierarchies, where the ministry and the witness of the church take place from the top down, in the long run, always leads to the laity becoming mere receivers of whatever the church, as an institution, provides for them, (Hendriks 2004:4), in contrast, the empowerment of the laity should be the norm. Only when a proper theology of the laity is developed is there any hope for overcoming the perennial problem of the bipolarity of a person in the office versus community? (Kärkkäinen 2000:154). When the laity is seen as the medium through which the Spirit of God constitutes the church, then spiritual activity and receptiveness are no longer divided

into two groups of persons but represent two primary activities of each individual: each acts in the person of Christ, and each is a recipient of this action.

Debating about lay persons and clergy is like the idea of division of labour in the hospital, distinguishing the roles of nurses, medical doctors, surgeons, cardiologists, physiotherapists, pharmacists, medical laboratory scientists and radiologists in the healthcare system. Rather than being in conflict, these have always specialised in their distinguished roles. The question is, are there examples of lay persons who became clergy and of the clergy who became bi-vocational as professional in two disciplines? Are there any rules that permanently keep the lay persons away from becoming clergy if they desire the office? I turn to the ecumenical mission as an essential mission concept for exploring the study.

2.2 Contemporary Mission Thinking in Ecumenical and Evangelical Church Contexts

Mission now is indeed 'from everywhere to everywhere'. It involves many laypersons and relatively few full-time professionals who share their faith and give witness in their neighbourhoods and around the world (Skreslet 2012:15). Walls and Ross, writing from the perspective of Presbyterian mission theology, argue that the mission of the church is characterized by five prongs or aspects, namely: (i) to proclaim the good news of the kingdom, (ii) to teach, baptize, and nurture new believers, (iii) to respond to human needs by loving service, (iv) to seek to transform unjust structures of society and (v) to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain a life of the earth (2008:123). These markers are not exhaustive as mission is more complicated with many ramifications. The mission of the church to the world does not wear just one face but is multifaceted and calls for the development of thoughtful, informed, and robust frameworks for theological and missiological thought and missional practice. Fagbemi, an Anglican Bishop in

Nigeria, writing on *Territorial Expansion or Passion for the Lost*, cited Emil Brunner's statement that the Church exists for mission as fire exists by burning. The only way for the Church to exist is by engaging in a mission (2014:71). Missiological scholars have identified various ways of engaging the Church in a mission in frontier or local multicultural contexts. The idea of engaging mission carries several senses. First is the matter of engaging the issues embedded in mission and the forces and social currents with which mission has been intertwined in historically critical yet sympathetic, thoughtful, and forward-looking ways. Second, engaging in mission has an active element. It invites and encourages becoming personally involved. Mission is a matter not just of actions carried out in faraway places but of acting in the manner and attitude of Jesus Christ toward those whom God places in our path, seeing opportunities to welcome strangers and inconvenient persons in Jesus' name, embracing openings to be the embodiment of Christ to them. Third, mission engagement has to do with outlook, manner, and mode. Is our missional outreach winsome? Is it attractive to others? Does it allow Christ to call forth a response from deep within those among whom we live and to whom we speak? Do our lives accord with our profession, or are overpowering words our only recourse? (Baker et al. 2015:175). Kenneth Ross carried out a study on two centuries of Scottish mission experience, acknowledging 'past mission has been characterized and delineated by a shared vision, ecclesial commitment, intellectual quality and extensive engagement' (Conway 2014:156). In a similar vein, McClung, in his contribution to Global Pentecostalism, suggested a mission paradigm parallel to Kenneth Ross. According to him, there are three elements of ecumenism mission, evangelism, eschatology and holism (Dempster et al. 2011a:4). The elements fuse in dynamic tension and balance, the indispensable components of exegesis and experience. We have seen the ecumenical

mission context, which provides a basis for comparison with the Evangelical mission. I proceed from here to the Protestant Lay Movement narratives.

2.2.1 Protestant Lay Movement

The concept of the laity and their engagement with the world in mission is a well-established mission framework (Care 2011; Dickey & Fund 2003; Oden 2007; Steinbron 2004). From Richard Hooker in the sixteenth century to William Temple in the twentieth century, Anglican theologians have reiterated the theme that the world is the Church's workplace. Hooker referred to the Church as a visible though mystical body marked by a mutual fellowship in society (Care 2011; Ferns 1993). Methodist theology begins with faith as the basis that leads to the proclamation of the gospel. In Methodist history, an ideal Church does not consist of an active few, the ordained clergy, and the passive many, the laity, who are just content to be the recipients of benefits from the clergy. All are called to serve in the Church of Christ (Littell 1964; Ogden 2003). This position corresponds with the view of, who suggested that all Christians are called to love God and neighbour and engage in some way in the church's worship, community, and mission (2004).

2.2.2 Moravians Missionary Movement

The mission history of Moravians as a global missionary movement is a watershed in inter-cultural mission foray and frontier missions. The Moravians allegiance to the Great Commission known as Christ's missionary commission and their activities portrayed mission adventures as a strategy and grand design. Following the lines of thought of Cronshaw, the 'Great Commission' of Matthew 28:18–20 is a controversial passage (cf. Mark 16:14–18; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:19–23). It is arguably the foundational text of the modern missionary movement (2016:110). The Moravians were glued to the missionary commission as

the be all and end all, with sense of urgency and priority. The Moravian Church is a mainline Protestant denomination with more than five hundred years of history. Founded before the Lutheran, Anglican, or United Church of Canada, Moravians have long focused on faithful living and Christian unity. Peucker suggests that:

One of the fascinating aspects of the history of Christianity is its incredible diversity of expression and evolution, particularly as Christianity left Europe, bound for the shores of America,. The Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum or “Unity of the Brethren”) arose in what is now known as the Czech Republic in the late fourteenth century. The history of the Moravian Church is vital for understanding not only European church history but also the history of the church in North America. (Peucker et al. 2009)

The Moravian church traces its beginnings to the pre-reformation teachings of Jan Hus, a Czech reformer and philosophy professor at the University in Prague. He led a protest movement against certain doctrinal positions of the Roman clergy and hierarchy and was accused of heresy, tried and burned at the stake in 1415. But his followers gathered on an estate in eastern Bohemia and organized this church in 1457-60 years before Martin Luther began his reformation. The Moravian recognised the gift of ordinary people for spreading the faith with or without ordination. Mason pointed out that John Cennick a great lay preacher deserted George Whitefield for the Moravians by whom he was ordained. Moravians made great use of the piety of their lay brethren for the work of the ministry (Mason 2001:2,157).

There are several things about this historical sketch that seem odd on the surface. Why would an American Protestant denomination begin its official history with two Greek Orthodox saints who have no direct connection to the church? Why focus on Moravia when the church was originally called the Bohemian Brethren. (Atwood 2013:110)

In 1722 Zinzendorf, a twenty-two year old Count who came from Dresden and had been educated in a German Lutheran Pietist environment at Halle opened his estate in south-east Saxony to a group of Protestant refugees from Bohemia and Moravia. Eleven Members of this group, who were escaping from persecution by the Roman Catholic Habsburgs, were part of the Unity of the Brethren (unitas fratrum) or the Moravians, a

movement that had its origins in the reformation in Bohemia under Jan Hus, who was put to death in 1415 (Randall 2006:205). The impact of Moravian as a Protestant movement led to turnaround experience of the founder of Methodist missionary Movement significantly. William Kay, in his study of origin of Pentecostalism pointed to the influence of Moravian on Methodism: Wesley encountered the Moravians while:

Travelling to the American colonies to preach, John had little success and returned home disappointed. On the Atlantic voyage, he had observed a group of Moravians at close hand and marvelled at their calmness during a storm. While everyone else panicked, they sang hymns. In 1738, at a meeting in London, a Moravian pastor was reading aloud from Luther's writings and John reported: "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation. (Kay 2011:9)

The implication of this context highlights the importance of a personal encounter with the God of mission before taking up the proclamation of mission and the spread of Christianity. The salvific plan is integral to understanding the grand purpose of God in his redemptive work. The Moravian account reveals the extraordinary work the mission can have on lay persons and corporate Church engaging in missional practice regardless of the place they are in as much as they occupy a central place in strategic mission map. Is the enthusiasm the Moravian mission displayed similar to the contemporary Nigerian Pentecostal mission? This question is relevant to the way the Nigerian professionals (teachers, doctors, traders) but lay individuals within the Pentecostal churches engage in mission, as their churches became sending agencies to places outside of the Southwest Nigeria.

2.3. Missiological Applications and Lay Proclamation

Lay persons appear potentially as persuasive proclaimers of the Christian gospel in the emerging church. All Christians are called to love God and their neighbours and proclaim a gospel message in the worship, community, and mission of the church. Grace previews the missiological position of the issue more succinctly:

However, they will each express their mission proclamation differently, so some are full-time peacemakers, evangelists, justice campaigners, or pastoral leaders. Missiology has a double role in propagation: to permeate the community with a missiological dimension and to serve mission praxis with a specific intention. A missiological approach to the propagation of the Christian faith may demonstrate the importance of mission to the life of the church. (Grace 2001:492)

The double role of missiology might provide context for mission, evangelism and discipleship and foster a definite missional practice. But, again, it might also seek to enlighten and revitalise the mandate and message of proclaiming the reign of God. There is ostensibly a specific setback being experienced in the enlistment of the lay congregational members for the propagation of the Christian faith due to the overbearing position of the clergy as the main organ of proclamation. The lay members in the congregation see themselves as an appendage to the clergy and possibly unqualified for the proclamation. O’Conaill laments the critical situation:

Our embarrassment about proclamation also concerns the fact that we live in an era of extreme disillusionment about mere talk. What politicians, bankers, lawyers and, yes, even bishops, say, and what they do, are so often nowadays shown to be in conflict that cynicism is rampant? Noticing this, popular culture made one of its stranger archetypal heroes, Batman, utter the following line in one of his recent cinematic outings: 'it is what I do that defines me. (O’Conaill 2009:411)

The issue of identity is very critical in people’s orientation and world views. No one has a neutral identity in terms of believing and belonging. The church must be defined by a consistent identification with Christ in life and missional practice.

This rebuttal has had a levelling influence on the Pentecostal movement. Therefore, every member is encouraged to be a witness based on their experience of Spirit baptism rather than gender, education, training or worldly rank (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005:95). Anderson and Burgess refer to this as the ‘democratization of Christianity’ and suggest that the mass involvement of the laity is one reason for the success of the Pentecostal movement in African indigenous churches (Anderson 2001; Burgess 2008). This was an anti-reformation move to counter the emergence of reformation. In the early

centuries, the Christian message spread quickly because it was proclaimed by all, not simply by those with special commissions (Acts 4:31). In the early church, those who had the ability to preach preached. Lay preaching existed until the ninth century, when it was formally condemned. In the twelfth century, lay preaching again became common with the establishment of the mendicant orders (especially the Franciscans). The Council of Trent in the sixteenth century decided that the preaching of sermons in the strict sense should be confined to bishops and their assistants (Burgess 2009). Maloney decries the lay passive proclamation in Canon Law (Canons 766/7), which permits only priests and deacons to deliver homilies (Maloney 2003:134). However, it allows lay people to preach before the Mass or after communion but not after the gospel. Nowadays, several lay people are graduating from the restrictive proclamations of faith in their local community.

The lay ecclesial ministry has its source in the communion of the Church, rooted in the loving communion of the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. By their very baptism, all Christians are called to share in the threefold mission of Christ as priest, prophet, and servant king, according to their gifts and calling. A lay mission model referred to by Yves Congar as total ecclesiology, cited in the earlier part of the chapter. They participate in Christ's mission of celebrating, proclaiming, and serving the reign of God. Gifts or charisms are given freely through the outpouring of the Spirit to "the faithful of every rank", making them "fit and ready" (*aptos et promptos*) to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church (Long 2013). The proclamation of the Kingdom of God and salvation for all people through Jesus Christ is at the very core of the Church's mission, (Glasser & Engen 2003). It is an essential aspect of lay proclamation. Theological beliefs of churches and its structure have a way of influencing mission practice and paradigm significantly. What do Pentecostals believe? Why do they grow? In a nutshell, these seem to be two of the bottom-line questions raised

when missiologists consider the theology and strategy of Pentecostal mission. Deji Ayegboyin and EmiolaNihinlola writing from a mainstream Baptist theological background in Nigeria cited by Oladejo and Adetunji are of the opinion that, there are four identifiable major doctrinal emphases taught by the Pentecostals: (i) belief that the church is now in the new Era of the Holy Spirit, (ii) that all Christians need a personal experience of the Holy Spirit which is accompanied by the speaking in tongues. They believe that the experience of the early church should be normative for Christians today, (iii) belief in divine healing and (iv) belief that through the Holy Spirit, they can receive a knowledge concerning spiritual circumstances (2008:7; 2006:72; 2016:12). Furthermore, Gary McGee reveals that Pentecostalism has remained evangelical in doctrine, confessing belief in the Trinity, the inspiration and infallibility of scripture, justification by faith, substitutionary atonement of Christ and other historic doctrines of the Christian faith (Moreau et al. 2000:742).

2.3.1 Paradigm Shift in Church's Proclamation

Proclamation occurs when the Church deliberately engages the community and pluralistic world where they exist to lead the people inside that culture and community to Christ (Hiebert 1994; Netland 2001). Bosch strongly remarks that 'the movement away from ministry as the monopoly of ordained men to ministry as the responsibility of the whole people of God, ordained as well as non-ordained, is one of the most dramatic shifts taking place in the church today (1991:208). From Bosch's position, can any conservative evangelical movement argue against the involvement of the laity in the proclamation mandate in today's Church environment? In contrast to its perception of ordained ministers, the Church must involve ordinary believers in a proclamation to complement the ministerial activities of ordained leadership. The ordination of few and specific

numbers of professional preachers cannot produce a significant change in both local and global harvest fields. The Church's mission statement in terms of world evangelization must be rewritten to include the armies of non-ordained believers to proclaim the faith once again from the bottom or from the pew to the public. The lay members of the congregation are the public face of the church.

Proclamation is the missiological concept of articulating the faith in a new way to those who have not been evangelized. Bosch mentions that 'the Pauline churches are manifestly different. They are characterized by a missionary drive, which sees the outsider as a potential insider' (1991). The concept of centrifugal understanding of lay proclamation is appropriate here. The lay proclamation of faith is a centrifugal affair in any specific context.

2.3.2 Mobilization of the Laity in Christian Mission

In the Christian mission, the work of the laity is the crucial means by which the world is to encounter Christ (Chung 2010). The emphases of these renowned scholars have redefined the engagement of the laity for the Christian mission. Their research pointed out that (1) lay persons have the capacity to change when they are engaged in Christian mission; (2) engaging lay persons is the primary task of the clergy and pastors; (3) lay persons should be engaged and serve according to their gifts; (4) all the people of God which constitute the lay formation requires appropriate mission engagement; (5) lay persons should be delegated in church leadership; (6) church growth is likely to occur when lay persons are engaged in community outreaches; and (7) effective engagement of the laity takes place gradually in different mission context (McGavran & Wagner 1990; Wagner 1984). In industry, the prime responsibility for putting faith into practice lies with the Christian men and women who spend their working lives in the community. It is they who put the mission into effect or who fail to do so if they are unaware of their

responsibility and need to be equipped for it. Through their efforts and out of their struggles, community and society reflect at least some of the values enshrined in the Christian gospel. Christian effectiveness in the neighbourhoods is enhanced and strengthened through all involved in lay mission (Johnson 2003). In an evaluative manner, Conn and Ortiz emphasize from everywhere to everyone in the marketplace as a venue for mission engagement. They mention that ‘another specialization involves laity in the marketplace. In the urban parish, it is not enough to have a busy programme at the church. We need to equip people to move into the subsectors of the city: the court system, the advocacy roles’ (2001). The primary preoccupation of lay engagement depends on mission innovation and creativity. When the laity’s gifts are unleashed for ministry, the gospel will take a new turn in the market. The remarks of Conn and Ortiz are startling on lay ministry engagement:

We need to send people into politics because the laws are unfair and unjust. We need Christians who will articulate the gospel in the business world. We need people to serve in convention businesses, in theaters, in arts, and in all the subcultures of the city. So pastors have to be the equippers of the laity and commission them to move into the marketplace. (Conn & Ortiz 2001)

They concluded that ‘no other form of life and ministry is possible. Only after surviving for a certain time does it become possible to speak of patterns of stewardship that involve the community in the great task of centrifugal mission?’. What is more difficult to obtain, in the case of developed and established churches, is lay mobilization. It is total participation in the holistic welfare of the Christian community. This position had been earlier reinforced by Lesslie Newbigin who argued that the local church is the hermeneutics of the gospel (2006:50–59). Marketplace ministry is significant and something that certain Pentecostal pastors in Nigeria are currently emphasizing. It is a ministry that emphasizes the important role of the laity in mission. It also represents a broader understanding of mission to include ministry in the workplace in the different

public spheres (e.g. politics, education, business, arts, etc.). The heightened mobilization problem remains one of the most daunting tasks in frontier missions. The church in a community sometimes finds it difficult to involve ordinary members of the church in a voluntary participatory mission. I argue that the experience of voluntary contributions through the lay ministry forms the bedrock for the survival and growth of the local church; it creates discipline and a new pattern of timing and budgeting, a foundational experience. Pauline churches saw the focus of lay proclamation as an outward affair rather than an inward endeavour. Martin argues:

I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples. John Paul II takes up the theme again in his inspiring vision for Catholic life in the new millennium. Drawing out the implications of baptismal spirituality, the Pope roots his vision in the universal call to holiness and the universal call to mission that each member of the Church receives by being a Christian. (Martin 2004:658)

Mission constitutes the Church's first and fundamental way of serving the coming of the kingdom in individuals and human society.

2.3.3 Centripetal and Centrifugal Missions

Missiologists use the terms centripetal¹¹ and centrifugal¹² to describe complementary mission methodologies. They contrast the approach that Christian

¹¹ Centripetal is actualized by a messenger who crosses frontiers and passes on his news to those who are afar off; centripetal by a magnetic force, drawing distant peoples into the person who stands at the center. (Kim 2011:45)

¹² Gustav Warneck and Donald McGavran define mission according to the concept of the centrifugal mission. The method of the centrifugal mission entails sending out missionaries with a message. There are many examples on the centrifugal missions in the New Testament. Jesus himself went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people (Matthew 4:23). He said, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43). And Jesus sent out the twelve to preach the gospel, saying, "Go! I am sending you out" (Matthew 10:5; Luke. 10:3). He also appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two to every town (Luke 10:1). WARNECK, G. 1887. Evangelische Missionlehre. Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes. (McGavran & Wagner 1990; Kim 2011:41–47)

presence wins people by attraction (centripetal) with deliberate efforts to win people through proclamation and persuasion (centrifugal). The word centripetal means moving or tending to move towards the centre. It attempts to draw the people to the Lord rather than sending out messengers with a message (Glasser & Engen 2003:64). Centripetal mission implies the church's mission to the world regarding the people coming to the church. Whereas centrifugal mission means the church's mission is going to the people to win them to Christ. There is a difference between the people coming to the church and the church going to the people to proclaim the good news. New Testament mission includes both centrifugal and centripetal dimensions: missionaries going and searching for the lost and missionaries attracting them to Christ once they find them by using the centripetal missionary methods (Matacio 2008:38).

Multifaceted mission proclamation requires both centripetal and centrifugal missions. The centripetal mission and centrifugal mission should go together. Missiologists often mention that the Old Testament is wholly built around the method of centripetal mission, whereas the New Testament enjoins the method of centrifugal mission. When looking at the Bible, the centripetal mission was not always applied in the Old Testament and the centrifugal mission in the New Testament. The two methods are not divided and contrasted clearly, but rather work together (Kim 2011:49).

There appears to be a link between Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity. A dynamic conception of mission history links Christocentrism, the Church's focus, in both Evangelical and Pentecostal missions. Following the thought of Volf Miroslav in "After Our Likeness" on the structure of the Church, Pentecostals could be regarded as a stepchild of the Evangelical and Ecumenical movements (Volf 2000:113). Pentecostal Christianity takes off from the foundation of Evangelical and Ecumenical faith without

theology and structure of its own (Hollenweger 2004:130). For the Pentecostals, the Missio-Dei was interpreted as the Spirit's work that embraces both the Church and the world: 'this wider understanding of mission is expounded Pneumatologically rather than Christologically' (Bosch 1991:391; Goheen 2004:104). The Evangelicals interpret mission christologically, while the Pentecostals interpret mission pneumatologically. The link between the Evangelicals and the Pentecostals can be defined as the difference between the Word and the Spirit. Exploring the boundary of Evangelicalism in relationship to modern Pentecostalism is especially intriguing (Amos 2002:235). The chapter, at this point, looks at the shift from the Evangelicals to how the Pentecostals negotiate the question of self-identity.

2.4 Pentecostalism in Global and Africa Contexts

Pentecostalism and mission are almost synonymous. Assemblies of God Church historian Gary McGee accurately observed that 'the history of Pentecostalism cannot be properly understood apart from its missionary vision' (Dempster et al. 2011a:32). Their earlier understanding of the experience that came to be known as the 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit' was that it produced a missiological fervour and ministry. It provided empowerment for the same. From its inception, Pentecostalism emphasizes supernatural empowerment for ministry. Indeed, early Pentecostal missiology was not only the missiology of the pulpit and pew but, more importantly, the missiology of the altar (Dempster et al. 2011:37). The emergence and phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal, charismatic and neo-charismatic movements are three waves which constitute one of Christianity's greatest renewal (Burgess & van der Maas 2010:2). It is important to study the beginnings of these movements in order to establish the precedents that determined the future (Anderson 2005:176).

Pentecostal scholars have pointed to several streams as the point of origin, which include but do not exhaust the source of Pentecostalism. Modern-day Pentecostalism, however, dates to January 1, 1901, when students at Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, spoke in tongues under the tutelage of Charles F. Parham (Miller & Yamamori 2007:18). Pentecostalism has developed considerably over the last century. It would be surprising if approaches to the gospel did not change during this time. Whilst it is important to value the early years of the Pentecostal movement as formative in Pentecostal identity, we cannot neglect how Pentecostals subsequently have understood and reinterpreted these years in different contexts (Lord 2013:20). There appear to be multiple roots of Pentecostalism. The research conducted by Ogbu Kalu provided a narrative in this respect. In his exploration of Pentecostal historical materials, Kalu argues for multiple origins of Pentecostalism:

Clues point to multiple origins of Pentecostalism in various regions of the world. It is interesting that just before the Welsh revival in 1904; Korea experienced the beginnings of a revival during an interdenominational Bible study meeting conducted by R. A. Hardie in 1903 at the Methodist Church, Kwangwon Province, Wosan. In 1905 a major revival started in Mukti, India, and flowed to Gujarat (Anderson 2005a:179) in 1906. The following year, Dr Howard Agnew Johnston brought the stories about the Welsh and Mukti revivals to Korea and triggered another revival in Pyongyang. The Azusa Street revival flowered amid these exciting events in 1906. (Kalu 2008:132)

The story of the Azusa Street revival has significance for the complex question of the origins of Pentecostalism. One theory of the origins cannot be emphasized to exclude others. Pentecostal historian Augustus Cerillo has outlined at least four approaches to the subject: (i) providential, the belief that the movement came ‘from heaven’ through a sudden, simultaneous and spontaneous outpouring of the Spirit, the ‘latter rain’; (ii) historical, where the movement is seen as continuous with nineteenth-century revivalist Christianity, especially the Methodist and Holiness movements; (iii) multicultural, where Pentecostalism is seen as originating in multiple cultural and religious factors; and (iv) functional or sociological, which looks at the functions of Pentecostalism in a given social

context to explain its emergence (Anderson 2005:175). In all its diversity, Pentecostal Christianity is a highly significant movement (or perhaps more accurately, movements) within Christianity inside and outside the older, 'historic' churches (ibid 2005:175). However, Anderson follows documentary source historical narratives which point to the origin of Pentecostalism to Azusa. Anderson claims, 'At least twenty-six different Pentecostal denominations trace their origins to Azusa Street, including the two largest: the Church of God in Christ and the Assemblies of God. In a real sense, the Azusa Street revival marks the beginning of classical Pentecostalism, and from there, the revival reached other parts of the world' (ibid 2005:177).

According to Miller and Yamamori, this historical contour points to similar manifestations which occurred well before the twentieth century in Africa, England, Finland, Russia, India, and Latin America. Furthermore, in the 1960s and 1970s, another movement of the Pentecostal spirit emerged in several Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant churches, which went under the banner of the charismatic renewal (2007:18). Anderson recognizes the paramount importance of the documentary history of world Christianity before the emergence of Pentecostalism in the mission space. However, various research and Pentecostal studies point to three waves of Pentecostal origins¹³.

From available records and the history of the emergence of Pentecostal charismatic Christianity, it appears that Pentecostalism started in Azusa and spread from

¹³**Three Waves of Pentecostal Origin.** The first wave of Pentecostalism originated in ex-slave communities on Azusa Street, Los Angeles, in the USA, from where it spread to Latin America and Africa. In North America, the movement addressed issues related to reconciliation between white and black people. The second wave of Pentecostal-charismatic expansion started in the 1960s. Dennis Bennett, an Anglican priest in California, declared in 1959 to members of the church that he had been filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. The third wave of the Pentecostal charismatic movement started in the 1980s and continues in the present. It accentuates a belief in signs and wonders and the importance of spiritual healing. It focuses on the healing of diabetes, HIV, and AIDS, the anointing with oil, blessing by the laying on of hands, and reversing generational curses, and blessings for material wealth such as cars, scholarships, and visas to the USA and U.K. (Kangwa 2016b).

there by mission. Similar movements emerged at various global spots in the same period and merged. Mayrargue, when examining the paradox of Pentecostalism in Africa, remarks that 'Pentecostalism in Africa is both a religion anchored in local communities, supported by local actors and a globalized religion. These same local African actors are responsible for more and more initiatives worldwide' (Mayrargue 2010:5). Here, I will follow the line of thought of (Noret 2010:108), who stresses that Pentecostalism turned into a globalized phenomenon not as a result of interpersonal relationships, but rather of collaboration between institutions.

However, separating the individual from the institutional action may not be the best way to understand how the Pentecostal message is appropriated (2010:111 *ibid*). The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement is characterized by adaptability to different cultures: it is a "religion made to travel" (Lord 2001:1; Dempster et al. 2011). It supports the tenet of mobility of mission across cultures by Timothy Tennent in his call to global missions (2010:227). Kalu admits that the complexity and fluidity of the movement are notorious. As David Martin intoned, 'Movements play different roles at different times in different places, even while they retain continuity and family likeness'. Martin emphasizes the ambiguities born of the dynamism of the movement as it assumes different colours in various parts of the world:

Even when it crosses borders, it goes native; 2. There are some cases of Anglo-Saxon origins, but many more where it is freestanding; 3. In some places, it expresses folk religiosity but also ingests it; 4. The class content of its membership cannot be easily classified; 5. It may be varied but retains family likeness; 6. It fuses the modern mode with an ancient spirit or primal piety; and 7. It recovers the world but transcends it. (Martin 2002:45–59)

In the above review, some scholars categorise Pentecostal mission as evangelistic outreaches; others claim that it is charisma and gifts of the Spirit; some focus their debates on the future eschatological reign of Christ, while others examine it as a social

gospel to address unjust structure in the society, and other scholars approach it as spiritual renewal and faith. Taking a side position might be reductionistic in my understanding of the Pentecostal mission. A Pentecostal mission should be comprehensive and holistic in all ramifications addressing humanity's social, economic, spiritual and material existence within the scope of divine sovereignty.

2.4.1 Features of African Pentecostal/ Charismatic Spirituality

The characteristics of Pentecostalism are prayer, speaking in tongues, prophesying, and exorcism. The rapid growth of Pentecostal forms of Christianity in Africa in recent years can partly be attributed to the prevalent practice of exorcism or 'deliverance' that characterizes it. Anderson pertinently argues that:

Pentecostalism is one of the most significant expressions of Christianity on the African continent today and probably the most rapidly expanding, not only in its thousands of denominational forms but also in its effects upon older churches. Pentecostals, in general, share a New Testament belief in the possibility of demonic influence on human behaviour. Some will call this 'demon possession', 'oppression', or 'demonization', but the net result is that the persons suffering from this form of affliction need 'deliverance' or 'exorcism'. (Anderson 2013:112)

Experiences and practices within the Pentecostal movement(s) are interpreted and mediated by the Spirit. These experiences are sometimes not compatible with the heritage of older post-reformation churches. Some Pentecostal-charismatic churches adhere to a theology that is not distinct from the mainstream creeds and confessions (Kangwa 2016:578). There are four clear orientations and expressions of Pentecostalism. First, we have 'legalistic and otherworldly' known for various legalistic religious lifestyle prohibitions. The second is depicted as a prosperity gospel with health and wealth emphasis. The third is delineated as integral or holistic gospel, which falls within progressive Pentecostalism who 'no longer sees the world as a place from which to escape, 'the sectarian view', but instead as a place they want to make better'. Lastly, we have the routinized Pentecostalism (Miller & Yamamori 2007:30; Ayegboyin 2006a:71).

In this category are churches that have shed their sectarian heritage and have embraced many elements of contemporary culture, including secular music melodies and rhythms. However, they still hold on to the idea of spirit-filled worship. The question is often about the manifestations of the pneumatic dimensions of the gospel in various regions and cultures and how the people appropriate these dimensions (Kalu 2008:13). A new model of church is rising where people gather not to hear a well-prepared sermon (the Protestant way) and not to witness a sacerdotal liturgy (the Catholic way) but to experience the presence of the living God. Burgess aptly captures the trends in the narratives of neo-Pentecostal Christianity when he mentions that:

From the beginning of Christianity, strands of charismatic, enthusiastic Christian expressions emerged that differed from the more conventional, traditional Catholic church. These enthusiastic groups wanted to keep alive the flame of vivid charismatic experience that was the characteristic of and central to early Christianity. (Burgess 2012b:13)

Koskela offered a fresh insight into the debate when he said, ‘Yves Congar, the Catholic theologian contends that in the beginning the church saw itself subject to the activity of the Spirit and filled with his gift’ (1965; Koskela 2007:89). As an example, he also mentions that Clement of Rome said that the apostle ‘set out *and* (sic) filled with the assurance of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of heaven’ (Karkkainen 2011:108). On the importance of charismatic experience in the liturgy, Pinnock asserts:

The meeting throbs with life. The power of the original event of Pentecost is prolonged ritually. God is experienced as doing new things. There is the expectation that God will move with power. Around the speaking and the singing, there is room for improvisation. Faces shine. There are shouts of joy. Gifts are in operation. There is broad participation. There is an empowerment of the laity. It is not so much a theory of the church as it is an experience of the church now charismatically alive. (Pinnock 2006:157)

I will argue that worship is one of the most important areas that have an enormous spiritual impact on Pentecostals' expression of faith in pneumatic Christianity. One of its unique features, observable in most congregations, is the expressive, exuberant,

interventionist, experiential and dynamic pattern of worship (Asamoah-Gyadu 2013:17). In contrast, the static mode of worship in most traditional older orthodox assemblies offers no attraction for charismatic Christianity. Keddie provides a challenging experiential narrative in Pentecost: a missing inquiry. He writes:

The Spirit is about disorder and creative uncertainty: we like our ecclesiastical organizations to be settled and comforting – Spirit wants us to move on and unsettle us, leading us off into new directions: Spirit wants to break the mould, lead us into new truth (as Jesus promised), prise open our fixedness, nudge us and needle us until we change and respond. (Keddie 2010:356)

Cox, who speaks on Pentecostal innovation worship declares that Pentecost is about the experience of God, not abstract religious inclination; it is about God who does not remain aloof but reaches out through His Spirit (Cox 2001:5). The amazing outcome of worship in a Pentecostal way is that ‘As people from different religious traditions experienced spiritual phenomena in a new way they sought common fellowship and common structures’ (Melton & Baumann 2010:2218). The Pentecostal-Charismatic orientation aptly leads to the concept of change and conversion as a prerequisite to the Pentecostal soteriological point of view. In his study of Pentecostal ecclesiology shaped by mission, Andy Lord emerged with an incarnational mission model. David Garrard argues against incarnational mission models and reinforces a focus on the evangelistic missionaries models who are to continue until Jesus comes (2006:105). There are many areas of contribution, but the vital question is whether the mission also needs to positively embrace God's holistic move working within and outside the church. Garrard would stress the former, while Lord has sought to develop a theological and biblical rationale for the latter. Cultural and social concerns have been more in Pentecostal mission thinking. However, as Andy Lord suggests, there is a need for Pentecostal understanding of mission to be holistic, yet keep its evangelistic focus (2012:12). Bosch noted the resonances between mission studies and Pentecostal insights in his

holistic survey (1991:256). Kirsteen Kim argues that there is more to the work of the Holy Spirit in mission than Bosch allows, and more recent development needs to be considered. In this regard, it is notable that the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit as the primary mover in "evangelization and salvation", a uniting theme despite the very different form of church underlying this dialogue (Lord 2012:12). In my view, scholars writing on African Pentecostalism have generally agreed that it shares the ideas of mission elaborated in Evangelical tradition as a mission paradigm. Again, given that these authors on Pentecostal concepts of mission are writing from Evangelical and Ecumenical contexts, I need to ask whether this applies to African Pentecostalism, which this thesis contributes to answering with its in-depth case study in Southwest Nigerian. The next section examines concept of change and conversion in Pentecostalism.

2.4.2 Concept of Change, Conversion, and Affiliation

Pentecostals emphasize conversion, moral rigour, and a literal interpretation of the Bible. However, Pentecostals never formed a single organization; instead, individual congregations came together to found the various denominations that constitute the movement today (Melton n.d.:2). Sociologists Stark and Bainbridge, in discussing the process by which people join new religious groups, have questioned the utility of the concept of *conversion*, suggesting that *affiliation* is a more useful concept (Stark & Bainbridge 1985:338; Bader & Demaris 1996:296). Conversion to sects from a phenomenological perspective differ 'in the degree of subjective change in worldview, lifestyle, and biography undergone by the group' (1996:281 *ibid*). However, the Pentecostals are more at home with the demand and evidence of conversion as a strict criterion for belonging. In this respect, some Pentecostals place considerable pressure on potential converts. It may entail 'love bombing', in which an individual or family and

potential people groups are given considerable attention and affection, or they may play upon the individual's or people groups' sense of guilt; sometimes both tactics are adopted. Examining the concept of change, generally, changes in religious beliefs and practices, including Christianity, can be attributed to social factors. Doug Reeler, in 'A Three-Fold Theory of Social Change', believes that the procedure of 'social change shows that societies tend to create boundaries protecting them from outsiders' (2017:1–15). Thus Pentecostals design and facilitate transformative practices and processes of religious and social change within specific mission contexts for protecting and gaining members. Ruth Marshall argues that there is a process of conversion in Pentecostalism based on the idiom of the new birth. She states that 'the project of conversion involves the elaboration of new modes of the government of the self and of others in which practices of faith are fostered by the discipline of the body, mind, and emphasizing purity, rectitude, and interiority'. The main focus of mission by most Pentecostal churches in Nigeria is the salvation of the soul and conversion from a certain form of religious practice or cultural belief to real salvation in Christ. Randal, when writing on Moravian spirituality, suggests, that studies over the past few years have generally aligned themselves with the argument advanced that evangelicalism is a movement comprising those who stress conversion, the Bible, the cross, and activism (2006:205). Thus, spirituality is seen as concerned with the conjunction of theology, communion with God and practical Christianity.

2.4.3 Pentecostal Membership

The argument here should rather focus on how a person becomes a Pentecostal member. In answering the argument, Marina develops a four-stage model explaining the process of becoming a Pentecostal as follows: (i) Prior worldview, (ii) God hunting, (iii) Getting saved and (iv) The Commitment (Marina 2010:99). Although this model is sequential, the order in which each stage develops varies among diverse Pentecostals. This prior

information reveals how the process of becoming Pentecostal leads to individual changes in a candidate's worldview. Individuals often experience changes throughout each stage in the process of becoming Pentecostals (Marina 2010:118). I agree with Marina, but contrary to this view, Mantsinen points to the drawback of this model in his thesis on conversion and transformation culture. He finds out that “conversion experience, socialization into the group (Pentecostalism), and class styles” have always produced non-conformists attitudes amongst members of such groups (2015:36). Boas raises concern over the influence of conversion on the institutions and reiterates that ‘Owing to external factors such as globalization and secularization, social institutions, including the church, may change dramatically in some aspects while remaining constant in others’ (2007:43). In Pentecostal churches that metamorphosed from mainline churches, it is evident that existing members have been acculturated by external influences such as colonization, western forms of Christianity, migration, globalization, and Pentecostalization. As a result, new beliefs and practices are clearly adopted in response to the demand imposed by Pentecostal doctrines.

2.4.4 Pentecostal Formation and Practices

The real causes of the proliferation of Pentecostalism are rooted in the historical, sociological and theological praxis of the movement. Religious studies scholars contextualize the rise of Pentecostalism in contemporary times, relating it to a product of an answer to detraditionalization, fragmentation, non-reflexivity, and individualization in pre-existing denominations (Anon n.d.). It is corroborated by Onyinah, who states, ‘The Pentecostal movement emerged as the various traditions could not accommodate the move of the Spirit within their structures. Often such moves were seen as breaking institutional structures and doctrines’ (2013:283). Pentecostals were first dismissed as a marginal sectarian phenomenon by older churches and derisively dubbed 'holier rollers'

deranged fanatics (Hocken 2010:164). They experienced rejection at the hands of almost all the religious groupings before being organized into a plethora of rather introverted denominations. Opposition from the authority in the mainline churches was a significant factor behind the formation of neo-Pentecostal churches (Burgess 2008:184). Kalu mentions that ‘Pentecostals emphasize different teachings and have different histories. It explains why older forms of Christianity have been more virulently against Pentecostalism—perceived by both groups as intimate enemies—than unbelievers and secularists’ (2008:8).

2.4.5 Pentecostal-Charismatic Ecclesiology, Leadership and Mission

Pentecostals live out a church model that promises to transform Christianity (Pinnock 2006:149). The Church is not an add-on but something crucial. In Pentecostal ecclesiology, the model of the Church is to have a living experience of the Spirit. It is the primary element in the promise of Pentecostal ecclesiology. It is a power ecclesiology. Being apostolic is fundamental to what it means to be the Church in Pentecostal ecclesiology. There is a renewed interest in what constitutes Pentecostalism in the visible church and its calling. The Church is a messianic community that is central to God's plan. God calls a community to witness his reign's character and serve as a medium through which God expresses himself to the world. The Church is a community where God is moving with signs and wonders, a community of faith which is a new social reality and which, because of its Spirit-empowered likeness to Christ and its renunciation of the world's values, reveals the nature of God's kingdom (2006:152). According to Peter Wagner, Fuller Professor of Church Growth, typical reasons why people join a church include a search for community and a spiritual quest (1990:47). I see that Pentecostal churches are relevant in responding to the challenging religious quest of Nigerian and, by extension, the African heart. African Christianity appeal to the marginalized (see Chinua

Achebe's account of the conversion of the Igbo in Nigeria), but what made it successful was the networking effect (Jenkins 2011:196; Achebe 1960).

Many Pentecostal churches are formed and led by charismatic leaders¹⁴. Some Pentecostal churches have instead been formed by groups of individuals, particularly those who have split from pre-existing religious groups (Anderson 2004:237). Although the emergence of these leaders can be seen as the reinvention of a hierarchical structure based on charisma, it is also possible to view the spread of Pentecostalism as a sharing of charisma. Leaders' values have been known to infuse every aspect of church life (Miller & Yamamori 2007:184). They are visionary, creative with confidence in God. Pentecostal-charismatic institutions are leader-driven ministries with an articulated ministry philosophy (Clark 2013:50). Mikael Rothstein Hammer in 'The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements' states that:

Charisma takes varied expressions, and the charismatic careers of individuals and groups have different trajectories. Nevertheless, charisma serves many purposes for the members of a movement – the leaders and the followers. (Anon n.d.)

The aspect of the argument I wish to emphasize here is the potential for transformation of genuine charisma – the charisma that is intense and individualized – into categories of charisma such as 'kinship charisma', 'hereditary charisma' and the 'charisma of office'. This idea allows us to think of charisma as extending beyond the leader. The leader's power to disseminate charisma is crucial to Pentecostalism because a leader is not recognized in a Pentecostal circle without charisma as a key ministry gift. Writing about charismatic leaders during the post-independence Pentecostal revival in Nigeria, Burgess believes that:

Often these compelling figures possessed charismatic qualities such as the ability to preach and perform miracles which validated their messages before their followers without recourse

¹⁴There are only so many expressions to understand the meanings of words in specific writing.

to the traditional ritual symbols that the older African Independent churches incorporated into Christianity, and to which many people continued to resort to in the face of vicissitude and cerebral Christianity of the mission churches. (Burgess 2008:181)

According to Stark and Bainbridge 'sect leaders usually have leadership experience'. This may be in stark contrast to a Pentecostal leader who sees the gift of Holy Ghost as the only criteria for assuming leadership position without any formal experience or theological training (Stark & Bainbridge 1985). Pentecostals affirm that God raises the leaders and not the committees. It is opposed to how traditional Catholicism and Protestantism appoint committees as arrowheads of church administrations. Pentecostal leaders are pivotal in disseminating the word; the word is the central source of Pentecostal theology (Nkwoka 2005:166). As leaders grow older, many have children who are brought to the Pentecostal establishment. The death of a founder represents a significant moment in any religion's history. Over the months and years following their death, the movement can die out, fragment into multiple groups, consolidate its position, or change its nature to become something quite different from what its founder intended. In some cases, a group moves closer to the religious mainstream after the death of its founder. Several founders of the new Pentecostal establishment have not provided clear plans for succession to prevent confusion after their death.

2.4.6 Pentecostal Laity and Mission

Sociological and historical studies have reflected upon the humble social origins of the Pentecostals. Without a long history of formal theological training for "the ministry" (as a class set apart), the Pentecostal tradition has emphasized that all the bodies are ministers and everyone a preacher. By and large, this is yet true (McClung Jr 1988:4). One of the strengths of the Pentecostal church movement is its internal organization which is designed to mobilize the laity. Miller and Yamamori refer to this as 'giving ministry to the people'. They suggest that it is a feature of the relatively flat organizational structure

characteristic of many successful Pentecostal churches, where the pastor and their associates are not to do the ministry of the church, but to enable others to do the work (Burgess 2012:37). The phenomenon of charismatic dimension to Christianity is very central to the understanding of lay Pentecostal mission. By charismatic, I mean the conscious experience of the Spirit's presence in and for the community of believers through their liturgical life (Coulter 2010:324). It is not so much a theory of the Church as it is an experience of the Church now charismatically alive (Pinnock 2006:157). Therefore, I argue for rethinking the way mission is done and by whom. It is because lay people will no longer rely on the leader to tell them what the Spirit is saying. Rather, they will be required to listen to what the Spirit is saying (Fettke 2010:2) on the mission to the community. It is interesting to know that lay people are an extension of Jesus' vocational identity. Anderson notes that lay persons 'have largely been written out of the histories of the Pentecostal movement. These race and gender distortions are indeed problems to overcome, but there may be even more serious issues facing the interpretation and writing of Pentecostal history' (Anderson 2005:175). Anderson contends that:

The impressive growth of Pentecostalism in the Majority World was partly attributable to its enterprising, entrepreneurial local preachers and leaders. The most remarkable growth of a single congregation in Seoul occurred under the ministry of David Yonggi Cho (b. 1936) and his future mother-in-law, Jashil Choi (1915–89). The growth of Pentecostalism in Korea became virtually synonymous with the ministry of ordinary people. (Anderson 2013b:2)

Ministry here depends largely on the laity, including evangelism that often takes place in homes and workplaces on a one-to-one or small-group basis. They are marked by the informality of structure and style and take shape very much as an effect of the presence of the gospel in the mouth and hands of everyday people (Clark 2013:50). For instance, recalling a 'survey of how the numerous congregations within one densely populated region of Nigeria had come into being', through the activities of lay persons, Andrew F. Walls notes:

Time after time, the seminal figure was a new court clerk who was a Christian, a worker on the new railway, a tailor carrying his sewing machine on his head or some other trader. Some such stranger, or a group of strangers, had arrived and had started family prayers, stopped work on Sunday, and sang hymns instead, and some local people got interested. (Smith 1999:72)

The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship is an example of a lay Pentecostal movement that has been influential in some African countries. The Full Gospel Businessmen Fellowship was founded as a lay mission by Demos Shakarian (Tallman 2009:20). What is new with respect to the ministries of ordinary people in full gospel businessmen fellowship is not the emphasis on personal testimony. Instead, it is their commitment to remain non-denominational fellowships of charismatic lay people that remain in their respective churches or denominations serving as agents of renewal. They are "missionaries without robes" whose impact on the Christian church has been profound (Asamoah-Gyadu 1997:171–2). Miller and Yammori, in their contributions to the debate of lay Pentecostal mission write: 'these churches affirm the priesthood of all believers and operations of the ministry outreaches, essentially as the work of the laity. Once the vision is cast, it is up to the laity to implement it' (2007:184). The centrality of the Holy Spirit in the mission has been a consistent theme in academic studies of Pentecostalism. According to Allan Anderson, the Pentecostal movement from its inception was a missionary movement made possible by the Holy Spirit's empowerment. Anderson refers to the Pentecostal mission as "pneumato- centric" in comparison to the *Missio Dei* of older Catholic and Protestant missions (Burgess 2012:31). Mission is a significant means of ushering in an eschatological age (Warrington 2008:259). Andy Lord argues that eschatology can still motivate mission when key characteristics of the future kingdom are anticipated as being potentially the world today (Lord 2014:248). Pentecostals seek to bring hope and dynamic spiritual perspective to people who live in the context of powerlessness, deprivation, and uprootedness caused by societal crisis and often political upheavals in marginalized settings (Warrington 2008:257). The patterns established by

the new churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have become paradigmatic of Pentecostalism in the twenty-first century. Charismatic Christianity today is full of religious entrepreneurs who, like their predecessors in early Pentecostalism, are on a mission to take their message to as many people as possible. They declare a call from God and have an uncanny ability to communicate with crowds of people. Their message of hope and faith attracts the crowds, who give their substance and enable the enterprise to succeed (Anderson 2016:38).

2.4.7 Future of Christian Mission and Lay Missiology

The central missionary focus of the church must not be lost in the routine and confusion of change or practices trapped in the past missionary model. The church needs a new lay mission strategy to configure the local and global arena to the Great Commission mould. Funke Adeboye, a Pentecostal scholar in Nigeria, asserts the importance of the Great Commission as the heartbeat of God's mission to the Pentecostals. She states 'the biblical 'Great Commission' (contained in Mark 16:15 and Matthew 28:19-20), according to which Pentecostals and Christians of other persuasions are required to evangelize the world, is often read as a charge propelling Christians from their private spaces into various public spaces to preach the gospel. This divine mandate is sufficient justification for Pentecostal forays into various public sites' (Adeboye 2012:147). It may be the only way to achieve optimal utilization of God's abundant lay resources bestowed on the church. Po Ming-Suen has challenged the clergy to rise to the task of developing a new lay missiology. Unfortunately, in his own words, many 'local Churches have demonstrated little awareness of the significance of equipping lay professionals and mobilizing them for mission' (Po 2004:59, 61). Therefore, developing a missiological vocation for equipping lay professionals to serve in limited-access regions and regions with open doors is urgently needed. Lay people are a subset of the larger mission set.

A laocentric missiology is necessary for the actualization of the Great Commission mandate. The story of the birth and growth of lay ministry in the global Church is both fascinating and exciting (Gibbs et al. 1965; Grimes 1962) but far from being completed. The Church experience of lay ministry and many other forms of lay participation in the Church's life is again in the making. (Hahnenberg 2013; McDermott 2007) observe that for Catholics during the middle decades of the twentieth century, this spirituality and theology of engagement came to the centre of what was then called 'the lay man'. The marketplace ministry appears to involve the whole people of God. Ralph Winter, a missiologist, proposes a lay ministry model that is built on the interrelationship between two structures: the ecclesiastical structure (modalities) for building a communal life and the missionary structure (sodalities) for outreach to win the lost (Winter 1996).

2.4.8 Modalities and Sodalities

Following the proposition of Ralph Winter on two structures of mission approaches in global missions. The concept of lay involvement in mission has relied on these two categories of mission approaches. The first is the modality model, while the second is the sodality model. These models were coined by Missiologist Ralph Winter, the Fuller theological seminary Chair of Global Mission. The first model refers to a formal hierarchical church institution with formal strategic structures. In contrast, the second model is a nucleus of informal diffused mission groups with flat, non-hierarchical panoply (Winter 1974:125). The mission model cannot be a linear endeavour. Still, it must be diverse and multifaceted to reach different people groups in the community. Hence, the importance of modality and sodality mission models.

Modality structures such as denominational organizations tend to be vertical, hierarchical, and chain-of-command. Sodality structures such as faith-mission agencies or

Christian non-governmental organizations tend to be horizontal, more associational, cooperative fellowships of persons who share a particular vision and agenda. Modality structures tend to carry out many different types of activities. Sodality structures tend to focus on doing one kind of activity with a specific, focused purpose: Missionary sodalities consistently operate as how the churches continue to reach out to evangelize those places where Jesus was (*sic* is) not yet known, (Ireland 2019:259). These are the descriptive pictures of lay persons representing the sodal approach, while established churches in Pentecostal missions form the modal¹⁵ mission approach. The lay persons' movement in Nigeria most often works far more outside the four walls of the church as a new development in the proliferation of missions in every street and corner of Southwest Nigeria. These are majority lay movements struggling to fulfil the great commission or groups of people who break away from the formal indigenous Pentecostal church without formal ordination.

Drawing missiological inspiration from Ming Po, I believe that in the African Church context, the professional clergy and the lay congregations are called to serve in the ecclesiastical and the missionary structure, respectively if our praxis is to be based on a viable mission model. However, without the full participation of the lay people in the Christian mission, the Great Commission remains slowed down or unfulfilled.

¹⁵ There are different ways to express modality and sodality mission perspectives. Winter gives definitions this way: 'A modality is a structured fellowship in which there is no distinction of sex or age, while a sodality is a structured fellowship in which membership involves an adult second decision beyond modality membership, and is limited by either age or sex or marital status. In this use of these terms, both the denomination and the local congregation are Modalities, while a mission agency or a local men's club are Sodalities.' Ralph D. Winter, 'The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission', *Missiology*, 2/1 (1974), 121-139. (Winter 1974:121–139)

2.4.9 Pentecostal Charismatic Mission and Socio-Political Engagement

Several scholars have referred to the shift within African Pentecostalism towards a theology and practice of mission that includes social and political engagement (e.g. Miller & Yamamori 2008; Yong 2010; Burgess 2015, etc.). There is a fairly literal understanding of how Pentecostal prophetic discourse engages the public sphere (Yong 2010:12). Before their entry into political space in Nigeria, the Pentecostals were extremely negative towards politics (Osuigwe 2014:30), and they warned Christians against active participation in it. Burgess sees the development of Pentecostal political engagement in civics responsibilities from a neo-Pentecostal lens:

Historically, Nigerian Pentecostals have adopted a variety of political postures in response to changing contexts, ranging from the apolitical to the more politically engaged. However, during the 1970s, they were characterized by political acquiescence due to their location on the margins of society, their preoccupation with evangelism, their focus on the personal rather than structural effects of sin, and their radical holiness ethic, which generated a perception of politics as a dirty business tainted by its associations with traditional religion and "occult" forces, and linked to corruption and violence. (Burgess 2012a:36)

Their initial foray into politics began with the political mission of healing the land (Wariboko 2014:229). Nigerian citizens have been known for engaging in prayers for their government, especially during electoral campaigns and, subsequently, the election. This is imperative, given the regular volatile political situations. It has led to the continued participation of the religious group in the economic and political development of Nigeria (Nolte et al. 2009:7). The abrupt entry of Pentecostals into politics was a response to a clear initiative from a secular political source; multi-issue activists and social elites who acknowledged the importance of Christian participation in civic responsibilities (Anderson 2009:30; Freston 1997:25). Some scholars have accused Pentecostals of having a spirituality that withdraws from public life and concentrates on evangelism (Burgess 2012:29). Pentecostals were seen as those who 'use their divine empowering and faith building message for self-serving purposes' and 'neglect the social

responsibilities that should accompany this phenomenon'. However, Pentecostal politics in Nigeria retains a distinctively Pentecostal flavour (Yong 2010:11). The global charismatic Christian movement has come to establish itself as a key presence in policy-making and culture creation within and between many states, societies, and markets (Murray & Worth 2013:738; Marsden 2008:11). Nigerian Pentecostal churches are committed to building members' capacity to influence society. This is reflected in some of the mottos adopted by individual congregations, such as 'Empowering lives, influencing society for Christ' (R. Burgess 2011:440). The Pentecostal movement in Nigeria has become a phenomenon. Its popularity and influence are, among other causes, the direct result of its large membership, an expanded network, growing wealth, and fraternization with the business and political class (Adesoji 2016:1). The people of God have often responded to the ever-changing circumstances and play a significant role in the spiritual and socio-political survival of constructing and re-constructing cultural and political norms.

2.5 Origin of Pentecostalism in Nigeria

One can only speak of Pentecostalism in the twenty-first century by giving some attention to the roots of the movement (Klaus 2007:39). The origin and growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria as well as its basic features, epoch and ramifications, are well documented in the literature. Among the primary contributors to the study of Pentecostalism in Nigeria are (Achunike 2008; Magbadelo 2004; Ukah 2003; Smith 2001; Ukpong 2006). Many scholars, notably John Peel, Matthews Ojo, Richard Burgess, Ogbu Kalu, Asonzeh Ukah, Ruth Marshall-Fratani and Nimi Wariboko have been written on the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria (Peel 2003:56; Marshall 2009:1; Ojo 1988:4; Burgess 2008:5; Anderson 2001; Kalu 2008). Several scholarly works have arisen in the past twenty years on Nigerian Pentecostalism (Anderson 2001:80), but little attention has been given to the

praxis and mission motivation behind indigenous Pentecostalism that ushered in the revival ¹⁶(Anderson 2005a:177; Adeboye 2007:25).

The origins of Pentecostalism in Nigeria are usually located in the activities of indigenous revival movements associated with Garrick Sokari Braide of the Anglican Church in the Niger Delta in the 1910s, the revival meetings in the Anglican churches in Lagos from 1916 to 1918 and the activities of the Diamond Society (Adesoji 2016:4; Ayegboyin 2006b:12; Ojo 2006:33). Omenyo argues that Pentecostalism had been established in most of sub-Saharan Africa by the 1920s, but steady expansion gathered massive momentum in the 1960s and 1970s (Robeck Jr & Yong 2014:133). Regarding the origins of the post-independence charismatic movement in Nigeria, Ojo (1986) states that:

The emergence of the Nigeria charismatic movement owes much to the witness laid earlier by two international student organizations, The Student Christian movements (SCM) and the Christian Union (CU) linked to the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. These were well established in Nigeria's educational institutions before the 1970s, having been introduced between 1937 and 1995 principally from Britain. It was among these students, already exposed to liberal and conservative evangelical Christianity that the charismatic revival gained root. (Ojo 1986)

Wariboko (2014:15-17) has a contrary argument against Nigeria's popular theory of the root of Pentecostalism. He sees Pentecostalism emerging through multiple pathways that were mediated through culture, history, religious nationalism, and the economic and political dynamics of Nigeria, with personalities and cultural and historical antecedents playing crucial roles. Past studies on Pentecostalism in Nigeria reveal multifaceted structures, comprising mainline Pentecostals, indigenous Pentecostals, African independent denominations, and neo- Pentecostal churches. Pentecostalism in Nigeria was inspired by new Religious Movements, which shares some common features with it.

¹⁶The view is sometimes expressed that the growth of Pentecostal forms of Christianity in many parts of Africa is a product of a new North American missionary presence backed by massive North American money. The studies do not support this view. North American Pentecostal movement in Africa had only a modest impact until the indigenous Pentecostal movement began,(Walls 1996).

Gaya (2002) buttresses this view that revival flared up ‘during an influenza epidemic in 1918’ when healing took place. For example, the Cherubim and Seraphim Society began in 1925 and the Church of the Lord (Aladura) in 1930, respectively. The Anglican form of prayer known as the Precious Stone Society came up to heal the influenza victims in 1918. The group left the Anglican Church in the early 1920s and was affiliated with Faith Tabernacle Church based in Philadelphia. Also, Joseph Ayo Babalola of Faith Tabernacle led a revival that converted thousands of people to Christianity.

2.5.1 Critique of Pentecostal and Charismatic Missions

There has been a renewed interest in Pentecostalism's beliefs, practices, and spiritual and ethical dimensions. This has resulted in important challenges to Evangelicals and Pentecostals, as well as to the older churches, precisely because divisions, rivalries and lack of love have been major impediments to every form of mission, which broke out of existing denominations (Hocken2010:165). A penchant for divisiveness is not peculiar to Pentecostals by any means, but it is an area which bears watching. How Pentecostals relate to Christians of other denominations is also a neglected issue. Rightly or wrongly, Pentecostals are perceived as exclusivist and separatist. Leadership in breakaway churches often exhibits power-mongering inclinations which require attention. The Pentecostal movement in some quarters is marked by split and division. Hollenweger refers to this as a ‘frightening tendency to split up Pentecostalism into hundreds of unrelated bodies’ (2004:127). More disturbing is a tendency to develop peculiar teachings derived from extra-biblical sources. While there was considerable agreement among the Pentecostal denominations over the validity of charismatic gifts, over the soon-coming of the Lord, the need for evangelism, the provision of divine healing for today and the importance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, there was disagreement

over issues related to church government (Kay & Dyer 2011:383). The problem with an experience-centred Christianity is that historically it has always tended towards extremism and heresy. The only way to avoid this is to hold the Spirit and God's Word together in proper harmony.

Pentecostalism in Nigeria and Africa is seen as a reproach to the overarching mission of God because of its germane excesses, independent leadership, and arrogant posture. In a region where democracy and its processes are often seen as a foreign import, and where they receive lip service rather than whole-hearted acceptance, the rise of authoritarian Pentecostal leadership is an obvious corollary (Clark 2013:52). The rediscovery of such a gift is beneficial to the church. However, the emphasis on power and authority and Old Testament-type claims for the unquestioned revelational authority of leaders has produced spiritual abuse on a massive scale throughout the Pentecostal world (2013:53 *ibid*).

Omenyo and Arthur argue that preposterous claims in Pentecostalism bordering on dreams, visions, and prophecies have been used and manipulated to disrupt society at large (2013:55). Pentecostalism has been criticized for lack of rationality and perceptivity. Intuition has replaced inspiration. Pentecostals largely compromise the authority and veracity of scripture. Meanwhile, relationships between the Pentecostal churches and the mainline denominations on the one hand and with the Aladura churches on the other are characterized by tensions. Pentecostals openly criticized mainline churches for their 'coldness' and 'apathy' while the former also accused them of 'sheep stealing'. The Pentecostals condescendingly described the Aladura as 'white-garment' churches and labelled their leaders as 'fake prophets'. This tension could also be seen as a generational conflict between older forms of Nigerian Christianity and the newer Pentecostal generation (Adeboye 2007a:29). Catholic elites have long distrusted

Pentecostalism for ‘tending to draw its adherents into a mainly Pentecostalism’ (Meyer 2004:453). Another observer asks why Nigerian Pentecostals have totally failed to transform the country after the largest explosion of Pentecostalism across Africa and despite all their postcolonial language of new birth, spiritual warfare, and capturing the country for Christ. For the believer, there is a danger here of reductionism, a point the researcher is acutely aware of and seeks to disavow. Gifford lists the reasons for Africa's plight, including slavery, colonialism, geography, and trade terms. At the top of his list, however, are the continent's elite, stating how in Africa, at least Pentecostal leaders belong to that same elite (Robeck Jr & Yong 2014:188) . Many Nigerian Pentecostal leaders invest in the estate, capital markets, and microfinance, which become a setback to their mission. Character and charisma are in conflict with each other. Wariboko argues that churches establish finance houses to make a profit to supposedly fund the mission of Christ and to provide ‘holy clean’ water to the members (Wariboko 2014:33), representing a metaphor for integrity and strict ministerial ethics.

2.5.2 Gap in the Literature

In the literature review, two groups of scholars emerge from various studies. First, the leading scholars who have written and identified the essential roles of lay persons in the church argued that the lay roles are critical for the liturgy, worship and function of the church ministry with the clergy in the church. Second, in contrast, I discovered another school of thought who acknowledged the roles of the lay persons as not only essential within the church but should be outside the church. The scholars who believe the inward roles of lay persons in the church are: (Balala & Kim 2010; Fettke 2010; Msangaambe 2011; Oenga 2014). In contrast, the scholars who advocate the outward

roles of the lay persons are (Anderson 2013; Kato 2003; Kraemer 1958; Lakeland 2003; Newbigin 2006; Ogden 2010; Stevens 2000).

Most of the literature reviewed concentrated on the divisive dichotomy between the laity and clergy, the professionalization of the laity, or the equality of the clergy and the laity. The extant works of literature show that not much is heard from the voices of the lay persons in the Pentecostal-Charismatic mission. The blueprint for the mission has been either from the Church as an institution or from the clergy at the top of the hierarchy. Regarding the origins of post-independence Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in Nigeria, Ojo states 'the origin of Nigerian Pentecostalism could be traced to the 1930s, and from that time it has experienced uneven growth in this progression: a sporadic spread from the 1930s, a lull in the 1960s, a charismatic renewal in the 1970s, and a powerful explosion in the 1990s' (2006:14). The more closely related works to my research are Ruth Marshall's *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*. It is followed by Matthew Ojo's *End-Time Army: Charismatic Movements in Modern Nigeria*. The next is Ukah's *Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) Nigeria. Local Identities and Global Processes in African Pentecostalism* and Richard Burgess' *Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny: A Religious Movement among the Igbo People of Eastern Nigeria* (Burgess 2008).

Marshall's arguments provide a historical narrative on the political and spiritual contours of what she described as 'Born Again Christianity' as a movement in the socio-political landscapes of Nigeria Pentecostalism. Her emphasis on the historical and redemptive ruptures in Nigeria Pentecostalism is liberation from the past and a new wave underscoring social prestige attached to conversion. According to her, the 'ruptures' and crisis, however, have shaped Nigeria's political and spiritual climates. Ojo's work looks at the origin of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, especially the religious foundation of charismatic

Christianity in Nigeria. His articles on DLBC provide a baseline for the beliefs and practices of the church at its inception. Interestingly, Ukah's *work focuses* on the history, development and mission antecedents of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Nigeria and not on the many branches of the church. He also examined how RCCG has deployed biblical and secular doctrines to create new transnational identities and substantial social and financial capital.

Burgess outlines the origin and root of Christianity in Eastern Nigeria while the civil war from 1967 to 1970 nurtured the embers of the growth of Pentecostal revival. He identified critical factors that led to the revival, which included Igbo primal cosmology and concept of salvation, the missionary enterprise, mission churches, the Scripture Union and the legacy of enlightenment thinking. This, no doubt, was a precursor to the transformation and eagerness which gave birth to the revival. The revival generated an enduring 'actual life' theology in Igbo's cosmology. The civil war was a marker in the transformation of the Igbos and the root of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, particularly in Eastern Nigeria. His research points out how Pentecostal progeny benefitted from the missionary impulse as a corollary of revival before stagnation by drifting from Pentecostal spirituality to emphasis on the prosperity gospel in Nigeria. Burgess also researched reverse mission, RCCG in works, and the civic responsibility of RCCG as a mission approach. All these studies considered Pentecostalism from different perspectives without focusing on lay mission within Charismatic Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria, which is the focus of the current research.

There are points of tension in mission between the lay and clergy. There is a sustained relational tension in Africa about what constitutes Christianity's Evangelical strand. While this challenge is not peculiar to Africa, the diversity in practices and classifications is more pronounced in the majority world than elsewhere. This challenge is

more from historic missionary denominations that are direct offshoots of protestant Christianity. Historic mainline churches are linked with the Great Britain Evangelicalism of the 1700s, whereas, in Africa, there exists a notion that there are differences between Evangelicalism and their Pentecostal Charismatic counterparts. These differences are largely based on doctrinal, theological, liturgical, and ethical issues as well as their traditions and genealogies.

Drawing from the broad range of current debates on laity and clergy missions, it is abundantly clear that the evolution of lay engagement for the Church's completion of the Great Commission rests on awakening the lay sleeping giants for the global harvest. The task of mission may be associated with the completion of the Great Commission and the laity needs to be involved in achieving the goal. Mission cannot succeed beyond the level of mobilization of its full members for a full-blown Christian mission. If the Church's mission is to continue, the lay mission must be given a new priority and a distinctive expression of the Christian mission. The case for lay congregational members' participation in Christian mission depends on mobilization and empowerment. This takes into cognizance the lay people's work as human beings of the church in the middle of the world and as human beings of the world within the church. If lay mission is neglected, it appears that the outcome may be between transformation and further decay. Would envisioning, enabling and equipping the ministry of lay people for active Christian mission in the twenty-first century help to mobilizes, empowers and supports ordinary Christians in ministry? This thought comes up because of this review.

2.6 Summary

The chapter explores lay and clergy missions' historical, theological, and missiological perspectives. It provides the mission trajectories of lay and clergy debates from the

Catholic, Protestant, Ecumenical, and Evangelical while focusing on Pentecostal–Charismatic missions. The chapter traced the theology of the laity to the Church's first century, when there was no apparent distinction between the people of God and the Church leadership when they were engaged with God's mission. It examined the clerical dimension of the Church influenced by Neo-Platonic imagery. It also reviewed the context of lay mission from Evangelical, Protestant and Pentecostal strands of the Christian faith. It overlays the broader discussions presented in chapter one by specifying the situations of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) and the emergence of Pentecostal missions in Nigeria and highlighting the gap for further study. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology of the thesis as a qualitative case study research. I shall explore the research methodology as a bridge between the literature review and the foundations for the empirical chapter of the research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative case study approach. Qualitative methods are used to answer questions about experience, meaning and perspective, most often from the participant's standpoint. The data obtained from such studies usually need to be more amenable to counting or measuring. Qualitative research techniques include 'small-group discussions' for investigating beliefs, attitudes and concepts of normative behaviour; 'semi-structured interviews' seek views on a focused topic or, with key informants, for background information or an institutional perspective; 'in-depth interviews' to understand a condition, experience, or event from a personal perspective; and 'analysis of texts and documents', such as government reports, media articles, websites or diaries, to learn about distributed or private knowledge (Hammarberg et al. 2016:499).

Qualitative research is not built upon a unified theory or methodological approach (Flick, 2009) and can adopt various theoretical stances and methods, including the use of observations, key informants and in-depth interviews, questionnaires and document analysis (Gray 2013:161). Creswell (2013) described the qualitative case study (QCS) as an exploration of a "bounded system" or case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, each with its sampling, data collection, and analysis strategies. To corroborate Stake's QCS, Thomas Gary, in his book "How to do your Case Study", describes a primary understanding of a case study thus:

A case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a 'real life' context. It is research-based, inclusive of different methods and evidence-led. The primary purpose is to generate an in-depth understanding of a specific topic (as in a thesis),

programme, policy, development, professional practice, and civil or community action.
(Thomas 2015:10)

The outcome is a case description comprised of case-based themes (Boblin et al. 2013:1236). The qualitative research approach could take the form of ethnography, grounded theory, case study, phenomenology, or narrative research. Moreover, if appropriate, it guides theory by identifying the research paradigm e.g., post positivist, constructivist/interpretivism, (2014:1245 *ibid*). I have distinguished between three types of purposes for research based on Robson's classification, descriptive, explanatory and exploratory ((Robson 2011:45). The current research is an exploratory study of how lay persons in the selected Pentecostal churches understand their involvement and participation in ordinary people's mission.

3.1 Theory of Methodology

Research methods are inductive and flexible. Discovery and interpretation occur concurrently. A priori conceptual framework is not required; a flexible beginning in conceptual framework might be used. The goal is understanding, with interpretation being the primary method (Boblin et al. 2013:1269). Thomas gave a succinct roadmap on carrying out case study, thus:

Here we are talking about understanding how and why something might have happened or why it might be the case. The assumption in a case study is that, with a great deal of detailed study of one case, looking at your subject from many and varied angles, you can get closer to the 'why' and the 'how'. Thomas (2015:4)

As this poignant excerpt shows, the researcher seeks to tap into the situation of the subjects as a case study to unravel the lived reality of a phenomenon by asking the questions, what, why and how for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena.

3.1.1 Research Design

Research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusion to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study (Yin 2013:24). This is a qualitative phenomenological research approach. It fits the study because the thesis examines the lived experience of the lay persons and the clergy through questions about their involvement in mission. I want to emphasize that one of the aims of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of how the lay persons and clergy see themselves and how others identify what they do in Christian mission, often referred to as Pentecostal mission. The research questions are approached from the perspectives of lay persons and clergy involvement with Pentecostal missions. I want to hear their stories to answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions as in the case study and understand how lay persons and the clergy interactively construct their identity, values, and relations with Christian missions and the tensions that arose in their interactions. This might be due to different perspectives of missions from their actions. One of the critical design issues in the case study method is the definition of the unit of analysis and then ensuring that this unit of analysis fits with the research objectives. The study could also explore the power dynamics between the lay persons and the clergy in the process of carrying out and building the mission of God to understand how their efforts can be improved in future (Gray 2013:271).

3.1.2 Constructivist Assumptions

In line with an objectivist philosophical position, quantitative research concentrates on gathering 'facts' in order that 'truth claims' can be established. Such facts are less likely to be tainted by the researcher's biases if they maintain distance from the object of their study. However, qualitative researchers contend that truth and meaning do not exist in some external world but are constructed through people's interactions with the world.

Hence, two people could construct two different meanings for the same phenomenon. (Gray 2013:192). I adopt the constructivist philosophical position with a naturalistic paradigm in the research process based on the Stake QCS. The search is for "happenings" in this research, not causes. There are three philosophical assumptions in research. These are ontology, axiology, and epistemology. **Ontology** speaks of the nature of reality. Reality is subjective; subjectivity is an essential aspect of understanding. The emphasis is on the holistic treatment of phenomena, with elements intricately linked. Understanding phenomena requires looking at various contexts, such as temporal, spatial, economic, historical, political, social, and personal.(Boblin et al. 2013:1269). There can be multiple realities, and each reality is subjective. It is subjective because participants have passed through a similar situation, but their explanations are different. Multiple realities mean that they have different backgrounds. For qualitative studies, we can have multiple realities. As highlighted, this is because the participants pass through the same issue, but they see things differently. The reality may also be influenced by individual bias. **Axiology** deals with the role of values in any given research. The value and bias-laden nature of the work is acknowledged and embraced. The values and beliefs of the participants play key roles in divulging information to the researcher. I have tried as much as possible during my interactions with the informants to maintain objectivity and reset my mindset during interviews and questions and answers to my inquiry. I realized that I cannot remove the values of the participants to understand the phenomenon. **Epistemology** describes what we can know and how we know it (the means and conditions for knowledge), including how we can know what exist. Does epistemology also ask about the relationship between the researcher and the researched? The researcher interacts with the phenomenon, usually during a prolonged period. The intent is to lessen the distance between the researcher and who or what is being researched. The researcher

might have an insider view, seeking to understand the human experience (Boblin et al. 2013:1269). I must closely interact with research participants and informants without attempting to influence what they think about the issues being discussed. Therefore, I have to process the available evidence and avoid changing the information towards personal bias or my worldview.

3.2 Research Process

At the initial stage of the research, two methods of fieldwork were suggested: (i) interviews and (ii) participant observation. Much of the discussion focused on how to proceed with data collection and fieldwork. The instrument is designed to answer the first research question regarding how the Redeemed Christian Church of God and Deeper Life Bible Church conceptualize mission and place emphasis on the Lay / Clergy mission. As a result, methodology and research design must be put in place. I selected Stake's (Abma & Stake 2014) QCS approach as my research design. I wanted to increase my understanding of how lay persons and the clergy implemented their mission strategies in a given context (Boblin et al. 2013:1267). I began the qualitative research with interviews as part of the data collection methods. The interview is one of the most frequently employed qualitative methods. Indeed, the term "qualitative methods" commonly denotes data collection techniques based on various conversations between the researchers and respondents. Of these, the one-to-one interview is arguably the primary form; it is used in many research settings and can be quite variable in style, including duration. (Crouch & McKenzie 2006:484). The validation of questions to be asked is very significant in case study methodology. Semi-structured and open-ended questions were asked so that the respondents could express their views freely. My supervisors examined the questions for their validity before they were administered. This is in line with Marshall and Rossman's discourse on the quality and validity of research questions, (2010:125). In line with this

suggestion, my research questions were tested for validity. I tested the questionnaires in a pilot study with Christian workers of the Life Transformation Pentecostal Mission, Southwest, where I have been a mission director for four years. Again, the faculty members of Full Stature International Mission, Southwest Nigeria, examined the questionnaire and research instruments. Each of these informants responded with some feedback which necessitated slight amendments. The type of interview was the in-depth interview (IDI). In-depth interviewing has consistently been chosen to generate knowledge in empirical research. The primary aim of an in-depth interview is to generate data which gives an authentic insight into the people's experience (Crouch & McKenzie 2006:486). I conducted interviews with the leaders and members at their churches, homes, offices, schools and right during direct mission outreaches with the intended interviewees. The evidence for this research is from the lay persons in the Pentecostal churches selected for the thesis. The evidence was derived from the fieldwork conducted between September 2017 and January 2019 as the first phase, while the second phase was between August 2020 and January 2022 in Southwest Nigeria. This piece of evidence comprises what the people are saying on the extent to which Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission. The attempt at this point seeks to place the evidence before the concepts to provide substantive support for each piece of evidence. Thus, the evidence is first presented and then only does the concept follow. The concepts are from pieces of literature underpinning the research. This is a sample of what I am doing in my research. I visited the RCCG convention in August 2016 for participant observation. I witnessed how the lay people responded to the mission.

At the convention, I had a first-hand opportunity to meet RCCG local pastors, zonal and area pastors and deacons involved in urban mission across the cities and communities

where the churches are situated. What is evident at the convention was the interest in the purpose of many lay people who attended the convention. The participation exposed me to the rhythm of mission as it occurs naturally with the understanding of how RCCG practices lay mission. I went with groups of people where mission and evangelism were taking place in Alaguntan Parish in Alimosho provinces. I attended several church services across the two churches of my research focus. I attended the National Strategy Leadership Congress of the Deeper Life Bible Church in January 2017. I listened to the messages and direct observations of the leaders and ministers. For the Redeemed Christian Church of God, I attended the National Congress of the Church in August 2016. I also met with the leaders during the Minister's Solemn Assembly at the Camp in March 2021.

I interviewed lay persons and district pastors from the Deeper Life Bible Church with district churches in Akowonjo, Alimosho, Akoka, Egbeda, Gbagada (DLBC headquarters) and Mushin in Lagos. The average attendance of these district churches apart from Gbagada headquarters (35,000 seating capacity) ranged from 150 to 250 members. The respondents were eager to express their relationship with Christ and their faith. Christ is regarded as the cornerstone of their faith. However, a few respondents felt petrified and shy to elaborate on their claims of faith. The questions concerning mission were borne out of the need to establish the church's theology and beliefs, and not of the church members. Significantly, all the respondents threw their weight around the church regarding their beliefs in the salvific purpose of God to the world through Christ. All the respondents could identify the church's salvific focus and the need to share their faith during mission outreaches. However, some did not relate this to mission but to their responsibilities as faithful members of the church. The next session was the analysis of

the church documents and interviewees' understanding of the salvic purpose of God in mission, beginning with soteriology.

The development of new ways of relating theological enquiry to the concerns and issues of contemporary times: that is, the relationship between church and society, religion, ethics and politics, is critical to the success of empirical research. An essential part of the analysis is to enact whatever theological methodology is built into the research design. This may involve creating a conversation in one's mind between the data and the Christian traditions. It may involve working with others to identify theological disclosures of the data. To do theological reflection, I had to develop methods to juxtapose present life experience and the treasures of our Christian heritage, to check one against the other, to let each talk to the other, to learn from the mix and to gain even more insight to add to the store of Christian heritage (Astley 2017:26). A critical approach is linked to a critical realist epistemology concerned with getting several different perspectives on the topic under study. It identifies who might legitimately have a view and ensures that those views are represented, even if one is not concerned about making that representation statistically valid. The nature of the research phenomenon is a case study of two Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria.

3.3 Case Study Method

To find out the nature and perception of the participants about their real-life experience in lay ministry, especially within church denominations situated in Southwest Nigeria, a case study approach is deemed appropriate to provide a 'conceptual validity'. A case study approach will identify and explore the indicators that best represent the theoretical concepts. Because the research is based in denominational church settings, though with branches across the country where the denominations are founded, the case study approach can best address the particular context of the research. The case study approach

provides a broader understanding of lay ministry and clergy involvement in mission within the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). Different important aspects of case study method are exhaustively discussed by (Johansson 2003:8). How are findings validated? How is a case for study selected? How are generalizations made from a single case? Again, different research methodologies serve different purposes, as one research method does not fit all purposes. The term case study is strongly associated with qualitative research, partly because case studies allow for the generation of multiple perspectives through multiple data collection methods or the creation of multiple accounts from a single method, (Ritchie et al. 2013). But typical examples include individuals, a role or occupation, organizations, a community or even a country. It could even be a policy, process, crisis or event.

3.3.1 Types of Case Study Design

Whatever the precise case study design chosen, the case study must take the reader into the case situation. This means that the descriptions should be holistic and comprehensive and include a “myriad of dimensions, factors, variables, and categories woven together into an idiographic framework” (Patton 1990:387). The design process of case studies involves deciding whether the unit of analysis for the study will be an individual case or multiple cases. Stake identifies three types of case study: (i) intrinsic, to better understand a particular case, (ii) instrumental., to provide insight into an issue or to create generalization; and (iii) multiple or collective, when several cases are studied jointly to investigate a phenomenon (Stake et al. 2005:453). However, Yin (2013) proposes four main types of case study design. This means that the case study can be based on single or multiple case designs and single and multiple units of analysis. There are four types, according to Yin: Type 1: Single case study but holistic. In this study, only a single case

is examined at a holistic level, for example, an entire educational programme, not individual elements (modules) within it. Type 2: Single case, embedded. Within a single case study, there may be several different units of analysis. Type 3: Multiple cases, holistic, where the multiple case study approach is needed (say to improve the reliability or generalizability of the study) when it is impossible to identify multiple units of analysis, then a more holistic approach can be taken. Type 4: Multiple cases embedded. The problem faced by holistic case studies can be reduced if multiple units of analysis are used, which allow for more sensitivity and for any slippage between research questions and the direction of the study to be identified at a much earlier stage (2013:98).

There are strengths and weaknesses to using the case study research model. Some have criticized case studies as lack of scientific rigour and reliability and that they need to address the issues of generalizability. However, there are some strengths of the case study. For example, it enables the researcher to gain a holistic view of a certain phenomenon or series of events. It can provide a round picture since many sources of evidence were used. Another advantage is that case studies can be useful in capturing the emergent and immanent properties of life in organizations and the ebb and flow of organizational activity, especially where it is changing very fast. Case studies also allow generalizations as the result of findings using multiple cases can lead to some form of replication (Noor 2008:1063).

3.3.2 Case Study Protocol

The case concept needs to be better defined and remains a subject of debate. The case may be a relatively bounded object or a process; it may be theoretical, empirical, or both (Ragin & Becker 1992:8). At a minimum, a case is a phenomenon specific to time and space (Johansson 2003:14). The notion of "case" is complicated in another respect. The

kind of case on which a case study focuses may change over time. It may change both in the hands of the researcher and in the hands of the researcher's audience (Ragin & Becker 1992:8). It is characteristic of case study methodology that the boundaries, and often even the focus of the case, change through the research process. The case study methodology was initially used primarily for exploratory purposes, and some researchers still limit case studies for this purpose (Runeson & Höst 2009:145). The case study protocol is a container for the design decisions on the case study and field procedures for its carrying through. The protocol is a continuously changed document that is updated when the plans for the case study are changed (2009:141 *ibid*). There are several reasons for keeping an updated version of a case study protocol. Firstly, it serves as a guide when conducting the data collection, and in that way, it prevents the researcher from missing to collect data. Secondly, formulating the protocol makes the research concrete in the planning phase, which may help the researcher decide what data sources to use and what questions to ask. Thirdly, other researchers and relevant people may review it to give feedback on the plans. Feedback on the protocol from other researchers can, for example, lower the risk of missing relevant data sources, interview questions or roles to include in the research and to ensure the relationship between research questions and interview questions. Finally, it can serve as a log or diary where all conducted data collection and analysis are recorded together with change decisions based on the flexible nature of the research (2009:145 *ibid*).

3.4 Interviews

The initial interviews were based on field research in DLBC and RCCG in Southwest Nigeria between 2017 and 2022. A set of research questions to be used in interviews was later constructed. It was the first phase of my research till my transfer to the PhD stage. The Southwest represents one single ethnolinguistic setting which is the Yoruba in

Nigeria. The region represents where the selected Pentecostal Churches (RCCG and DLBC) originated. The RCCG draws strongly on Yoruba rituals, musical and literary genres. It might be perceived locally as a Yoruba church, even though it has been able to attract large numbers of believers from other backgrounds in Nigeria, Africa and beyond (Nolte et al. 2009:56). It took several months of planning and arrangements to secure the date and time of the interviews. Most of the interviews were held on the church premises. Again, further visits were made to these churches for observations and clarifications over the previous interviews.

Research can have constraints about when and where the research subjects are available, when data collection can rarely be fitted around existing commitments. Identifying how much data to collect and from whom is a crucial aspect of research design (Cameron et al. 2005:97). My experience shows that only some have the nugget of wisdom about the knowledge required for the research. The first series of interviews was conducted with prominent leaders, workers, pastors and members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. There were initially 40 contributors from the selected Pentecostal churches, 23 from Redeemed Christian Church of God and 17 from Deeper Life Bible Church. Of the contributors, 30 per cent are clergy, and 70 per cent lay persons. I collected additional data from at least 50 more informants in the selected Pentecostal churches to construct the theory of Lay Mobilization and Theology of Mission for the two churches between 2020 and 2021 after my return from the United Kingdom at the height of the global pandemic in July 2020. I have interviewed about 90 respondents for the empirical study from the two Pentecostal church denominations, although that does not indicate saturation.

The selection of the people was based on the locations and common factors such as accessibility, size, and growth of the parishes chosen for the interviews. I met with the

Director of Research and the first principal of Redeemer Bible College for data collection. He played a significant role in the research process as the trainer of the lay persons from the inception of the church. In another attempt in the second province in Lagos, I interviewed eight pastors, a senior pastor of the province comprising 7 area pastors from other church locations who came purposely for the interview. From a critical realist epistemology, many perspectives were discovered, analyzed, and examined with contextual literature on lay Pentecostal missions. The field data show a different understanding of laypersons within the context of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). There were clashes in perspectives with opposing views on the role of lay persons in mission. There appeared to be divisive variations and contrary interpretations on the extent to which a charismatic church conceptualize lay persons' mission. I want to point out that my interviews were not flawless, as I went back and forth several times to ask questions and have certain aspects of the questions repeated for me to understand the informants. Interviews were extensive, especially in the church settings, but were brief in some cases. I would interrupt interviewees and asked questions that were not in the guided questions because new information emerged from the interviews to strengthen the research. This thesis has used the empirical approach and history of the two churches to construct the various accounts found in chapters four, five, six, and seven and the conclusion. In addition, I have utilized the empirical and historical records about the selected Pentecostal churches (RCCG and DLBC) and secondary data for my analysis. The historical approach consists of messages found in sermons, printed texts, internet records, church websites, books, diaries, magazines and published articles.

Other sources are from archival sites of the churches, interviews with the founder's son, Ifeoluwa Akindayomi of the Redeemed Christian Church of God at Shomolu, Lagos

Province 16 and formal interviews sessions at the RCCG National Headquarters in Mowe while interacting with Assistant General Overseers and parish pastors. I was also at the Redeemed Missions College Ede for interviews. Deeper Life Bible Church interview sessions took place at district churches and the Deeper Life International Conference Centre (DLICC) Mowe, on Lagos Ibadan Express Road. In addition, many interviews were conducted at the Annual National Congress, National Retreats, and participation at the Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK), International Bible Training Centre, and Monday Bible study.

3.4.1 The Transcription of Interview

My supervisor and house mentor vetted the research instruments for validity and reliability. I interviewed the respondents in the English language. I recorded and transcribed every interview. In one way, qualitative interviewing was independent of the questionnaire-based questioning, especially where it sought to capture the historical backgrounds and social contexts of specific local churches, with particular respect to how they affected attitudes, beliefs, and practices among the lay Christians (Randolph 2017:75). I have examined in this session the research process undertaken on the methodology in order to produce research evidence empirically. The next session leads naturally to the actual findings after the interviews and the fieldwork.

After the interviews, I began transcription from the recording gadgets and video equipment. Transcribing is time-consuming, with ten minutes of the recording taking up to one hour to transcribe to capture the details. The interviews were transcribed verbatim as the respondents presented their views. The recordings were listened to several times to understand the views of each respondent. Deductive coding has been used to highlight concepts where they are defined, or insights offered on the concepts. This approach is

often used when investigating a topic in exploratory research (Cameron et al. 2005:103). A manual coding was done after the transcription to generate texts for the empirical research. I developed some frameworks for analysis of the emerging themes, discourse analyses, conversational analogy, and a critique of the data. The following steps were involved in the preliminary data analysis: First, evaluation coding and reading the interview text to see what was happening. Next, it considered various ideas, categories, and concepts which appeared in the data and how they are related. Second, it looks at the interviews and identifies areas that relate to emerging categories and themes. Third, data compilation cut and paste sections which relate to the same conceptual categories.

As a case study, I have interpreted data from the interviews and other sources, including relevant literature and written documents of the churches involved in this thesis. This proposition is used to guide the development of the case studies. Again, early data analysis is a critical step in interpreting the case studies. I used codes and coding techniques. This was selected as it lent itself to linking the data back to the research questions (Atkinson 2002:2). For example, a code might identify a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph important to the research. The code attempts to associate meaning to these chunks of data. I identified segments related to the research questions from specific and general codes, which formed the theme discovered from the interviews and documents of the church related to mission.

3.4.2 Fieldwork and Field Notes

Taking field notes is an important process, whether the approach comprises non-participants' observation or participants' observation and ethnography. In both cases, a similar process may be followed. Non-participant observation studies may use field notes, structured observation methods or both. However, the style of notes created by non-

participant methods may contain subtle differences. They are essential to the success of fieldwork and comprise everything the fieldworker believes to be of importance. The danger of taking field notes is failing to note a situation in the belief that it will always be recalled later (Gray 2013:416).

The fieldwork explored Pentecostal and charismatic lay missions in the selected churches to understand laypersons' influence and priority in mission engagement. The research is located in Pentecostal missiology. It is perceived that the experience of people on mission can differ from the lay Pentecostal charismatic mission theory. Nevertheless, there is a theology embedded in Christian mission and lay mission practices which can be explored. During my fieldwork, I documented a series of events before the interview and after the interview. I have field notes to replace the interviews conducted and other raw data from the accounts of the lay mission and the clergy's involvement in mission in the two Pentecostal church denominations. In qualitative research, the objective stance is obsolete; the researcher is the instrument, and 'the subjects' become 'participants' who may contribute to data interpretation and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln 2009). Qualitative researchers defend the integrity of their work by different means: trustworthiness, credibility, applicability, and consistency are the evaluative criteria (Leininger, 1994). These variables are herewith enumerated.

3.4.2.1 Trustworthiness

A qualitative study report should contain the same robust procedural description as any other study. The purpose of the research, how it was conducted, procedural decisions, and details of data generation and management should be transparent and explicit. A reviewer should be able to follow the progression of events and decisions and understand their

logic because there is adequate description, explanation and justification of the methodology and methods (Kitto et al. 2008:113).

3.4.2.2 Credibility and Applicability

Research credibility is one of the criteria to judge the fairness and truth about the fundamental acceptance of the study. The defence of qualitative research in a social world is only possible when the facts and ideas the study represents are valid. It gives the reader unbiased assurance concerning the integrity of the scholar in producing new knowledge through verifiable and established processes that can stand the test of time. When the people who shared their lived experiences as data with the researcher through a standard investigative procedure see their accurate picture of the research findings, it gives credibility to the claims and focus of the study. Similarly, the worth of research is its applicability to a similar situation in a similar context with little or no adaptability. The generalizability of research outcomes in the real world is a good index for its applicability and test of validity.

3.5 Data Collection

I collected various documents written and oral sources from the selected churches to understand the reasons for their involvement in Christian mission. I worked with the lay persons who I identified as having valuable ideas and information on my central research questions. At times, I took photographs and videos from my research site, such as mission boards, mission content analysis, and signposts, given that I could find any information that could serve as my primary data. The use of multiple data sources, rich in real-life situations, has been described as a distinguishing characteristic of case study methodology. According to Stake et al (2005), varied data sources are collected and analyzed to obtain multiple perspectives and points of view to obtain a holistic

understanding of the phenomenon being researched. Triangulation is a term that has been frequently used to describe the use of multiple data sources (Hentz, 2012). Unlike Yin, who has suggested that using multiple sources is to assist the researcher in identifying the convergence of findings (2003), Stake has suggested that researchers can also use triangulation to identify divergence (Stake et al. 2005).

The vastness of the population of these churches formed the basis for the decision to interview selected provinces where the churches are situated in Southwest Nigeria. Marshall and Rossman describe the interview method as a viable instrument useful among a large population of people (Marshall & Rossman 2010). The population in this study are the members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) of Southwest Nigeria. The interviewees were purposively selected because the research requires specific information about the lay mission activities of the church. Purposive sampling of specific stakeholders within a population will be required to ensure that as many perspectives as possible are sampled (Stake et al. 2005:308). The argument for some form of purposive case selection seems strong. Indeed, purposive methods can only partially overcome the inherent unreliability of generalizing from small samples (Seawright & Gerring 2008:297).

I employed a purposive case selection procedure for the investigation representative of the lay population. Purposive or judgmental sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). It is where the researcher includes cases or participants in the sample because they believe that they warrant inclusion (Taherdoost 2016:22). In the broadest definition, sampling and selection are principles and procedures used to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant units which will be used for data generation by any method. These units will

belong to or relate to a wider population or universe. However, sampling and selection – appropriately conceived and executed – are vitally important strategic elements of qualitative research (Mason 2017:28).

In order to answer the research questions, it is doubtful that the researcher should be able to collect data from all cases. Thus, there is a need to select a sample. The population is the entire set of cases from which the researcher's sample is drawn. Since researchers need more time and resources to analyze the entire population, so they apply a sampling technique to reduce the number of cases (Taherdoost 2016:18). A sampling frame is a list of the actual cases from which the sample will be drawn. The sampling frame must be representative of the population. The selection of an appropriate sample (or respondents) is relevant to both quantitative and qualitative study. Once that is right, the progress of the research to near completion is almost certain. This research is treated as a case study unit, with the lens of case study as a protocol. Four main factors are used to select the two churches in this thesis. The first is for sampling. Second, I consider the two churches representative of the Pentecostal charismatic church in Southwest Nigeria. Third, the two churches were founded by lay leaders in 1952 (RCCG) and 1973 (DLBC), respectively. Fourth, the two churches are located within the same geographical, population, and cultural location.

My involvement and connections with the selected churches aided the research in a significant way. The process has assisted in coming up with 'insider' benefits such as depth of contextual understanding and good rapport. I also aimed for a range of areas in terms of urban characteristics, class, size, theologies, or samples of provinces which shared similar sub-characteristics. I visited many churches to gain an insight into the movement, with its different theological emphases and geographical centres. Based on this theoretical framework, I designed qualitative data research instruments with two

types of data tools, closed-ended and open-ended, as questionnaires for my fieldwork. The questionnaires were authentic guides throughout the interviews and data collection. I used the instruments whenever the opportunity arose in DLBC or RCCG after a visit to the district church. There were many pre-arranged interviews in DLBC and RCCG. For example, when I travelled to Ede at the RCCG mission school, it was a pre-arranged interview period in May 2001. Again, some interviews took place at the DLBC International Conference Centre, which was also pre-arranged.

I am aware of personal bias as a researcher. I observed the respondents from a distance while collecting the data. I played the role of an observer as a participant. Such an approach offers a deeper insight into the experience of lay persons in mission. I used an inductive approach and thematic content analysis to analyse the data collected. The community is the natural environment of the respondents and ensures the collection of high-quality data. I am aware of my position as a minister and pastor in Nigeria. I paid attention to my own bias because, as an insider, I can only see something new if I go through the meaning of what the informants are saying and why they are saying it. I am aware of both cultural and traditional biases to interpret the data appropriately. My interest is to gather the informants' views to improve mission practice. Research integrity is important as data integrity.

3.6 Data Analysis Method

Thematic and interpretative analyses were used to establish and interpret themes from interview responses. This method of analysis is used to identify, analyze and report patterns within data as well as interpret various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke 2006). One of the benefits of thematic analysis is its flexibility which can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches. The thematic

analysis started by looking for patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in the data and converging them into meaningful coding schemes or groups. It was followed by isolating the different codes into possible themes. One of the features of case study research is its flexibility. Hence, adjustments might be made during the data collection process by deciding to use additional data collection sources, an approach that Eisenhardt (1989:539) refers to as 'controlled opportunism'. Yin (2009) suggests that there are broadly six main sources of case study data, each of which has its strengths and weaknesses. The data can be from documentation, archival sources, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts. All the data collected are analyzed and synthesized into individual case study reports. The findings of each case will produce convergence evidence so that the data in one case replicate the data from another (Gray 2013:271).

3.7 Research Ethics and Risk Assessment

This research follows and adheres to the Research Ethics and Risk Assessment of Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford and the Middlesex University of London. I studied the required documents on research ethics and agreed to the terms in 2015 as I progress with my study. Also, I followed the ethics guidance of my research subjects in the two case studies for this research.

Informed consent is undoubtedly an essential feature of ethical considerations in research involving human subjects. The essential elements of informed consent are the following: a brief description of the study and its procedures; a full identification of the researcher's identity; an assurance that participation is voluntary and that the respondent has the right to withdraw at any time without penalty; an assurance of confidentiality; and benefits and risks associated with participation in the study, (Bowen 2005:214). Ethics

deals with the issue of morality or matters of right and wrong. In qualitative research, ethics start from obtaining permission for access to the research object, as well as consent and protection of fundamental human rights of participants (Punch 2009:56). In the case study method, we changed individuals' names to protect their privacy. It ensures that no one is hurt or embarrassed by the research contents in the case study analysis (Vyhmeister 2009:146). There is no part of this research that will create any risk for any of the participants involved.

Before conducting each interview, I explained the research and its implications to the participant(s). Following my research ethics framework, I emphasized confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. Because a few of the participants could be placed in an awkward position if they were associated with a research project like this and because of the political and religious crisis in Nigeria. Religious terrorism and attacks on Christians in Northern Nigeria were spreading gradually to Southwest Nigeria, leading to the kidnapping of pastors by terrorists for ransom. Therefore, I considered interviewing the key leaders well known through an introduction and the knowledge of informants to conduct interviews and obtain relevant data.

3.8 Summary

A qualitative methodology has been used to answer the research question in this thesis. I have used interviews, participant observations, and documentary records to generate empirical data for the analysis. The primary research apparatus lends itself to in-depth inquiry, which focuses on significant contributions to the current conversation on the mobilization of lay persons for Pentecostal missions. I have looked at the methodology for my research in this chapter. The next chapter four presents the data obtained from this empirical study study.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter is on my empirical findings, data presentation and analysis. I used thematic analysis for the explication of the data. The thematic analysis emerged from the data. The data emerged from the interviews, participant observations, reading of the interviews, transcription of the interviews' manuscript and the readings of academic literature related to my research questions. It presents findings from a descriptive case study of lay Pentecostal-Charismatic missions in Southwest Nigeria. It was generated from the primary data collected through face-to-face in-depth interviews and participant observations during fieldwork in Southwest Nigeria between 2017 and 2022. The data analysis focuses on two selected Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria: the Redeemed Christians Church of God (RCCG) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). The main research question for the thesis is:

- How do the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission?

The interviews were structured and semi-structured in nature. The instruments were designed to elicit information from two groups of respondents: lay persons and clergy. The selected Pentecostal Churches (RCCG, DLBC) are located in Southwest Nigeria. The selection of the informants was based on their roles in their churches. For this chapter which forms the basis for their missional ecclesiology, there were 40 contributors from the selected Pentecostal churches, 23 from the Redeemed Christian Church of God and 17 from Deeper Life Bible Church. Of the contributors, 30 per cent were clergy, and 70 per cent were lay persons. The numbers of male and female informants were thirty and ten,

respectively. Their age ranged from 20 years to 60 years. The informants' level of education was not lower than high school and not higher than university degree qualifications, while a few possessed postgraduate degrees. The following tables provide the participants' demographic data by roles in the selected Pentecostal churches, age and educational levels.

Churches	Clergy		Lay Persons	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
RCCG	6	-	12	5
DLBC	8	-	4	5
TOTAL	14	-	16	10

Table 4.11 Clergy and Lay Participants

	Average age	Percentages
1	20-30	15%
2	31-40	24%
3	41-50	40%
4	50 and above	9%

Table 4.12 Age Distribution of the participants

	Educational levels	Percentages
1	High School	8%
2	Diploma	17%
3	University	49%
4	Post graduate	21%

Table 4.13 Participants Educational Level

The language used for the interview was English. English is the second national language and serves as Nigeria's primary language of instruction. The interviewees have a fair understanding of English as a medium of communication. The interviews were

recorded on an audio device, followed by a transcription of the interview from audio to text. I recorded and transcribed every interview.

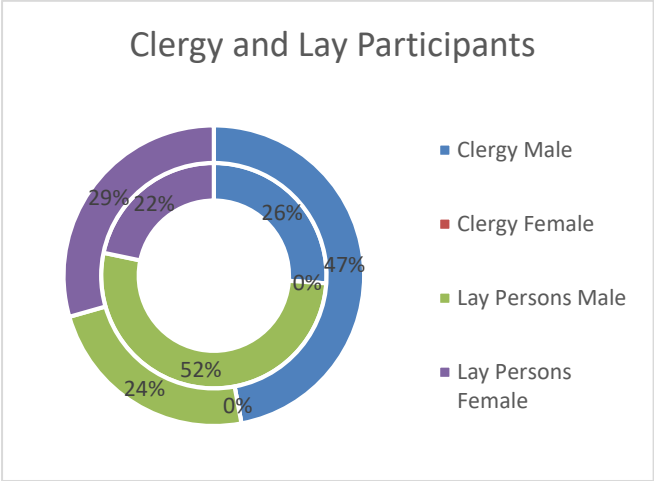
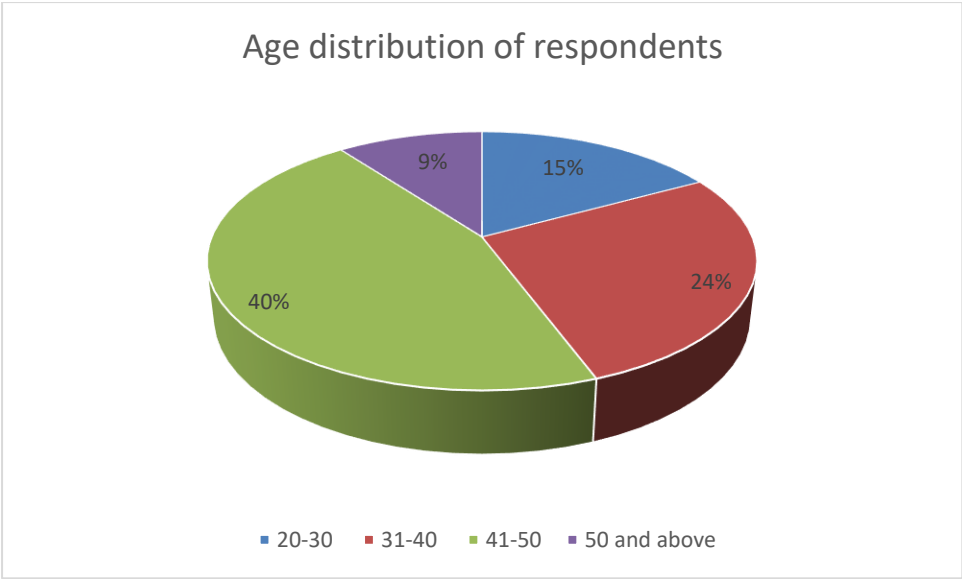


Figure 4.11 Age Distribution of the participants

Age of the respondents	Percentage
20-30	15%
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Figure 4.12



Participants Educational Level

Educational levels	Percentage
High School	8%
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Postgraduate	21%

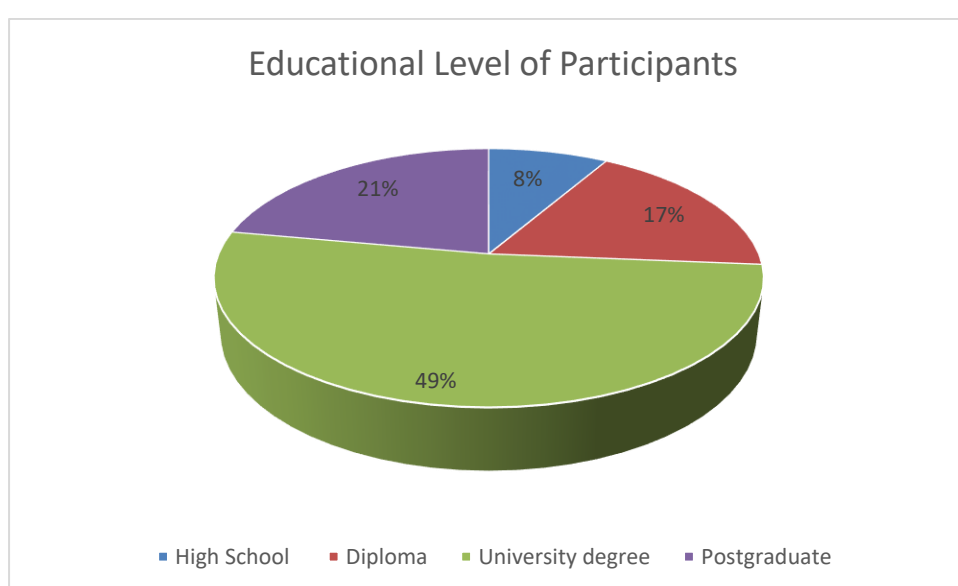


Figure 4.13 Educational Levels of Participants

I manually transcribed the data and information from respondents to identify common perspectives and different understandings of the respondents to underpin patterns, categories and themes from the interviews. The Redeemed Christian Church of God had 23 participants (lay persons and clergy). It was a collation of interviews with lay persons and clergy from four provinces and eight parishes. The provinces are LP 90, Akowonjo; LP 71 Abule Egba; LP 38 Alimosho; and LP 57: Shomolu. These parishes are from the Lagos geographical locations of Alimosho, Akowonjo, Abule Egba, and Shomolu. I chose the interview conducted in eight parishes to understand the specific

mission functions of lay persons and clergy at different times and in different capacities. The purpose was to see if they have a uniform understanding or disparate meanings which reflect in their mission practices.

In Deeper Life Bible Church for this chapter, I have chosen participants across district churches like the geographical locations with the RCCG. The numbers of participants in DLBC, including lay persons and clergy, were 17. The research participants were from Akowonjo, Egbeda, Ayobo, Ipaja, Agege and Gbagada, the church headquarters. This is done to analyse the data and obtain a description of their involvement and practice of mission. I attended the parish church services at Akowonjo, Dominion Cathedral in RCCG to understand RCCG's mission practices. I also attended DLBC's weekly Bible study and Thursday Revival and Evangelism Training Service in Akowonjo and Gbagada. After the services, I interviewed lay persons and clergy (District Coordinators). I attended these church services as a complete observer before interviewing the lay persons and the clergy. Walliman describes a 'complete observer' under participant observation (PO) as follows:

The observer takes a detached stance by not getting involved in the events, uses unobstructive observation techniques and remains "invisible" either in fact or in effect (i.e. by being ignored). (2016, p. 135)

I present below a few of the photographs taken during my interviews with lay persons and clergy in RCCG and DLBC with dates at various period of my research.



Figure 1: Fieldwork photograph at the RCCG National Secretariat, Move Ogun State with my wife and research assistant. Picture taken 3rd March 2018.



Figure 2: Interview with Dr Josiah Bolarinwa: the first Principal of the Redeemed Bible College 1984; Now Director of Research and Development. Picture taken 18 July 2018.



Figure 3: Group interview with Pastors at RCCG, Baruwa, Lagos central province. Picture taken 15 October 2017.



Figure 4: Selection Interview at Deeper Life Bible Church, University of Lagos with the group and National Coordinator of Deeper Life Campus Fellowship. Picture taken 22 July 2018.



Figure 5: An interview with Dr Joel Oke. The Provost of the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, Nigeria. 12 May 2021

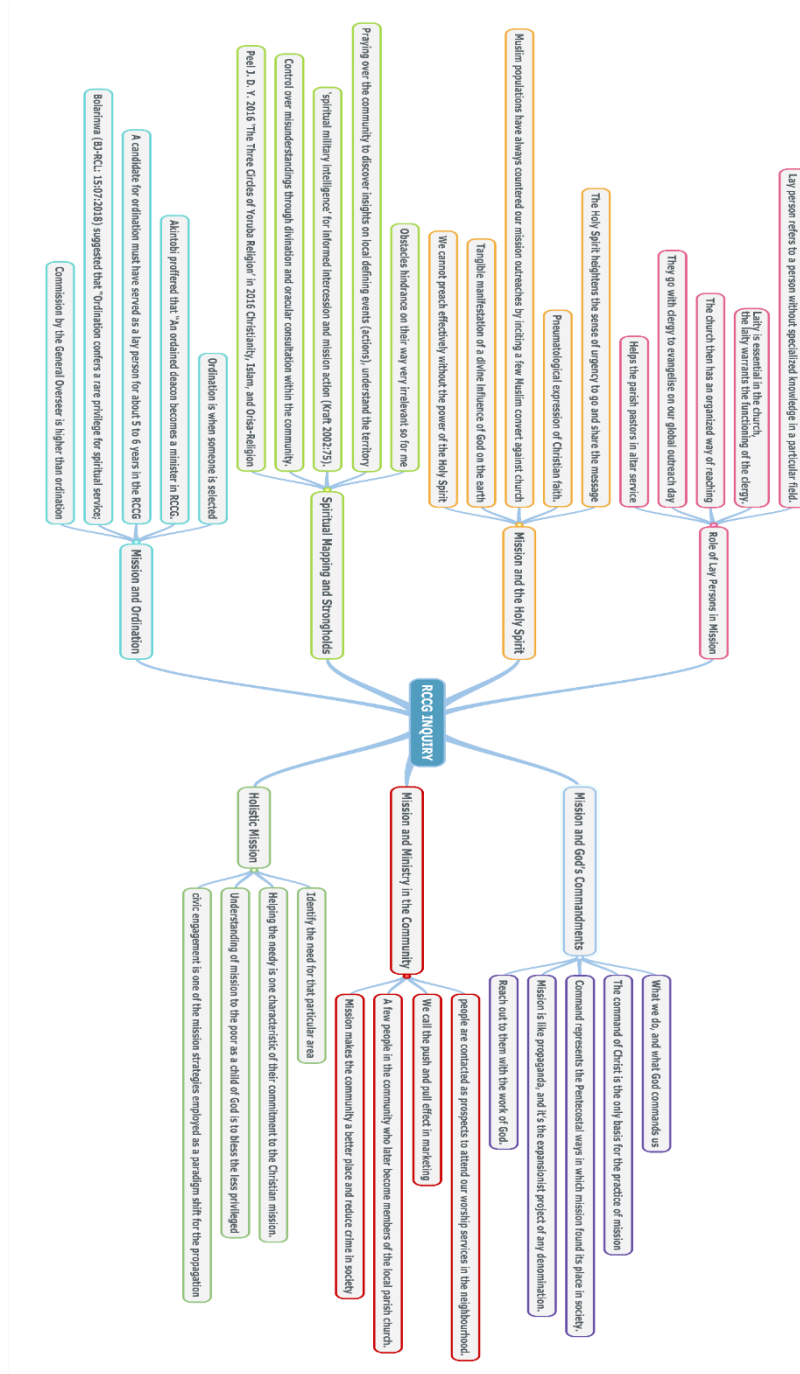


Figure 6: This photograph was taken after one hour lecture at the old personal library of Pastor Enoch Adeboye on 8 June 2021 from left is Emmanuel Ogunklati, myself and other participants.

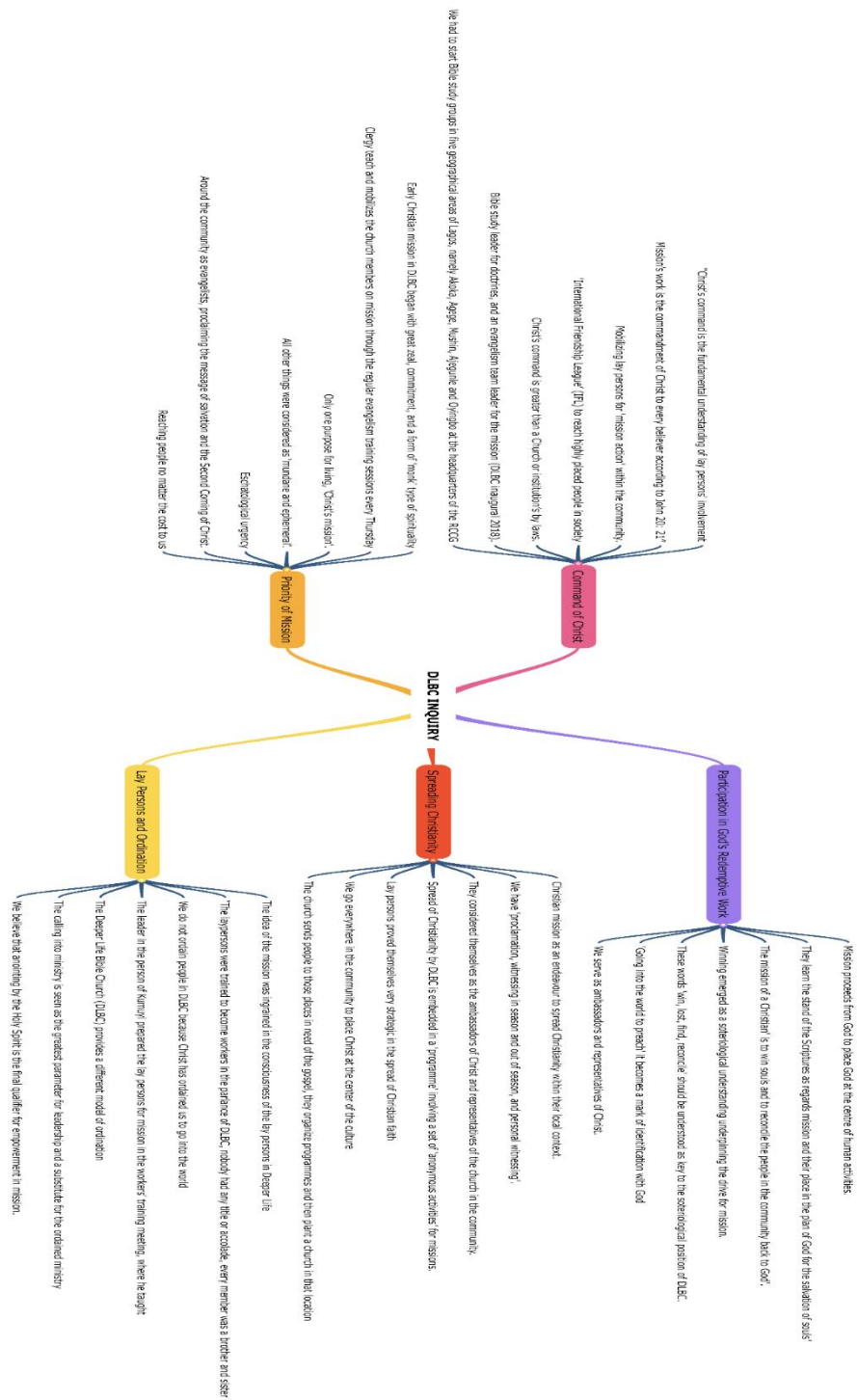
4.1 Analysis of findings

The data analyzed and synthesized were based on the central research question of how Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission.

Mind Map RCCG Thematic Analysis



Mind Map DLBC Thematic Analysis



Mind Maps

Above are the mind maps used as visual representations of the thematic ideas and nodes generated to analyze the respondents' perceptions of my interviews in RCCG and DLBC. The mind maps allow me to develop a coherent pattern which includes examples, quotes and arguments from the respondents. Various concepts were derived in the interviews by adopting mind maps in the analysis. Concept maps are graphical tools for organizing and representing relationships between concepts indicated by a connecting line linking two concepts. Words on the line, referred to as linking words or phrases, specify the relationship between two concepts. Concepts and propositions are usually organized hierarchically, from most general, most inclusive to most specific (Novak & Cañas 2007:29). The mind maps provide four categories of analyses, namely, (i) RCCG thematic feature, (ii) Mission Mobilization- Redeemed College of Missions, (iii) DLBC thematic feature and (iv) DLBC theological motivations for the mission.

This piece of evidence is what the people are saying on how Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission. The attempt at this point seeks to place the evidence before the concepts to provide substantive support for each piece of evidence. First is the evidence, and then the concepts follow. The concepts are from works of literature underpinning the research. This is a sample of what I am doing in my research. The research findings in RCCG focus on seven central themes, while the findings in DLBC yielded five themes in the understanding of the Pentecostal practice of mission. The most recurring of the 70 generated nodes in the interview transcriptions of RCCG and DLBC showing how lay persons can preach, the role of lay persons, lay persons obeying the command of Christ,

lay persons spreading Christianity are grouped and categorized. Various themes emerged from the categories. Below is the mind map presentation of the RCCG and DLBC themes.

4.1.1 RCCG Thematic Feature

Prior to his accession as the General Overseer (GO) of the RCCG, Pastor Enoch Adeboye had been open concerning mission and mobilization in frontier missions. He instituted Christ Redeemer Mission as the main organ and office for mission mobilization while still a mathematics lecturer at the University of Ilorin and the University of Lagos. Odesola, Assistant General Overseer (AGO), in his book (2020) affirmed that the inner motivation of Pastor Adeboye was to mobilize people in the church (RCCG) through the establishment of Model Parishes and the evangelistic program of the RCCG titled ‘Let’s Go Fishing’. A few years later, Adeboye addressed the core leadership of the church and lay people about strategies to adopt for expanding the RCCG. In his speech, ‘I want a gift from God for my birthday, and it is a miracle for every member of the RCCG’. The emphasis in the interviews indicated that local mission mobilization was the vision and direction of the RCCG. In this chart, (Figure 4.11) I have drawn lay persons and clergy as categories where the theme of mission mobilization occurred. The lay and clergy from four provinces in Lagos; Shomolu LP (Lagos Province) 56; Abule Egba LP 71; Oshodi LP 65; and Akowonjo LP 90.

Table 4.11 Mobilization in Mission

Parishes in Provinces	Shomolu LP 56	Abule Egba LP 71	Oshodi LP 65	Akowonjo LP 90
Lay	7/12	6/ 10	3/8	5/10
Percentages	58.3 %	60 %	37.5 %	50 %

Clergy	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Percentages	75 %	100 %	66.6 %	75 %

Out of 12 lay persons interviewed in Shomolu province, 7 agreed that mobilization would greatly help the RCCG mission. In Abule Egba, 60 per cent of the lay persons support the mobilization of members for the mission. On the other hand, in Lagos province 65 in Oshodi was indifferent to the concept of mobilization. They had a low view of how mobilization could stir the members to participate in the mission. Abule Egba parish pastors were more eager as the zonal pastor, and the provincial pastor supported mobilization as key to mission harvest. However, in Akowonjo Lagos province 90 barely 5 supported mission mobilization which is 50 per cent. Whereas as the table above shows, the clergy who are the parish pastors, in Shomolu and Akowonjo shared a greater per cent of 75 per cent on their perception of mobilization. Oshodi province had a higher perception of mobilization.

Table 4.18 Mobilization Through Events and Program

	Shomolu LP 56	Abule Egba LP 71	Oshodi LP 65	Akowonjo LP 90
Lay	$\frac{2}{5}$	$\frac{4}{7}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{6}{6}$
Percentages	40 %	57.1 %	66.6 %	100 %
Clergy	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{2}{2}$	$\frac{4}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Percentages	50 %	100 %	100 %	75 %

RCCG used events and programs as innovative means of mobilization. The data on the event pointed to innovation by the RCCG in Oshodi and Akowonjo Lagos provinces. The lay persons in Akowonjo, with 100 per cent, acknowledge that events such as celebrations

of birthdays and marriage have significant growth on the RCCG numerical goal. While 100 percent of the clergy in Abule Egba, and Oshodi provinces heavily subscribed to events as tools for mobilizing their members. The least perception of events as means of mobilization was seen in 40 per cent of the lay people in the Shomolu province.

4.1.2 Mission Mobilization- Redeemed College of Missions

Analyzing the Redeemed Mission College interviews, Ede gave a different perception of mission mobilization. Therefore, I went to Redeemed Mission College for interviews between 10 and 13 May 2021 for in-depth interviews to understand how the Mission College trains lay persons and parish pastors in RCCG in terms of discipleship and equipping the lay persons for missions in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 4.19 **RCCG College of Missions on Mobilization**

Category	Numbers	Percentage
Faculty	3/3	100 %
Students	6/10	60 %
Others	1/2	50 %

Three faculty staff of the RBC were interviewed in an in-depth investigation of the RCCG missional training of the students and the conceptualization of the mission by the school. Ten students gave interviews during the time. Others, who worshipped at the chapel in the early hour of Tuesday at 6 am in the morning, gave time for their interviews. I was with a research assistant who helped me during the interviews. I used guided questions and semi-structured interviews.

Table 4.20 **Sending, Going, Praying and Giving**

	LAY	CLERGY
Going	10/12	3/5
Percentages	83.3 %	60 %
Sending	8/10	4/5
Percentages	80 %	80 %
Praying	7/8	2/4
Percentages	87.5 %	50 %
Giving	7/10	3/5
Percentages	70 %	60%

Going to the world of the community where the Church exists is the heartthrob of the mission. However, RC comments that ‘the number of the people going on a mission is lower than the proportion of the people sitting in the church’. To some interviewees, their missional perception is that a church is active in proclaiming the gospel. Those who are not going need to send people to the local mission field, including the interior villages of southwest Nigeria. Others believe praying is more effective in sustaining missionary impulse and engaging in spiritual warfare as a critical strategy to break the strongholds militating against establishing new churches through church planting. I frequently heard the metaphor of giving in the southwest, ‘money is the wheel for spreading the gospel’. It was a refrain during most of the interviews.

Table 4.21 Role of Lay Persons in Mission

Parishes Provinces	in Shomolu LP 56	Abule Egba LP 71	Oshodi LP 65	Akowonjo LP 90
Lay	7/10	5/6	7/9	9/10
Percentages	70 %	83.3 %	77.7 %	90 %

Clergy	2/3	1/2	3/4	4/5
Percentages	66.6 %	50 %	75 %	80 %

The role of lay persons in mission was the central theme of the interviews as the lay persons were frequently asked to comment on what they did inside and outside the four walls of the church. At least 90 per cent of the lay persons in the Akowonjo group think they make substantial contributions to the mission objectives of the church in various outreach program, especially in the last Saturday of the month, tagged as the Global Evangelism Day in the RCCG. This is followed closely by Abule Egba province, with 83.3 per cent on the indispensable role of lay persons in the RCCG. Oshodi province scored 77.7 per cent in contributions to the RCCG at the grass-root level. Shomolu province had the lowest rating of 70 per cent on the crucial role of the laity in RCCG.

The parish pastor in Akowonjo appraised the role of lay persons as very high in their participation in God's mission at 80 per cent. Oshodi parish pastors perceived lay persons as fellow helpers in ministry and mission at 75 per cent. The provincial pastor of Abule Egba had afternoon lunch with the lay leadership team on the day of my interview hence the 50 per cent annotation for LP 71 on the critical service and contributions of lay persons to the mission.

4.1.3 Deeper Life Bible Church Thematic Feature

The data coded from the respondents' identified patterns that answer the research question and the themes that emerged from the Deeper Life Bible Church interviewees pointed to inquiry about mission hermeneutics. The patterns and themes were identified with a close reading of the data highlighting areas of their focus presented below in the thematic analysis.

4.1.4 Theological Motivation

The interviewees in DLBC emphasized the importance of doctrines, salvation, sanctification and baptism in the Holy Spirit, and Bible study as themes for equipping believers. This iterates the critical role of theology for DLBC in its missional practice and conceptualization of mission. The church derived its name from the regular study of the Bible every Monday without a break since January 1973, hence the name Deeper Life Bible Church.

References were made during the interviews about the structure of Bible study as a missional practice. This is linked with establishing a Short Term Ministerial Course (STMC) at its institution, International Bible Training Centre, Ayobo, Lagos. It provides mission training for lay persons and the clergy. For instance, (FA-DLP: 20:09:21) quoted Matthew 28:19, 20, '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'. While discussing the need for spreading Christianity, (FA-DLP) spoke eloquently of the Thursday Revival and Training Service as a veritable means of equipping lay persons for participation in local and foreign missions, an arm of mission outreach by the DLBC. Furthermore, (JA-DLP: 20:09:21) quoted II Timothy 2:15, 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, the workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth'. In addition, Samuel mentioned that the backbone of DLBC's missional practice is the central Bible teachings by the General Superintendent (GS), Pastor William Kumuyi, which has raised an army of soul winners for the DLBC.

Table 4.22 Theological Motivation

Group of Districts	AKOWONJO GROUP	ALIMOSHO GROUP	AGEGE GROUP	GBAGADA GROUP
Lay	10/20	9/15	5/9	7/8
Percentages	50 %	60 %	55.5 %	87.5 %
Clergy	5/8	3/6	$\frac{3}{4}$	2/5
Percentages	62.5%	50 %	75 %	40 %

Looking at the above table, 50 per cent of lay persons in the Akowonjo group spoke about the conviction of sin as a step towards salvation. At the same time, 60 per cent of lay persons in Akowonjo articulated repentance and faith in Christ as a prerequisite for any lay person to qualify to join a witnessing team. In the Agege group, 55.5 per cent of the lay persons, emphasised the importance of sanctification for every member of the DLBC. Gbagada is the headquarters of the DLBC. At the Deeper Life Campus Fellowship (DLCF) secretariat, 87.5 per cent had a higher perception of the missional practice of the church either on the campus or in the community where the members are present. The clergy often called the District Coordinators, have a higher conceptualisation of mission than the lay persons.

Table 4.23 **Theology and Missional Practice**

	Theological	Missional
Lay	12/20	14/20
Percentages	60 %	70 %
Clergy	18/20	15/20
Percentages	90 %	75 %

The above table shows that a higher number of lay persons and clergy are inclined to theological issues as what underpins their missional praxis. Seventy per cent of lay

persons relate their conceptualization of mission to theology. In contrast, 90 per cent of the clergy see theology as a driver of the mission.

Another theological focus repeated in the interviews was the DLBC maxim, 'every member a minister' and 'living with eternity in view'. The eschatological dimension of the Bible study series in the book of Revelation often consigned the missional practice to see the end from the beginning, the imminent return of Christ. This is rooted in the critical messages during the Strategy Leadership Congress, which began in 1987 by the DLBC's General Superintendent of the church, Pastor William Kumuyi, in leadership training and mobilization for local and international missions. Another attribute that stands clear among the interviewees is the exclusive use of the song 'Jesus Only is Our Saviour'. The song reveals the four-fold office of Christ as the Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Baptiser and Coming King. The position taken by DLBC is similar to the study carried out by Frank Machia, an American scholar and Pentecostalist, 'Baptized in the Spirit' (Macchia 2018:3).

4.2 Case Study One: Redeemed Christian Church of God

I conducted twenty-three interviews with respondents from Redeemed Christian Church of God. Seventeen lay persons and six clergy were interviewed in this analysis. The analysis examined the understanding of lay persons on Christian mission, lay persons' self-understanding and the RCCG approach to mission and its conceptualization of mission in their denominational context. I transcribed the interviews by manual analytical coding, as reported in the methodology section in this paper. This section examines seven categories that emerged from the interview, including the research question: (i) Mission and God's commandment, (ii) Mission and ministry in the community, (iii) Holistic

mission, (iv) Role of lay persons in mission, (v) Spiritual mapping and strongholds, (vi) Mission and ordination, and (vii) Mission and the Holy Spirit.

The first question in the research instrument deals with the participants understanding of conceptualization of Christian mission. This qualitative interview question was prepared to answer the research question: How do the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission?

Mark¹⁷ (MM-RLP, 17.9.17) who coordinates church inter-relationships within the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Alimosho, Lagos shared his understanding of mission in line with the broadly accepted Christian understanding of mission as ‘what we do, and what God commands us, it is the spread of good news of the Christian faith for the conversion of the people’. The question helped to examine the fundamental basis of Christian mission as a mandate for the church. The question was to examine the understanding of the interviewees on Christian mission and to build a solid foundation for the research. The question intends to draw out the missiological implications of lay persons' involvement in mission. It also provides an empirical basis for current research. Mission is very important to the spread and expansion of the Christian faith. Christy¹⁸ (CF-RLP, 5.4.18) pointed out:

The command of Christ is the only basis for the practice of mission. The command is not for a few individuals in the church denomination. All Christians connected with the vision and mission of Christ are called to establish His Kingdom on earth. Christ sends us through our church denomination.

The concept of engaging in mission in obedience to the command of Christ lies at the heart of mission. The concept is linked with sending and being sent as the primary reason for mission. Although, there are broad ranges of things that people can be sent to do with

¹⁷Mark (MM-RLP) (43 years old) coordinates the church inter-relationships with Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Alimosho, Lagos

¹⁸Christy (CF-RLP)

respect to Christian mission. A close examination of the mission's prerogative from the respondents shows that Christ is the driving force of Christian mission in the community and on the earth. The research needs to find out the connection of every Christian with the call to mission in this context, regardless of the individual's social, ethnic, gender identity and spirituality. Meshac¹⁹ (MM-RLW, 5.4.18) sums this up well. He understands 'Christian mission as the outreach arm of the church that goes beyond the traditional setting, it is like push and pull effect in marketing. Ordinarily, the traditional setting expects people to come to the church'. I asked him to further explain the concept of push and pull with respect to his understanding of the Christian mission. He was of the view that 'mission is like a force of gravity, both centrifugal and centripetal in nature'. This suggests that people in the community will not come to church on their own, but the church must go out and bring them to the church. Some church denominations adopt 'wait and come' mission orientation, that is centripetal, while other denominations are informed by 'go and tell' vision.

4.2.1 Mission and God's Command

The Pentecostal lay persons I interviewed viewed Christian mission as the essence of the existence of the church. Mission as a command from God resonates with reasons for the existence of the church as a community of redeemed people. The nitty-gritty and substance of Christian mission is the driving force for going out of their comfort zone for the mission. These lay persons hold to the fact that Christ gave His life for the salvation of the world. They felt they had to reciprocate by love and obedience to Christ's command 'to go' on His mission. Pentecostal lay persons acknowledge the synergy between God the Holy Spirit and the human spirits inspired by the former. Thus, the

¹⁹ Meshac (MM-RLW)

command represents the Pentecostal ways in which mission found its place in society. These lay persons engage people in the community in everyday relationships rather than expecting them to visit the church. During an interview, Bulama²⁰ (BM-RLW, 20.4.17) said indignantly, 'Mission is like propaganda and it's the expansionist project of any denomination'. He denounced the consensus that a Christian mission represents a spread of good news of salvation. When asked to substantiate his claim, he warned that 'A denomination must seek for the overall kingdom mission, not in terms of membership and attendance, but the spirituality of members and their relevance to the invisible Church'. The informant was of the view that the kingdom mission supersedes a church or denominational engagement in mission.

4.2.2 Mission and Ministry in the Community

It appears that the Pentecostal mission is practised by involvement and attraction of people to worship in the public space. Esther²¹ (EF-RLP, 17.9.17) described one of the approaches of doing mission in a local context by the RCCG:

During our mission outreaches in the community, people are contacted as prospects to attend our worship services in the neighbourhood. We give invitation cards or handbills for a unique programme being held in our church during Sunday worship service to interested people. The church is arranged for the new invitees. The church service for the day is usually tagged 'a power-packed, anointed service'. According to her, "the exuberant worship usually begins with speaking in tongues, giving of prophecies, and a bold confession of faith.

I became curious about worship as an approach to mission during the interview. In order to validate her opinion, I attended an RCCG mission service in a nearby neighbourhood as a participant observer. The Sunday morning worship service at RCCG commenced around 9 a.m. with a doxology by the choir. The first half of the programme began with prayers, songs, invocation and testimonies. There was a Bible reading and collection of tithes and offerings in the service. The second half of the service was

²⁰ Bulma (BM-RLW)

²¹ Esther (EF-RLP)

devoted to a sermon and followed by praise characterised by an African style drumming, clapping, and dancing, with the use of various cultural bands and European instruments. This, no doubt, serves as a huge attraction to the people. After the Sunday school session, an announcement was made from the pulpit calling the first-timers to take individual seats arranged very close to the pulpit. Special recognition was given to each person with glowing praise. RCCG referred to the service as the role of worship in mission. I noticed the service followed a regular worship pattern. It appears worship might have been a Pentecostal missional model for the church to attract others to the worship of God. For a better understanding of the worship, I interviewed two lay persons after the worship service. The experience of those interviewed on the role of worship and mission differ significantly from lay persons' participation in worship service. Lay persons are trained as future ministers and are also encouraged to replicate the practice elsewhere within the community as a mission model. The Pentecostal way of worship in Southwest Nigeria can be emotional and vibrant. However, at times, it can be cold, formal and lethargic. One of the lay persons interviewed, Adeyi ²²(AM-RLP, 24.10.17) noted that 'Lack of passion and waiting on the Lord in prayer is often the cause of a petrified worship'. One expression of the broader acceptance of mission is found in the steps taken to carry out mission work within the community. Mission is diverse and multifaceted in RCCG's approach. The mission approach adopts a different style of inviting people in the community for a distinctive social programme organised by the RCCG. The RCCG takes advantage of its long history of mission practice and various resources at its disposal to shape the present and future of its mission in a very significant way. Bob (BMA-RCL, 8.1.19) worked in different RCCG parishes in the Southwest as a local pastor for the past twenty years before his current promotion as the pastor of province 71 in Lagos. He

²² Adeyi (AM-RLP)

shared his experience of a mission across Southwest and specifically about RCCG's mission approaches. He mentioned the following mission approaches:

There are several things we do in our mission approaches which include evangelism, discipleship, intergenerational discipleship which invests in lives across multiple generations. We also advance mission through worshippers from every language, tribes and people group. Besides, we organize small group fellowships as focal mission points. We plant churches with parishes spanning less than one kilometre before the next parish. We present the gospel through local drama, music cantata, naming ceremony, house warming, elite's celebrations, and other spiritual activities as planned by the 'new model parishes' in Southwest, Nigeria

The mission approach attracts quite a few people in the community who later become members of the local parish church. The high point of RCCG's mission approach is the monthly Holy Ghost service conducted by the General Overseer of the Church, Pastor Enoch Adeboye at the Redemption Camp, along the Lagos -Ibadan Expressway, in Southwest, Nigeria.

4.2.3 Holistic Mission

The campaign for Christian mission is linked with the social vision of RCCG. It is believed that mission will make the community a better place and reduce crime in the society. Corruption, bloodshed, and injustice are rampant within the community mission context. The tackling of crime is a significant concern in the community especially with the presence of Area boys and Street boys²³. John²⁴ (JM-RLW) argued that 'Engagement in Christian mission can mitigate the problem of vices and perennial conflicts between the Street boys and the community'. Again, Rufus²⁵ (RM-RLP, 17.9.17) working in a rehabilitation centre for young people at the suburb of Lagos mentioned that 'another way of mitigating crimes and social vices is through the involvement of the church in all

²³The area boys are those who extort money from privately owned commercial transport vehicles at different bus stops across the city of Lagos. The lay persons also carry out the mission among these set of people. Area boys used force and violence to get what they want from the bus conductors and drivers. They act with impunity and destructive behaviour. Show of brutal force against their victims characterise their actions with innuendos.

²⁴ John (JM-RLW)

²⁵ Rufus (RM-RLP)

'round ministry' to the community. All-round (or holistic) ministry looks at the entire life of the community and responds with love and compassion to the poor'. Hospitality and social actions are two markers of holistic mission. The lay persons considered themselves as Good Samaritans within the community by helping the needy and providing necessary provisions for disconnected people.

Tenny²⁶ (TF-RLW, 17.9.17) shared her experience in mission through hospitality and social actions. According to her 'Christians are the light to our world. When we embrace Christ's mission faithfully, our labour will be rewarded. It will reduce crime and all forms of social vices. If Christians commit themselves to rescue the disconnected and marginalised people in the community, we will make our society a better and safer place'. Helping the needy is one characteristic of their commitment to Christian mission. Further evidence for the involvement of lay persons in Christian mission was provided by a female respondent:

My understanding of mission to the poor as a child of God is to bless the less privileged. It is expected of me to bless others through what the Lord has provided for me. The Lord has blessed me, and I must not be selfish, I need to extend hands of love towards the needy around me. It could be in terms of financial help or sharing material substance with the people who are suffering.

However, Anne²⁷ (AF-RLW, 15.9.2018) warned that the act of hospitality can be abused by beneficiaries who accept material blessings but reject the right hand of fellowship from the church. It is sometimes an effort in futility. The influence of mission goes beyond the spiritual formation experience, and inner transformation of new believers converted to the Christian faith. A lay person pointed out that 'Christians cannot detach themselves from the environment, which is the theatre of mission' Emmem²⁸ (EM-RLW, 24.10.17). In RCCG, civic engagement is one of the mission strategies employed as a

²⁶ Tenny (TF-RPW)

²⁷ Anne (AF-RLW)

²⁸ Emmem (EM-RPW)

paradigm shift for the propagation of the gospel in rural and community missions. In the words of a parish pastor, ‘we organize the lay persons to participate in the social life of the community through sport, entertainment, community waste management, refuse disposal, council meetings, traffic control, and community development’ Wande, (WMO-RCL, 17.9.17).

4.2.4 The Role of Lay Persons in Mission

The field data shows different understandings of the definition and role of lay persons in mission within the context of RCCG. There appeared to be contrary interpretations on the extent to which a charismatic church places its priority on laypersons' mission. To the question, ‘What do you understand by the term layperson?’ One informant Lasun²⁹ (LM-RLW, 2.9.2018) from RCCG, City of David stated:

The term lay person refers to a person without specialized knowledge in a particular field. A lay person working in the engineering field is a person without certification in that field. In the church, a layperson refers to ordinary people or members of the church, who are not ordained for religious duties like the clergy. They are referred to as the laity because they perform other duties not assigned to the clergy, Lasun (LM-RLW, 2.9.18).

Lay people go to church for liturgy under the clergy. They are the congregation in the church being taught and nurtured by the clergy. The researcher asked another question to draw out the perception of how the church places a priority on the lay mission. Do you mean that lay persons play a dormant role in the church? The informant responded:

No, the laity is essential in the church, and their activities cannot be overemphasized. In our church, the laity is in charge of leading prayers, Bible reading, and maintenance of gadgets, cleaning and arrangement of the church, among many others. Without the laity, many activities in the church will be paralyzed as the laity warrants the functioning of the clergy. They pay tithes, offering and also contribute to the expansion of the church.

I asked the informant rhetorically, what other things laypersons do to help the church in the process of mission to the community? Lasun ³⁰(LM-RLW, 2.9.2018) further argued that ‘The laity has influence that the clergy does not have. They make up an integral part

²⁹ Lasun (LM-RLW)

³⁰ Lasun (LM-RLW)

of society. They can affect laws, policies and governance, influence their societies by their engagement in secular activities to transform and influence lives for Christ'. This can be done by participating in missions to reach out to the orphans, the needy, and prisoners etc. The clergy cannot well perform these duties because of the other salient responsibilities they are saddled with in the church.

4.2.5 Spiritual Mapping and Strongholds Mission

Spiritual mapping is one of the practical field methods in mission. The concept of spiritual mapping is highly visible in planning for 'Let's go a fishing' in chapter seven of the thesis. The RCCG is known for church planting in demonic infested communities in the southwest, Nigeria. It's a tool for spiritual warfare. It begins by praying over the community to discover insights on local defining events (actions), understand the territory (community), and develop a mission plan for advancing the gospel. During another participant observation, I followed lay leaders on a mission to a local traditional palace in Egbeda parish. The area was a beehive of local and cultural activities. The environment was characterized by local rituals, idolatry, and traditional banter. The environment's appearance made it a bit difficult to 'get people to accept the Christian mission'. The mission exercise took more than four hours. I observed a group of lay persons witnessing in the palace. They found themselves witnessing to Baales, Omo-oniles and the town chiefs. The Baales are the local chiefs with cultural and traditional authority over the land. A typical traditional society in Yoruba is headed by a king and assisted by 'chiefs', called 'Ijoye or the Baales'. The lay persons began the outreach here with prayer, which lasted about thirty minutes. One of the leaders told me, 'This is a mission to Baales and Omo-oniles in our community. They are the custodian of Yoruba tradition and heritage at a lower level than the Obas (kings)'. According to him, 'The Baales are important because

they are recognized as defacto for a king's operations and activities within their domain. The Baales are appointed as the eyes of the Obas'. They meet in a local palace for adjudication and arbitration of quarrels and misunderstandings through divination and oracular consultation within the community. These people take special meals, such as orogbo (alligator pepper), obi (bitter cola) and some leaves as a normal Yoruba delicacy. In their own right, they consult oracles along with Obas. Their cosmology is the Orunmila³¹ fraternity and other gods. This group of people are hurdles to lay persons in a Christian mission. However, with daring affirmations for proclamations of the mission, they moved into the 'strongholds'. The mission of God is interpreted and understood in terms of deities of the Yoruba by these categories of people. They understand Jesus Christ as one of the gods of the Yoruba who originated from Ile- Ife. Lay persons who endeavour to present the good news end in futility. It took about two hours to explain the benefits they would derive by identification with Christ. To them, Christ and local Yoruba traditions are on an equal footing. The lay persons involved in the mission frantically appealed to the precedents of 1930 when a Yoruba 'Oba' gave up the local traditions and accepted Christ, 'sic' Oba Isaac Akinyele of the Christ Apostolic Church, (cited from Dictionary of African Christian Biography 2014:298). The Omo -onile's are the sons of the soil who take pride in the inheritance bequeathed to them by their ancestors. They believe all lands in Yoruba territory belong to their ancestors, and it is considered a trespass to purchase land and build a house without their consent. Outreach to this set of people requires familiarity and an in-depth understanding of their beliefs.

³¹This is the background for understanding involvement of the Yorubas with three circles of Yoruba religion, namely, Christianity, Islam and Orisa (Peel 2016). There are deep interplay and interactions of the Yorubas with the divinity behind each of the gods. Peel J. D. Y. 2016 'The Three Circles of Yoruba Religion' in 2016 *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa-Religion* Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction, University of California Press: 214–232, (Peel 2016).

Pastor Ezekiel recounts (LM-RCM: 20:10: 2019) ³², ‘When lands are purchased, Omonile collect as much as 20% of the value of the land regardless of the government control and issuance of a certificate of occupancy and deed of assignment by land speculators or from land speculators’. When the lay persons ‘arrived’ in their palace, they began a narrative, ‘the earth is the Lords and the fullness, therefore’, this is a Bible quotation from Psalm 24 verse 1 (Ezekiel interview, 2019).

This Christian mission appeals at neutralizing the predominant understanding of land ownership through ancestors. Reaching this group of people with a Christian mission instead demands a unique approach to understanding the purpose of church engagement within the community. The mission, in this instance, is linked with the concept of strongholds and spiritual mapping.

4.2.6 Mission and Ordination

Pastor Akintobi³³ (PA-RCM: 08:01: 2020) mentioned, ‘We do not assume that it is automatic; we want to ensure that they have what it takes to occupy the new position for the work of the ministry’. Akintobi pointed out that ‘An ordained deacon becomes a minister in RCCG. He helps prepare Holy Communion service, altar work, and as worship leader, sorting out basic issues in the church; after ordination, you are given a certificate. If he is very good, he can be made a parish pastor after being ordained as a deacon which is the starting point’. The provincial pastor presents the name to the General Overseer. If God is willing to ordain such a person, he will be ordained as a deacon if he is a man or a deaconess if she is a woman, after some years of service as a worker. A candidate for ordination must have served as a lay person for about 5 to 6 years

³² Pastor Ezekiel LM-RCL. Interview held in his church premises in October 2019 at the RCCG, Liberty Parish, Alimosho, Lagos.

³³ Pastor Akintobi is Zonal Pastor in RCCG Abule Egba Lagos where he assist the Provincial Pastor.

in the RCCG (Akintobi interview, 2019). Bolarinwa³⁴ (BJ-RCL: 15:07:2018) suggested that ‘Ordination confers a rare privilege for spiritual service; the prerogative of ordination is carried out by the General Overseer of the Church always and almost an annual convention of the church’ (Bolarinwa interview, 2018). He ended by saying the act of commission by the General Overseer is higher than ordination.

4.2.7 Mission and the Holy Spirit

The emphasis on the Holy Spirit has helped the advancement of the Pentecostal mission in a significant way. This is a pneumatological expression of Christian faith and activities. The mission is understood by the movement of the Holy Spirit primarily in the life of the lay persons involved in the Christian mission. The intuition and prompting of the Holy Spirit are central to moving out and remaining on the streets in the community because of the inner dealings of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit heightens the sense of urgency to go and share the message of salvation with the people not known for church attendance or participating in any church programme. Talking to people is one challenging task faced by lay persons during witnessing.

The challenge is enormous. Some reject any attempt to discuss anything religious. A few respondents claimed to be scared when they were invited to share their faith openly with people who have no relationship or association with the church. Others argue that they have not received the gifts of the Holy Spirit to enable them to have the privilege of outdoor mission encounters with people from other religions. Some emphasised that going outside the church to the community could lead to being attacked by supernatural forces and thus lead to being harmed or facing a prolonged battle in spiritual warfare

³⁴ Bolarinwa Josiah is the first Principal of the Redeemed Bible College, Nigeria. He is currently the Research and Development Director of the RCCG, Redemption City, Kilometer 42 Lagos Ibadan, express Nigeria.

within their cultural setting. Some lay persons in this context had served either as local missionaries within an indigenous context or regular itinerant evangelists in the RCCG. Sharing of their faith with people was a process in developing convictions for mission. It begins with fear and uncertainty and with persistent participation, the fear is gone and boldness to witness begins to increase. Therefore, it is not unusual to be scared at the beginning of a lifelong experience. Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity influences the religious landscape in Southwest Nigeria. Lay Pentecostal mission practitioners often operate under “the power of the Holy Spirit for mission, evangelism, healings, prophesying and exorcism”. Pastor, Ayobami (OA-RCL 15:08:2019)³⁵ RCCG country Coordinator for Rwanda, when interviewed at the Redemption Camp, acknowledged that ‘lay Pentecostal mission is the continuum of the present-day ministry of Christ in our contemporary situation. To him, ‘this is a tangible manifestation of a divine influence of God on the earth and an infallible proof of authentic Christian faith and mission’. However, a few respondents claimed that they were scared whenever they were invited to share their faith openly with people. Moreover, I interviewed two lay persons in an urban neighbourhood of Lagos who mentioned substantial opposition to lay mission outreaches from a few Muslims living in their community. Deacon Funmilayo (DF-RLP; 23:09:2017 interviews) states, ‘In the Baruwa location, a few Muslim populations have always countered our mission outreaches by inciting a few Muslims converts against church attendance and fellowship with the believers’. She mentioned the opposition experienced from Muslims during an interview. Another layperson, Wale Ademola (WA-RLP: 10:12:2021) in Akowonjo, Lagos province 90, mentioned that:

Today a large Muslims number who are jealous of the Christian faith and practices, now utilise the same strategy of the Pentecostal mission to reduce or curtail the high number of Muslims getting converted to the Christian faith. There are two mosques in our area that hold

³⁵ Pastor Ayobami Oladapo works as RCCG National Missions Coordinators of Ethiopia and Rwanda.

night vigils on Fridays and the mosque opens on Sunday morning for a pseudo worship. Yoruba Muslims now hold prayer on Sundays in few of the mosques.

The on-going situation confirms the extreme religious climate and antagonist environment where the Pentecostal mission operates in Nigeria. Major clashes were recorded by the Muslim community against the Christians' lay practices as the Muslims see this as a threat to their faith when their people are invited to church or converted to Christianity through the ongoing mission activities of the lay persons in the community. Counter Islamic Sunday worship programs are now being held by Muslims in Lagos and Southwest Nigeria to checkmate the growth of Pentecostal churches and restrain the advance of lay person's mission outreaches in the community. I now turn to the second case study on the Deeper Life Bible Church.

4.3 Case Study Two: Deeper Life Bible Church

I conducted seventeen interviews with respondents from Deeper Life Bible Church. Ten lay persons and seven clergy were interviewed in this analysis. The analysis examined the understanding of lay persons on Christian mission; lay persons' self-understanding and the DLBC approach to mission and showed the results of the interviews conducted with the lay persons and the clergy in Deeper Life Bible Church regarding conceptualization of Christian mission mostly by lay persons in their denominational context. I transcribed the interviews by manual analytical coding, as reported in the methodology section in this paper. This section examines five categories that emerged during the interview: (i) Command of Christ, (ii) Priority of mission, (iii) Participation in God's redemption work, (iv) Spreading Christianity, and (v) Lay persons and ordination.

4.3.1 Command of Christ

The central research question is:

- How do the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualize lay involvement in mission?

Lay respondents gave answers with a common understanding of a command given by Christ as the primary understanding of Christian mission. In DLBC, lay persons always back up their perceptions with Bible verses on mission. The Bible text emphasized as Christ's command by informants is (Matthew 28:18-20). Again, the following phrases occurred in the interview several times, 'saving of souls, winning souls for Christ, passion for souls, command of Christ, baptising believers and making of disciples. The use of these phrases reveals the understanding of lay persons on mission with respect to the command of Christ. Felicia ³⁶ (FF-DLP, 10.7.19), a female informant reasoned with a similar emphasis, 'Christ's command is the fundamental understanding of lay persons' involvement in Christian mission in my denomination. Mission's work is the commandment of Christ to every believer according to John 20: 21'. Another Bible verse referred to was when Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you' (NIV). The informant referred to the command of Christ as an imperative for Christian mission. Two strong indications emerged from the interviews. First, lay persons' mission action in DLBC is informed by the command of Christ. Second, the doctrinal emphasis of the church on mission is another influence on their actions. The weekly Bible study in DLBC strongly influences and is a strong conceptualization for church's the modes and actions for its mission work. Here is the discovery for the missional ecclesiology of the DLBC. The broader understanding of Christ's command points to saving of souls.

³⁶ Felicia is 27 years old, serving a cell leader in Alimosho district of Deeper Life Bible Church with over 20 young women engaged in weekly outreach to the community.

The organized way of reaching people with good news requires a strategy. DLBC as a church denomination has a strategy for mission, which is carried out by mobilizing lay persons for 'mission action' within the community. From the interviews, I compared the understanding of mission in terms of the response of the clergy and the lay persons. It appears as it might be expected that the clergy have a better grasp of the conceptual views of Christian mission than the lay persons. The clergy teach and mobilizes the church members on mission through the regular evangelism training sessions every Thursday in the church. However, the mandate of the mission is actualised mainly by the lay persons.

4.3.2 Priority of Mission

The missions take place through networks of relationships that are geographically based. Early Christian mission in DLBC began with great zeal, commitment, and a form of 'monk' type spirituality, as Martin³⁷ (MMP-DCL, 5.12.17) group pastor in Alimosho recounted. I asked Martin to explain 'monk type spirituality'. According to him:

The idea of the mission was ingrained in the consciousness of the lay persons in Deeper Life, that all the world meant nothing, but one essential thing is to 'win the world at all costs'. The lay persons then had only one purpose for living, 'Christ's mission'. We separated ourselves from friends and relations, like the monks of sixteenth century Christianity'. All other things were considered as 'mundane and ephemeral'. if those things compete with Christ's followership and our view of discipleship. We always looked at how we can get more people to come to Christ or return to Christ.

. Lay persons in professional careers such as lawyers, engineers, teachers, medical doctors and nurses employ a strategic business approach for mission in DLBC. The approach uses a strategic forum tagged 'International Friendship League' (IFL) to reach highly placed people in society. The IFL is a programme organized for the elite in society comprising of participants from the business world, the academic community and the people at the helm of affairs in Nigeria. The league serves primarily as a platform for networking and interactions among members with a view to assisting them to grow and

³⁷ Martin is the Group Pastor in Shasha at one of the district headquarters with seven congregations in his jurisdiction.

live consistently. Topical issues that affect the family, business and professional and ministerial issues are regular features of its programme. Lagos is divided into about 100 mission locations. The lay persons in each location numbered about 20 as a mission team. They go around the community as evangelists, proclaiming the message of salvation and the Second Coming of Christ. Each location has a Bible study leader. The mission activities have two sets of leaders with delegated responsibility for mission: a Bible study leader for doctrines, and an evangelism team leader, for the mission (DLBC inaugural 2018).

Allen (AMJ-DCL, 17.8.19) mentioned that 'the mission sought for a wider spread and advancement of mission leaders across Southwest Nigeria. He shared his views on the theme 'From Pentecost to public place mission'. Allen further emphasized:

That the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of mission. We had to start Bible study groups in five geographical areas of Lagos, namely Akoka, Agege, Mushin, Ajegunle and Oyingbo at the headquarters of the RCCG, then Cemetery Road, but now renamed Redemption Highway. Allen shared his conviction that "Our main approach was through personal mission outreaches, street mission campaign, and establishment of school mission outreach across Lagos, in Southwest Nigeria, bus mission campaign.

The above assertions, resonate with the fact that Pentecostal mission is grounded first and foremost in the conviction that the Holy Spirit is the motivating power behind all mission activities (Anderson 2003:2). As one of the defining marks of the new covenant, Pentecost is seen as the endowment with or by the Spirit for "Christocentric" missions.

4.3.3 Participation in God's Redemptive Work

The lay persons interviewed evaluated their contributions to Christian mission in DLBC as participants in the redemptive work of God. Mission proceeds from God to placing God at the centre of human activities. God's work for rescue and redemption is at the heart of mission engagement. The phrases 'salvation of the lost, winning souls, warning the sinners and Christian activities at all levels reveal how the respondents interpret

God's redemptive work. As Ola ³⁸ (OM-DLW, 8.11.2019) pointed out when asked what the roles of the lay persons in his denomination were, he said, 'They learn the stand of the Scriptures as regards mission and their place in the plan of God for the salvation of souls'. Williams³⁹ (WF-DLW, 5.11.19) another respondent's view, is that 'The mission of a Christian' is to win souls and to reconcile the people in the community back to God'. The word winning emerged as a soteriological understanding underpinning the drive for mission. This assumption is the foundation for the theological belief of DLBC mission. The respondents think that people are lost, and God is sending them as messengers to reconcile them with God. Use of words such as 'win, lost, find, reconcile' should be understood as key to the soteriological position of DLBC.

Holistic mission is linked with participation in God's redemptive work. It addresses the need and aspirations of the people through hospitality and civic engagement. Respondents expressed the way they met people's needs of various kinds, engaged in Christian activities at all levels, brought the gospel to the marginalized and practiced Christian social engagement. They provide food stores in selected districts churches, minister through various home caring fellowships known as life-cell centres. As one lay person stated, 'we do all things positive within the community to make the people realize God's love through care, help and provisions for their needs'. When the action is connected with the purpose of Christian mission, 'going into the world to preach' becomes a mark of identification with God in the work of reconciliation and recreation.

³⁸ Ola, 27 years old works with the youth wings of Deeper Life Campus Fellowship, Alimosho, Lagos. He leads the campus youth a rural, rugged mission in Lagos.

³⁹ Williams (WF-DLW)

4.3.4 Spreading Christianity

The lay persons interviewed spoke about the Christian mission as an endeavour to spread Christianity within their local context. They see Christian mission primarily as a proclamation of the gospel. The items codified in the interview transcript of eight lay persons provided insights into Christian mission as the spread of Christianity by DLBC. I checked the codes as terms which emerged from the data: we have 'proclamation, witnessing in season and out of season and personal witnessing'. The lay persons are the key group in the work of the DLBC in Southwest Nigeria. They consider themselves as the ambassadors of Christ and representatives of the church in the community. The spread of Christianity by DLBC is embedded in a 'programme' involving a set of 'anonymous activities' for missions. The anonymous activities often do not carry specific religious labels or denominational identity. The 'anonymous activity' is designed as a disguise to attract people who reject direct religious package. In the interview, Leke ⁴⁰ (LM-DLP, 22.7.18) a layman mentioned that 'The church sends people to those places in need of the gospel; they organize programmes and then plant a church in that location'. To confirm the case cited above, I asked, in what ways lay persons were involved in mission in his denomination? In explicit support of lay person's mission, Ayo⁴¹ (AM-DLW, 5.11.19) argued 'Lay persons are encouraged to go for mission; they are used for the major work because they make the bulk of the number. Their work ranges from reaching out in personal evangelism and follow up of converts'. Lay persons proved themselves very strategic in the spread of Christian faith in DLBC through non-religious activities such as crèches for the less privileged in the community, charity projects, adult education classes, and the Success Academy for Youths, (SAY).

⁴⁰ Leke (LM-DLP)

⁴¹ Ayo (AM-DLW) Ayo is 35 years old. He teaches government and economics in a Christian secondary school. He is married and works with young adult church in Deeper Life Bible Church, Oshogbo.

4.3.5 Lay Persons and Ordination

Oliver⁴² (OMS-DCL, 25.12.18), one of the Bible study leaders for Agege cluster mentioned that the 'the laypersons were trained to become workers in the parlance of DLBC, nobody had any title or accolade, every member was a brother and sister'. The lay persons' training at that time was a period of 'vision casting' for DLBC. He continues,

The leader in the person of Kumuyi prepared the lay persons for mission in the workers training meeting, where he taught discipleship, evangelism and mission. He used these themes as the curriculum of the training. The mission training sent lay persons into different communities and undertook the task of soul-winning and mission. Those of us who already knew Christ were willing and excited to share our faith with others. The kernel of the truth is that the "The lay persons who became Christians through the Bible study were taught and disciplined, and sent out to tell others what they understood about their new relationship with Christ. (Oliver interview, December 2018)

The Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) provides a different model of ordination in contrast with RCCG and DSCM. DLBC presents an alternative to ordination, known as a call into ministry. The calling into ministry is seen as the greatest parameter for leadership and a substitute for the ordained ministry. Lay people are called into ministry, on a part time basis, while still keeping their secular professions. Those in leadership positions in DLBC are chosen instead of being ordained into the ministry. It usually begins with the individual receiving the prompting of the Holy Spirit for a call into a certain area of the ministry or mission within DLBC. This may take some time, as the person is placed under watch, and undergoes an examination of his adherence to the doctrines taught by DLBC. He may then be recommended to the leadership for consideration and confirmation. The fundamental way of empowering the lay person for mission is through the anointing of the Holy Spirit rather than the ceremony and rituals of ordination. The RCCG practices ordination, whereas DLBC believes in anointing and

⁴²Oliver (OMS-DCL) Oliver served as Bible study leader. Several times president of Fellowship of Christian Students in Southwest Nigeria under the Deeper Life Bible Church. He planned retreats and mission outreaches to several cities in the Southwest.

ordination by the Holy Spirit and the rest is a mere pronouncement. Allen (AMJ-DCL, 17.8.19) stated ‘We believe that anointing by the Holy Spirit is the final qualifier for empowerment in mission. The lay person is equipped for mission by the anointing of the Holy Spirit’.

The reason why Deeper Life does not ordain a minister may not be farfetched. The lack of a formal ordination service for ministers in Deeper Life is perhaps because of Pastor Kumuyi's experience in Apostolic Church where he ministered without ordination. He could not be ordained possibly because he was under discipline. However, Ojo (1988), in his study of the emergence of Deeper Life Bible Church argued that “In late 1975 Kumuyi left the Apostolic Faith Church in Lagos following a crisis which both sides refused to discuss, thereby deepening the secrecy surrounding the person of Kumuyi in the Apostolic Faith could be the result of ‘the conservative doctrine of that church, which tenaciously prescribes that preaching is the job of a few ordained ones alone, or the job of those who are called by the Holy Spirit’ (Ojo 1988a:145). In contrast, in RCCG, a formal ordination service is organised and those ordained are given a certificate as evidence of their ordination. The real difference is that in RCCG, it is formalized, but in DLBC, there is no formal ordination ceremony. Technically there is no ordination in DLBC but, instead, to designate ministerial responsibility, appointments are made and a hierarchy is created. What it shows is that RCCG and DLBC have different concepts of ordination and use different language to describe what the same concept is functionally.

4.4 The Clergy's Understanding of Mission

Mission wields influence in the community, in terms of leading a change, either spiritual or physical. The craving in the heart of the clergy for mission goes beyond the nature of the Church to gaining both tangible and intangible things as aid to the Christian faith.

They are at the forefront of community opinions. The mission is perceived as a source of power and ambition in ministry. The power is attached to the position occupied within the echelon of the church and the hierarchy. The lay persons are sent out of the church by the clergy to speak and spread the news of redemption in the community where they are. The connotation for sending is multi-task with various strategies adopted to reach the city with the gospel. The lay persons are sent to save, speak and liberate. The clergy encourage the lay persons to give to mission.

This involves money to fund and support the work of mission either at home or abroad. If people cannot go on the mission, or directly participate in the mission, it is stipulated that financial support is critical to sustaining mission and mission's work and strategy as sacrosanct with the outreaches of the church. Another understanding of the mission by the clergy is sending. The Church is measured not by the seating capacity but by the sending capacity. It means sending lay persons as mission contacts to the community for the sharing of the good news of Christ. There are different categories of sending, short term mission or furlough mission.

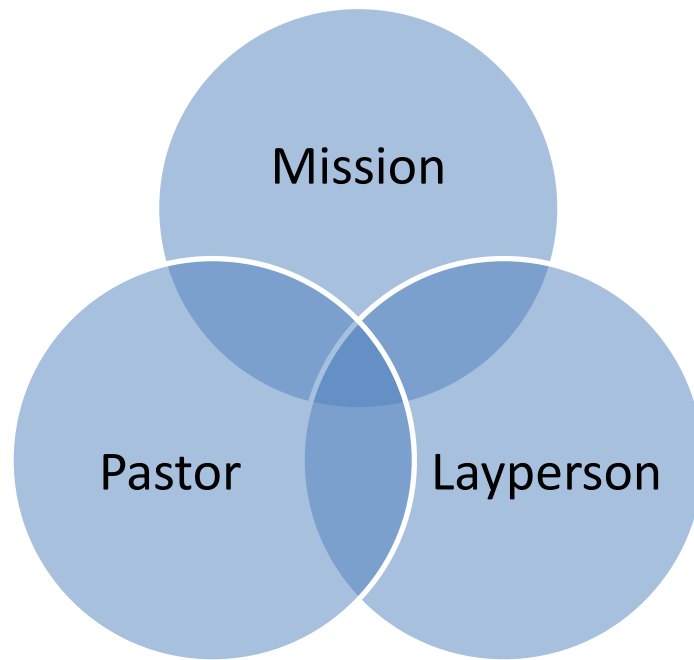


Figure 4.1: Interrelationships in Lay Pentecostal Mission

4.4.1 Comparisons between the Selected Pentecostal Churches

The two churches, the RCCG and the DLBC, presented differences in doctrine, ordination, mission strategies and ecclesiology. On the one hand, the RCCG preaches conversion, practices glossolalia, accepts modernity and contextualisation of mission in any given context. RCCG pastors/members count themselves a conservative evangelical and adopt a literalist approach to the Bible. RCCG is classified as prosperity health and wealth Pentecostal. On the other hand, DLBC preaches radical conversion, practices glossolalia, maintains a rigid sectarian ethos and rejects worldly costumes and values. DLBC is conservative and believes in the literal interpretation of the Bible. It is categorized as a legalistic neo-Pentecostal church. RCCG does not have a unique entity. It is instead a brand, under which hundreds of very different, small and big parishes worship. The uniqueness of DLBC is unmistakable. It has a homogenous identity and uniform characteristics.

Noticeable in the denominations are dispersing, converging, and contradictory tendencies. It reflects in their ordination, lay formation and denominational practices. Holiness, strict life, moral discipline, and anti-materialism are cardinal doctrines in DLBC. The RCCG liturgy and church structure, offer of miracles, and open the church to different social classes and ethnic group. There is no denying the missiological similarities of the selected Pentecostal churches, but they demonstrate vast differences in their theology and ecclesiology. They portray both the complexity and coherence of early Pentecostalism. However, Deeper Life differs significantly in its stress on holiness codes of conduct and behaviour, and its anti-materialistic and otherworldly stance. The absence of uniformity is explained by the diverse nature and structure of Pentecostalism in the Global South. Both churches have a similar understanding of worship, liturgy and mission. RCCG perhaps recognizes better the pluralistic society within which it is situated. In contrast, DLBC emphasizes the creation of a homogenous community of faith from a pluralistic society. The two churches provided models of awareness and attitude for the practice of lay Pentecostal mission within the southwest context in Nigeria and examples of the way lay mission could be done. The two churches represent a parallel Pentecostal paradigm in theology and ecclesiology shaping African missions.

4.4.2 Critiques of Pentecostal Practice in the Selected Churches

There are obvious drawbacks observed in the pursuit of mission by these two denominational Pentecostal churches which can be lessons for the broader churches in the same context of their missional practice, especially for the neo-Pentecostal African churches.

4.4.3 Critiquing Lay Mission Formation

The priority on a lay mission by DLBC at the outset hinged basically on two identified strategies. First, the interdenominational Bible study and second, the formation of lay mission outreaches. One of my informants had earlier pointed out that "The lay persons in each location numbered about 20 as a mission team. They went around the community as evangelists, proclaiming the message of salvation and the Second Coming of Christ. Each location had a Bible study leader. The mission activities produced two sets of leaders with delegated responsibility for mission: a Bible study leader for doctrines, and an evangelism team leader, for the mission" (AMJ-DCL, 17.8.19). Kumuyi rejected both the Anglican and Apostolic Faith Church ecclesiology and began to organize a Free Church independent Bible study. This Bible study exposed participants to fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith to solve the problem of dormant and cold spirituality inherent in orthodox churches. Frank Macchia emphasized the importance of doctrines for critical and contextual theological reflections as the basis for the church's beliefs and praxis (Dempster et al. 2011:9). The doctrine consists of a concise statement of biblical truth presented in a logical order and marked by gathered scriptural support. It provided a new vibrant faith for the new waves of 'Pentecostal revivalists' and the 'born again'. As a result of lack of formal training- 'doctrinal problems proliferated'. However, DLBC has been criticized for causing a schism in the mainline churches because of drawing existing people for lay mission through its interdenominational Bible study.

It has been alleged that DLBC started its lay mission by recruiting Christians from many denominations across Southwest Nigeria who were not the direct converts of people won to Christ by its mission endeavour. The majority of these Christians were drawn from the mainline churches such as Methodist, Anglican, and Baptist and a few indigenous Pentecostal churches as the founding members of its lay mission. This did not

go down well with clergies from the mainline churches. They announced that they would never work with DLBC again. Burgess confirmed the same development in the formation of the Eastern Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. He observed that “Initially, most of the youth were members of Anglican and Methodist Churches, the main denominations in the area” (Burgess 2008:157). The Pentecostal movement drew a higher percentage of the members from the Presbyterian and Assemblies of God members. This strategy has been questioned, as a form of ‘sheep stealing’ in disguise. Marshall argues “after a decade of accusing the new Born Again churches of ‘sheep stealing’, many mission-based or orthodox denominations began tolerating Born Again fellowships and activities” (Marshall 2009:74). The lay mission formation received criticism from both close and distant observers of DLBC. Gaiya's critique of the approach is worth mentioning here, when he writes, “The initial members of Deeper Life Bible Church were converted from other churches, courting the charge of “sheep stealing” (Gaiya 2002:13).

4.4.4 Denominationalism

The denominational influence appears as one of the leading motivations for lay mission practice. The participants from the selected churches appear to place a strong emphasis on denominational identity. Both the churches essential practice of propagation of the gospel by lay persons accentuates the strength of the denomination to which they belong. One informant proclaimed “Join our congregation, with pride and prejudice. Our model church has everything you can think of in life’ (VM-RLP, 20.8.18). Denominational pride is a reality in the spread of Christianity in Southwest, Nigeria. The approach is a church-centred concept of mission in contrast with a Christ-centred mission. A church-centred mission is a Christian misunderstanding which appropriates Christus victor Christology into a church building business, (Sung-Hae Kim S 2001:9). Out of 20 laypersons

interviewed, 70 per cent were focused on mission as a denominational obsession. Souls won are regarded as trophies to the denominations, rather than to Christ. It appears that a few Pentecostal revivalists were looking for a cheap church planting mission strategy. In the same vein, Ward and Stanley argue that 'Here we are in deep waters. Nevertheless, the thought persists that a rudely self-seeking church denomination might be a contradiction in terms' (Ward & Stanley, 2000:138). Building on the earlier discourse on the fragmentation in the Pentecostal mission, Andy Lord suggested a network, which he called a structure within the categories of Spirit, Word and Community. He noted 'Spirit as moving people outwards from individuals to local communities to the wider church and out to the world' (Lord 2014:23). In a significant way, denominationalism represents a proclamation of one Christ, multiple visions, with disconnected voices in a homogenous Yoruba context. Unfortunately, the Yoruba audience who are the recipient of the mission watch in dismay at the struggle and schism evident in denominationalism.

4.4.5 Indiscriminate Ordination of Political Elites and Acceptance of Traditional rulers as Church Members

What the Pentecostals teach often contradicts and negates the actual practices, not only in ordination but in their ecclesiology. There are diverse and multiple variants of ordination which shape the hierarchical structures of the Pentecostal ecclesiology. There are two broad issues I identified with RCCG over the inappropriate practice of ordination: (i) indiscriminate ordination of questionable political elites as deacons. (ii) acceptance of traditional rulers and 'Obas' as church members. The criticism on the performance of ordination was awry, especially with the calibre of people involved. One informant refers to the former practice as 'cultural investiture' and pedestrian pedagogue (EMA-RCL, 5.10.19).

4.4.6 Recognition of Political Elites

Political elites had the penchant of stamping their recognition on the Church in Nigeria, especially with the Pentecostal mission. This might be the reason for the ordination of a few political elites who associate with the RCCG. These people belong, but do not behave. For example, in 2000, Obasanjo (former President of Nigeria, 1999 to 2007) worshipped with Adeboye and his congregation at the international headquarters of RCCG at the Redemption Camp, claiming the honour of being ‘the first born again Christian president’ of Nigeria (Ojo 2001: 32). Again, on 24 May 2002, Obasanjo, together with many of the members of his cabinet, top government officials and the senate president, Pius Anyim, participated in a particular Holy Ghost service officiated by Adeboye at Abuja (Ukah 2003:199). One respondent commented of this practice, ‘They are merely searching for belonging, yet challenging identity and allegiance to tradition, not willing to say goodbye to a traditional stool’ (VM-RLP, 20.8.18). The RCCG ordained a few of these questionable political elites as deacons and deaconesses. A former clergy who left RCCG commented that ‘this indiscriminate kind of ordination is inspired from the pit of hell’. He saw the indiscriminate ordination as a desecration of a holy calling to the Christian ministry (EMA-RCL, 5.10.19). Another informant, a parish pastor confessed that ‘not all those who attended water baptism and school of ministry were qualified to be ordained but one way or the other some bribed their way through the exercise’ (EMA-RCL,5.10.19). I asked one RCCG parish pastor to comment on the criticism levelled against his denomination about indiscriminate ordination. He explained that ‘Everybody has his own opinion, the Pharisees criticized Jesus for accepting Zacchaeus reception in his house’ (WMO-RCL, 17.9.17). In discussions with members of established Pentecostal churches, ‘they see it as blurring the difference between ‘Christianity and paganism’ (EMA-RCL, 5.10.19).

The involvement of lay persons in mission was not easy in a clergy-centred mission context. Lay persons are aligned with the extraction and attractional mission model (Morrison 2014:276). The lay persons have been silent in the church and were forbidden from participating in any form of mission in the early 1960s in Nigeria (Maxey 2016:140). The Apostolic Faith Mission in Nigeria, which was the bedrock of the classical Pentecostal church, had several times disallowed the laity from participating in Christian missions until they were ordained. Such was the case of Josiah Akindayomi of the Cherubim and Seraphim Christian Movement, who spoke publicly in the community without permission from the clergy. ‘The incident happened 28 years before 1952 when Josiah saw a Christian piece of literature tract written by the Apostolic Faith Church, and he decided to print it and use it for evangelism. As simple as it seemed to him being unschooled, he did not know he needed a copyright owner's consent. He was called before the leaders of the church and was found guilty. The rest of the tracts were retrieved from him and were burnt right before his eyes’ (Bible-Davids 2009:123). This incident makes the case study of RCCG a pertinent one because a lay person founded the church without primary secular education and theological training. The church began through trial and error in 1952 when he left the Cherubim and Seraphim church in Nigeria because of syncretism. Again, the Deeper Life Bible Church Nigeria began with the effort of William Kumuyi, who although a university don, was without any theological training with 12 people in January 1973 (Isaacson 1990:15). He believed in doing Bible study sessions separately from the organised Apostolic Faith Mission without being ordained. Many Pentecostal churches are formed and led by charismatic leaders. He was greatly misunderstood in the Apostolic Faith Church he was attending at the time. His traducers took exemption to his firm conviction, especially his insistence that personal evangelism

was the duty and ministry of every Christian. The church believed that only ordained ministers were qualified and mandated to preach the gospel (Ojewale et al. 2021:71).

4.4.7 Comparison with the Literature

The existing works of literature on Nigeria Pentecostalism highlight its origin, its rapid growth and links with global Pentecostalism. This section seeks to highlight a few of the findings in the research. Various factors were identified by the participants from the selected churches, including meeting needs, the ordination of lay persons, the role of lay persons in mission, participation in God's redemptive mission and the spread of Christianity. From this point, I will examine the works of Ruth Marshall, Richard Burgess, Asonah Ukah, Matthew Ojo, Nimi, Wariboko, and Andrew Lord who have written on Pentecostal mission and ecclesiology in the context of the present research.

4.5 Marshall's Political Spirituality

Marshall presented Pentecostalism in the political and religious climate in Nigeria in the post-colonial eras when the citizens grapple with inequality, poverty and corruption (Marshall 2009). The struggle gave birth to 'being born again' as the panacea to the individual's freedom. The restoration of 'ruined traditions' by the old established churches in Nigeria was the focus of Pentecostalism from its emergence. Marshall pointed out that 'the ruined traditions' that Pentecostal Christianity everywhere claims to restore and fulfil refers to the early Christian church of the apostles' (ibid 2009:80). However, the Pentecostals interpret the Christian church of the apostles as the present-day ministry of Christ which they are delegated to fulfil as a mission mandate. Although Marshall indicated that 'there was a birth of African church movement in which Nigerian clerics and laymen set out to 'indigenize' Nigerian Christianity' (2009:89). It is worth noting that Marshall specifically alluded to the clergy and lay people taking responsibility for

mission in the new Pentecostal heartlands of Nigeria. Here, the Pentecostal clerics and lay persons were challenged by the vacuum created by the old-established evangelical protestant and mainline churches' half-hearted attitudes to the urgency of mission.

4.5.1 Born Again Mission Thrust

The crux of mission thrust becomes the mandate for the 'born agains' in the new wave of Pentecostals mission engagement. These 'born agains' from Marshall's analyses are predominantly lay persons (2009:73). Again, Marshall emphasized revival, new waves of Pentecostalism, its antecedents, born again Christianity, new strands of Christianity, in the social-political environment of Nigeria (2009:2). She argued that there is a process of conversion in Pentecostalism based on the idiom of the new birth. She stated that 'the project of conversion involves the elaboration of new modes of the government of the self and of others in which practices of faith are fostered by the discipline of the body, mind, and emphasizing purity, rectitude, and interiority' (2009:125).

There is a connection between this thesis and the research by Marshall. The paradigm of conversion resonated prominently as the initial stimulus for Christian mission in RCCG Lagos central province. A provincial pastor stated that "The conversion paradigm involves three significant responses from listeners, (i) change of religion, (ii) change of world views (iii) and a change of nature' (BMA-RCL, 8.1.19). These form the backdrop to the Pentecostal ecclesiology for churches across Nigeria and specifically in Southwest Nigeria. This concept of conversion in the selected Pentecostal churches appears to be the key to understanding the practice and drive for mission at every stage of their mission campaign both at home and abroad. For instance, Deeper Life, under its

logo inscribed its mission thrust, as ‘Your spiritual welfare is our concern’⁴³. The RCCG mission statement states ‘To evangelise the world in the name of Jesus Christ and to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ’ with a conviction that one in every family in Nigeria” will be reached for Christ⁴⁴.

4.5.2 Burgess’ Pentecostal Revival

The starting point for Burgess was the civil war and the understanding of the spirituality of Igbos theology which centred on Pentecostal experiences such as passion, missionary impulse and suffering. He ‘explored the socio-political, economic, and religious background to the revival and its Pentecostal progeny, and showed how the crisis generated by colonial legacies, missionary ideologies, decolonization, and conflict created a favourable environment for religious innovation’ (Burgess 2008:68). Burgess’ main concern was to move from the traditional Igbos cultural worldview, socio-political upheavals, and defeat in war to how the Igbos embraced a vibrant Christian faith and a new Pentecostal movement emerged in the process. There was a shift from the powerless gods and traditional religion to seeking salvation as a panacea to their crises. Burgess explained how ‘war trauma and deprivation also intensified religious commitments by dealing a severe blow to materialistic lifestyles and future ambitions and creating a crisis of identity. After the war, many Igbos interpreted their survival as evidence of God’s providential power, and this too precipitated a search for salvation’ (ibid 2008:182).

⁴³ DLBC- This is the anchor statement under the logo of the Deeper Life Bible Church. The central focus of the ministry is spiritual welfare. Source: From the doctrinal statement of the church.

⁴⁴ RCCG- This is a central mission statement of the RCCG as cited by A. Ukah in his book on the Redeemed Christian Church of God. 2003; 73.

4.5.3 Revolution, Ruptures and Civil War Revival

The current monographs are linked to the issues of clergy, lay persons' mission, and Pentecostals' response to civil war, revolution, and austerity. The failure of the old established churches to offer alternative practical solutions to the growing needs of the people in Southwest and Southeast Nigeria was a critical concern. Marshall and Burgess have presented the dynamics of Pentecostal revival through a metaphor of revolution and civil war. Andy Lord researched the actions of Pentecostals in times of austerity. The alternatives to producing mid-range theory are a push to the edges (Grover and Lyytinen 2015). Therefore, pushing the study beyond the current position, requires the following questions? What happens to mission in the period of stability and peace in a nation? What will be the response of the Pentecostal churches to a peaceful climate without political upheavals? Again, what happens to mission when the community and environment are in a state of equilibrium? Studies from these earlier scholars suggested that people only seek God in times of turbulence and chaos (Burgess 2009:39,60; Marshall 2009:73–87). Burgess and Marshall shaped their studies through multiple primary sources based on over a hundred churches across Nigeria. The churches were indigenous, neo-Pentecostal churches, a few classical Pentecostal and mainline denominations. Ukah exclusively studied the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The first two studies took account of the cultural, social and political contexts of Nigeria. The current thesis is different from the previous studies in that; it is a comparative case study of two Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria. Ojo examines the rise of Pentecostalism in Nigeria through young men and women who labelled themselves pastors and evangelist without theological training (2006:9). Wariboko's work presents a multidisciplinary study of how Nigerian Pentecostals conceive of and engage with a spirit-filled world. It seeks to discern the spirituality of the charismatic religious

movement in Nigeria concerning issues of politics, national sovereignty, economic development, culture, racial identity, gender, social ethics, and epistemology (Wariboko 2014:23). None of these studies have researched the overarching role of lay persons in mission as the object of their research.

4.6 Summary

This chapter explored the analyses of the RCCG and DLBC mission praxis through qualitative interviews and participant observations. I analysed the data and highlights various themes that emerged from the study. My investigation discovered some common phenomenal and practices among the Pentecostal believers of the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the Deeper Life Bible Church heritages. These include the priority of lay mission and involvement of lay persons and clergy in mission. Christian mission assignment is conceptualized as a significant outreach arm of the denominations through the lay persons and clergy involvement in mission.

Formerly, the lay persons were the receivers of ministry in the mainline churches. I discovered that the context has changed in the case study, that the lay persons now are active as givers of ministry in contrast to having been the recipients of ministry. My investigation found that the practice of mission is diverse, multifaceted, and multi-directional in the homogenous context of Pentecostal mission in Southwest, Nigeria. It found out that mission obsesses inwardly when it fails to move outwardly. There is also dissimilarity in the theologies and ecclesiologies undergirding the mission praxis in the selected Pentecostal churches. The participants in the research have passed through similar situations, but their explanations are different. In the ruptures of these diversities and exclusivities, the bigger picture remains – a beautiful tapestry emerges in the

differences. The next chapter explores mobilization of lay congregation for mission by the Redeemed Christian Church of God as it came up in the data in section 4.2 above.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE MOBILIZATION OF LAY CONGREGATIONS FOR PENTECOSTAL MISSION

This chapter explores the mobilization of lay congregations for Pentecostal missions in the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Southwest Nigeria, as a case study. Some of the participants in this study are pastors, lay persons and professionals in Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) on full-time Christian missions and part-time services to the church to spread God's mission. Others are assistant pastors, altar workers and workers in training. The categories of leaders and members of the church interviewed include Provincial Pastors, the Provost of Redeemed Bible College, and the Research and Development Director, who handles strategic mission functions and operations in Redeemed Christian Church of God. Occupationally, the respondents are gainfully employed. Their occupations include teaching, lecturing, printing, business entrepreneurs, engineering information technology and banking. All the respondents reported working in RCCG between a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 35 years. I coded the data by identifying specific patterns that answered to the research question and the themes that emerged from the data. The patterns and themes were identified by a close reading of the data and highlighting areas of interest, paying attention to recurring ideas and language. I created categories in line with my research questions. This chapter discusses the mission mobilization as a joint effort of the RCCG by the clergy and lay persons. It looks at how mobilization occurs in response to spiritual needs in the RCCG mission context and professional mission frontiers. It examines how the lay congregants are sensitized for mobilization. The metaphor of advertisement looms large in mission mobilization from the theological perspectives of the RCCG's school of mission. The emerging themes in

the thesis rest essentially on the influence of mobilization as a catalyst for the growth of the RCCG.

Mission mobilization is resourcing mission in specific local and global contexts. In everything, it takes resources to implement clear and strategic actions. The resources are time, finances, facilities, tools, equipment and so forth to equip the mission efforts to accomplish their functions well. In the previous chapter, I analysed in depth my thesis's central research question. Chapter six of my thesis answers the third research question on the theology underpinning the selected Pentecostal churches. The current chapter addresses the second research question. The second research question is: How does RCCG mobilize the lay congregation for Pentecostal mission?

During my fieldwork I came across diverse sources of information ranging from oral interviews, archival documents from the Open Heavens International Centre Library and Gallery, RCCG Missions' Forum magazines, Redeemed Bible College, Ede; Redeemed College library, RCCG Regions' Mission Campaign, Provincial worship services, participant observations and field notes. I visited the Central Missions Board (CMB) at the RCCG National Secretariat to collect data. In answering the research question, the various themes developed in the study are the contemporary strategies used to engage the lay congregations for missions by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Southwest Nigerian context. These interviews provide a platform to discover and to put forth a few working proposals. Several significant themes were the most prominent attributes of mobilization and mission engagement of RCCG.

The nature and features of mobilization show that members are connected with the sending, supporting, praying and giving as elucidated by the General Overseer Pastor Enoch Adeboye. The inauguration of the Holy Ghost service is hinged on mobilization.

The climax of mission mobilization is discussed through sources of mission exposure, genre of mission mobilization and Pentecostal events. The chapter concludes with the changing roles of mobilization, continuity and discontinuity, mission innovation, contextualization and a summary of interpretation and criticism of the mission mobilization.

5.1 Sensitization and Creation of Awareness for Mobilization

It appears that a strong awareness exists among the lay persons and clergy for mission mobilization in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and a more robust conceptualization. RCCG aims at producing a down-to-earth influence through the lay congregants when adequately mobilized. To get more of an emic perspective on mission mobilization by RCCG, I participated in three-day mission awareness seminars at the Redeemed Bible College, Ede, Nigeria, between 10 and 12 May 2021. Again, I received an invitation to Region 9 headquarters ACME Road, Lagos, on 15 May 2021 to participate in the Region's Women Mission Mobilization Conference. In addition, I contacted the department of the Central Missions Board (CMB) at the RCCG national headquarters, Mowe, where I had interviews with Assistant Pastors handling strategic mission functions at the CMB. The Redeemed Bible College (RBC) also provided the RCCG's Missions Focus documentation and records for my use.

A proper understanding of mobilization begins with breaking the stagnancy amongst Pentecostal churches. I collected data during interviews and observations of mission practices and how the RCCG at various levels and places in their parishes and provinces operate and execute mission mobilization. I became curious about the phenomenon of mission mobilization. I started looking for reasons for mission mobilization in RCCG. There are various reasons why mission mobilization is critical to

Christian missions. The church will be a mere repository of knowledge characterised by spiritual stagnancy when missions remain on the back burner. There are churches whose mission programme is an annual engagement. They are engaged in mission mobilization to maintain the status quo.

5.1.1 Why do Churches mobilize?

The case for mobilization takes a three-pronged approach including a 'dynamism', 'faith', and 'persuasion' Joel Oke (J.O-RCL 13:05:2021). Firstly, it brings the church from the fringes of mission to the centre. Secondly, another primary reason for the status quo in mission is ignorance. From the interviews conducted and the available RCCG mission documents⁴⁵ Odesola, RCCG Assistant General Overseer, and Temitope Emovon (RCCG Region 9, Acme road, Lagos) during a an interview (20:05:2021) I identified six reasons were identified as to why mission mobilization occurs in the RCCG: (i) Many people are unaware of their responsibilities and mission challenges; (ii) To foster unity and cooperation, because nobody can be a lone ranger in the work of missions; (iii) To harness spiritual gifts and resources; (iv) To get the work done faster and collaboratively; (v) To reawaken people to the commitment once made but has been forgotten or neglected, and (vi) the realization that great revival started as a spark of fire but was continually fanned into flames by the Holy Spirit through mobilization. Furthermore, I wanted to get an insiders' perspective on how critical was for mission mobilization as the engine of revival and the growth of the RCCG as a leading, thriving and expanding indigenous Pentecostal church in Nigeria. There are clashes of perspectives and preferences over this. When interviewed, Josiah Bolarinwa, (J.B-RCL: 17:10:2018) responded pragmatically to questions on RCCG's purpose for mobilization. Three factors

⁴⁵ Missions' Focus RCCG.

emerged: (a) People are mobilized to reach the unreached; they are informed about activities on the mission field, (b) The church is being mobilized to support and sponsor the work among the unreached, and (c) They are mobilized to pray for the harvest. The next section examines insiders' perception of mission mobilization by the RCCG.

5.1.2 Metaphors of The Market in Mobilization

This section examines the RCCG theological training centre's understanding of mission mobilization. The phenomenon here takes place within the mission training institution of the RCCG's Redeemed College of Missions (RCM). It was established in 1993 by the Redeemed Christian Church of God, then as a subset of the Redeemed Bible College to handle the training of missionaries. It has grown to be an intercultural bi-vocational college of missions. RCM has trained students from more than 30 different countries in Asia, America, and Africa to become missionaries, with students from more than 100 tribes. The vision of the school is: mobilizing, recruiting, training and deploying missionaries for effective cross-cultural missions in the nations of the world (26th Graduation Ceremony Handbook, November 30, 2019). These were indigenes from other African countries and Asia, sent to study missions in Nigeria by their foreign churches or the RCCG's diasporas or migrant churches. The lay congregation often in locally diverse curriculum are trained and mobilized by the institution for church and community mission.

The interview questions are as follows: the first is how mobilization of lay congregants for mission happening in your context and what does it look like? The second question is conditional if mobilization of the lay congregant is not being practised in your context, how would it be done to be part of mission praxis in your denominational training institution? In an interview with Joel Oke, the Provost of the Redeemed College

of Missions (RBC), when unfolding the narratives of mobilization in the RCCG and its essential reality in local mission he explained that ‘Mobilization is an empowerment activity for mission. Mission is the business of the King. It takes aggressive and strong commitment to influence people and community to buy into the mission’ (JO-RCL: 14:05:2021). He gave a cogent reason for his assumption that there is an element of advertisement in mobilization. In a Yoruba local dialect, he interpreted it: “*Ipoolowo oja ni agunnu oowo*” (advertisement is the medicine for business). The idea that mobilization for mission could be achieved through advertisement is novel but not entirely new. Some scholars highlighted the use of adverts and mass media as the means for church growth and the development of churches to a mega status in Pentecostal strands of Christianity.

The notion of an advert as a strong factor for mobilization in this discussion is not a surprise as narrated by Joel in the interview (JO-RCL, 12:05:2021). Ukah in his study of RCCG pointed out that ‘Metaphors of the market and exchange are significant as we have seen in discussing the doctrines of RCCG’ (2003:321). The finding by Ukah demonstrated the economic dimension of mobilization when he suggested that:

As we have seen in this study, globalisation has proceeded the fastest through the market. Religious globalisation has occurred through the commodification of religious ideas and practices. With such commodification, it is easy to package religious ideas and sites in such ways as to make them travel from one locale to another. The incentive of the market has become one of the strongest mobilisers of religious entrepreneurship. (Ukah 2003:331)

In my understanding, the African religions phenomenon has gone beyond commodification, but it is at the stage of commercialization in the 21st century. Many religious forms, rituals and sacraments and artefacts extending to prayer and anointing are now commercialised by neo-Pentecostal religious traders. However, the context of advertisements in this section goes beyond church growth, raising members and seeking high attendance in the church. The nature and role of mobilization in mission are

indirectly linked to the concept of church marketing by scholars such as Asonzeh Ukah and Richard Burgess. The former mentions that ‘The urban religious geography is dominated by a bewildering array of Pentecostal institutions occupying warehouses, office spaces, cinema houses, and purpose-built structures’ (2004:418). Furthermore, this resonates with Ruth Marshall who pointed out that ‘RCCG events are aggressively advertised across a variety of media before the events’ (2014:100). Linking the position of Ukah with Marshall brings to light why African Pentecostal churches aggressively mobilize and advertise the church programme and projects in a given context. Advertisements of mission and marketing may not be a bad idea except for their controversial synopsis by the local and global televangelists. Ukah argues:

Adeboye, therefore turned to the American churches, specifically to Keneth E. Hagin Snr. (August 20, 1917 – September 19, 2003) to learn how to improve and re-package the spiritual wares of the "tribal church" he had inherited. The result of Adeboye's frequent trips to the United States and Asia introduced a process of commoditization, an aggressive marketing of spiritual life and effective branding of RCCG and his leaders, and an era of miracles and wonders. (Ukah 2014:182)

Another informant, Kolawole a part two mission student at the RCM, (KO-RCL, 13:05:2021) corroborated the views of Joel and mentioned proper packaging and exclusive branding as key to mobilization in the 'high tech' and 'computer savvy' congregation and trending world of the 21st century. According to Kolawole, a part two mission student at RCM, ‘The gospel is the same, the people are not the same, and we have to apply appropriate mission models and mission methods to reach them and mobilize the lay congregation with a drive and passion to reach the world for Christ’. For example, the current mission and vision statement of the RCCG came into existence through a past adaption of chapels in Glasgow when Pastor Adeboye visited Scotland in 2010 (KO-RCL, 13:05:2021). The theological position of RCCG on mobilization can be seen from the interviews conducted at the RBC, Ede. To answer the why and how questions as a case study and provide answers to the research questions in the thesis, I

asked a few of the students after the class in the evening. Why churches mobilized for missions and how is the mobilization carried out? Solomon's answer is 'To me, it seems very few people are still doing mission work. For example, my church recruited about fifteen of us to enrol in Bible school, and we cannot get up to three here. This may be because few have replaced the majority in the church; there is the need to sensitise and mobilize all the church members to be aware of the need to proclaim the gospel so that the burden will not be on the few people'. Solomon's response to the why of mobilization reveals the inadequacy of generalising mission based on assumptions; once specific numbers of people are doing mission, all is well with the church (SJ-RCL, 13:05:2021).

Shobayo, a final year student at RBC Ede, provided a theologically oriented response, having been in the school for about four years for a Bachelor of Arts in Mission studies. He states, 'The setting of mission awareness and engraving mission impression in the congregation's mind for effective and dynamic outreaches is the best way to mobilize'. Unfortunately, he could not finish the argument at once because it took time to bare his mind to the question. But I asked him how it is done in Bible school. He argues, further in the local church, 'members are given targets of souls to win, budget to raise, resources for support, Bible for converts, numbers of outreaches to carry out, and several foreign missionaries to support and distribute other mission-related responsibilities to achieve in a given year to the members'. Shobayo (SF-RCL, 13:05:2021).

5.2 The Nature and Features of Mobilization Concepts

I designed four interview questions for the lay persons and two research questions for the pastors to understand how mission mobilization occurs in each congregation (See the Appendix for the guided questions). Questions were first presented to the lay persons and then to the pastors. The questions focused on lay understanding and the pastors'

knowledge of critical factors towards mobilization. Lay persons' questions were directed to the meaning associated with mobilization to learn their perceptions. At the same time, the questions for the pastor sought to test their professional competence for mobilization. The questions for the lay persons generated various themes to demonstrate how mobilization helps the church specifically in their outreach. The lay persons talk of the love for God, obedience to the Great Commission, working for God, changing people's lives, helping people to realise their potential, the preparation for the coming Kingdom, the transformation of society, and the salvation of souls (DA-RLP, RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, and DB-RWP, 20:04:2021). The pastors mentioned the Great Commission, reaching the world for Christ, going to the harvest of souls, God's judgment on the earth, being sent by Christ, and the fall of man requiring a Saviour (EO-ECL, TL-RCL, GR-RCL, IA-RCL: 17:02:2021).

The pastors' responses provided the study's doctrinal, spiritual, and ministerial direction. Other pastors reported mobilization by using their spiritual gifts, time, talent, and prophecy. The diagram below points out how the Redeemed Christian Church of God relates to mission mobilization of lay persons. It provides an understanding of mobilization in a conceptual way through which each segment relates to the central missionary purpose of the church. The diagram depicts mission mobilization as a continuous cycle that never ends with any one component.

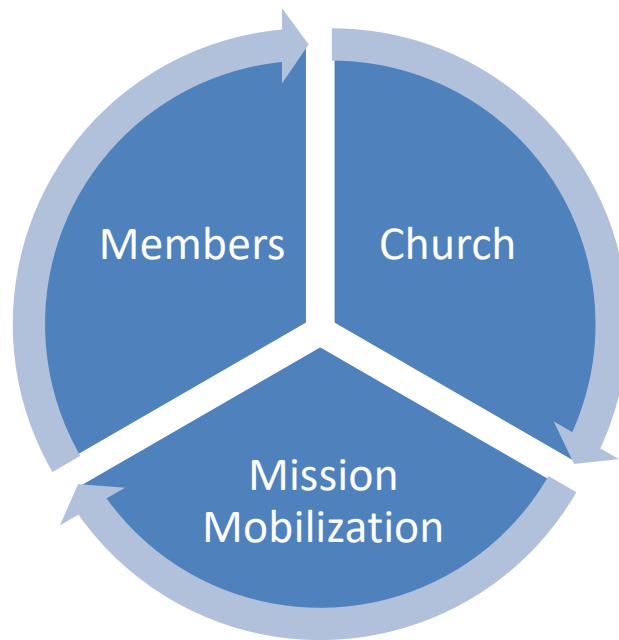


Diagram 5.1: Members, Church and Mission Mobilization

5.2.1 Mobilization Concepts

Again, tentative codes surfaced from the answers to the various questions to build an argument on reasons for mission mobilization as presented in my thesis. The initial codes I generated from the answers from my perspectives are "sending", "going", "praying", and "supporting" (RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, TL-RCL, GR-RCL, 17:02:2021) as popular mission mobilization concepts. These emerging themes lead to the following theoretical and conceptual frameworks for interpreting the data. These theoretical frameworks connect the data with the existing body of knowledge as the focus of my research. The concept of mission mobilization developed slowly but gained widespread acceptance amongst the Pentecostals. It was both a divine and human activity in mission models. The concept of mobilization is the key to understanding the rapid growth and expansion of the Pentecostal movement, especially in Africa. Mobilization attempts to change the pattern and shape of the lay persons' understanding and perception of mission as an agent of transformation. In the various interviews (RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, TL-RCL, GR-

RCL, 17:02:2021). I conducted in parishes, provinces and regions of the RCCG in Southwest, the concepts of mobilization for mission involves four concepts, namely, Going, Sending, Giving and Praying. There are diverse opinions on what constitutes each concept and how significant they are as practices in mission mobilization in both the local and global contexts. The following notions illustrate the understanding of participants on mission mobilization through 'going' and 'sending'. According to Mfon (MF-RLW, 02:05:2021):

Going for mission is the key to evangelising local people as Christ has given us the command to go into the entire world. I believe that going is just a prong and prompter to seize the opportunity of the open door while it lasts before it is closed in the present turbulent and social crisis confronting the mission of God in our present days. If we do not go, the enemy will occupy the territory before we make up our mind.

Two informants shared their passion with me on the priority of sending as a critical factor in mission and propagation of the Christian faith. Adeleke, (AG-RLP, 02:05:2021), on the one hand, sees sending as a key to the result of mobilization.

We may not all be able to go because of resources required to send a missionary to a distant home mission, but a few of us can nominate a pastor with a call to mission and send the pastor to a people group or a region with fewer Christian workers, but having millions of people to reach in Nigeria.

On the other hand, Emmanuel Olaniyan (EO-RLP, 13:05:2021), a post-graduate mission student at the Redeemed Bible College (RBC), who was a first-degree graduate in architecture before proceeding for mission training stated that "sending people to mission is a lifetime project that requires a lifetime commitment. I am sent here by my province to be equipped for mission. I do not find it convenient, but I see it as a necessary sacrifice for the advancement of mission. As an architect, he relates sending to a building project which requires a strong foundation, structure and a well-designed framework before it becomes a magnificent building. 'We then send the people to the house of mission (a local church cathedral) which others indirectly refer to as a mission field'

.

From the interviews, the lay informants looked at mission from the perspective of being sent out of the home mission to a cross-cultural context outside the geographical and local context of the church. The clergy understands that mission mobilization involves both foreign mission and local mission mobilization. The diagram below has four segments: going, praying, sending, and supporting. The prayer segment ‘shot’ out of the circle because many informants opted for prayer rather than being a volunteer to go on a local mission (RO-RLP, FO-RLP, GR-RCL, 17:02:2021).



Diagram 5.2: Activities of Going, Sending, Praying and Supporting in Mobilization

However, many pastors understand mobilization as part of their service in the kingdom. The actual codes that emerged included: responsibility, vocation, faithfulness, stewardship, callings, mission field, the dedication of talents, willingness to serve, persecution, discouragement, opposition to missions, and suffering for Christ's sake. Some of the pastors mentioned motivation for participating in mission and mobilization, including social and spiritual factors. Social factors are recognition, position, privilege, material blessings, and ministry opportunities. In comparison, spiritual factors are the answers to prayer, gifts of the Spirit, divine enablement and rewards.

5.2.2 Misconception of Missions and Mobilization

Pastor Adeboye (EAA-RGO), in his mission campaign during RCCG Ministers' Solemn Assembly in March 2018, explored the ignorance and misconception of both the lay persons and clergy on mission. He noted, 'I have heard people say to me, I am a pastor, but not a missionary'. The question then is, who is a missionary? Answering this question

will clarify how people and resources are mobilized for mission and expansion of the Christian faith on the concepts of going, sending, giving and praying as the fundamental ethos of mobilization. Adeboye infers that ‘the unscriptural but popular view is that a missionary comes from a rich country advanced in education and technology. Thus, because of his culture's advantages, he comes to help the less fortunate by starting schools, hospitals and agricultural projects and preaching the gospel’

. Given the understanding of mission in this context, it will be difficult for any local Pentecostal church to be engaged in any meaningful mobilization for mission.

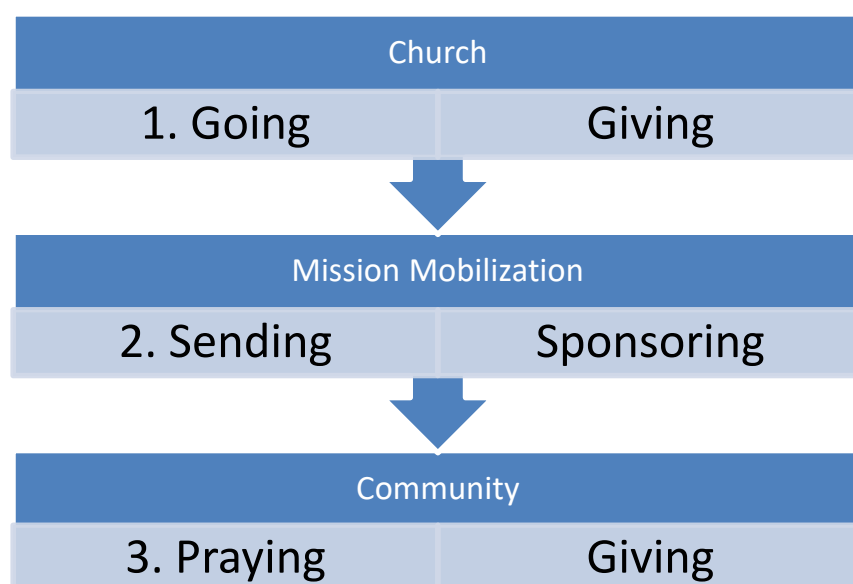
The position of Adeboye is consistent with a few informants interviewed in Alaguntan and Liberty parish, Alimosho Lagos. In two of the parishes I visited, two of the lay persons interviewed had the perception that missionaries were from advanced nations who came to Nigeria and Africa in the era of the colonial regime and empire-building across the developing world (JF-RFP, RM-RLP) October 2019 interviews conducted in RCCG Alaguntan and Liberty parish, Alimosho, Lagos. However, they added that the indigenous people are now the carriers of mission in their context rather than the foreign missionaries. The outcome of these interviews reveals unanimity between the perception of the lay persons in RCCG regarding missionaries from overseas and the observation of the General Overseer of the church, Pastor Adeboye. While there can be divergent views, the available evidence in the oral interviews and records of mobilization in the church documents do not suggest a significant discrepancy. For example, Pastor Adeboye, in 2014, gave a fair but compelling verdict in another missionary conference of the RCCG that ‘every child of God should be involved in mission’. This includes lay persons and the clergy. It clarifies the primacy of mission to the RCCG church denomination. He mentioned four ways by which people can be involved in missions.

First, ‘one can be physically engaged in mission which could be either a rural or an urban mission’. The assertion represents the ‘*going*’ factor in mission mobilization. A second way to be involved in mission is to give to missions by sponsoring suitable volunteers in a Bible College or a missionary training school. Thirdly, by organising financial materials and emotional support for missionaries from time to time. Lastly, you can organise prayer support for missionaries who go out⁴⁶. The position of the General Overseer and the teaching of the RCCG can be understood from the answers given to the overarching concepts of mission mobilization by lay persons in Alaguntan and Liberty parishes in Alimosho provinces, Lagos.

5.2.3 Analysis of Three-Ways Mission Mobilization

This session analyzes the three ways of mission mobilization. There are different mixes of the four ways in two dimensions which could lead to mobilization. First, “Going and Giving”- included. Second, “Sending and Sponsoring” – excluded. Third, “Praying and Giving” – optional.

Sending, Going, Praying and Supporting Paradigm Diagram



⁴⁶Mission Focus, March – July 2018 , pp. 12.

Diagram 5.3: Activities that Impact Mission Mobilization at Different Levels

The diagram above describes the various activities involved concerning the paradigm of going, sending and praying for missions. The first level highlights the church's emphasis on both going and giving. The second step pushes for sending and sponsoring, which looks similar, but is a contrast of the other. The third plane looks at praying and giving for mission without going directly to the mission fields. However, the three levels are interdependent when viewed from the RCCG and ecclesia community lens in mission mobilization.

5.2.4 The activities of Sending and Going

The participants involved in this data were workers in training, altar workers, and a few church members interviewed at the RCCG Liberty parish Baruwa in 2018. Half of the participants acknowledged that the church could send people to local missions without going themselves (RT-RLP, BA-RLP; MF-RLW, 17:02:2021). This is understood as an inclusive mission strategy. It means being active mission participants. Only four research participants acknowledged the possibility of the second option, i.e, sending and sponsoring (RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, TL-RCL, GR-RCL, 17:02:2021). In this case, the mission agency is excluded as an active participant in mission. Seven participants chose the third option. They stated that giving is essential in mission mobilization, but praying is a lip service affair and optional (EO-ECL, TL-RCL, GR-RCL, IA-RCL: 17:02:2021). In this group, most preferred giving for mission, but one man said he distinguishes between giving and prayer. In general, Christians could not conceive of giving without praying and/or praying without giving as the best ways to express their commitment to mission (RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, TL-RCL, GR-RCL, 17:02:2021).

The emerging themes and patterns reflect a different perspective and opposite views to the stand of the church with events and celebrations, which is discussed thoroughly in this chapter. Conversely, reaching the world through mission engagement within the community is linked with sending, going, praying and supporting missions. The harvest of souls is associated with mobilizing for mission. A few people, who are not active participants in mission, attributed their absence to time and constraints between their work-a-day world and stewardship of talents. Other responses could be interpreted as the coldness of the spirit, existing personal spiritual problems, and general backsliding.

5.2.5 Mobilization: Partnering, Adopting and Floating

Three other concepts of mobilization for mission emerged during the interviews: (a) Partnering, (b) Adopting and (c) Floating of mission apparatus, resources and personnel. These ideas or concepts are generated from personal insights and interpretation of my research data. A lot has been written with an emphasis on going, giving, sending and praying. However, this opinion aligns with much of Christian thinking of the past. Interestingly, some of the people interviewed (DA-RLP, RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, and DB-RWP, 20:04:2021) mentioned this neglected aspect or new ways of being involved in mission mobilization through the channels of partnering, adopting and floating. I will examine the concepts one after another.

Firstly, there are situations where an individual is not a member or leader in a mission church but has an external interest in another mission organization. This could be termed a 'cross-partnering mission'. In a cross-partnering mission, the partners share in the burden, ministry, structures, and mission workloads of the partnering mission church without necessarily being a neither bonafide partner nor beneficiary of the mission organization. Mfon, mentions 'RCCG has local mission partners who are part of the work

from outside the RCCG flocks who look after mission progress, ministry proposals and maintenance projects’.

Secondly, adopting is similar to sending but different from the sending concept. A mission adopter, after spiritual mapping of a territory, volunteers to look after the mission personnel and geography as a complete mission endeavour without the aid of any other participants. This concept is rooted in the idea of a man who adopts a child from outside the family and becomes a member of a new family. The responsibilities of the growth and upkeep of the child are taken over with a change of name and possibly a change of identity. The church mobilizes and seeks mission adopters for advancing mission endeavours. In RCCG, parishes and provinces have been seen to adopt a new land or location for mission outreach.

Thirdly, mission mobilization can float a mission from an existing mission in a culture or people group to reach out to another group within the same geographical boundary. Floating is used in mission for concealing a ministry identity while reaching out to a new people group, for example, the activities of Christ the Redeemers Ministry's (CRM) role in the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Pastor Adeboye founded the CRM before he was nominated as the General Overseer of the RCCG. If the extant literature does not support this position on mission mobilization debate, it may be seen as an extension of the theory.

5.2.6 Intensive and Extensive Mobilization

The RCCG Central Missions Board (CMB) is the arm of the church that sees to the church's mission activities both within and outside Nigeria. Achieving any objective will require moulding their vision in a two-dimensional proposition. Two dimensions of mobilization emerged from my field notes in this regard (Amen: Holy Ghost Congress,

August 2-9, 2019): *intensive* and *extensive*. On one hand, intensive mobilization narrows the activities to a reasonable level with rich content or a high degree of spiritual workload. On the other hand, extensive mobilization increases input from a mere slice to a full-blown proportion. It is driven by an 'expansionist impulse' proliferating the vision and mission of the RCCG mission. The mission mobilization dimension aligns with the vision and primary objective of the RCCG Central Mission Board which states that 'Our primary goal is serving to bring the members of RCCG to the point *where the mission is done intelligently, willingly and joyfully* in line with RCCG vision to take the gospel to all nations'. The mission objectives of the RCCG appear to set the direction for both local and regional mission mobilization campaigns for parishes and provinces in all gospel endeavours.

	Mission Factors	Number of Pastors
1	Missionary testimonies	5
2	Missionary literature	2
3	Ministry reports	1
4	Special mission campaigns	4
5	Short term missions	3
6	Mission mobilization programme	5
7	Missionary biographies	3

Table 5.1 Sources of Mission Mobilization.

Furthermore, I used a 20-participant analysis to know how the average lay persons have contact with mission mobilization. The data analysis for this section was collated between 2019 and 2021 from parish pastors and church workers in RCCG (BMB-RCL, TME-RCL, WMO-RCL, AI-RCL, AO-RCL, AF-ELW, MM-RLW, MF-RLW). Five pastors

mentioned that they were exposed to missions through the testimonies of visiting RCCG missionaries to Nigeria from West Africa and Europe. Two other pastors attributed their source of mission concern to reading various kinds of literature on mission, especially the publications of RCCG such as *Redemption Light* and *Mission Forum* magazine. Only one pastor cited the ministry report as the source of his contact with mission and missionaries. This might happen because he works at the RCCG national secretariat, where he has access to information from hundreds of mission reports from the administration. Four pastors stated that it was through attending several mission campaigns. It is noteworthy that three of the pastors have travelled on short-term missions locally within Nigeria, which they mentioned as the source of their exposure. At the bottom of the list were five other pastors who pointed out that the mission mobilization campaign in RCCG was their source of exposure to mission. From this brief analysis, missionary testimonies and mission mobilization campaigns take the lead, with ten pastors citing these two mobilization elements as a source of their exposure to mission. Can we recommend that missionary testimonies and practical mission mobilization campaigns are the most effective tools for getting people, especially the pastors with mission?

I will discuss the mission mobilization campaign in detail towards the end of the chapter with women's mission mobilization. Mission representatives had the most individual influence on those who became missionaries. Following closely was the role of individual existing ministers. This is consistent with other comments given regarding the effect of personal testimonies and field reports. The last source of exposure is through the missionary biographies that showed up numerous times in the data, as an influential element. The following section analyzes the importance of events as a process of mission mobilization in the RCCG.

5.3 Type of Mission Events in RCCG

In analysing my research data and field notes one important concept in mission mobilization in a local congregation is associated with specific events. Mostly, it is paradoxically linked with festivities and celebrations in these contexts. Although, the idea of the words used in this regard vary significantly across parishes and provinces and regions in the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Some of the informants used words such as ‘occasion’, ‘programme’, and ‘connections’, ‘dedication’, and ‘get together’. The most dominant terms used during the interviews were ‘events’, ‘celebrations’ and ‘programmes’. One informant (AJ-RLP,13:03:2021) in his narrative pointed out ‘We do different things at different times as led by the Holy Spirit to win people to the Lord’. This brings to light the indispensable roles the Holy Spirit plays in the Pentecostal mission. However, some ministries and ministers claim that although the Holy Spirit leads in many mission activities, this should not rule out the rational mode of thinking for any strategic mission.

5.3.1 Trends and Types of Events

Events are a series of activities by the church such as building a sanctuary, church social responsibility, community outreach, camp meetings, and publications. In an RCCG parish, their events consist of anointing services, thanksgiving services, anniversary day services, grand finale services, firstborn family special services and Christmas services. These services are events that occupy the calendar of the parish from the beginning till the end of the year. These events keep the lay congregation active and participative, and act as means of mobilization for mission. Events suggest doing something, hatching a new plan, altering old missions into new mission arenas or appointing new mission leaders. An adept informant (MF-RLW 20:05:2021) gave me two concepts about the

event as a theme on mobilization. The concepts are (i) celebration and (ii) connection. In her interview, Deacon Joy Adewale (JA-RLP 16:05:2021) from RCCG Dominion Cathedral, Gowon Estate Egbeda, Alimosho Lagos, told me after a Sunday service:

In RCCG, we celebrate people and recognise achievements and contributions of members of the church. We connect ourselves and do things in a way that brings meaning and purpose. This church connects people through interactions and house fellowship. In different seasons of life, we do not leave people to their fate.

Events are a social spectrum of the church through which they connect people to the church. Again, they connect the church to the world outside the church in a mood of celebration. This is referred to as grass-root mobilization. Grass-root mobilization will be considered in greater detail in the next chapter. Adedibu, who was once a Principal at the Redeemed Bible College, observes that an event ‘invariably deals with the affirmation of the ritualisation, ceremonies, festivals and exegetical reflection through the sermons of Pastor E.A. Adeboye and other Pentecostal preachers together with charismatic and prophetic activities that are enacted at the sacred space’ (2019:4). As previously noted in my public space discussion, this agrees with Adedibu's notions of church ritualization. Events are major tools for mobilization of the broader community for specific mission outreach through the lay congregation. Events do not stand for mere rituals in RCCG. They mobilize the lay congregation often for a mission.

5.3.2 Lay Congregation Perceptions of Events and Mission Mobilization

The analysis below reflects RCCG conceptual understanding of events concerning the mission of the church and mission mobilization. The codes for events by the lay individuals are: rejoicing with those who rejoice, felicitation, extending the right hand of fellowship, helping people in times of needs, unity in the body of Christ, and support for the celebrants (AR-RLP, KO-RLP, PN-RLP, EC-RLP, 13:05:2021). In a parish under one of the provinces in Lagos (Abule Egba LP 71), their events are anointing services,

thanksgiving services, anniversary day services, grand finale services, firstborn family special services and Christmas services. These services are events that occupy the parish calendar from the start to the end of the year. There are individual and corporate events. The following are individual events: programmes, festivals, naming ceremonies, birthday, dedication, funerals, apprentice freedom and school graduation ceremonies, (KE-RLP, AF-ELP, KI-RLP, EB-RLP and BA-RLP Youth, 20:05:2021). Church specific events are CSR (Church Social Responsibility), special outreaches, early morning prayers, and mercy ministry, (MA-RWP, DA-RLP, AA-RLP, 20:05:2021).

In the diagram below, lists of various events are produced to show the levels of events and their outcome in the church parish locations.

Events Data

Type of Events	Numbers Per (100th) March 2021	Numbers Per (100th) April 2021	Total
Birthday	5	10	15
Thanksgiving	7	5	12
Music	2	1	3
Drama	1	2	3
Marriage	3	4	7
Buildings	5	4	9
Think Life	0	1	1
Feast of Esther	1	0	1
Social	12	5	17
CSR	3	2	5
Community	1	0	1
Mercy	9	2	11

Table 5.2: Provincial Event Analyses March and April 2021

The above table provides a summary of data collated during my fieldwork between March and April 2021 at the various RCCG parishes in Alimosho and Shomolu regions.

Each of the regions has over 150 parishes. The data analysed above are from 10 parishes visited during this period. It shows the number of birthday events, thanksgiving services, music and drama, marriage and building events for the period. The next section explores mobilization for the Holy Ghost Service, especially as a distinct event for the RCCG. The RCCG has different departments such as evangelism, follow-up, welfare, hospitality, youth, teens, choir, media, and children sections overseen by lay persons through which mobilization is implemented. Many of the departments form a cluster for mobilization in the church. They meet together to examine the vision and goals of the church to achieve set targets with respect to the mission of the church. Mobilization is carried out through programmes such as family weekends, children on the go; teens outreaches, generation next, music cantata and film shows. These are the programs in RCCG and peculiar to RCCG's mission in Nigeria. The lay persons interviewed referred to these programmes as the mission of RCCG to the community. The lay person recognized that moving out of the church premises to witness Christ to people who are non-Christians, or the 'church-goer' as understood in the context of the RCCG, is a form of mission work. To a lay person in RCCG, it is understood that a form of mobilization is when the church sends them to bring souls who were not part of the existing membership of the church into the kingdom. Therefore, regularly talking to community members counts as involvement in God's mission. This may have a different connotation outside Nigeria, but the members of RCCG perceived this as a lay person's involvement in mission. The above assertion was confirmed by a lay person called Adeyanju, when he says 'Our going out of the church premises is a great spiritual exercise because we are witnessing to people, touching lives, and praying for people directly to accept Jesus as personal Lord and Saviour.' (AD-RLP: 09:10:2022).

What comes up very strongly in the interview is that a layperson is an ordinary person in the church. This layperson after identification with the tenets and beliefs of the church becomes a non-ordained Christian worker and is set apart for the vocation of the laity in the church. The layperson transits from the nominal role to a committed person in the mission of the church. This is clearly articulated in the workers' manual of the RCCG:

A worker in the Redeemed Christian Church of God is any child of God who, on the recommendation of the local Pastor, has been set aside for special services in the house of God. Included in this category are members of the Choir, the Ushers, the Sunday School Teachers, and Children Teachers etc. Primarily and ultimately, the worker is working for God Almighty Himself. It follows immediately that he/she will get his/her reward from the Almighty too. Secondly, however, the worker is working for the Redeemed Christian Church of God as part of the visible body of Christ on earth. This is why the General Overseer mentions the workers in his daily prayers to God. This constant prayer of the General Overseer is basically the reward that the Redeemed Christian Church of God offers her workers throughout their life's span. (Workers Manual 2011:10)

Every worker within RCCG is expected to be (a) an active soul-winner and an incurable witness for Christ; (b) Therefore, he/she should be involved in the propagation of the gospel by means of word of mouth, tracts distribution, letter writing crusades, seminars, youth services, village evangelism, child evangelism prison, hospital and market evangelism; (c) Every worker is also expected to be very active in follow-up programmes (Workers Manual 2011:11). Many other factors have influenced the laypersons' participation in the Pentecostal mission in RCCG. The interviews showed various impulses that contributed to the decisions from significant numbers of the informants: (i) vision received directly from God, (ii) love for the people, (iii) passion for souls, (iv) obedience to Christ's command, (v) the shortness of time, (vi) prompting of the Holy Spirit, (vii) the urgency of the second coming of Christ, (viii) reality of hell after life without Christ and (ix) future rewards.

Mobilization of lay persons in RCCG is also designed for soul-winning and making disciples. Therefore, the church's quest for souls is a significant priority at every

level. Lay persons are sensitized and made aware of the “lost people” condition. The term “lost people” is used in a spiritual sense and is a connotation for the unbelievers yet to know Christ in Nigeria's context. Thus, lay persons are mobilized to reach out to the “lost people” with the good news of salvation. Abimbola (AA-ELP: 09:10:2022) clarifies the concept of reaching out to the lost people when he states, ‘Winning the lost people to Christ is the priority of our mission to the community. The death of the lost people is not a gain for the kingdom of God. Christ came to find the lost, and we do the same thing in Abule Egba parish every time we talk to them. The lost people are blind to seeing the vision of the future glory. They are also deaf to the call of God for their salvation’. (AB-RLP: 09:10:2022). Mobilization takes the form of reaching out to the community through seminars for married people, seminars for singles, prayer warfare, and academic success for the youths, and empowerment for the people out of school to learn a trade or professions such as barbering, fashion designing, creative arts, cake and confectionery making, and house painting. Deaconess, Theresa MFon, serving as a lay person in the children’s department shared her story in relation to mobilization during an interview with her. According to her narrative:

As a lay person, I share testimonies of God's wonders in RCCG with outsiders. I learned to share testimonies as the burden of mission grew through the nudging of the Holy Spirit. I dedicate Friday evening to contacting people in my neighbourhood to tell them of the manifestations of the power of God in the Holy Ghost service. As a lay woman, I have chosen to testify of God's power to cure infertility in women through the prayer of the man of God. In our Amen Congress in 2017, eighty-three women gave birth to children during the convention. About three of them gave birth to twins. I use this method to win fellow women to Christ. (TM-RLP: 09:10:2022)

She admitted that sharing testimonies with people may be a daunting task which requires self-abdication and loss of a sense of shame, but this is for a purpose which is higher than personal ambition.

5. 3. 3. Mobilization for the Holy Ghost Service

This section examines the concept of mobilization and a conceptual application of mission mobilization from the perspectives of the General Overseer of the RCCG, Pastor Enoch Adeboye. This is how the leaders see church events and their interrelationship with mission mobilization. The inter-relationship of mission mobilization, church events and leadership appear to be effective when the leaders are in the forefront and take mission mobilization as a marching order. When a mission is at the centre, how do each of the elements relate to each other? Insights are provided by the narratives of the General Overseer, Pastor Enoch Adeboye as given below.



Diagram 5.4: Mission as the central focus of the church

On June 8, 2021, at the Open Heaven Gallery, listening to Pastor Adeboye at an event very critical to mission, he alerted my attention to how mission events have facilitated the unprecedented growth of RCCG. His objective was to help the new ministers and

churches to understand the multiplicity of factors capable of nurturing churches and ministries to realise their highest potential. The Holy Ghost Service (HGS) is an incredible growth channel for RCCG's local and global missions. It is a platform for mobilization of lay congregations for church expansion and for exponential growth of the RCCG. According to Pastor Adeboye:

When I was in Britain to prepare for our Sunday School outlines. The period was very close to my birthday. I was wondering what should be the connection of my birthday to the church in this respect. I asked God to give me a birthday gift. The Lord asked what do I want? I said I want every member of my congregation to have a miracle. The Lord said to me, gather them together for a week-long special thanksgiving. When I returned to Nigeria that year, I called the congregation and shared the vision with them.

From this narrative, the leadership challenges the congregation with a creative and innovative mission plan identified as an event. The congregation then mobilized people and resources for the actualization of the leadership vision. Pastor Adeboye continued, after the success of the event, some members suggested that they do it every year. The following year, other people suggested if it could be done every month? This is what led to the Holy Ghost Service. What was in 1997 December led to another wonderful climax of having the Lekki 1998.⁴⁷ According to Pastor Adeboye, money, materials, and men were mobilized and deployed to reach the millions of people who attended Lekki '98, which was the beginning of Holy Ghost Service.

⁴⁷The day Lekki 98 was conceived was like every other day. Pastor Adeboye was in a vehicle passing the Lekki Beach when he asked himself why people couldn't gather at the Beach for Christ as it was in the Bible. From that moment, the seed of the greatest gathering of believers in the world was sown. It was difficult to imagine the magnitude of what God was going to do through Lekki '98 when Pastor Adeboye mooted the idea of an all night prayer by the ocean to some Senior Pastors in The Redeemed Christian Church of God. The initial reaction was an admixture of curiosity and doubt. They had neither experienced nor heard of anything of that magnitude before then. Source: **THROWBACK THURSDAY LEKKI '98... - RCCG Public** <https://www.facebook.com>

5.3.4 Changing Roles of Mobilization in RCCG

The role of mobilization has changed significantly in RCCG since the founding of the church in 1952. The current General Overseer, Pastor Enoch Adeboye was appointed in 1981 after the passing of the founder, Reverend Josiah Akindayomi. The founder was more traditional in his approach to mobilization for mission, while the current General Overseer has used a more dynamic and contemporary approach to mission mobilization. The founder would have used a circle of family members, friends and the immediate community to mobilize for mission and stop at that point. From available records between 1952 and 1980, the old methods of mobilization were to dance along the road during any major programme, with the use of locally improvised morning cries and megaphones⁴⁸. A march past by local brigade organizations was deployed as a mode of mobilization for mission. The serving of food to participants in the community would pass for a successful mobilization along Willoughby Road, Ebute Metta Lagos, where the church started in 1952⁴⁹. Today, Pastor Adeboye uses more sophisticated means such as media, both digital and non-digital for mobilization. He partners with international funding organizations and appeals to faith-based NGOs to sponsor local and international church events using his connections and strategic leadership capabilities. Similarly, strategic mobilization has been established in line with this notion as Ukah mentioned in his study of RCCG's local identities and global presence. Nigeria is a society where different religious practices and doctrines have achieved popular appeal. RCCG holds a multiplicity of interests for a wide range of people. RCCG mobilizes local resources to found congregations abroad and

⁴⁸*The Seed In the Ground*: The story of the founding of the Redeemed Christian Church of God [Olaferu, Olanike]

⁴⁹ The history of the church is well known from the time of the founder Pa Josiah Akindayomi who started with a house fellowship of twelve people at No. 9, Willoughby Street, Ebute metta, Lagos, South-West Nigeria, the Church by the mercy and grace of God has grown phenomenally with branches in over 190 countries/territories of the world today

through these congregations, made up of mainly Nigerian and other African migrants, build a strong global network and identity for more evangelism elsewhere (2003:283). The backing and support of Pastor Adeboye would have been sought for approval for such strategic mission mobilizations.

5.3.5 Mobilization: A Step on a Journey

An application of the shaping and changing mobilization mission model was implicit if not explicit from the report of the Edinburgh Centenary Conference as analysed by Ross from where one could draw out valuable mission directions for a contemporary mission strategy. This leads me to examine how mobilization has led to the transformation of mission praxis of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The evocative description of mobilization has led to a diverse strategic penetration of mission into the community in the Southwest Nigerian mission context. Mobilization generates a sense of ecclesia and a down-to-earth local penetration of the gospel plan for a local community. One major strategy in mobilization as a mission paradigm is the creation of awareness internal to the lay congregants and external to the ecclesiastical community with the context of the study. The next section examines the consideration of continuity and discontinuity of mission strategy in RCCG.

5.3.6 Mobilization: Continuity and Discontinuity

There is continuity and discontinuity in strategic mission mobilization and a discontinuity with ineffective local mission mobilization and a new paradigm of mission mobilization emerges. The former was crude and local, while the latter is sophisticated and global. For instance, the first RCCG church auditorium was a wooden structure. Later the church moved to Cemetery Road, Oyingbo Lagos, Nigeria. A structure was built on the land very close to the wood-log dealers, a sawmill backing the lagoon. The

transformation of the church itself was through mobilization for advancing the mission of God in the RCCG. The vision of mobilization to transform the old church into a global headquarters had begun. The lay persons were mission personnel and resource partners for the achievement of laudable mission projects by the RCCG. The vision is stated below by Pastor Adeboye:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that work on RCCG Coastline Worship Centre has begun. It is exciting because we are building an edifice for the LORD our God and the Master of the Universe, Jesus Christ our Saviour and our Redeemer, let somebody shout Halleluyah. The RCCG Coastline Worship Centre is a unique and innovative masterpiece located in the heart of the fast-growing and developing coastal centre of Ebutte-Meta, Lagos. It will consist of a tower with 17 floors, a multilevel car park and a jetty with a capacity to dock 16 boats. The Coastline Worship Centre is a 21st Century style structure designed with special features such as a helipad, a world-class auditorium and conference centre, an elevator, a medical centre and facilities, a shopping centre, banking halls amongst other features and facilities which will improve the social, health and economic activities within the Ebutte-Meta Coastline area (RCCG Website [RCCG Coastline Worship Centre \(rccgetour.org\)](http://rccgetour.org), Accessed 22nd May 2021).

1981 was a period of transition for Pastor Adeboye. The RCCG advanced from a mere Pentecostal reform to a Pentecostal reform movement to a Pentecostal revolution toward a global mission movement. William Kay writing for Pentecostal in the European context, mentioned that Pentecostal is a renewal movement within Christianity (2011:1) This view may corroborate the impact of the RCCG as reformist movement in African Pentecostalism especially in Nigeria. The early period of RCCG's ministry was an epoch of preparation for manifest Pentecostal destiny. The preparation helped shape a predetermined mission approach for the local and global mission of the RCCG – Open Heaven.

5.3.7 Contextualization, Innovation and Mission Creativity

RCCG uses spiritual innovation, on one hand, combined with Holy Spirit discernment, on the other hand. Globalization of strategy is very visible in every aspect of its mission operation. For example, the Holy Ghost Service for in Nigeria and Africa, while the Festival of Life is for Europe and North America. Both are a means of reaching the world

by contextualizing the gospel. It is noteworthy to recall that when Pastor Adeboye took over the leadership of RCCG in 1981, the church had only forty parishes, and these were all located in the Western part of Nigeria (Odesola 2012:55). The following mission approaches have been identified in my study as a result of Pastor Adeboye's initiatives: (i) relational mission (ii) social and civic engagement (iii) camp monastery spirituality (iv) model parish system (v) education, development, and discipleship (vi) lay release mission orientation and (vii) Holy Ghost festival missions. These mission approaches emerged during in-depth interviews and participant observations at the RCCG National Secretariat, located at Mowe, Ogun province in Southwest Nigeria, (KE-RLP, AF-ELP, KI-RLP, EB-RLP and BA-RLP Youth, 20:07:2019). Chapter seven of the thesis will explore in detail a few of the mission approaches by the RCCG. There was a discontinuity with the traditional mission approaches. Pastor Adeboye discovered that narrow and restricted mission methods would strangle the multifaceted nature of the Pentecostal mission. 'When he took over the leadership of RCCG in 1981, the church had only forty parishes, and these were all located in the Western part of Nigeria. Straightway, Pastor Adeboye started implementing changes. The first thing he did was to create house fellowships in strategic locations. When these fellowships grew to a certain stage, they automatically became a church' (ibid 2012:50). It was a turning point in the history of the growth of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The dreams of the model⁵⁰ parishes were realized on 22 May 1988 in Ikeja Lagos. At the first service in Ikeja, the General Overseer, Pastor Enoch Adeboye, preached a sermon entitled 'In the Beginning'. The idea of setting up these model churches was to strike a balance between

⁵⁰The term 'model parish' is used in RCCG to describe the brand of her parish that is the combination of the old beliefs and practices and the new trends in churchmanship. In this type of parish, the liturgical language is English. The use of a conventional church building was played down for informal structure to attract those who are scared of the so-called dogmatic disposition of Pentecostal orthodoxy. It should be noted that the word 'model' should not be interpreted as 'modern' or 'post-modern'. This is a mistake on the part of those who do not know the motive for the establishment of the model parishes.

orthodox Christianity and fundamental Pentecostalism (Josiah Bolarinwa 2009:42). This was corroborated by Johnson Odesola, in his book, *Daddy G.O: The man and his messages* (Odesola 2012). For the church to reach out to the rich and wealthy in society, he introduced the concept of model parishes. This was the beginning of a massive expansion for the church. The model parishes were created to serve as conducive and Christ-centred places of worship for the elites of society (ibid 2012:50). The model parish cuts across several cultures, classes and denominations, by teaching and preaching the living word of God and transforming lives locally and globally. The deliberate objective of the new mission mobilization was to test a lay professional engagement in the mission.

5.4 Women's Mission Mobilization

The RCCG Region 9 ACME Road Lagos organized a special mission mobilization for provinces and parish churches under its jurisdiction. The theme for the mission mobilization conference was "Rekindled- God is raising an army for himself". The conference was attended by about 200 women leaders from six provinces in the region. The conference provided a contrast to the male-dominated mission field operations. I observed the process of the women region's mission mobilization strategy. The data obtained in this section was the result of the women's mission conference. The chairperson was Pastor Mrs. Helen Oyitso, (HO-RCL, 15:-05:2021) the wife of the RCCG Chairman of the Central Mission Board, Pastor Brown Oyitso. The uniqueness of women mission mobilization is obvious. In a male-dominated enterprise, the women appear to occupy their space in mission. The gender difference was not a barrier in a field popularly occupied by men. It points to the fact that women are not in the background in matters of the Kingdom. The task here is to examine the influence of women in RCCG's mission mobilization. In an effort for women to claim their rightful place in God's

mission in the world, they organized themselves to fulfil a divine mission mandate and reposition themselves for Christ's commandment to every member of the church, regardless of race, gender, age, and ethnicity. For instance, the women meet once a month in the parishes under the banner of the 'Feast of Esther'. The feast of Esther is the annual women's conference organised by Pastor Mrs Foluke Adeboye for the RCCG women at the redemption camp and is replicated in all RCCG's local parishes. One of the goals of the Feast of Esther in RCCG is to fulfil the third goal in the RCCG mission statement 'To have a member of RCCG in every family of all nations. This opportunity is seized by the women as a channel to obey God in the Great Commission'. The mission mobilization by the women of RCCG could be placed in the context of Nigerian society's view of gender inequality which has been influenced by cultural and sociological factors. The recognition given to women in terms of responsibility is minimal when society properly considers gender roles in an African setting. The world and broader society have been divided by gender, race, sex and religion.

Women's Role in RCCG Mission

I had an interview with Mrs. Temitope Emovon (TE-RWL, 15:05:2021), the Women's Mission Co-ordinator for region 9, Acme Road, Ikeja Lagos. She was asked, 'What are the roles of women in mission mobilization in RCCG?'. Her response was direct and instructive. According to her, 'Women's role is to win souls to the Kingdom of God and empower them to spread the glad tidings of salvation with passion, purpose and grace' (RCCG ACME, 15 May 2021). The efforts of women as equal agents in RCCG's mission mobilization appear to be on the increase. The women are given an equal position for which they are qualified in RCCG unlike the counterpart church in this study, Deeper Life Bible Church. RCCG ordains women pastors for churches on an equal footing with the men in regions and provinces. The church has discovered that the follow up work for

by the women is more effective after mission outreach work. In contrast, Deeper Life Bible Church, (DLBC) works with women in a different way though in the early days of DLBC women had played the overall leadership role in establishing Bible study locations. Lest the position of DLBC is misunderstood, as a call for the absolute subordination of women, the church affirms male / female equality and mutual dependence. However, such equality does not lead to abandonment of the social norms or the abolition of gender differences (Adewuya 2019:96).

The mobilization strategy in RCCG consists of women and raising their mission consciousness. Each province in the region has a woman mission co-ordinator. The provincial mission woman coordinator is given the task of evangelizing an identified female segment of the community although this is not limited to women as the Holy Spirit leads when the opportunity arises for other genders without either being marginalized. It is interesting to note that women are given assignments in RCCG towards mission mobilization. The assignment comes from the central mission board (CMB) and cascades down the hierarchical leadership ladder to other women leaders for mission action and participation. There are four mission assignments given for each women co-ordinator (TE-RCL 15:05:2021). These are (a) locate your own Macedonia, (b) find a place where the harvest is ripe for mission, (c) reach women struggling and suffering from gender-based violence, and (d) organize mission outreach to various places with open doors among women, including single mothers, and widows.

There are women mission executives recommended as leaders for each province under the region. Each position is given specific functions and terms of operation. The positions are (i) Prayer Co-ordinator, (ii) Welfare Co-ordinator, (iii) Project Co-ordinator, (iv) Finance Co-ordinator (v) Event Co-ordinator (vi) Media Publicity Secretary and (vii)

Technical and Logistics. The Co-ordinator, Mrs. Temitope Emovon (TE-RLW, 15:05:2021), reiterated the region's vision after providing the list of central working executives of the women leaderships:

Our vision and mission are to carry the gospel to every corner of the region in our Jerusalem” using all possible means. And for this we have our special mission programmes in different locations every two months, focusing primarily on the unreached women. The General Overseer, Pastor Adeboye has asked us to locate our village for Jesus and evangelise the women in our Jerusalem.

I see this as a women’s strategy of mobilizing the mobilizers in missions. It is the secret of the revitalisation of frontier missions. In the RCCG, many women have impacted communities in different parts of Nigeria, Africa and beyond. This study would be incomplete without highlighting the mission mobilization efforts of the wife of the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Pastor Mrs. Folu Adeboye. She pioneered the African Missions Global and was personally involved in rigorous mission work in a local context across Nigeria. In her role as a mission mobilizer, Pastor Mrs. Folu Adeboye led the team of evangelists who visited numerous villages. The result is that almost all the villages now have a RCCG parish, and some of the villagers have even become pastors in the church (Redemption Camp 2020: 19).

5.5 Missionary Significance of RCCG Mission Mobilization Discuss

In this section, I will examine how the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) engages in missionary mobilization. Missionary mobilization is significant for the Redeemed Christian Church of God and is a catalyst for its various mission engagements. McClung highlighted the key categories of church ministry that are required for mobilization for the Great Commission. He identified two types of missionaries: the marketplace missionary and ministry missionary without which mobilization will be difficult to fulfil. The marketplace missionary denotes the lay professional (people who may have university degrees in business or economics or

medicine) who are involved in the spread of the gospel, whilst the ministry missionary is the clergy (people with a theological background and ministry experience in churches that bring with them maturity in gospel work) with theological experience. They are acknowledged as ecclesiastical leaders (2020:18). McClung writes with a North American setting in mind but offers an approach that fits a universal understanding of the Church. His explanation of what it takes for a church to mobilize provides the North American and the global Church with a standpoint for rethinking and doing mobilization today. The notion of mobilization as suggested by McClung can elucidate the efforts of the Redeemed Christian Church of God's missionary strategy and the mobilization of its resources for mission. The gaps mentioned by McClung appear to be closed in a report by Brown Oyitso the Chairman of the Central Mission Board (CMB)⁵¹ of the Redeemed Christian Church of God on market missionary and ministry missionary. Brown Oyitso identified four categories of missionaries as defined in the mission policy of the RCCG. He aptly stated:

The first categories of missionaries are the full-time missionaries who are sent from Nigeria. The full-timer has no other work that gives him income other than the RCCG's missions work. Therefore, he has to be looked after in his peculiar way. Secondly, we have missionaries who are professionals: staff of multinational companies, members of the Diplomatic Corps, or members of the military, who are sent on transfer or posting by their organizations. These are part-time missionaries. They are paid salaries by their organizations. They work for their organizations but use their spare time to work for God. They arrive in a nation and see mission opportunities or an existing parish that needs to start other parishes and then get involved. They are not paid by the RCCG nor are they entitled to children's educational allowance because they are paid by their organisations. Thirdly, we also have missionaries who travel out of Nigeria for greener pastures or some other reason. They get to those foreign lands and start to reside there and join the RCCG. Some of them may be RCCG workers or ministers before they travelled out. Lastly, we have missionaries who are indigenes of the countries. They have no connection with a Nigerian sender or a sponsor. They were evangelized in their own nations. They joined the RCCG and rose to senior levels

⁵¹The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Central Missions Board is a mission's arm of the church. The Central Missions Board exists to bring the members of RCCG to the point where mission is done intelligently, willfully and joyfully with the RCCG vision in taking the gospel to all nations. Our goal is to reach every nation, city and home with the gospel of Jesus Christ. <https://www.rccgcmb.org/>

through the passage of time, through commitment to the work and their loyalty to the church⁵².

Therefore, according to McClung's model of mobilization in terms of missionary opportunities, the Pentecostal laity, whether travelling as tourists, migrants, or career missionaries, are highly evident in the RCCG mission mobilization approach.⁵³ The most exciting dimension of this conversation was that Oyitso, from the RCCG's mission panoply, added to the RCCG's panoply of missionaries, the category of an indigenous missionary to plug the gap with a unique mission perspective different from the North American experience in the Nigerian context.

5.5.1 Mobilizing Multiplied Missional Synergy

The potential for multiplied missional synergy is limitless. Mobilization occurs in response to the latent spiritual needs, mission conditions and evangelistic potential within a geographical and cultural context of the church. A critical examination of McClung's mission mobilization strategy reveals that unlimited opportunities for a missional church exist. Mission in a globalized world is now appropriately described as being "from everywhere to everyone, everywhere." The Pentecostal laity travels throughout the world for a wide variety of reasons – as tourists, students, migrants, refugees or in civilian and military careers to name a few. They discovered mutual co-operation and opportunities in missions. Missional synergy brings much accomplishment in mission sodality. The synergy is a potential mission catalyst. Mobilization might foster the propagation of Christian missions in Southwest Nigeria if the process is well implemented. Mission

⁵²*Mission Focus*, January – June 2017, pp. 30/31.

⁵³ Our missions policy also defines the categories of missionaries because this dictates the way the Central Missions Board (CMB) and their supervising pastors relate with them and also handle them on the field. It becomes apparent that the Southwest mission mobilization is not limited to local missions. The mobilization involves sending ministers on cross-cultural and international missions, from the Southwest provinces and regions to the rest of the world. *Mission Focus*, March - July 2018.

mobilization as a critical missiological category can be understood in its impact and influence. It is often carried out through a synergistic approach in the mission chain continuum.

5.5.2 Lay Professionals in Mission Frontiers

There are lay professionals on the missionary frontier for creative missions in the twenty-first century. They have the primary responsibility of sharing the good news of the kingdom with the needy. Consequently, a widespread need for the better formation of lay professionals in the faith becomes increasingly apparent in today's churches and mission movements (Po 2004:58). In his study of the Pentecostal Theology of the Laity, Steven Fettke highlights the visibility of lay professionals in ministry and mission space. He recognizes the importance and collaboration of the mission working relationship between the lay congregants and the ecclesiastical leaders, the Pentecostal arrowheads. He notes that 'Systematic and practical theologians are calling for a more active role of the laity in the mission church. The vision, energy, faith, gifts and expertise of laity are keys to the church's future' for mission mobilization (2010:13). An examination of Fettke's position on mobilization by Pentecostal leaders leads to a focus of lay members of the congregation as active or silent. Lay professionals are significant in mission mobilization, especially considering local and global restrictions and missionary access to new mission frontiers. In the same vein, although with a slight difference from Fettke's view, from my findings, as discussed in chapter four of my thesis, the RCCG has three categories of lay persons identified during my interviews. First, some lay people are ordinary members of the church who do not take up any form of work. Second, professional lay members – non-ordained but active in church activities. Third, lay workers who are engaged in church ministry and mission; they are called workers in training.

5.5.3 Genre of Mission Events in RCCG

In analysing my research data and field notes one important concept in mission mobilization in a local congregation is associated with specific events. Perhaps because the church is a community of faith, celebrations and events are an important part of *koinonia*. Macchia and Fettike observed that “The justice of the Spirit is *koinonia* or a sharing of life. The church participates as a body in the justice of the Spirit not only through charisma and word but also through rites of the Spirit. The spirit of *koinonia* was the practical expression of love and care among the people of God (2020:282; 2010:73). The essence of *koinoniato* ensures one of the cardinal visions of the RCCG, that one person in a family becomes a spiritual family of the RCCG. Although, Vondey, a Pentecostal scholar, spoke eloquently about the prodigious activities and commitments of Pentecostals on ecumenical unity with respect to *koinonia* he noted a dividing line and segregation as a major crisis of fellowship among the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Conversely, Vondey mentioned that ecumenical perspectives on *koinonia* have become widely accepted, on one hand, as a fruitful basis for a shared understanding of the church. On the other hand, a common manifestation of *koinonia* as an ideal has been rejected as an emphasis and it remains for many Pentecostals the strongest obstacle to ecumenical participation (2012:64). This is because churches and denominations relate strictly based on doctrinal congruence rather than convergence.

Events such as ‘Mission Kononia’ are part of efforts strategically designed to mobilize the lay congregation in an integral mission. Events do not stand for mere rituals in RCCG. They often mobilize the lay congregation for mission. The genres of events in RCCG are diverse. Wonsuk Ma et al. succinctly stated:

To have a diverse spirituality within the community is a great strength for Pentecostals. This diversity, considered in the church's history as a disorder and a threat to 'unity', is at the end,

in Pentecostalism, what we can offer as strength to the ecumenical movement. If we look at our communities in all continents, we can see that in each country diversity is the great wealth of the Pentecostal community (Wonsuk et al. 2014:128).

On a balance of probability, considering the evidence provided above by Wonsuk et al on the community of faith on Pentecostal diversity in relation to events, one informant (AJ-RLP,13:03:2021) in his narrative pointed out ‘We do different things at different times as led by the Holy Spirit to win people to the Lord’. This brings to light the indispensable roles the Holy Spirit plays in the Pentecostal mission. However, some ministries and ministers claim that although the Holy Spirit leads in many mission activities, this should not rule out the rational mode of thinking for any strategic mission.

5.6 Interpretations and Criticisms

This research attempts to explore the phenomenon of mission mobilization by analysing the mobilizing strategies of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, its large human resources, the lay congregation towards its target constituency the broader society and the world. Joel Oke (JO-RCL, 14:05:3021) spoke about intensifying mobilization in his address to the 2019 graduating students of the RBC to exemplify the true commitment of the RCCG as a denomination to single-handedly fulfil both local and global missions to accomplish the Great Commission and as the main priority of mission. Again, Brown Oyitso mentioned that "the most important agenda for the church in these times should be the task of the harvest of the nations. In the words of Pastor E. A, Adeboye, ‘Anyone who has a big dream (of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ) will do everything within his or her power to ensure that not only the gospel is preached all over the world but also that souls are won in multitudes to the kingdom of God’⁵⁴ The world is waiting for us and if we do not fulfil our assignments as reapers, the harvest will be wasted. I see great

⁵⁴*Mission Focus*, December 2018– January 2019 , pp. 7.

cooperative efforts on the part of RCCG to fulfil the Great Commission. The mission mobilization discussed by Joel Oke and Brown Oyitso (JO-RCL,05:11:2019; BO-RCL 19:11:2019) can be interpreted through the four terminologies that emerged during my interview sessions at the Redeemed College of Mission, Ede⁵⁵ and from my observations and field notes and are rooted in the fundamental concept of mobilization. They are (i) Meso-mobilization, (ii) Macro-mobilization, (iii) Micro-mobilization, and (iv) Meta-mobilization. Each of them has distinguishing characteristics when applied to mobilization. As indicated above, it appears that intensive mission efforts can be achieved through meso-mobilization. Gerhards, using a sociological lens seems to link meso-mobilization as a prefix to, and an element of mobilization. The author uses the terms 'speaking' and 'spreading' as the ability to communicate with other people. Thus, according to him, "Jesus' followers were able to spread the word of God to different communities around the world. Pentecost is therefore also rightly called the birthday of the Church as an organization, one of the earliest globally acting 'companies' (2012:12). Thus meso-mobilization implied that the ability of the Lord's followers to speak foreign languages allowed them to create a globalized society and to counteract its previously fractured and scattered structure (ibid 2012:12). A nuanced perspective was proposed by Monpams that on a structural “**Meso-mobilization**” level, a person's relationship to other members of Pentecostal and fundamentalist denominations tend to be significantly more sustainable in a goal-oriented mobilization. **Micro-mobilization** is a case of mobilization carried out by an individual entity in the church towards a single mission frontier. For instance, a parish mobilizing its members for the mission of 'Let's go a-fishing'. Chapter seven of the thesis explore 'Let's go a fishing' as one of the lay mission approaches of the

⁵⁵ The Redeemed Bible College is located in Ede, outskirt of Oshogbo sharing its boundary with the Redeemed University. I spent three days (10 -12 May 2021) on the campus with the students. Apart from the interview, I spent long hours in the mission library reading and studying the mission models of the RCCG in various documents as primary sources for my research.

RCCG. Experiences of the informants seem to suggest that in RCCG micro mission mobilizations are within the purvey of parishes and succeeds more at the area and zonal level of the church. **Macro-mobilization** is apparent in spiritual warfare in mission. The church can mobilize the entire resources at its disposal for the cause of Christ in an active mission. This includes finance, people, and mission types of machinery. Macro mobilization sets the stage often in discovery momentum to secure (i) greater drive for maximising the potential of the leaders as the catalyst for multiethnic and multicultural strategic mission campaign, and (ii) multi-focused pursuit for a larger broad-based mission participant. **Meta-mobilization may be viewed as a mission catalyst.** Pentecostal leaders are meta-mobilization actors providing the direction for the lay congregants. Using the metaphor of play, without the actor, the whole team might become a charade with no leading force at the centre of the play. To capture the intentionality of boundary spanning activities towards transformational change, the concept of meta-mobilization actors is introduced. I make this from observation and unspoken information from various visits to the RCCG camp and meetings.

Critical Issues with RCCG Mission Mobilizations

Possibly the overarching mission approach of the western mission in Southwest Nigeria, was centred on Christianity, commerce and civilization, a form of modernisation theory that may be akin to the Pentecostal's adoption of the prosperity gospel. However, the western missionary purpose differs significantly from the Pentecostal purpose in Africa and specifically in Southwestern Nigeria (Robert 2008; Mark-Thiesen & Mihatsch 2019). The Western mission considered the overall kingdom, while the indigenous Pentecostal model in Nigeria moved to a personal dimension. Hollenweger rightly argues that 'A Pentecostal reinterpretation of Christianity is inaugurated by 'prosperity preachers' (2004:130), especially in an African context. Thus, during one of the interviews, one of

the informants mentioned that the church is looking for their money, not their souls. A few people see lay mission as patronage, while others see it as empire-building (EF-RPL, 12:10:2019). One former RCCG Pastor, (Ayodele Amos (AA-RCL,11:10:2019) re-echoed Pastor Sunday Adelaja's⁵⁶ and former Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, Anthony Okogie's criticism of the Redeemed Christian Church of God missions endeavour, 'that the RCCG is building restaurants and not church parishes'. The criticism here was by Amos Ayodele rather than Adelaja, whose critical position lacks evidence and documentation. Again, criticism and condemnation follow acceptance of 'social rituals, rites of passage, events, and ceremonies' (BA-RLP, 11:10:2019) as mission mobilization initiatives. To the critics, the exercise falls within the realm of syncretism. Furthermore, Hollenweger has observed that 'These Third World Pentecostals have integrated many of their pre-Christian rites and experiences into their pneumatology' (2004:129).

5.7 Summary

Mobilization was an oft-repeated concern among Nigeria's Redeemed Christian Church of God. The importance of mission was demonstrated by both the clergy and laity alike. This chapter explored the mobilization of the lay congregation at the Redeemed Christian Church of God as the fundamental ethos of its mission in Southwest Nigeria. It highlights the importance of the roles of lay professionals and clergy in its strategic missions. It expatiated on the vision and contributions of the RCCG to mission through the Holy Ghost Festivals as one of the different facets of its mission activities. The chapter further explored the innovative nature of mobilization of the RCCG under the new leader and

⁵⁶ Sunday Adelaja (Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian: Сандей Аделаджа) is the founder and senior pastor of the Embassy of God, an evangelical-charismatic mega-church in Kyiv, Ukraine. He immigrated to the USSR and Belarus as a scholarship student from Nigeria in 1986 to study journalism. After graduation and the breakdown of the USSR, he started several churches that he later handed over to other pastors before he moved from Belarus to Ukraine in December 1993.

successor and the transformation of the church through mobilization. The role of women is part of the move of the church to balance the overarching gender differentials in mission mobilization. This chapter suggests that mobilization could be further considered not as the issue of a single denominational effort but by the whole church in Southwest Nigeria, especially with the involvement of the ordinary people in the church who presently are only observers in the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

This study, specifically chapter five, is qualitative research of a human phenomenon: the mobilization of a lay congregation for a Christian mission in the Southwest Nigerian context. The findings from the study are multifaceted, with complex microcosms. It has examined micro-parts of the big picture to understand how RCCG mobilizes the local church for mission. The micro-parts of the study include advertisement, public place mission, local church mobilization, seed-sowing and mission deployment. Many parts have been treated in isolation in different works of literature by scholars but bringing them together in single research will provide a better dialogue with Pentecostal mission mobilization. The next chapter shows how the theological framework has the potential to revolutionize the Pentecostal mission. It demonstrates how mission springs from theology, as its true origin is not restricted to the pulpit but in the field of missions in Deeper Life Bible Church.

CHAPTER SIX

THE PLACE OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGY IN PENTECOSTAL MISSION

This chapter examines the theological perspectives of the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) one of the selected Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria. The data is drawn from oral interviews and church documents. For a better comprehension of DLBC theology, the study uses as primary sources the complete Bible study outlines, workers retreat manuals, Deeper Life Campus Fellowship manuals (DLCF), Search the Scripture teachings on Sundays, sermon notes, publications of Deeper Life Bible Church, and messages of the founder, Pastor William Folorunsho Kumuyi. The participants in this study are clergy and lay persons. In the interviews the main respondents were clergy (Pastors, sometimes addressed as District Coordinators), lay persons (Christian workers and other sectional leaders in DLBC). All the respondents have been members of the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) between a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 35 years. I identified recurring themes which I grouped as patterns that answer the research questions. Theology appears to govern the scheme and theme of Pentecostal mission proclamation. Theology may be the vehicle of activating the critical mission and prophetic voice of the Church to the community. Furthermore, Theology can establish the church in its missionary practice, (Bevans et al. 2004:4). Practical theology is the application of the fruits of Biblical and systematic theology involved with the habits, practices, beliefs and life of the church (Cartledge 2012:17, 19). It is a way of being and doing approach. Cartledge remarks further; thus the communal story of the church is located and understood within the overarching narrative of Scripture (2013). While this research is not on the theology of mission *per se*, one of the research questions seeks to understand the theology of mission which underpins the understanding and practice of

Christian mission by the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). The third research question is:

- How does theology of mission influence the lay Pentecostal mission in DLBC?

Pentecostal mission engagement and the theology underlying the mission is the focus of this chapter. Understanding the theological thinking of this denomination is the key to the groundwork of its Christian mission. The shaping and understanding of mission theology underpinning their activities and praxis provide both rationale and motivation for lay persons' uniqueness and strategic position for advancing the mission of God in the Southwest Nigerian context. It will therefore focus on key monographs and full-length studies under the following headings: (i) Soteriology and theological focus, (ii) Christology, (iii) Bible doctrines, (iv) Bible study, (v) Priesthood of believers and (vi) Eschatology. It will conclude by making some critical observations and suggestions for possible future trajectories.

The chapter analyzes DLBC's theology. First, I looked at the church's beliefs and connection to mission. The DLBC carved out systems of beliefs grounded in the study of the Bible for its evangelism and mission. The soteriological focus of DLBC's theology rests on salvation and conversion to Christ. Thus, the conversation about conversion is linked with its doctrines of repentance, forgiveness, and justification by faith. Christology demonstrates the grand narrative of redemption through the incarnation and is treated as the dual face of its theology. I also examine how Bible study was the foundation and backbone of its mission to transform society. The priesthood of believers and eschatology present the ultimate connection of mission and urgency of lay persons' mission proclamation. The chapter ends with an interpretation and criticism of its theology and mission practice.

Looking at the theology of Deeper Life Bible Church, the church has carved out system of beliefs that originated from its Bible study when it started with 15 members in August 1973 in Flat 2, Ransome Kuti Road, University of Lagos, Nigeria. Kumuyi's biographer, Ojewale et al, write: 'In August, 1973 he had fifteen believers, comprising mostly students, gathered in his apartment, at Flat 2, Staff Quarters of the University of Lagos, one Monday evening for a study of the Bible. That apartment was later renamed Flat 2 by the University authorities' (2021:67).

6.1 What Do You Believe?

This section lays the groundwork for what follows about the church's denominational beliefs. Every church has a theology that influences its mission behaviour directly or indirectly. The Theology of a church may be rightly considered as a significant factor in the propagation of mission. The Theology of mission explores the Pentecostal churches interactions with the Bible in a way that is both authentic and hermeneutical concerning mission praxis and lay mission engagement. Illustrations of the DLBC beliefs appear in *Christian Women Mirror*⁵⁷, a publication of the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) which states that:

What people believe form their attitude and convictions. It influences their ways of life and outlook on life. This is why the Christian belief system and scriptural standards are constantly under attack. Over time, there have been several attempts to mutate or refashion what Christians should believe. The aim behind this is to pressure them to conform to the patterns of the fallen world. Sadly, some Christians have unwittingly yielded and compromised their faith. (March 2020: 8)

⁵⁷The late Sister Abiodun Kumuyi (former – late wife of Pastor W. F. Kumuyi, 1957 to 2009) started the *Christian Women Magazine*, popularly known as the *Christian Women Mirror* in October 1992. From its inception it has focused on meeting the specific, spiritual, and family needs of women both within the church and the entire world. The magazine also articulates the theology of the Christian denomination to inspire readers to mission action.

The above-mentioned resource flowed naturally from a defence on the importance of what belief is to a church and acts as an introductory remark for a valid theological belief. Their beliefs prepare the lay congregation to act as the meeting point between the Christians and the world. The adherents' beliefs are the confessional basis for their interface and dialogue with opposing religious forces in individuals and corporate mission efforts. My treatment in this chapter is limited to an examination of Pentecostal theology as has emerged within Southwest Nigeria, by the selected churches in Africa's most populous nation and the location of one of the most vibrant Christian communities in world Christianity. The theological beliefs in this study are limited to such beliefs on which Christian and theologians of the DLBC base their relationship with Christ and how the belief influences the mission of God in the church and the world. It does not cover the A to Z of the theological beliefs of Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC). I interviewed laypersons and District Pastors from the Deeper Life Bible Church with district churches located in Akowonjo, Alimosho, Akoka, Egbeda, Gbagada (DLBC headquarters) and Mushin in Lagos. The average attendance of these district churches apart from Gbagada headquarters (35,000 seating capacity) ranges from 150 to 250 members. The respondents were eager to articulate their relationship with Christ and their faith. Christ is regarded as the cornerstone of their faith. However, there were a few respondents who felt petrified and shy to elaborate on faith. The question was born out of the need to establish the theology and beliefs of the church in respect to mission. Significantly, the lay persons stressed their beliefs in the salvific purpose of God to the world through Christ. All were able to identify the salvific focus of the church, and the need to share their faith during mission outreaches. Some did not relate it to mission but to their responsibilities as faithful members of the church. The salvific purpose of God in salvation was common to both the lay persons and the clergy in DLBC. The next section is the analysis of the

church documents and interviewees understanding of the salvific purpose of God in mission beginning with soteriology.

6.2 Soteriology: Purpose of Mission Engagement

The distinctiveness and uniqueness of Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) is its theology of salvation and conversion to Christ. Its starting point is the fact of the atonement of Christ which results in indelible change when appropriated. The resultant change is both an inward and an outward experience. According to their convictions, it can be appropriated by prospective converts through repentance, renunciation of sin and acceptance of Christ for pardon and forgiveness. It appears rather cast in iron as a spiritual form. It looks concrete and constant like a 'northern star'. The strong focus of DLBC's theology rests on salvation and conversion to Christ. This is referred to as soteriology. Thus, the conversation about conversion is critical to mission praxis in the context of the present study. The Deeper Life Bible Church Short Term Ministerial Course, known as the (STMC)⁵⁸ founded in 1981 set forth the view of soteriology as:

The communication of the blessings of salvation to the sinner and his restoration to divine favour and life of intimate communion with God. Soteriology proceeds on the assumption of the completed work of Christ for man's redemption and therefore there is a close connection between Christology and soteriology. (Short Term Ministerial Course Volume 1, 2000: 246)

The above definition clarifies the position of the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) and its understanding of soteriology. Redemption is the fundamental basis of soteriology, established and accomplished by Christ's atoning work. The work of salvation is purely the work of God, and it may be difficult to distinctly point out the

⁵⁸The short-term ministerial course is the arm of the DLBC responsible for training scholars to mobilize them for mission. Short term mission's play a role in mobilizing the next generation with a vision of evangelization in this context.

'mystery' of salvation but from the scriptures. Therefore, in this section, regeneration, conversion, faith, and justification will be considered.

6.2.1 Respondents' Understanding of Soteriology

From the analysis of the data, different words and phrases were employed to express salvation in the context of Deeper Life Bible Church. These phrases suggest the spiritual state of the respondents as staunch adherents of DLBC. In meeting with interview participants, I structured the questions to make each person reflect on the connections between their understanding of salvation and their theology and practice of mission. When I asked, 'What is salvation and why is it so important to God's mission and gospel proclamation'? Interestingly, the expressions of the respondents are both experimental and experiential in various narratives. The respondents were clergy (District coordinators) and lay persons (District church workers) and a few selected free worshippers in the church. I noticed that the answers given to these questions depended on their conviction and how they engaged with the Bible study held every Monday. In a quiet church setting, I spoke with Feyisara (FA-DLP, 27:12:20), a female lay person from DLBC Dopemu group of districts. She had been worshipping in the church for more than twenty years, and she was a regular member of the Soul Rescue Team (SRT) which is part of the DLBC's Gospel Explosion Mobilization (GEM). Her answer was profound, 'Salvation is the outcome of preaching the gospel to someone to give his life to Christ. If the person repents and responds to the altar call and surrenders to Christ as a result of the message, it means the person is born again'. From another point of view, Daramola (DE-DLP, 13:10:20), a male house caring fellowship (HCF) leader for more than 15 years in another district church, gave cogent answers to the question on the importance of salvation in relation to his understanding and call to mission, 'Without salvation in Christ,

the world is lost. No person can get to heaven without repentance and salvation in Christ. This rests on the uncontroversial belief that Jesus is the only Saviour of the world. I preach because necessity is laid on me, and the destiny of the people in our community is tied to the gospel'. The SRT affirms the same conviction in every mission outreach outside the premises of the church.

As indicated earlier in the analysis of previous findings in chapter four, the assumptions of the respondents depend on the belief that preaching the gospel is a mission mandate from Christ. It is a refrain that 'We preach to win souls to Christ. It is mandatory because it is expected of believers' (JO-DLP, TG-DLW, FO-DCL, SO-DCL 14:01:2020)⁵⁹. This common answer by those I interviewed demonstrates that they were well taught the principles of faith and belief in Christ. Here, the respondents build a strong case in support of their passion for mission. Pastor Kumuyi once challenged the leaders attending the Thursday Evangelism School in the early part of his ministry when he queried, 'Why are many multitudes consumed with fire on the other side of death today'? Because you were not found to stand in the gap? How many have died without God, without Christ, without hope since you knew the Lord? How many in your school, Office Street, village have died without Christ since you became a born again Christian? (Kumuyi 1991:11). Examining the above excerpt, a critical analysis of the discussion reveals that the listeners were on a spiritual edge or survival mode to accept responsibility for negligence, by questioning the loyalty of the soul-winner to Christ who has given the mandate for mission. Thus, the soul-winner, especially those who are members of the SRT's (Soul Rescue Team) take mission participation as a compulsion rather than as a voluntary responsibility.

⁵⁹The codes are assigned to the names of interviewees. The full explanations and descriptions of the interviewees are provided in the appendix. The code follows the interpretations and identifications of categories and themes that emerged in the analysis of the findings.

Furthermore, for a more robust understanding of soteriology in relation to saving faith in Christ, I conducted interviews with ten other research participants separately in September 2020 from five DLBC district churches. In my data analysis, six research participants (informants) acknowledged the possibility and importance of conversion (BS-DLP, AO-DLP, IH-DLW, 20:07:2020; DO-DLP, JO-DLW; 25:09:2020; Youth JF-DLP, 25:09:2020). In general, they felt that Christians could not conceive of salvation without repentance, faith in Christ and forgiveness of sin (TJ-DLP, AN-DLW, FO-DCL, MH-DCL 13:01:2021). The four other participants chose the second option, ‘going to church for a long time before committing their lives to Christ’. They stated that it may take a longer time for would be converts to become acquainted with the doctrines of the church before making a definite commitment. They also mentioned that conviction and decision are essential to conversion, but ‘invitations’ at crusades are not (GS-DLW, AO-DLP, AO-DLC, 13:01:2021). In this analysis, most preferred the use of Bible texts in sharing their faith, but one man stated that he makes a distinction between merely changing a church and true salvation. He was emphatic that one can change a church without real salvation (FA-DLC, 13: 12:2020). The theological narratives and the Great Commission imperatives have culminated in Global Crusades across Nigeria and the world from May 2021 by the SRT and Deeper Life Gospel Mobilization Organisations. The strategy is analysed in chapter seven under the mission approach of the Deeper Life Bible church.

6.2.2 Theological Blueprint: Belief System

My next task is to analyse the theological blueprint that underpins the belief system of DLBC concerning salvation. The respondents’ views and perception of salvation are expressed through different terminologies, as a mirror reflection of Pentecostal

diversities. The expressions I heard during the interview were multi-dimensional, such as: 'Being born again', 'converted to Christ', 'an encounter with Christ', 'being saved from sin', 'pardon and forgiveness', 'justification by faith', 'peace with God', 'being a new creature', 'a believer in Christ', 'a child of God', 'knowing the Lord', 'acceptance of Christ', 'saved by grace', and 'a name written in the book of life', and these require unpacking. An insight from the above discussion suggests that the doctrine of salvation is emphasized in the Pentecostal mission of the DLBC.

The table below provides a summary of what the lay persons and the District Coordinators perceive as general terms of conversion and salvation through Christ. The table gives a summary of 20 interviewees comprising 14 lay persons and 6 clergy's and their views on salvation which generated various categories in soteriology (BA-DCL, HY-DCL, RU-DLPTJ-DLP, AN-DLW, FO-DCL, MH-DCL, MD-DCL, 13:01:2021).

Perceptions of the Lay Persons and District Pastors on Soteriology

Terms	Lay	Clergy
Being born again	14	6
Converted to Christ	11	2
Encounter with Christ	10	4
Being saved from sin	10	3
Pardon and forgiveness	7	4
Justification by faith	6	5
Peace with God	12	2
Being a new creature	8	3
Believer in Christ	13	4
A Child of God	14	4
Knowing the Lord	13	5
Acceptance of Christ	11	4
Saved by grace	6	3

Name written in the book of life	9	3
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Table 6.1: The Perception of Lay Persons and District Pastors on Soteriology

The table above reveals the understanding of the lay persons and the district pastors on what salvation and faith in Christ connote (signify) in relation to mission. They underscore the conceptual thinking of the whole church working towards proselytizing the larger society as they engage the community in mission. The term being born again is frequently used by both the district pastors and lay persons in mission. Lay persons use the term more at the point of contact in witnessing than the district pastors do. The same goes for ‘conversion to Christ’ and ‘encounter with Christ’. ‘Being saved from sin’, ‘receiving pardon and forgiveness of sin’. The sequences of Christian experience are critical to the theological views of DLBC in tandem with Wesleyans holiness theology which stresses sanctification as the second work of grace.

It is believed by DLBC that salvation is the first encounter with the Lord and means of entrance into the visible Church, while sanctification follows before the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This sequential experience is critical to Christian living, Christian ministry and the theology underpinning DLBC local and global missions. The following texts reveal the theological convictions of DLBC in respect to what it referred to as *definite* Christian experiences. The texts are from two primary sources providing full details of the position of DLBC on the three Christian experiences by Pastor W. F. Kumuyi. According to him:

Many people ask whether Christ's disciples were born again or have the same salvation we have now because he had not gone to Calvary yet. Some people say they did not know Christ as Saviour; and, therefore, were not saved until Jesus died on the cross. The disciples had left everything, turned their backs on the world, believed in Christ, accepted and fully gave themselves to him. They were different from the people of the world. They were neither sinners nor backsliders, but people whom Christ had chosen from the world and they belonged completely to him (p.186). (Kumuyi 2019. Systematic and Expository Outlines of the Gospel According to St John)

This argument is in tension with traditional Pentecostals who believe that a Christian can receive the baptism of the Spirit without sanctification. But the DLBC insists that sanctification is a prerequisite for the Holy Spirit's baptism. However, DLBC's theology of Christian-initiation and sanctification is not typical of Nigerian Pentecostals. Kumuyi further stretched his sequential doctrinal approach on salvation before sanctification:

The world can not have sanctification. They can only have salvation. It is after they are saved that they can have the privilege of being sanctified (p.188). In Christ's Supplication for Our Sanctification, Christ by extension prayed for other believers too. There are seven distinct processes and aspects of Jesus' prayer for the fuller revelation of his grace and power in their lives. He prayed for (i) Our sanctification, (ii) Purity through sanctification, (iii) Provision for our sanctification, (iv) Purpose of our sanctification, God wants to perfect and take imperfection from us by inscribing his Word in our hearts (v) The price for our sanctification, (vi) The preparation for our sanctification, we must keep his statute and do them, and (vii) Our preservation in sanctification. Systematic and Expository Outlines of the Gospel According to St John. (Kumuyi 2019)

According to DLBC doctrinal leaning, Jesus prayed for the disciple's sanctification after their call to salvation. Sanctification is an experience of the Christian life after salvation. While salvation is the foundation, sanctification is the second work of grace. It brings deeper humility, meekness, holiness, honesty; it makes a happier home, brings a higher honour and gives the hope of heaven. Salvation is provided by Christ, without whose incarnation, the essence of mission would be a futile effort, (Kumuyi 2019). The next theme which emerged in the study leads the discussion to the person and works of Christ.

6.3 Christology- Incarnation and Redemption

The origin and works of Christ the Messiah are indispensable to Pentecostal identity and its furtherance of mission to the ends of the earth. Christology is the key to unlocking the grand narratives of redemption embedded. A clear understanding of the incarnation, ministry and nature of Christ is linked to the appropriation of saving faith in his sacrifice and atonement. *The notion of* Christology is central to an understanding of redemption and the shaping of Christian mission in the present research context. The DLBC holds in its doctrines that Christ is both human and divine. Half of the lay persons interviewed

had a low perception of the term Christology, while most of the Pastors have a higher perception of the full redemptive work of Christ called Christology. However, I see this as one of the themes that emerged during the interviews.

6.3.1 Derivation of Christology in DLBC

The founder of DLBC appears to have found his understanding of Christology in the song composed by Albert Simpson in 1895. Albert Simpson (1856-1933)⁶⁰ might have captured the heart of Deeper Life Christology and its theology when he wrote the great hymn “Jesus Only is Our Message”. The hymn appears as a doctrinal source in DLBC Christological thinking. The Deeper Life believes that the holiness of believers is grounded both on the work of Christ and their relationships with him (Adewuya 2019)⁶¹. The Deeper Life Bible Church adopted the song as the basis and foundation of its Christology. It appears that the song depicts Christology in its four-fold gospel themes. This clearly shows the influence of the Holiness Movement on Kumuyi and Deeper Life theology/Christology. For Deeper Life Bible Church, the hymn does not ‘reflect African theological and cultural context and geniuses. The illustration of the Christological focus of DLBC can be extracted from the six stanzas of the song. The full six stanzas songs are as follows:

⁶⁰ The song was composed by Albert Simpson, a Canadian preacher, theologian, author, and founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), an evangelical Protestant denomination with an emphasis on global evangelism. Simpson was born in Cavendish, Prince Edward Island, Canada as the third son and fourth child of James Simpson, Jr. and Janet Clark. The young Albert was raised in a strict Calvinistic Scottish Presbyterian and Puritan tradition.

⁶¹ James Adewuya was the first foreign missionary of Deeper Life Bible Church to the Philippines in 1979. He served and coordinated the mission work for Asia for over twenty-five years.

1. Jesus only is our message,
Jesus all our theme shall be;
We will lift up Jesus ever,
Jesus only will we see.

Refrain

Jesus only, Jesus ever,
Jesus all in all we sing,
Saviour, Sanctifier, and Healer,
Glorious Lord and coming King.

2. Jesus only is our Saviour,
All our guilt He bore away,
All our righteousness He gives
us,
All our strength from day to day.

3. Jesus is our Sanctifier,

Cleansing us from self and sin,
And with all His Spirit's fullness,
Filling all our hearts within.

4. Jesus only is our Healer,
All our sicknesses He bare,
And His risen life and fullness,
All His members still may share.

5. Jesus only is our Power,
He the Gift of Pentecost,
Jesus, breathe Thy pow'r upon us,
Fill us with the Holy Ghost.

6. And for Jesus we are waiting,
List'ning for the advent call;
But 'twill still be Jesus only,
Jesus ever, all in all.

The hymn etches out in its refrain the full redemptive work of Christ as the Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer, Baptiser and Coming King. The first stanza points to Christ as the message and the focus of its theology. The second stanza characterizes the saving work of Christ and depicts him as the Saviour. The third stanza looks at Christ as the Sanctifier. The fourth stanza establishes healing as included in Christ's atonement, and refers to Christ as the Healer, while the fifth stanza describes Christ as the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit. The sixth looks forward to the second coming of Christ as an introduction to Pentecostal eschatology.

The excerpts below show the special place the hymn holds in DLBC liturgy. Ola Omitoyin (OO-DLP, 20:04:2021) stated 'As I woke up this morning, this song popped into my mind. I came here and searched for it and was so happy when I found it! Jesus only! Jesus over everything! This has been my theme in recent days. Thank you Jesus for being my all in all'. Another informant said 'I first heard this song in the year 1989 in April when I was in SS1, at Deeper Life Church Kafanchan. It was one of our teachers, Mr Ayo Amusan, who took us from Jagindi to Kafanchan for a conference. God may your name be praised forever!', Christiana Ekanem-Calabar (CE-DLP, 20:04:2021), Cross River State, Nigeria. In my interview with Mike he said 'I too first heard this song in Deeper Life in 1996 when I gave my life to Christ, it's a song Pastor Kumuyi loved so much. We usually sing it when we have occasions for workers (Pastor Mike Audu-Abuja, Nigeria, (MA-DCL, 20:04:2021). This song keeps ringing in my heart for some days now; I got to know the song many years ago in Deeper Life Bible Church. Am so glad to Google it and found it here. God bless you for making it available'. (JA-DCL-20:04:2021). Source <https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/511#2> (Accessed 13th August 2021).

The DLBC uses this hymn as a congregational song for worship in its numerous programmes. The song always appears at the start of any major programme organised by the Deeper Life Bible Church. Most of the lay people and pastors interviewed could sing the song from memory. This is where the average understanding of members of the DLBC on Christology can be found. The DLBC uses a popular sticker with the inscription, "Jesus Only is Our Message". It is often pasted behind Bibles, the back of car windcreens, and home front doors in Southwest Nigeria.

Two Choir Masters of DLBC Akowonjo (AN-DLW and AF-DLW, 05:05:2021) were interviewed, and the following are their views about the hymn. I asked them, 'Why does the song Jesus only is our message hold a great appeal in Christology'? The answers given reflect the church's mission and doctrinal focus. According to them, 'The song talks of the pre-eminence of Christ. The place he holds in our life, ministry and mission. Christ should be the mainstay of any church's dogma. He is the one we talk about. The beginning and the ending' (NL-DLW 15:07:2021). The second person Femi Appolo, added, 'The song reveals the cardinal truths of our doctrines. There is virtually no doctrine we emphasise about our salvation that the song has no significant reference and defence of the truth. It seems irrefutable' (FA-DLW 17:07:2021). In the answers, respondents place Christ as the final authority to their convictions, faith and basis of their relationship with God. They are of the view that Christ cannot be subservient to any other personality. Jesus Christ is not just a King, He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. As Creator, Owner and Governor-General, he exercises authority over the whole earth and all that dwell therein. Conversely, when Christ is prescribed as an angel or a less than a Saviour, religious figure without the affirmation of his deity such position can be interpreted as false and erroneous.

6.3.2 Duality of Mission Theology

Duality of theology can be illustrated by explaining the context of Nigerian Pentecostal worship and the theological models mostly used in Africa (inculturation/contextualization and liberation). Stretching its position on African worship songs, style and liturgy, it appears like Deeper Life Bible Church is averse to the socio-cultural and political engagement by its members in any form and guise. The evidence can be seen in the ministers' study at the Ministers Development Summit, in an ecumenical conference for Lagos State, Nigeria.

The church of God is not a social institution, where social needs are met. The church is not primarily for social welfare. It is not a business school or secular leadership institution. It is not a place for entertainment and amusement nor is it expected to just be a mere solution centre where only people come to have their problems solved. The primary purpose of the ministry is to call men back to God and get them prepared for heaven⁶².

The remarks only show the church's priority and not an exclusive position. Furthermore, Kumuyi warned that "Some ministers started well but along the line, they deviated and went into some unscriptural practices because of : (i) Carnal comparison, (ii) Worldly entanglement, (iii) Delayed answers to prayers (iv) Hardship and ministerial challenges, (v) Persecutions, (vi) Love of money, fame and pleasure, and (vii) Quest for power and position⁶³. From the history of the church, the emphasis has been Jesus as the anchor of all the doctrines of the Bible (JA-DCL, FA-DCL, TO-DCL and FO-DL, 10:02:2021). Nearly, all the informants shared similar convictions on the centrality of Jesus in the liturgy, worship, sacrament and mission. Hence, I term this as Christology. Out of the ten people I interviewed, 2 of them actually made mention of Christology.

The table below provides the ranking of the hymn "Jesus Only is Our Message" in all its programmes.

⁶² 'Ministers Network Development' MDS, March 2019: 56,27). Vision versus Confusion in Ministry. The Conference was organised by the Deeper Life Bible Church for all church denominations in Lagos represented by Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Christian Association of Nigeria, Presbyterian and Methodist Denominations.

⁶³'Ministers Network Development' MDS, March 2019: 56,27). Vision versus Confusion in Ministry.

DLBC Christology and Jesus Only Hymn

PROGRAMME	HYMN ONE	HYMN TWO	HYMN THREE
General Retreats	Jesus Only is Our Message	Only Remembered	Send the Light
Leadership Strategy Congress	Jesus Only is Our Message	True Heated, Whole Hearted	Jesus Send More Labourers
Crusades	Jesus Only is Our Message	With Signs Following	Come Believing
Workers Retreats	Jesus Only is Our Message	Have You Counted the Cost?	More Holiness Give Me
Special Programme	Jesus Only is Our Message	All Things in Jesus	Fill My Cup Lord
Ministers Conferences	Jesus Only is Our Message	I'll Tell The World	Give Me A Double Portion
Mission Conferences	Jesus Only is Our Message	It Pays to Serve Jesus	Must I Go and Empty Handed?
Deeper Life Campus Fellowship Congress	Jesus Only is Our Message	I've Anchored in Jesus	Burn Fire of God
Deeper Life Student Outreach	Jesus Only is Our Message	Take Time to be Holy	A New Name in Glory
Children for Christ Camp	Jesus Only is Our Message	More Love to Thee	Called Unto Holiness

Table 6. 2: DLBC Christology and Jesus Only is our message

In analysing the content of the table above, we can see the prominent place given to the hymn 'Jesus Only is Our Message' is the ring of truth. The table appears to illustrate the centrality of Christ embedded in the song "Jesus Only in Our Message". For more than 40 years of the existence of Deeper Life Bible Church, the song with its Christological focus takes the lead and the first in rank in all of the church's programmes, missions and local outreaches.

6.4 Doctrinal Beliefs of DLBC

When the DLBC respondents elaborated on the nature of Bible doctrines and their relevance to mission work and gospel proclamation in the broader society, the answers were diverse, but nevertheless have various common themes that run through the answers. Many respondents made reference to the General Superintendent (Pastor Kumuyi) or the Bible study to support their arguments. For Deeper Life, doctrine is translated from two Greek words, *Didasche* and *Pidascalia*, meaning teaching. Doctrine means teaching or instruction:

It could also mean knowledge. It also means that which is taught: what is held, put forth as true and supported by a teacher, a school, or a sect; a principle or a position, or a body of principles in any branch of knowledge or any tenet or dogma; a principle of faith; as the doctrine of atoms; the doctrine of chances. They are the articles of faith and doctrine (Hooker). Since these teachings guide one's life, action, behaviour or that of the church, it could mean law or rule. (STMC Bible Doctrines v. 2, p. 167)

The DLBC prides itself as the sole custodian of sound doctrines of the scripture. In DLBC, the doctrine is a matter of life and death and may be considered as one of the strongest unique selling points in African Pentecostal contexts.

6.4.1 Development of Doctrinal Beliefs

Furthermore, Pastor Kumuyi's seminal work on Bible doctrines is the complete Bible study series (1983). The book could be called a primer in systematic theology. It has been a doctrinal handbook for both members of DLBC and short-term ministerial students in IBTC campuses across Nigeria and West Africa. It was written to provide fundamental doctrines of the church and to improve biblical literacy for evangelism and defence of the Christian faith (Kumuyi 1983). The book has many references to secondary sources with little documentation of the sources. Kumuyi believes that the book is important for building the foundation of Christian doctrines with far-reaching consequences. A person's

belief ultimately shapes and influences their action and practice, this is also Kumuyi's belief.

Pastor Kumuyi's Complete Bible Study series looks like a most enduring work. *The Doctrines of the Bible* (1983) has been read by people attending Deeper Life Bible Church Monday Bible study and its theological institutions such as International Bible Training Centre (IBTC) and the Short Term Ministerial Course (STMC). Various lay members of the church were participants for Short Term Ministerial Courses (STMC) to broaden their understanding of Scriptures for Christian growth and edification. The Complete Bible study book is organized under the headings:

The scriptures," "fall of man," "qualifications for profiting in the study," "God's plan of redemption," "the atonement," "repentance," "restitution," "salvation through grace," "Christ teaches on swearing", "the believers names", "prayer", "walking by sight or walking by faith", "the interceding Christians", "faith", "scriptural fasting", "personal witnessing", Biblical pattern of evangelism", "communication in evangelism (Complete Bible Study Series, Kumuyi 1983)⁶⁴

This single volume of nearly 210 pages contains a preface explaining that it was written to give basic doctrinal instruction to second-generation Pentecostals who desired to be more biblically literate, especially those preparing for ministerial work. The evidence of the genius of Pastor Kumuyi in relation to Bible doctrines and the study of the Bible in DLBC was provided by Ojo in his study of Deeper Life Bible Church:

Kumuyi stands in a conspicuous and significant position in the life of Deeper Christian Life Ministry. As founder and leader, he has formulated all the doctrinal teachings and has dictated all the religious practices by which members are guided. Up till 1982, Kumuyi rigidly applied the doctrinal emphases and religious practices to Deeper Life members, but the influx of many more members after 1982 has led to a relaxation of the restrictive

⁶⁴ See the appendix for the complete doctrinal statement of the DLBC in the Bible Study series.

practices. The practices to some extent spread the fame of Kumuyi and Deeper Life far and wide. (Ojo 1988b:146)

6.4.2 Importance of Bible Doctrines

The importance of Bible doctrine is paramount for understanding the Word of God by every follower of Christ. According to Pastor Kumuyi:

Doctrines to the church is what a foundation is to a building. It is the article of faith on which a believer's faith is anchored. A building with a weak foundation will collapse under intense unfavourable weather through storms (Matthew 7:24-27). A believer's steadfastness and stability in the Lord is dependent on a firm grasp of truth revealed in the Bible, Ephesians 4:13,14, whereas a lack of knowledge leads to backsliding and destruction. In a world of error and deceit engineered by Satan and his host (John 8:44), a believer needs to be well-grounded in the truth in order to frontally attack every lie of Satan if he is to remain in faith. Deeper Life Leadership Strategy Congress. (January 2020)

The excerpt above can only be understood from the perception of a district pastor in DLBC, Ketu, Lagos, Pastor Laja Ojetola (LO-DCL, 19:02:2021). When asked what a doctrine is and how it affects the presentation of the gospel to a prospective convert? He mentioned that:

Doctrine is referred to as statements from the Bible that regulates our practices and lifestyle. Doctrines are our guardrails to prevent a fall and remain on track. There is every wind of doctrine capable of derailing the believers who started the Christian race to fall away from being a consistent Christian. Wrong doctrines have made believers capsize on their journey to heaven. Again, we preach repentance as a gateway by faith and as an entrance to the kingdom. This is followed by justification by faith, and before water baptism, we admonish a convert to make restitution of past wrongdoing for a proper reconciliation with God. Sanctification and baptism in the Holy Spirit are essential for power for service. Pastor Laja Ojetola. (LO-DCL, 19:02:2021)

He was asked to clarify his doctrinal labyrinth on why so many requirements are placed as obstacles to salvation by grace since Christ has paid all our debts. His answer was given in form of a question, 'Can a medical doctor prescribe a milder treatment to a

patient diagnosed with cancer because of the pain the patient will go through before healing’?

6.4.3 Collapse of the Gulf between the Clergy and the Laity

In an interview with lay person, Martins Dada (MD-DCL, 20:05:2021) who had lived and worked with Pastor Kumuyi at the International Bible Training Centre (IBTC), Lagos in the 1990s. I asked about the doctrines of DLBC, he mentioned that doctrines have fostered the understanding of mission by the brethren within the broader society. He concurred that ‘Knowledge is power’. The right knowledge can elicit commitment. The knowledge being disseminated raised a generation of people who act out of internal principles in the direction of the will of God. The knowledge garnered from the Bible doctrines and teaching collapsed the established traditional gaps and gulf between the clergy and laity’. Similarly, Ojo has remarked that ‘The Charismatic Movements have adopted many emphases and have also interpreted certain doctrinal issues and religious practices differently from the traditionally accepted formulae. The Charismatics generally show more commitment to evangelism and demand conformity to certain practices’ (1988:144).

6.4.4 Deeper Life Articles of Faith

From the interviews conducted on doctrine by the clergy (District Pastors) and lay persons (Christian workers), it was clear that the understanding of Bible doctrines has helped the church to excel in Christian mission and in the propagation of the Christian faith. The church has twenty-two doctrines referred to as orbits of truth. Looking at the first to seven on the list of beliefs and practices of Deeper Life Bible Church unlike the Apostolic creed, Allan Isaacson observed that ‘The beliefs and practices of the Deeper Life Bible Church emerged from the teaching of the Church, and it forms the cardinal

background of the Church Bible Studies and disciplines' (1990). The members of the Church are to live according to the beliefs and practices of the Church as they have their hopes of the rapture and second coming of Christ as their utmost life priority. The doctrines of the church are listed below as cited in Isaacson, (ibid 1990:108):

1. The Holy Bible: That the Holy Bible, consisting of 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament, is the inspired Word of God. They take the Bible as the final authority in all matters concerning Christian conduct and work. 2. The Godhead: That the Godhead consists of three separate, distinct and recognizable personalities and qualities perfectly united in one. The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are different Persons in the Godhead, not merely three names for one Person. 3. The Virgin Birth of Jesus: The virgin birth of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. 4. The Fall of Man: The total depravity, sinfulness and guilt of all men since the Fall, rendering them subject to God's wrath and condemnation. 5. Repentance: That Repentance is a complete turning away from all sins and their deceitful pleasures. 6. Restitution: That Restitution is making amends for wrongs done against fellow men, restoring stolen things to their rightful owners, paying debts, giving back where one has defrauded, making confessions to the offended and apologizing to those slandered, to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. 7. Justification: That Justification (or Regeneration) is the act of God's grace whereby one receives forgiveness and remission of sins, and is counted righteous before God, through faith in the atoning blood of Jesus, standing before God as though he had never sinned. (Isaacson 1990; Falaye 2015:20)

These doctrines, perhaps like the early Church's creed are the ideal starting point for establishing and preparing the members in the basic understanding of what they believe and why they believe these doctrines in a world without an anchor firmly rooted in the existence of Christ, the solid rock. For an effective witness to the world, the doctrines are learnt to prevent heresies and insidious activities of false doctrines peddlers. Matthew Ojo commented that these doctrines act as distinguishing characteristics of Deeper Life in a pluralistic religious world. The doctrinal emphases and religious practices are the features by which Deeper Life is widely known in Nigeria and abroad today. These are not exclusive to Deeper Life but are also found in other Pentecostal or Charismatic organizations in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world. However, Deeper Life has given

heightened and specialized interpretations and emphases to these beliefs and has thus distinguished itself from Charismatic movements elsewhere. In addition, many of the doctrinal emphases in Deeper Life have been held by the Apostolic Faith Church where Kumuyi was a member for over twenty years (1988:153).

6.4.5 Restitution Before Salvation: Is It Important?

The sixth doctrine cited from the twenty- two articles of faith by DLBC can be placed in perspective through a participant observation at the Sunday Worship Service of the Deeper Life Bible Church, 9 September 2018. The topic for the day was, ‘Repentance and Restitution’. One of the members asked the question about the importance of restitution. Pastor Kumuyi answered this question by moving through basic steps for a convert’s understanding before and after salvation experience:

Before we become Christians, our conscience can convict us for wrongdoing. For fear of consequences we go to the people we offend to make restitution. After salvation, God puts his Spirit in us. Without the Spirit of God in a person, he is not actually born again. Following conversion, the indwelling Spirit begins to reveal to you what you did not know when you were still a sinner. Ignorance is not an excuse for committing sin. Your conscience might not accuse you that you have done a wrong. People may deceive you into believing that you could make excuses for sinful actions, but in the eyes of God, you must make restitution for wrongdoing. In the Old Testament before the fullness of grace came to the people they did all the restitutions they needed to do with all their hearts, minds and souls as an expression of their love and obedience to God. Now that we have become the chosen people of God with the fullness and revelation of his Spirit, we need to make haste and be obedient to the word of God on restitution. Restitution before Salvation: is it important? (Kumuyi, Understanding the Scripture 2011: 47-55)

There are critical implications of the tenets of faith espoused by DLBC. The codes and categories which account for basic concepts of doctrines in DLBC have multiple dimensions. It provides answers to why the church is fundamental and inflexible in its doctrinal position. It has been criticized in Pentecostal theology and by various neo-charismatic churches for members' lifestyle and behaviour which separate the rest of denominational churches from DLBC.

6.5 Bible Study

This section explores the Deeper Life Bible Church interactions with the Bible. Of great note is that people have been attracted and drawn to DLBC churches because of the holistic Bible study ministry: ‘The power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word has influenced people from all walks of life to join the church’ said a lay house leader during one of the interviews (FO-DCL, 13:01:2021). Those who attended the central Bible study were considered the voice of mission and channels of propagation of the Christian faith in their particular context within the broader society.

Since 1973, the Bible study has been a significant tool for furthering Christian missions by the DLBC. Undoubtedly, the Bible study was pursued because of an absence of such an approach in the Church. Kumuyi considered the Bible study group which he led personally, as a direct response to the mandate of the Great Commission to preach the gospel to every creature and to disciple the whole nation (Ojewale et al. 2021:67). He pored endlessly over Christian books written by such great authors as John Wesley, alongside Charles G. Finney, Charles Spurgeon, and many others. He devoured their books, held tightly to their words and learned from their lives and ministry (Ojewale et al. 2021:68). However, I hope he also learnt from their mistakes in Christian ministry, because they too struggled in their ministries. Not many churches were keen on organizing Bible study sessions for their congregations in Southwest Nigeria. The mainline churches limited their teachings of the Bible to Sunday School, while most mainline churches never bothered about Bible teaching, but limited these to the clergy alone. An interview with Professor Israel Ogunlade (IO-DCL, 22:11:2020), a leader in the DLBC Southwest, revealed that DLBC took Bible study as a serious mission to purposely enlighten the lay persons and clergy on the centrality of Christ and its mission. It was conducted systematically and in a regimented way every Monday. The activities of

weekly Bible study extended to Wednesday, Thursday and Friday except Sunday depending on the place, people and context. The drive was essentially missional. The Bible study was integral to the mission. Williams Folorunsho Kumuyi (WFK) commented in his inauguration address of the New HQ Gbagada (April 2018):

Besides the central Monday Bible study sessions at Ebute Metta, pockets of believers met regularly in a different part of Lagos for studies and evangelism. By 1977, centres had been established at the following locations: Baptist Church, Chemist Bus-stop, Akoka, Gospel Pentecostal Assembly, 17 Shoremekun Street, Mushin, Yaba Model School, Surulere, Pentecostal Holiness Church, 97B, Ogba Street, Agege, 25 Mba Street, Ajegunle, Christ Gospel Mission, 6 Onitire Street, Itire, among others. Citing study locations closer to the people was a strategy meant to bring the benefits of the in-depth Bible study closer to the people. (DLBC New HQ inauguration, 24 April 2018, p.7)

6.5.1 Analysis of Bible Study Participants

DLBC's Spirituality is anchored on the routinized study of the scriptures. For this study, we can analyse the effect of Bible study on the life, practices, ministry and underlying influence of theology on the mission of the DLBC. This is because the impact of Bible study from the origin of the ministry has transformed from a mere Bible study group in 1973 to Deeper Christian Life Ministry in the 1970s and in 1982, became the Deeper Life Bible Church. Ojo pointed out that:

Deeper Christian Life Ministry did not in any way represent the mainstream of evangelical Christianity or the spreading charismatic revival. This is so because the founder of the organization derived his spirituality from outside the campuses. However, Deeper Life in its early years, 1973-79, supplied missing aspects in the growing charismatic revival in the educational institutions. These are the aspects of teaching and the study of the Scriptures by which Deeper Life has come to be known. The importance of teaching in Deeper Life meant that its evangelistic programme was directed mainly to Christians or those already in connection with Christian churches. (Ojo 1988:143)

Analysing the Impact of Bible Study

Year 1997 to 2017

N/S	Christian Experience/ Call	Clergy	Laity
1	Conversion to faith	7	9
2	Sanctification Experience	10	10
3	Baptism in the Holy Spirit	7	5
4	Discipleship	9	8
5	Mission engagement	10	7
6	Understanding of doctrines	9	9
7	Equipped for leadership	8	5

Table 6.3: The Analysis of Impact of Bible Study

The impact of the Monday Bible study appears significant. The church that began a Bible study in a sitting room in Lagos now has over 6,000 Bible study locations across Nigeria. The impact of the Monday Bible study appears significant. In a document presented during the inauguration of a new headquarters auditorium with a seating capacity of 35,000 in April 2018, it was reported that the church has a presence in all the 770 local governments in Nigeria⁶⁵. A sample of 20 people was selected consisting of 10 clergy and 10 lay persons for interviews to find out the impact of the Bible study on their lives and ministry. The people chosen were those who had attended the Bible study for at least 20 years from 1997 and the year 2017. They were also leaders in the capacity of clergy (District Coordinators) and lay persons (Christian workers) in Alimosho area of Lagos. The Alimosho group of Deeper Life Bible Church has over 7,000 members. Specifically, the emphasis is on being filled with the Holy Spirit in preparation for gospel work. Consequently, a two-dimensional dynamics and interactive process is at work. The first dimension is inductive, some members believing that they understand their relationship with the Lord in the light of regular attendance at the Monday Bible study. They also

⁶⁵Deeper Life Bible Church Inauguration of the new headquarters; auditorium. 35,000 seats capacity. The Cathedral was opened on Tuesday, April 2018. The location was Gbagada, Lagos where its original acquired land in 1982 was built as a ramshackle structure.

claim to have a willingness and readiness to learn. They were not satisfied with the religion, creeds, and rituals at the mainline churches where they had been staunch adherents. They were fed up with institutional religion and were struggling to reconnect to the former churches from where they had to come to the new Bible study. The participants I interviewed claimed that after participating in DLBC Bible studies for a period of six months and upwards, their lives had been radically changed and a new relationship with God had begun. The second dimension is deductive. Some members theorize about personal gifting based on their personal convictions that they were being called to serve. Others claimed that the Holy Spirit was at work in all of their encounters at the Monday Bible study.

Out of 10 clergy, 7 of them claimed that it was when they started attending Bible study that they knew the Lord and gave their lives to Christ. 9 lay persons out of 10 mentioned that it was at the first contact with the Bible study that they became converted. Looking at the experience of sanctification, 10 clergy reported that they had experienced sanctification, while all 10 lay persons referred to the Bible study as the place they were sanctified. With regards to baptism by the Holy Spirit, 7 clergy attested to being baptized in the Holy Spirit at the Bible study, and 5 lay persons claimed that they received the Holy Spirit at the Bible study. On becoming real disciples, 9 clergy reported that they had never been sure of their stand and commitment to Christ fully until they had started attending the Bible study, while 8 lay persons testified to a true discipleship experience through the Bible study. Exposure to mission numbered 10 out of 10 clergy, while 7 lay persons confessed that the Bible was the source of their exposure to mission (BA-DCL, HY-DCL, RU-DLPTJ-DLP, AN-DLW, FO-DCL, MH-DCL, MD-DCL, 13:01:2021).



Figure 6.1: Deeper Life Bible Church Headquarters' Gbagada, Lagos Nigeria. A 35,000 seating Capacity auditorium completed in 2017 and inaugurated 24th April 2018. Source: https://www.google.com/search?q=dlbc+headquarters+Gbagada+Lagos&sxsrf=APq-WBtkcCorTf0cNHearT0ZaP2Imi1BXw:1647867217210&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj2pPngn9f2AhULrxoKHbQfCUMQ_AUoAXoECAEQAw&biw=1093&bih=454&dpr=1.25. Accessed 10 January 2022.

6.5.2 Missional and Social Impact of Monday Bible Study

The impact of the Bible study has been very significant in Deeper Life Bible Church from its inception in August 1973, when related to Christian mission, discipleship, and ministerial development. It will be recalled that the Bible study began with only 15 people in Lagos. From the early 1970s till the close of the 20th century, the Bible study was a decentralised phenomenon. It began at the College of Education, University of Lagos. Between 1973 and 1977, the Bible study had expanded geographically to Lagos Baptist Church, Chemist Akoka, and Gospel Pentecostal Assembly Shoremekun, By 1977, centres had been established at the following locations: Baptist Church, Chemist Bus-stop, Akoka, Gospel Pentecostal Assembly, 17 Shoremekun Street, Mushin, Yaba Model School, Surulere, Pentecostal Holiness Church, 97B, Ogba Street, Agege, 25 Mba

Street, Ajegunle, Christ Gospel Mission, 6 Onitire Street, Itire, among others, with thousands of participants, and was now an interdenominational Bible study (DLBC New HQ inauguration, 24 April 2018, p.7). The later development was due to an unrelenting passion for souls and a great drive for mission expansion. Pastor Kumuyi began the Thursday Evangelism School Gospel Pentecostal Assembly at 17 Shoremekun Street Mushin in 1977. The evangelism training opened opportunities for the expansion of Bible study locations. At the evangelism training school, in preparing the adherents for immediate mission expansion, Kumuyi emphasized ‘Soul-winning is the greatest work you can ever be involved in. It is the most rewarding enterprise you can undertake. It is a work that gives joy in this life and brings reward in the world to come’ (1991:7). It is a wonderful responsibility that carries a satisfying reward. ‘The one who really wants to win souls is not looking at the success of the past. With all the successes you might have had if your zeal for soul winning dies out, or the fire in you quenches, or your vision has become clouded, then you need more of Jesus' compassion for the lost’ (ibid 1991:9).

6.6 The Priesthood of Believers

One theological and missional concept central and cardinal to the denomination under study is the indispensability of the priesthood of all believers as the central focus of its ecclesiology. A respondent (IF-DLW, 20:02:2021) pointed out that ‘Every believer in the denomination is given the privilege of the proclamation of the gospel with or without any form of ordination’. The assumption is that there is no form of license or approval required from the church authority to tell people in the neighbourhood that Jesus saves. This is a very strong theological teaching which significantly influences the church’s mission praxis. The theology underpinning the mission of Deeper Life Bible Church teaches, trains and empowers the laity and releases them to the community for God’s

mission. The DLBC believes that the priesthood of believers is a collective movement of the church at the individual level. The task of preaching the gospel of salvation to every creature is the responsibility of every Christian. Shortly, before his ascension to heaven, Jesus entrusted his disciple with this momentous assignment ‘Go ye into all the world’ (Mark 16:15-16.) By virtue of our redemption, through the blood of Jesus, this noble task has become the obligation of all true Christians. We are to reach out to sinners and call them to the way of salvation by proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus to them (Christian Women Mirror April 2020, p. 5). The theology of the priesthood of believers confers authority for missionary proclamation upon the lay congregants. The priesthood is thus a two-directional representation or mandatory task between God and the people, bringing the knowledge of God to the people. It is the privilege of the priest to bless the people and offer an acceptable sacrifice to God. There are outward and inward functions of lay persons as shown from the priesthood of believers. This includes both centrifugal and centripetal mission dynamics. The people interviewed explicitly articulated the Pentecostal dogma of the priesthood of all believers. Some respondents (MO-DLP, FA-DCL, 27:12:2020) spoke of the lay initiative in local mission, both inside the Deeper Life Bible Church and from their own personal experiences outside the DLBC, with the latter being more of a lack of emphasis on it in comparison to the initiative taken by DLBC. Yet others shared about what I have coded as 'a collective move', which occurred naturally without necessarily being directed by a central authority or the clergy, although each should be understood as nuanced slightly differently. This provides evidence of the priesthood of all believers as the main strategy of the outward expression of an individual's faith in the cosmic world. Again, the priesthood of believers was misunderstood by the Apostolic Faith, the former church of pastor Kumuyi, as has been pointed out in his biography. Ojewale et al. argued, ‘He was greatly misunderstood in the

church he attended then, Apostolic Faith. His traducers took exception to his firm conviction, especially his insistence that personal evangelism was the duty and ministry of every Christian. The church believed that only ordained ministers was qualified and mandated to preach the gospel' (2021:71). This is a critical aspect and foundation for this research because Kumuyi, though a university graduate, was regarded as a lay person because he was not ordained. There was a difference between the lay person and the clergy, but lay persons were needed to proclaim the Christian faith.

A Compelling Responsibility – the Priesthood of All Believers

Kumuyi sees the priesthood of all believers as a compelling responsibility for everyone in the denominational church, neither a selected few nor the clergy alone are to be involved in the proclamation of the gospel. He succinctly remarked that:

Preaching the gospel is vital because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. It is the only way to victory over sin and all the works of the devil. Where are the preachers today? Do not look around searching for one; just look at the mirror, the preacher is standing right there before you. As long as you have been saved, you are that preacher who should take this message of hope and salvation to the dying world, Kumuyi. (Christian Women Mirror, April 2020, p. 2)

This theological concept divides the responsibilities such that it is the fundamental structure of the church which holds together the mission and actions of the churches in the private and public space.

6.7 Eschatology: What Lies Ahead

The Deeper Life Bible Church's mission focuses on redemption, and a sure 'soteriology' of the future home. Eschatology and soteriology are thus connected with each other as the ultimate driver of mission theology. Thus 'Pentecostals are saddled with an eschatological that foresees the imminent return of Christ which militates against long term social and economic struggles' (Miller & Yamamori 2007:182). The Pentecostals

possibly oscillate between soteriology and eschatology. The doctrinal position of Deeper Life in view of eschatology argues that:

The present-day in which we live is referred to in scripture as the last days. This age is very significant in the plan of God as it ushers us into another important series of events often called in theology as 'eschatology'. This is the confirmation that DLBC has a view of theology that under guides its teaching and practice and is applicable to its mission. (Deeper Life Leadership Strategy Congress, 2004, p. 154)

6.7.1 Imminence of Christ's Return

The theological focus on eschatology resulted in a deep commitment to mission especially at the early stage of the ministry. In an interview, one District Co-ordinator (TO-DCL,20:01:21) mentioned that 'We believe that the coming of Christ will be literally tomorrow, we live a day at a time, and we want him to meet us evangelising and missionizing and proselyting. We worked ourselves to the bone on the field'. However, this is in contrast with the mainline denominations, and Protestant mainstream denominations interpret the Pentecostals' urgency and fervency played out in the Great Commission as fanaticism and extremism. It is the constant reminder of the Lord's imminent return that shapes the understanding of most lay DLBC congregants preaching and spreading the mission of Christ as the greatest endeavour for the Christian. The priority placed on the mission was far greater than personal ambition. The overarching arguments emphasize the importance of eschatology as a motivation for mission among early Pentecostals in particular.

6.7.2 Messianic Eschatology

Its messianic eschatology locates DLBC under three characterizations: (i) fundamentalism; (ii) anti-materialism and (iii) anti-worldliness. Implicit to the term 'fundamentalism', 'anti-materialism' and 'anti-worldliness' are the ideas of non-conformity

with prevalent cultural and social norms. They go against the grains. There is a tension between this world and the world to come in their belief and practice of the Christian faith with respect to mission. Since the militant Church is fervently waiting for the coming of the Lord by rapture and thus is engaged in his mission. The DLBC believes that:

The rapture is the greatest event of all ages that the Church is waiting for. It is the catching away of all true believers in Christ to meet the Lord in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16). The rapture (commonly referred to as the first phase or stage of the second coming of Christ) is the catching away from the earth, of all living saints and all who died in the Lord. The rapture will take place before the great tribulation and can happen any time from now. (Deeper Life Articles of Faith number 15, abridged edition)

Further to the theology the church espouses concerning the rapture, there is a panoply of spiritual qualifications required for being part of the rapture specifically for the Church and in general for the wider society. The more intriguing fact of the rapture is the astonishing way it will happen. It will be sudden, spontaneous, and shocking – like the twinkling of an eye (Christian Women Mirror March 2019, p 4). One of the informants, a lay person, Felix Akeredolu (FA- DLP, 12:03:2021) explained that ‘Although Christians in general, know and believe that Jesus is coming soon, it is saddening that some will be taken unaware by the rapture. Everybody will not be ready because of their attachment to the systems of the world’. In its doctrinal manual, the church articulated possible hindrances to being part of the raptured Church. The following are some factors, that can hinder you (Christians) from being raptured: (i) sin, (ii) undone restitution, (iii) unforgiveness (iv) unpaid debt (v) worldliness and compromise, and (vi) overconfidence (Christian Women Mirror March 2019:5).

6.7.3 DLBC Theological Discuss and Overview

This section discusses the relation of theology, DLBC Bible study, and convictions of DLBC on African modes of worship and doctrines. The Bible study class was essentially

a lay person's initiative without theological training. The founder of the group, Pastor William Folorunsho Kumuyi, was a first-class mathematics graduate from the University of Ibadan in 1967. He had been converted to the Christian faith in April 1964. Ojo remarked that:

His (Kumuyi) Christian growth dates back to his childhood, but he claimed to have been conscious of his faith only after his conversion. On 4 April 1964, he was invited to the Apostolic Faith Church at Ikenne where he claimed he heard the message about the new birth for the first time and was converted. As a result of his conversion, he made restitution by writing to the West African Examination Council that he had in past years impersonated other candidates in examinations. He claimed that he was pardoned and he used that opportunity to witness to the pupils on whose behalf he had written the examinations. (Ojo 1988:145)

According to the narratives of the founder, ‘When the Bible study started in my flat, we did not call it Deeper Life. It was the in-depth knowledge of the Word beyond superficial applications of scriptures that made the members nickname the group, deeper’ (DLBC National Retreat message 1981)⁶⁶. It was the lay persons attending the Bible study across many denominations who coined the name. At its start, the Bible study group was an interdenominational Pentecostal movement. From Ruth Marshall’s point of view ‘The remarkable rise of the Deeper Life could not be prefigured in the little group that met in the seating room of Kumuyi every Monday in the early 1970s. The expansion of Kumuyi’s movement during the 1970s occurred in the same informal fashion, at the initiatives of the engaged converts’, (2009:70). What Marshall missed out here was the format and content of the Bible study which eventually emerged as the fundamental beliefs of Deeper Life Bible Church. However, she provided the broader spiritual outcome and the experiences of the Bible study attendees without the theological

⁶⁶Deeper Life National Easter Retreat: a Unique Opportunity for all. Right from when Deeper Christian Life Ministry was established in 1973, the core mandate of the church was centred on the deeper study of the scripture. This was often done through the coming together of all Deeper Life members to a particular venue where the Bible doctrines were expounded with a focus on holiness and heaven. It was against this backdrop that the concept, a retreat was introduced into the church lexicon as far back as 1975 when the General Superintendent, Pastor William F. Kumuyi with other Bible-loving believers gathered to pray and study the Bible.

construct and beliefs of the Deeper Life Bible Church as seen later in the study. Furthermore, Gaiya's study on DLBC shed light on the beginning of theology in the Deeper Life Bible Church:

Kumuyi is the sole theologian of the Deeper Life Bible Church. Members depend on him solely to interpret the Bible. Kumuyi's published works (books and pamphlets apart from tracts) run into the fifties, almost all of them being sermons. These materials provide easy and accessible Bible commentaries, theological treatises, and propaganda material. The church publishes assorted magazines to meet various interest groups. Each of these materials is published by the church's publishing company, Zoe Publishing and Printing Company, Limited. (Gaiya 2002:15)

This brings to light the sources, formation, and development of theology as a distinct practice in the Deeper Life Bible Church. The DLBC theology is skewed towards western theological models in its orientation and focus of teaching with Wesleyan holiness theology as the lens for its hermeneutics. Deeper Life Bible Church has little or no sympathy for an African style of worship, liturgy and sacraments. DLBC practices and emphasis bear much of its DNA from Wesley's holiness theology and the American Apostolic Faith Mission. If the church had been founded by missionaries from Great Britain or America as other mainline churches like the Methodists and Baptists were, the stance of DLBC on theology would have been understood without an argument. However, this is an indigenous Pentecostal church in the clothes of Western mission and theological orientation. This is a dual face of its mission theology. It contrasts with Burgess' findings on Nigerian Pentecostal theology in global perspectives:

Post-colonial attempts to develop African theology have followed two broad routes. The first - African Christian theology - is concerned with cultural identity and liberation from European cultural domination. Early African writers, mostly Western-trained, sought to strengthen African Christian identity by exploring the continuities between Christianity and Africa's primal religious heritage. The second approach - liberation theology - is concerned with socio-political and economic injustices, and concentrates on liberation from class

domination and neo-colonialism through social change and praxis. (Young 1993: 13-33; Bediako 1996, Burgess 2008:30)

The above excerpt does not portray significant issues about African Pentecostal theology, but refers to two main types of African theology which are part of the foundation for this discourse. While the practical concerns of African Pentecostals tend to focus on issues such as healing, economic security and fertility, their theologies reflect a concern for character formation, identity construction and contextual relevance, as we will see later (Burgess 2008:31). Deeper Life in its theology with a hybrid of Africa Pentecostal and Western theological orientation may be situated between Parratt's and Paul Gifford's characterization of African theology as summarised below in Burgess' analysis of Nigerian Pentecostal Theology:

John Parratt (1995: 207) has suggested that African theology throughout the Continent finds common ground in three basic elements: the Bible and Christian tradition, African culture and religion, and the contemporary socio-political context. Paul Gifford (1998: 333) has taken issue with this, insisting that Africa's new Pentecostal churches largely ignore Christian tradition, demonise African religion and culture, and dismiss the contemporary socio-political situation as theological irrelevant. (Parratt 1995; Gifford 1998)

I have pointed out in the early part of this chapter that Deeper Life Bible Church by doctrine and practice is averse to African cultural orientations and cultural contextualisation.

6.8 Interpretation and Criticisms

The Deeper Life Bible Church has several blind spots which the observers are concerned about, which can be seen if the church's conservative approach to doctrines, life and ministry will allow such changes to be made without contradicting the Holy Scripture upon which the church is built.

6.8.1 Soteriology and Christology

DLBC's writings and hermeneutics suggest a spiritual experience of an intense, direct and overwhelming nature centring on the person of Christ which is schematized as "Christology". Given the importance of this experience, the implicit challenge was to define it theologically more precisely. This position has been interpreted by Macchia as a tendency, especially within denominational Pentecostalism in the Global North with application to majority world theology (the institutions most driven to establish doctrinal boundaries and most able to publicize their agreements internationally), to view Spirit baptism as an experience of renewal following (and distinct from) regeneration and water baptism, (2019:224). The DLBC claims that nobody can talk about allegiance to any denominational church if the person has not had an encounter with Christ. One of the informants asked 'Can we say that an individual living in sin, dead in trespasses with adultery evil manner of life has an association with a church'? (FA-DLP, 20:5:2021). DLBC believes that this is where many local denominations have got it wrong. According to DLBC, conversion comes before any claim of being a member of any known denomination. Hollenweger had argued that 'A catholic in France or Latin America who converts to Pentecostalism does not change his religion, but only his organization' (2004:130). Deeper life contended that salvation is not a mere identification with Christ, but that a substitutionary faith in Christ's atonement is essential to profess faith in Christ which results both in the change of life and character.

6.8.2 Controversial Doctrines

One of the most controversial doctrines among Christians who come into contact with the DLBC is the doctrine of restitution. The grey aspect is marriage restitution. When a man marries more than one wife or a divorced person is remarried while the first husband or

wife is alive, the man has to put away all the excess wives according to DLBC's teachings. The world sees this as averse to African marriage which permits polygamy. However, the DLBC insists that if a man marries more than one wife, the first wife is legitimate while the rests are visitors in a home. On the other hand, the children born by the visitors (one of the excess wives) are seen as the legitimate heir of the man. Salvation is taught by DLBC as a breakaway from the old order, a complete turnaround engendered through repentance and acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour. This practice has been questioned by a few scholars. Marshall asked, 'Is conversion an adoption of religion or conversion through religious practices? It appears that lay discussion or missionary discussion created a series of oppositions between Christianity and 'paganism' (culture) between opposed order of doing and seen (Marshall 2009:58). Again, the condemnation of television sets as 'devils box' held sway for long in DLBC. It forbade its members from owning television sets till the later part of 1999. DLBC was never spared for this as being misleading and uncivilised. Its separatist attitude and self-segregation have not helped incorporate lay people into the wider society. In the 1980s DLBC was criticized for causing a schism in the mainline churches because of drawing away existing people for lay mission through its interdenominational Bible study which metamorphosed to DLBC in 1982 (ibid 2009:79).

What people know and think of God appears to determine the trajectory of the mission. This brings together the mission practice and faith within a given context. There is a simple basic theology enshrined in a God sending His Son to the world. An informant, Joseph Ajibako (JA-DCL, 27:12:2020) mentioned 'Mission is the movement of God to the World'. This is a logic that captures the essence of incarnation in redemption. Theology is important because correct doctrinal beliefs are essential to the relationship between the believer and God. This reflection could be interpreted as vertical

and horizontal theologies. I see theology as a language for the mission where God meets a human being in the world arena, resulting in both dialogue and reconciliation.

6.8.3 Social Connections of Members with Larger Society

The Deeper Life Bible Church rejects the political involvement of its members. It sees this as a compromise and a worldly practice. This position is seen as a one-dimensional theological orientation by the Pentecostal community. Many scholars see this view as narrow and prescriptive, perhaps summed up as inconsistent with Pentecostal theology. The exclusive use of one hermeneutical key does not allow a deeper understanding of the theological exploration of a given subject. Several studies have established a positive correlation between the social engagement of the church and Pentecostal spirituality. Organizational performance is particularly significant, as improvements are the bottom-line of for-profit organizations that have integrated organizational spirituality, (Rocha & Pinheiro 2021; Latif & Aziz 2018). Other studies rejected the view that the Church is not a social gathering. In contrast, they show that there is an element of social involvement of members with each other in a real-life situation. Thus Gaiya in his study

Identifies two responses to social challenge by charismatic Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. I argue that churches taking a *centripetal* position are either socially passive or collude with corrupt leaders and groups who undermine efforts toward political, social and human improvement; yet, in their engagement with society, they offer spiritual solutions to myriad social and political problems. Conversely, churches taking a *centrifugal* approach try to confront political and social problems, but these churches are relatively few and located primarily in Lagos, although they are growing in influence. I conclude that charismatic Pentecostalism in Nigeria currently is shifting from strictly spiritual solutions to socio-political problems to an emphasis on meeting social needs in practical ways. (Gaiya 2014)

However, Kangwa's interpretation of the social connectedness of theology and mission is subtle but prioritises theological affinity of the Pentecostals for social interactions. He

draws a contrast between the mainline protestant churches and the Pentecostal while affirming a multifaceted mission approach. He hypothesizes 'Mainline churches are challenged to redefine how they do mission and to focus more on the spiritual, physical, and economic challenges of people in Africa' (Kangwa 2016).

6.8.4 Far Right Eschatology

The imminent return of Christ has been grossly misunderstood by some of the members as taught by the DLBC, especially in early period of DLBC in the 1980s. The sense of planning for the future appeared to be irrelevant as understood by a small number of people, who claimed to live one day at a time (FA-DLP, 12:3:21) while holding material and existential living with loose hands. On the other hand, a few members were bewildered on the issue of the rapture, as the church embarked on building an ultramodern church headquarters worth over \$100 million dollars and completed in 2018. Another informant (EY-DLP, 19:3:2021) criticised the church for such massive projects in the light of the coming of Christ. She said, 'We are told that Anti-Christ will inherit the properties left in the world after the rapture of the church'. This is an expansive eschatological dimension of an 'anti-worldly' theological stance but appears as the opposite of the act of divine self-impartation and transformation of creation (Macchia 2019:222) in the future judgment at Christ's return. It appears that a gap exists between the theology of the pulpit and the day-to-day practice of the theology by members of the church in a larger world. There is a difference between the church's hermeneutics and its specific appropriation by members of the church.

6.8.5 Change in Perspectives

A few of the lay faithful do not agree on the change in emphasis over the years in the doctrinal and soteriological position of the DLBC. This rests on the assumption that God

and His Word do not change. Abiodun a Group Pastor, (FA-DCL, 09:08:2021) admitted that the Word of God does not change, but the methods and applications of the Word in real context have changed. It is worth noting that an interpretive position emerged from a few of the respondents which vary significantly from the theology and doctrinal dictum of the church. The way the General Superintendent interprets "antiworldliness" is that the Christian attitude to the world is different from the perceptions of ordinary people in the church. Some see it as a complete detachment from the world in terms of social, economic and political engagement. This has led many of the members to be averse to involvement in national, social and political issues affecting the country.

6.9 Summary

This chapter has explored the theology underlying Deeper Life Bible Church mission and Christianity in Southwest Nigeria. I examined the origin, types, waves, formation and theological practices about mission in Nigeria as a background for laypersons Pentecostal-Charismatic mission which is the focus of my research. The DLBC doctrinal profiles have been outlined with special focus on exposing the place of the Bible study in the development of a theology for its mission practices. It has also shown how the lay congregations have been transformed from an observers' position to participants in missions over the years. The chapter also explored how the church spread from Lagos at the request of the lay persons to begin the Bible study in various places in Nigeria in the first twenty years of the church's existence and evangelistic mission endeavour. Every church has a theology that influences its mission behaviour directly or indirectly. Theology of a church may be rightly considered a significant factor in the propagation of mission. In a sense, however, the theology the DLBC takes after world Christianity. Mission is a theme that DLBC has heard from the hierarchy at the top but achieved from

the bottom of the ladder of the leadership. The next chapter explores the mission strategies of the RCCG and DLBC within the context of their missional ecclesiology.

CHAPTER SEVEN

NIGERIAN LAY PENTECOSTAL MISSION APPROACH

This chapter explores the lay Pentecostal mission approach in Nigeria by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and the Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) in the context of Southwest Nigeria. It provides historical settings and empirical analysis of their mission foray. The RCCG and the DLBC intentionally engage in mission within the indigenous population. These denominations understand the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the signpost to mission. The chapter also examines how the two denominations engage the lay persons and the evangelists to negotiate their identities in the emergent Pentecostal missions in Southwest Nigeria. Amid the social changes and political challenges in Nigeria, Pentecostal and charismatic churches are seen recovering their identities with an increasing participation in direct mission outreaches. The chapter narrates how lay congregational members weave evangelism, mission and discipleship into everyday mission activities. Mission is far from going out of date. Boladale, a lay person from RCCG, province 90 Akowonjo, reflects on the importance of the Holy Spirit in mission, mentioned ‘We are bringing back the early mission of the apostolic age, through the new outpouring and awakening of the Spirit. The Lord has given us the Holy Spirit to evangelize and save souls’ (BA-RLP: 22:11:2020). Tolani in a similar way admitted that ‘encounter with the Holy Spirit in a baptismal measure releases God's grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit to serve the Lord in a more fruitful way’ (TO-RLP: 22:11:2020). The Holy Spirit is a gift for spiritual enablement to evangelize the world. Okeke, in his writing on the significance of ecclesiastical ministries for lay persons in Nigerian mission concurred:

The Church in Nigeria needs officially- installed lay ministers to work hand in hand with the Clergy to bear eloquent testimony to the diversity and complementary of roles and ministries which characterize the Church as a communion. The installation of stable ministers will not do away with non-formal ministries. Rather it will ensure that qualified and trained personnel, who are so installed, are available to coordinate and oversees the services rendered by non-formal ministers. (Okeke 1993:12)

In Chapter six of my thesis, I examined the understanding of theology underpinning Pentecostal mission from the lens of the DLBC which incorporated concepts and strategies developed to bridge the gap between theology- doctrines, beliefs, spirituality, vision, and dreams into practice by immersing itself in evangelization. The gap occurs between what the lay persons do inside the Church and what they ought to do outside the Church. Theologically, it is a gap between espoused theology and normative theology⁶⁷. The theology is weaved essentially into the practice of mission proclamation. This chapter connects the previous chapter with the realities of Pentecostal missions' strategy Nigerian Pentecostalism is a dynamic movement with subtle changes of emphasis, beliefs and strategies. Within the modern Nigerian Pentecostal movement, there is an ongoing broadening of emphasis – from just saving souls to saving the society, from signs and wonders in the Church, to service and influence in the society (McCain 2013:160; Ajibade 2020:153).

7.1. Mission Strategy

The term strategy was initially used in military contexts to denote planning. However, the content of the concept has occurred in missiological contexts since the times of Paul. In Romans 15:18-20, Paul makes several strategic statements when describing his plan to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Tikkakoski n.d.:303). Creating a mission strategy is challenging and, when done well, a fruit-producing task for any mission organization. According to McClung and Hamalainen, on strategic mission approach, the 'terminology

⁶⁷Espoused: theology drawn from the group's own articulation of its beliefs. Normative: theology from sources which the group considers authoritative.

of modern leadership theories is not an absolute necessity to missiology'. However, such theories can offer fresh perspectives and approaches so that missions, helping agencies, missionaries, and churches can become more goal-oriented (2012:305). In effect, the idea conceptualizes spiritual, personal development, theological understanding and intercultural awareness of the lay persons to mission. While this study examines Pentecostal approaches to mission, it should be noted that different approaches have been used in the past to achieve the goal of evangelization. The approaches are the strategic panoply to give direction and overview of how the community, regions and nations should be engaged in specific missions. The popular approach adapts the strategy to the culture, values, and ethnic orientation of the people. Bevans and Schroeder outline six constants which formed a doctrinal theme to which the Church must be faithful at every boundary crossing and in every context. They studied approaches and proposed that they can be clubbed under six constants. The interactions and articulation of these six constants, 'Christianity, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Salvation, Anthropology and Culture' (2004) will determine the way the Church's missionary practice is lived out in various periods of its mission history and enterprises. Again, Dayton and Fraiser's world evangelization model outlined strategic mission orientations for people groups and frontier missions. They are: the standard solution strategy approach; being-in-the-way strategy; plan so far strategy and unique solution strategy (1990:17). There are gross limitations in this model. McGee highlighted three approaches to mission, namely, evangelism, church planting, and indigenization, principle and cooperation (McGee 1992:10). White and Niemandt writing on a Pentecostal mission approach in Africa, especially from Ghanaian perspectives in 2015 extended the strategy to include (i) spiritual approach, (ii) evangelism, (iii) campus evangelism and Pentecostal student group, (iv) evangelism through performing arts (v) mission through media (vi) print and

media evangelism (vii) discipleship (vii) leadership and ministerial formation, (viii) liturgical approach and (ix) diaconal approach (2015:251–260). Andrew Walls also dealt with issues of a mission approach which classified mission into categories. Walls call this approach to mission in his five marks of mission, “to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom’. The five marks of mission were explored with deft in chapter two of my thesis. Evangelism is derived from the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον, meaning ‘gospel’ or ‘good news’. It has to do with the proclamation, publishing, or spreading (announcing) of the good news/the gospel in order to turn people to the knowledge of Christ. Walls states that it is the proclaiming of the life story of Jesus Christ as recorded in the gospels. That is the story of the love of God for creation, reconciliation, and forgiveness (ibid 2015:242). This is what Krintzinger et al. call the 'kerygmatic' dimension of mission. In their view, it includes (but is not limited to) preaching, witnessing, and providing literature. The World Council of Churches says evangelism is a key to witnessing in mission. It believes that the Church has received all that is necessary to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ (2015:249). Krintzinger’s holistic mission approach (i.e. kerygmatic, diaconal, fellowship, and liturgical) argues that mission should be approached with a careful strategy.

Charismatic Pentecostal Mission Approaches in Nigeria.

As highlighted above, a contemporary approach is important to shape mission strategy for anthropology, ecclesiology, eschatology, salvation and culture. Therefore, I address the ecclesiological and soteriological dimensions of the enunciated approaches at this junction. Following Ajibade on Pentecostal missions in Nigeria, there are centripetal and centrifugal approaches to mission. According to Ajibade, churches taking a centripetal position are either socially passive or they collude with corrupt leaders and groups who undermine efforts towards political, social and human improvement; yet, in their

engagement with society, they offer spiritual solutions to myriad social and political problems. Churches taking a centrifugal approach try to confront political and social problems, but these churches are relatively few and located primarily in Lagos, although they are growing in influence (2020:151). Following this perspective, the centripetal position in mission is the "deeds only" churches, while those taking a centrifugal approach might be "proclamation only" churches using the analogies of Burgess (2015:192). The first explicates the kenotic aspect of the gospel, while the second is kerygmatic, which springs from understanding the gospel. There are inherent limitations to these two approaches. These approaches are non-intensive and relatively undemanding in their scope and rigour. The approach utilizes a liturgical and worship strategy for mission. Other innovative strategies include new forms of politics that open opportunities for service to all, cell groups, prayer, fasting, Bible study, retreats, widespread outreach in stadia, production of newsletters or house magazines, new hymnody (choruses), preaching in buses, door-to-door evangelism, and mail-prayer ministry. Some specialize in billboards and car stickers. The expansion has turned architecture into "Warehouse Temples" (Kalu 2002:130). In this chapter, I will look at the lay mission approach of the RCCG. The DLBC approach will follow it. I will analyze five mission approaches in RCCG: church planting, lay mission approaches, church social responsibility, and grassroots mission and the 'Let's go a fishing' strategy.

7.2 Redeemed Christian Church of God Mission Strategy

The beginning and formation of the RCCG in 1952 was a period of concealment (a reflection on how it appropriates crucial moments from its collective past), and the wave of the present mission euphoria could be referred to as a period of growth and consolidation (Adedibu 2016:86, Adeboye 2007:48). The RCCG puts strategy into

practice to broaden and implement its vision of Pentecostal mission. Its progression is communicated through lay persons who act as mission stakeholders. According to Adedibu, (former provost of the Redeemed College of Mission), commenting on missional history and the growth of the Redeemed Christian Church of God:

The seedbed for the emergence of RCCG as a significant transnational missionary player is firmly rooted in the organization's ethos as indicated in the memorandum and articles of association of the Church. It specifies and identifies 12 objectives for the establishment of the denomination. The first and most important of these states that the Church is established: To evangelize the world in the name of Jesus Christ and to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Art.1. 3a). The second objective states in a similar vein that the church functions: To convert the heathen and pagan to the Christian faith and to establish Churches and Missions throughout the world (Art.1. 3b). The two objectives represent the global missionary aspirations of the founding fathers of RCCG. (Adedibu 2016:86)

The motivation for such a strategy is the mobilization of the lay congregational members to be involved in mission through church planting. This is reflected in the *modus operandi* of the RCCG, which encourages its members to plant churches wherever they are situated.

Adeboye, the General Overseer of the RCCG, remarks, 'The characteristics of the church are five in numbers, joy, holiness, truth, mission and vision' (RCCG General Overseer 2008). The Church believes the Holy Spirit can reveal the future through visions and dreams. A vision is a direct illumination from God, at a time given to those who are too busy to hear the small still voice of God. Dreams are more gentle and 'grandiose', a subtle means of learning about the future. As in the case of prophecies, both vision and dreams must be properly checked against the settled word of God (RCCG General Overseer 2012). The RCCG has a mission statement, which elaborates the objectives contained in the Constitution. The mission statement of RCCG identifies six goals for the members of Church, namely:

(1) To make heaven. (2) To take as many people with us. (3) To have a member of RCCG in every family of all nations. (4) To accomplish No. 1 above, holiness will be our lifestyle. (5) To accomplish No. 2 and 3 above, we will plant churches within five minutes walking distance in every city and town of developing countries and within five minutes

driving distance in every city and town of developed countries.(6) We will pursue these objectives until every Nation in the world is reached for the Lord Jesus Christ. RCCG website, <https://www.rccghq.org/> Accessed June 10, 2022

The vision has two priorities and four bold outcomes. The outcomes are the strategic fit of the RCCG for proselytism. It spells out the policy of attempting to convert the heathen to the Christian faith contained in the articles of faith of the RCCG. In the constitution of the Church titled Memorandum and Article of Association of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Church adopts its motto: "Jesus Christ the same Yesterday, and Today, and for Ever". The first and most important of these states that the church is established: 'To evangelize the world in the name of Jesus Christ and to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ' (Art. 1.3a). The second objective states in a similar vein that the church functions: 'To convert the heathen and pagan to the Christian (sic) faith and to establish Churches and Missions throughout the world', (Ukah 2003:260). I will look at these in more detail below. The expression of the constitution dictates the direction of the strategy of RCCG in respect to its mission. The vision gives the locus standing for the Pentecostal mission strategy. The eschatological urgency to spread the gospel in the end times constitutes the drive for a radical mission statement in the African Pentecostal mission approach, as in the case of the RCCG in this context. This mission statement became the common faith basis for church planting and strategic mission paradigm for the RCCG. Significantly, Christ's return was independent of the wholesale conversion of the world to Christianity.

7.2.1 Church Planting Approach

The mission strategy and its components, like the mission and vision statements, set the direction of any mission organization, and make a clear statement about its future. The implication of the mission statement in its approach to mission means church planting is categorically stated in mission statement Number 5, 'We shall plant a church in every 5 minutes' walk in a developing country'. It stresses further: To accomplish No. 2 and 3

above, we will plant churches within five minutes walking distance in every city and town of developing countries and within five minutes driving distance in every city and town of developed countries. Church planting constitutes a substantial part of the RCCG mission strategy. Adeboye observes, ‘Of all these goals, the last one, which had to do with church planting, has been pursued most vigorously. Parishes of the RCCG began to spring up in several urban and rural settings’. However, the highest concentration has been in the Lagos metropolis. By 2004, the Church could count almost 7000 parishes in the entire country’ (Adeboye 2007b:41). Over 70 percent of this figure was concentrated in the Southwest, while the eastern and northern parts of the country made up the remaining percentage. Lagos alone contains 44 percent of the total in Southwest Nigeria. The Church planting mission strategy of the RCCG emerged through the crafted vision in their articles of faith, as indicated above. The church planting approach is a lay mission-inclusive strategy. Further, Burgess remarks in the same study on RCCG,

One of the Church's strengths is its internal organization which is designed to empower and mobilize the laity to engage in ministry and mission. The RCCG's creation of a category of lay leaders, called 'workers,' is innovative in terms of African Pentecostal ecclesiology. 'Workers' in RCCG are members who have undergone a four-month period of training, enabling them to fulfil various practical roles in the Church while continuing their secular occupation. Workers are also encouraged to receive Holy Spirit baptism, a key component of RCCG spirituality and closely aligned to power for service. (Burgess 2017:134)

The church planting vision is cascaded from the top hierarchy of the church denomination to the bottom of the ladder. It might be from the region to province to zone and then to parish church, the laboratory for the church planting spiritual assignments. The lay persons usually execute the strategy among the deaconry and parish faithful. My interview with Lekan Aruna, the provincial pastor of Oshodi (LA-RCL: 16: 05:2021), reveals that the RCCG church planting mission approach depends on lay persons. Pastor Lekan Aruna had hundreds of parishes under his provincial leadership spanning from Oshodi, the provincial headquarters, to Ilaro in Ogun State. According to him, the whole work in each parish is largely controlled by lay persons. Under this arrangement, there are

more than 700 house fellowships led by laypersons in the province. He mentioned that he leads a large province with a membership of about 5,000 that could split to form a new province as a means of extending church-planting initiatives by the clergy or provincial pastor. Aruna mentioned that the province has planted 27 parishes between 2018 and 2021 at the time of the interview. The same province has 216 parish churches, 120 area parish churches, and 65 zones with over 2,000 lay persons as Christian workers. A province serves a wide geographical area, while a zone serves a specific geographical community (Goodhew 2017:108). Pastor Aruna told me he had to administer the Lord's Supper to over 2,000 workers every quarter and this number excludes regular members of his provincial church (LA-RCL: 06:05:2021). Another way of the church planting process is for a zone or parish to split and establish a new zone or parish, and thus a new growth process begins. It is a circle of growth and reproduction. An RCCG church pastor describes his personal drive and passion for church planting in Alagbado province by saying:

The provincial pastor who came to mobilize us on Daddy GO's instruction to work for God, that a local parish church must open a similar parish to fulfil the 5 minutes vision drive of Church planting in local areas of the community in a developing country, is what we are doing. The province has given us direction to multiply churches to fulfil Daddy GO's vision which he received from the Lord. We have been sharing this vision with all the members of our parish as a heavenly vision. We must also evangelize our territory as a matter of mandate from Christ. (TA-RCL: 08:01:2019)

Another RCCG zonal pastor described his parish pastor as a "church planter with great zeal in multiplying local church parishes. Within two years in RCCG, Alagbado has planted eleven parish churches. We have ordained many workers as deacons, and they are going through training on church planting strategy" (TA-RCL 08:01:2019).

7.2.2 Evangelism and Church Planting

Church planting comes through engaging the community in occasional evangelism outreaches. There are a series of processes put in place for church planting. One study on contemporary Christianity in Nigeria hints at an effective way of reaching the community through church planting:

Church proliferation is a process that results in a new (local) Christian church being established. It should be distinguished from church development, where a new service, new worship centre or fresh expression is created that is integrated into an already established congregation. For a local church to be planted, it must eventually have a separate life and function without its parent body, even if it continues to stay in a relationship denominationally or through being part of a network. Christians, especially the missionary and clergymen have always believed that the most effective way to reach the world for Christ is by starting new churches. (Adetoyese 2019:178)

In the case of the RCCG, the parish church surveys the community to ascertain which points within the community have less presence of the RCCG parish to plant a new church. The second approach is through a change of residence by the existing leader. The change creates a need for Church planting to minimize leadership redundancy in the current province. According to a provincial pastor Agboola:

In the RCCG, we have groups and local assemblies together; they may be four to six parishes, and then we place an area pastor over them. At this level, the parish pastor is first, followed by the Area pastor, in charge of the area headquarters. When we have Holy Communion and other activities, the small parishes will come to the area headquarters for the Holy Communion service. (FA-RCL: 08:01:2019)

The area pastor is responsible for reaching out to all the parishes under him regarding welfare and where they need spiritual and physical assistance; he provides support or contacts the provincial pastor to respond to the needs of the parish. In addition, the area pastor initiates how to help members, and most of the time, the pastor from the headquarters visits those parishes for spiritual consolidation.

7.2.3 Conditions for Church Planting

The RCCG establishes conditions for church planting. Mfon Asukwo (MA-RLW: 22:11:22) remarks that ‘increase in the population of the community relative to several existing RCCG parishes, a transfer and direct deployment of RCCG parish pastor to a new field, graduation of assistant workers from believers’ class after water baptism, and ability of the province to raise finance for the proposed site’ are essential steps to planting a new church. In line with the condition outlined above, Agboola, a provincial pastor of Abule Egba, Lagos, described the process of church planting:

After planting a new church, we place a pastor over the parish. Over time, we give the church electronics and worship equipment such as generators, band sets, keyboards, speakers, and microphones. The pieces of equipment enhance their outreach ministry.

The following accounts by Burgess, citing Frank Ukah's seminal work on the RCCG, gives us an idea regarding the rationality of planting churches within a 5 minute drive of the RCCG in developing countries. According to Burgess:

Included within the RCCG's mission statement is the aim to 'plant churches within five minutes working distance in every city and towns of the developing countries and in every five minutes distance in every city and town of developed countries. According to Asonzeh Ukah, there were pragmatic reasons behind this strategy: to overcome the problem of transportation, considered a hindrance to church attendance, and to transform members into church-planters. The RCCG encourages members to plant churches wherever they are thus fulfilling the divine promise given to its founder that the Church would spread around the world before the Second Advent of Christ. Ukah identifies three ways RCCG congregations are founded outside Nigeria. First, a rich congregation in Nigeria could sponsor the establishment of a branch in Britain. Second, a member of RCCG who has migrated either for work or study may start a church, which is then incorporated into the RCCG family once it becomes viable. Finally, a rich congregation in Britain can plant a church by commissioning one of its members. This is the most common means of planting new branches. By 2009, the RCCG had planted churches. (Burgess 2017:135)

In this section, church planting is the strategic way for RCCG to fulfil its mission statement number 5. Pastor Olutobi, (OF-RCL 08:01:2019) Province 77, Abule Egba, summarised the benefits of church planting as follows: (i) Equip the lay persons to fulfil the mandate of the Great Commission, (ii) To fulfil the objectives of having RCCG parish within a 5 minute drive in developing countries, (iii) Raise a team of lay persons for spiritual maturity and developing high competence in sharing the good news of Christ

in their neighbourhood, (iv) offer spiritual training support to lay persons and workers in training ahead of ordination, (v) Intentionality of mission through church planting in April and December every year, (vi) Realizing an outward facing mission orientation to raising a new community of believers in Christ, and (vii) Learning about meeting the needs of the neighbourhood through spiritual mapping as highlighted in chapter four of the thesis (TA-RCL: 08:01:2019).

7.2.4 RCCG Lay and Grassroot Mission Approach

The dynamics of lay mission might be required to enhance the pivotal direction of the mission to achieve a chosen mission approach. A church may be *present* in a community without its *presence* in mission. However, the lay mission practice appears to make a church's presence relevant in the gospel's spread. The lay persons are the hermeneutics of the Church, symbolizing the bearers, confessional standing and being the interpreters of the gospel message in their tongue. Newbigin asserts that the mission of the Church is, in fact, the Church's obedient participation in the actions of the Father through the Holy Spirit by which the confession of Jesus Christ as Lord becomes the authentic confession of every person in their tongue (White & Niemandt 2015:244). The ministry of the lay persons in Southwest Nigeria revolves around many things that make the church functional. This includes prayer, liturgy, baptism, social engagement and discipleship. In addition, it develops the identity of lay persons, and the competence and skills for mission. I had phoned and contacted earlier in the week my intention to participate in the lay mission outreach by the RCCG parish, Alaguntan Lagos (RCCG Alaguntan, Lagos 2019 mission week). It was planned for the church's lay members to assemble for a mission outreach. My participation was part of my in-depth understanding of the mission phenomena by lay mission. It was to see how the mission takes place and who is

practically involved in it. The number of lay people who converged for the outreaches was 18; 10 women and 8 men. I was the nineteenth person for the micro mission outreach. A brief prayer and worship period was held when the lay people arrived for the mission outreach. The venue for the gathering before the outreach was the church building. The leader expected about 50 participants based on the data submitted earlier in the week from the lay people present at the mid-week programme. Ultimately, the actual number was far less than the expected number of participants. Many did not participate because of secular employment. However, more lay persons than pastors were involved in the mission outreach. It was voluntary participation. Those who came were paired up for the mission outreach. The idea of two people in a pair was to enable the support and help each could give the other. During the busy time of witnessing, one person engaged the listener(s) while the second person silently prayed for the listener(s) to understand the meaning of the good news and for the Spirit of God to work in the hearts of the listeners. In some cases, the pairing of witnesses forms an unbroken structure of partnership and mentoring. It also connotes mentoring a new lay person through learning by participation.

Three things emerged in mission practice. They are (i) relationship building, (ii) team awareness and recognition, and (iii) report and feedback system. The first mission is relational. This includes the concept of social interactions, which reflect cooperation and accommodation in the spread of the gospel. The relationship has also been known through connection with family and community members where the mission takes place. Nobody commits to a stranger in matters of faith and beliefs. It is by trust and confidence in the persons involved. The person may not accept the immediate decision, but at least a relationship begins with the prospects. Secondly, team awareness and recognition of roles are established in the process of mission proclamation among various people who constitute the groups from the church on the mission outreach. Lastly, the report and

feedback outreach system create information data and formal documentation to enhance future outreach programmes. It also reports any gaps in the field concerning the total experience of the lay persons. I witnessed and participated in four micro missions by the RCCG on the church's Global Mission Day which fell on the last Saturday of every month across four provinces namely Alimosho, Akowonjo, Baruwa and Ikotun in Lagos. The grassroots mission could be considered a model for transformative and total inclusion for any strategic mission paradigm. I interviewed Elder Felix Ohiwerei a Trustee of the RCCG. I interviewed him about the lay persons' role in the RCCG in 2019 to determine the spread of the RCCG at the grassroot level, especially in Lagos. He shared with me the importance of small-team ministry and its influence on church growth. For example, before he came to RCCG, for a brief period as a Catholic, he was a member of the Full Gospel Business Men Fellowship (FGBMF) Nigeria. He says he was born again at the RCCG. From his experience, he recognized himself as a professional lay member and leader in RCCG. He plays a prominent role in the interaction of the global business and corporate world with the RCCG. Having been the chairman of Nigeria Brewery for 15 years and Unilever Nigeria from 1998 to 2010. He shared with me about the grassroots ministry and the RCCG. Ukah's work on RCCG local identities and global processes on African Pentecostalism has this to say about Elder Felix Ohiwerei:

The public relations arm of the Church is headed by a retired chairperson of Nigerian Breweries, Assistant Elder Felix Ohiwerei, who is arguably the country's best corporate marketer. Through his efforts, different media organizations give the events sufficient attention. In addition, he liaises with other corporate bodies that would intend to use the opportunity to market their wares and services in exchange for donations to the Church. (Ukah 2003:221)

For example, in his Ikoyi residence, he holds a 'Corporate Businessmen Fellowship' every Tuesday. Top-level RCCG business associates meet from 11 am to 4 pm to share the Word of God and pray. Amongst participants are Professor Folagbade Aboaba, Pastor John Mofunnya, and a host of top members of the RCCG Partnership

League (PL) from the RCCG Lekki and Ligali Ayorinde, Lagos. Their numbers are between 20 and 30 because of the size of his seating room. This is one activity of grassroots ministry reaching the spiritual needs of highly placed individuals. The closest I had been to Pastor Enoch Adeboye was my contact with him in the house of Elder Felix Ohiwerei in 2005 and 2006 during Elder Felix Ohiwerei's birthday and on January 18 2017, on Elder Ohiwerei 80th Birthday at Landmark Event Centre in Lekki, Lagos. Pastor Enoch Adeboye was with us in the programme throughout the day on January 18. In the evening, he ministered to us. Another encounter with Pastor Adeboye was at the Muson Centre during the 70th Birthday of Elder Ohiwerei in 2007. He preached in the presence of General Gowon, the former Nigeria military Head of State. It was a birthday turned into a mission event for RCCG. The rationale for grassroots mission brings into sharp focus the spiritual, emotional, social and psychological orientation of the laity to shape mission paradigm of inclusiveness.

7.3 The SHEMBAGS Mission Strategy

SHEMBAGS is an acronym for the corporate social responsibility of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The CSR initiative is sub-divided into eight identifiable sections which it calls SHEMBAGS. The acronym stands for Social, Health, Education, Media, Business, Arts and Culture, Government, and Sports. These sections specifically target areas common to people and societies globally. SHEMBAGS as a mission approach by the RCCG shows the primary concern beyond the peripheral levels of mission in the African context. The prospects of mission can enhance the social actions of the Church to the community. The mission approach considers how the RCCG responds to the community in order to attract and recommend the gospel to satisfy the yearnings of the marginalized. The social conditions in Africa and especially Southwest Nigeria leave

much to be desired due to poor infrastructures and neglect of social responsibilities by the government. Southwest is possibly divided between the haves and the have-nots. Adeboye Olufunke, in her study of Corporate Social Responsibility by Pentecostals in Africa, but with specific coverage of RCCG in Nigeria, suggests that ‘The challenge before the Pentecostal community is thus to find solutions to the material as well as spiritual needs in their social environment. How have African Pentecostals responded to these social needs? How much of the social space is taken up by Pentecostals and what networks do they exploit as they strive to meet these needs?’ (Adeboye 2020:132).

Burgess identifies two main strands of the civic engagements of RCCG’s social ethics. The first strand is the provision of social services at the level of the neighbourhood. The second focuses on changing society for the better by enabling lay members to become leaders in the arena of politics, media and business and education (Burgess 2017:138). However, as of 2022, the RCCG has extended these social ethics into eight major categories identified by the acronym SHEMBAGS. According to the RCCG website: ‘The CSR of RCCG organization is to positively affect changes in these sections of society globally by working with peoples, corporate bodies, NGOs and governments to achieve these goals’ <https://www.rccghq.org/> Accessed June 10, 2022.

The Pentecostal participation in life-needs' reflects the possible shift in a population’s culture in the social, political and economic spheres. In the sense that secular and religious institutions apply similar approaches to expand their reach to the community. Ukah's study of the RCCG in Nigeria pointed out; this social service arm of RCCG works in concert with such international non-governmental organizations as the International Red Cross, Family Health International (FHI) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Through these organizations, RAPAC secures funding for its activities and programmes in the Church. These programmes are not

limited to church members alone, but to anyone requesting help and assistance. The Church, through the office of the General Overseer, provides additional funding and administrative support for RAPAC's programmes (Ukah 2003:147).

7.3.1 Existential Needs and RCCG's Social Engagement

Existential needs are very critical in the context of Nigeria, the gospel, and the Church. The needs include substance for basic survival, such as food, clothing and shelter. For many, the necessity of experiencing meaning, wholeness and a sense of direction for a purpose is scary. There is a daily struggle for survival and coping with daily challenges. The lay persons are responsible for the welfare of members and outreach missions to the neighbourhood. Welfare is an essential means of mobilization by lay persons to influence non-members in the community to become members of the RCCG. A further inquiry about RCCG's SHEMBAGS did not yield much information, until I met Koya, (KD: RCL: 5: 08:2022) a lay person from RCCG, Ikotun province 59. He observes, 'It is an attractive palliative with ripple effects on socioeconomic conditions and circumstances of the non-members of the community. Welfare is sharing, giving, helping, and caring for people'. His remarks demonstrate the essential thinking of RCCG about social welfare as a component of SHEMBAGS. Although he mentioned the negative sides of the SHEMBAGS approach as a strategy that can be abused or misused. The redemptive side of this welfare approach is conversion which reaches the people's souls. Since the physical aspect of human existence cannot be neglected, the Church steps in to try and ameliorate the harsh realities of life. The RCCG fills the void through its social engagement with the community and church social responsibility (CSR). This includes health clinics, skills empowerment, and provisions for basic amenities for the community.

7.3.2 Health Clinics - Medical intervention

The health clinics are a medical mission organized for the less privileged in the community who cannot afford medical care in private hospitals or in a government-owned medical institution such as the General Hospitals situated at Ikeja, Agege, Gbagada, and Igando on the outskirts of Lagos. I participated in Akowonjo, RCCG province 90 medical missions on Saturday, October 16, 2021. The RCCG had advertised through a printed leaflet circulated in the Akowonjo community the opportunity for free medical care. However, medical care is limited to non-complicated health conditions. The free medical care for treatment includes high blood pressure, diabetes screening, 'hepatitis B', prostate checks for men, and breast checks for any lumps for women, dental problems, simple eye surgery, paediatric cases, and gynaecological issues. The pastor had invited four medical doctors and eight auxiliary nurses for the medical service. A team had arranged for medical drugs ahead of the programme. The Christian pharmacists in the community donated a few of the drugs. The procedure was directed towards leading the patients who attended the program to salvation in Christ. In attendance were people from various strata of society as well as Muslims who came to benefit from medical care. The first stage of such a mission outreach brings the patients in contact with the real purpose of the medical intervention which is God's mission through Jesus Christ. The first point of contact for the patient is the first room for a spiritual check-up. The lay persons asked about the health condition and diseases of the patients. The lay person would then open the scriptures, read a verse on healing accounts in the synoptic gospel and prays for faith to be healed. Those who show further interest are connected with the welfare department in RCCG parish for a future follow-up. The second stage is moving to the nurses to check the patient's vital signs before a referral to a medical doctor for consultation at the open pavilion for any prescription for medicines. Once the doctors prescribe the drugs, the

patient moves to the nearby drug distribution room to collect the drugs. The result of the medical mission is the most important, as narrated by the provincial pastor, Akinborode:

We aim to lead the patients to Christ through medical care by the Church. Unfortunately, the people in the community have developed thick skin of resistance to the gospel message. It is a new strategy to win them to the Lord. Salvation is one of the elements that can transform the society. (AG-RCL: 16:10:21).

The total number of participants in this medical mission was 351. The number of those counselled was 157. The doctors referred 45 cases to a government hospital. The record of the number of those who accepted Christ was 38. About twenty lay persons had planned this particular medical outreach of which I selected two of them as respondents. Regarding the medical outreach on that day, Monisola mentioned,

We knew we shall have the medical outreach, and we mobilized the different departments in the church, who are lay members for publicity awareness, contribution to purchase and source for drugs; offer an invitation to community people ahead of time.

Akande believes that medical mission:

is entirely a lay function. We only have one pastor in province 90 who has his own business. The rest of us work and serve under him to make the work successful. Every department, such as children, welfare, choir, ushers, media, drama, and a few are the frontline for the medical mission.

Every aspect of SHEMBAGS points to the holistic approach to mission practice by the RCCG.

7.3.3 Holistic Mission Approach

The RCCG has looked at mission outreach programmes that touch on almost all spheres of society in order to link these with the gospel and mission of God. The implication is that all areas of life must be included when sharing the message of the gospel so that people can experience full redemption. Reaching a particular people or community would require a different strategy and approach from another. The questions for the lay persons generated various themes to demonstrate how “SHEMBAGS” helps the church specifically in its outreach. The lay persons mentioned that "the kind of needs present in

Alimosho and Abule Egba RCCG province are physical, emotional, social intellectual and spiritual. The spiritual needs are met through evangelizing the unsaved and integrating them into the socio-spiritual life of the RCCG congregation. Those who are converted are helped to mature through Bible study sessions. (DA-RLP:16:10:21) .

The lay persons I interviewed spoke of obedience to the Great Commission, working for God, changing people's lives, helping people to realize their potential, preparation for the coming Kingdom, the transformation of the society, and the salvation of souls (DA-RLP, RO-ELP, KI-RLP, FO-RLP, and DB-RWP, 20:04:2021). In RCCG Shomolu province, "Some physical needs are met when financial contributions are made towards wedding and funeral arrangements. On a social level, bereaved members are counselled". A fourth of the lay respondents are happy with SHEMBAGS and the kind of ministry offered in the RCCG parish to the point that they look towards going out for community evangelism with this strategy. So they often plan programmes with the SHEMBAGS approach as this is perceived to be an efficient way of reaching a high number of people who are likely resistant to the gospel, but and feel that addressing certain needs give an access to their lives. In comparison, some members use personal skills. Some want to be empowered economically. The SHEMBAGS approach is becoming popular to enhance a mutual ministry based on shared experience and involvement of existing church laypersons in the program. The use of SHEMBAGS has a drawback. One parish pastor mentioned 'Often the congregation is wary of the people in the community who might want to take advantage of SHEMBAGS but are not interested in becoming members of the RCCG local parish' (IA-RCL: 17:02:2021). The RCCG here are united and caring and welcome the community to faith. At the church level, those involved with ministry find going out to the community a great blessing and help create a link with the Church and establish social interactions with the people. Worship and

fellowship have significant meaning for the members because of the dynamic spirituality exhibited by the cell leaders. Another mission strategy by the RCCG is the “Let's go a-fishing” programme.

7.3.4 Let's Go A- Fishing

In the pursuit of the Great Commission as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 28, the RCCG initiated a 'Let's go a fishing' mission drive for every April and December of each year. This is an effort by RCCG to reach out to specified, unreached communities around its environs. According to the RCCG Research and Development director, Josiah Bolarinwa, the phrase was coined by Pastor Enoch Adeboye a few years after he became the General Overseer of the RCCG. Using different data sources, from interviews, church documents and leaflet about the outcome of the 'Let's go a fishing' mission approach, it is evident that there is no single and simple way to implement this mission approach across RCCG parishes in the Southwest, Nigeria. It is centrally organized, but diverse, disparate and heterogeneous. The bulk of people who participate in this strategic mission programme are the lay persons in the RCCG. The programme is an opportunity to involve and expose a large number of members to local mission in context. It allows an average church member who has never had exposure to an organized mission campaign to be part of one. Femi Agboola, (FA-RCL: 08:01:2019) Lagos province 71 observed:

in the RCCG, twice in a year we have something we refer to as ‘Let’s go a fishing’, we have in Easter and Christmas festive period. ‘Let’s go a fishing’ in 2018 December was a combined missional effort with the Region. We gave numerical goals to parishes and financial contributions, and the critical aspect of ‘Let’s go a fishing’ logistics were outlined as non-negotiable for the success of the mission outreach.

Moreover, Wale Olanipekun (WO- RLP 15:11:2022) a lay person in province 90, Akowojo, Mega Parish, explained the procedure of 'Let's go a fishing':

We prepare the lay congregation from January before the program takes place in April. We have a department responsible for the planning of 'Let's go a fishing' . The departments are

Welfare and Mission. It begins by identifying a location for 'Let's go a fishing' ahead of time. Seek support from all the members of the Church, for food, drinks, and clothing. We set up a committee to handle various areas and emerging plans. The areas involved are transportation, welfare, logistics, pulpit, and electric generator.

Deaconess Oriakhi, (JO-RLP: 15:11:2022) gave the pertinent purpose of 'Let's go a fishing', by outlining the 'why' of the mission campaign:

To let the people know more about Christ. To open every available community to the gospel of Christ. Connect families to the mission of God in the RCCG. To establish RCCG parish near the people for church growth. It is a time of missionary service, as we seek to replicate what the foreign missionaries did but through indigenous mission.

Bolarinwa noted that the African Indigenous Churches (AIC) in Nigeria and Africa was founded mostly by lay persons. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement to which RCCG belongs was a child of necessity. The role of the laity is transcendent, practical and missional. Laity acts as a vision-caster and goal-setter in Christ's mission to the world. Bolarinwa pointed out, "We were told to look for the golden coin in the fish's mouth and bring it as an offering to the Lord". Thus, 'Let's go a-fishing' becomes the new paradigm for the mission. The broader mission of Christ has been the driving focus of the lay members of the parish. Lay mission is not contingent upon time or place but rather transcendent and translucent. It is seen as both transactional and transnational (Marshall 2009). From here, I turn to the lay mission approach of DLBC, one of the selected Pentecostal churches in this thesis.

7.4 Deeper Life Mission Approach

Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) has four main approaches to mission: (i) Bible Study (ii) Retreats (iii) Global crusades with a Campus approach- Meine Freude; "Say No to Evil" and (iv), and Prayer. Unlike the RCCG, the Deeper Life does not have a crafted vision or mission statement, except what is in its doctrinal statement (number 13 on evangelism) and a recently crafted mission document on Gospel Explosion Mobilization

(GEM)⁶⁸ . Ojewale et al., in their narratives on the march into ministry⁶⁹ in Kumuyi's biography, reveal that 'the strategy was to continue to aggressively pursue a program of evangelization of local communities and effective follow up of new converts' (2021:72). Deeper Life sees mission as a lifestyle and core reason for its existence. Its Bible school emphasizes mission as the paramount calling of all the believers without exception.

7.4.1 Bible Study Space

The origin of Deeper Life Bible Church sense of mission as a denomination did not start with any human act of organization but with divine initiatives. The sense of a place for Bible study began in January 1973. Deeper Life sees the establishment of Bible study locations as sites for the mission field of ministry. The creation of Bible study location is a significant mission approach to mission by DLBC. There is no other model of mission pursued by DLBC that transcends a Bible study location. DLBC seeks to establish Bible study as a means of mission outreach. It believes that the study of the Bible will enable the penetration of the mission of Christ in any given situation in contemporary times. When the DLBC wants to organize any mission, they think of locations for Bible study as the seed for spreading the gospel. The approach is Bible and Mission. Bible Study and mission go hand in hand. To the church, the gospel will spread faster when Bible study is located first in a community and then the king's palace, prisons and markets. Furthermore, the establishment of the Bible study location is likened to a centrifugal source of extraordinary power. A lay person in Akowojo, Josiah Ojodare (JO-DLP: 20:10:21) believes that the task of establishing Bible study is winning the place for Jesus. It is concerned with processes of locating Christianity in societies". Following this line of

⁶⁸Gospel Explosion Mobilization: Fulfilling Mandate in 2021. Join a GEM formation. Reaching the forgotten and forsaken in our society. Deeper Life Publication. March 2012.

⁶⁹ March into Ministry is the title of chapter four in the biography of Pastor William Kumuyi, in the book, The Defender of Faith co-authored by Ojewale et al 2021.

argument by Josiah, it may be reasonable to justify the emphasis on Bible study as a place for mission and ministry. The DLBC has Bible study locations in Southwest of Nigeria as a mission approach in prisons (correctional centres), remand homes, and market centres. It also has Bible study locations in private secondary schools belonging to members of the denominations such as Jextoban Secondary School, Alapere, owned by Pastor Emmanuel Ojo, the Great Shepherd's School, owned by Pastor Bayo Osiyemi, and Bossom High School, owned by Pastor Isaac Badmus, to mention a few. Again, all the colleges funded by Deeper Life Bible Church in Nigeria registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission, Nigeria, as Deeper Life High Schools are centres with Bible study holding a special position. These are the reasons given for Bible study as a mission approach:

The new charismatic spirituality recovered a missional vocation of the Church based on the scriptures, a vision that re-imagined the Church as the presence, witness, representative, and foretaste of the kingdom of God in communities. In its being, doing, and saying, the Church affirms, proclaims, teaches, and assists communities to experience and receive the gift and resources of the kingdom. (Kalu 2007:35)

Ukah recognized the sacredness of a place for the mission of the Church when he pointed out 'The ability to materialize the sacred to situate the divine and to emplace spiritual things—unknowable and elusive—in a place, is an important aspect of the RCCG's strategy of success' (2014:185). In the 1970s, the first generation of the DLBC was beginning their ministries with lay person given the responsibility of searching out a place for Bible study in the public sphere. The causal link between land for worship and Pentecostal action is hinted at in the following statement by Lekan Oguntinyinbo, a DLBC Bible study location leader:

At the International Conference Center, we desire by the grace of God to take the whole land for Jesus. Therefore, we are approaching the indigenes of Mowe to release more lands to build our district churches so the General Superintendent can minister to the spiritual needs of the people for their ultimate salvation. Lekan Oguntinyinbo. (DLICC January 2022 interview)

The response was a conversionist theological orientation at the heart of the Pentecostal understanding of mission. The Bible study penetrates local public space and defines spiritual knowledge through hermeneutic expressions of salvation. The goal may be that the Deeper Life believes that the world will be theocratically governed by Christ when a place is given for Bible study.

7.4.2 Retreat as an Invitation and Mission Approach

The second mission approach by DLBC is a 'retreat' for mission and Pentecostal spirituality. Mission spirituality gives the deepest meaning to lives and motivates character formations. From the study of the DLBC, we can see that the retreat is a mission phenomenon where the lay persons have been instrumental in leading people to Christ in Deeper Life. The first decade of DLBC was spent focusing on establishing and formalizing retreats and camp meetings as means of spirituality. Retreats in DLBC began in 1975, with the Easter Retreat at the Baptist Academy Secondary School, Lagos. In December 1975 Deeper Life held its first major public programme, the December Retreat, at Akoba about two miles from the University of Lagos main campus, which led to public awareness of the existence of the organization. In Easter 1976, another retreat was held at the Baptist Academy, Ikorodu Road, Lagos, and it was acclaimed that record of 2,500 people attended the retreat. From this time onwards, the name Deeper Christian Life Ministry began to be used in all its publications, though there are indications that this really started in 1975 (Ojo 1988:147). The retreat filled the vacuum and met spiritual hunger with the emergence of Pentecostal revival in Southwest Nigeria. Isaacson rightly says: The civil war and the years immediately following were the dark ages for Nigeria. The problems affecting so many people, and the scarcity of everything, gave rise to some 'survival churches' which were really only on the look-out for what they could get. There was a dearth of the word

of God. Doctrinally and practically, there was a decline in Nigeria's spiritual climate. The 'occultic' churches became stronger. In the early seventies, therefore, there was hunger and thirst for a real spiritual experience. New movement like Deeper Christian Life Ministry helped to feed those who were spiritually hungry while the churches were not meeting the needs of the people (Isaacson 1990:31). The account suggests a seeking of the divine presence, which is absent in the secular environment, with the intention of restoring a spiritual balance which was met in the retreats. An interview with a national campus leader in the DLBC reveals the significance of encounters in retreats. Oyediran from DLBC University of Lagos, speaking with over 30 years of involvement and participation in various retreats, reflects:

We encounter God during the retreats. The retreats help the DLBC to ingrain in members the attitude and lifestyle of sober reflection as opposed to frivolous entertainment and celebration that characteristically accompany the Christian tradition of observing the death, resurrection and birth of Jesus Christ.

It needs to be mentioned here that retreat was the term used in the Apostolic Faith Church, from where Pastor Kumuyi was excommunicated after he started Bible Study sessions in Flat 2, in 1973. The practice of conducting retreats is a mission approach that led to unprecedented growth of the DLBC. The emergence of the retreats show how Pentecostalism, as a quintessential popular religion, can satisfy both deep existential passions and (Maxwell 2005:7) spiritual conditions of neo-liberal theology congregations (churches) in Nigeria.

The retreats are held two times a year. The concept was taken from the Biblical account of Jesus in Mark chapter 6, when he told His disciples "Come ye yourself apart". According to Kumuyi, 'The understanding of retreat is that Jesus had time for retreat. Therefore, Christ retreats with the disciples for a spiritual rest to re-evaluate and re-strategize for Christian living and gospel activities' (Bible Study Outlines: Studies in the

Gospel of John 2019: W. F. Kumuyi). The retreat is like a holy pilgrimage for members of DLBC. A new convert has said 'I was born again in December 1987, I did not go to Mecca. This Deeper Life Bible Church is my Mecca' (Isaacson 1990:43). This assertion can be connected to the current site of the DLBC as a national retreat location the Deeper Life International Conference Center (DLICC), situated at kilometres 42, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway (DLICC) is on at least a minimum of 362.71 hectares (895.89 acres) of property. The topography is partly undulating and partly levelled, thus allowing for the natural creation of basements and sub-basement for the accommodation requirements of pilgrims, <https://dclm.org/location/> accessed June 10 2022.

7.4.3 National December Retreat at International Bible Training Center

The December 1980 retreat was held on a poultry farm purchased by the DLBC in Ayobo, Lagos. The land was purchased for the commencement of the International Bible Training Center for Deeper Life. It was the first in Nigeria's history of the DLBC. The campsite at the time was made with bamboo and palm fronds. The construction of the camp shed was influenced more heavily by the demands and potential of the moment. There was no special place for the rich or poor, educated or illiterate. All the participants used a common place on the floor to sleep overnight. The use of a title such as overseers and pastors were not used at the time. Matthew Ojo referred to this as "changes or relaxation" of certain restrictions in his study of DLBC, 1988. There were a few relaxation points but no particular building for the Pastor, W.F. Kumuyi, and everyone queued for food. Up until 1982, Kumuyi rigidly applied the doctrinal emphases and religious practices of Deeper Life members. However, the influx of many more members after 1982 has led to a relaxation of the restrictive practices. These practices, to some extent spread the fame of Kumuyi and Deeper Life far and wide (1988:146).

7.4.4 Retreat Teachings and Doctrines

The teachings at the retreat follow the theme selected for the programme. The ten-pointed code of conduct and instructions for life in the camp is the first spiritual directive to the participants from the retreat Camp Commandant in the evening of the first day. The teachings begin with a general opening message and move further into the interpretation of the scriptures, emphasising salvation, sanctification, Christian living, discipleship and missions. The retreat is at the heart of spiritual formation for Deeper Life Bible Church. Isaacson writing on the extraordinary growth of the DLBC, pointed out: ‘Apart from exposition, it is worth noting that Deeper Life speaks authoritatively from the Bible into African situations, particularly in the areas of the search for God, poverty, the family and the supernatural’ (Isaacson 1990:226). Further, in another interview with Oyediran of the University of Lagos, he described the modalities of the retreat as follows:

The DLBC, therefore, uses these periods to further entrench the teaching strategy to distil various doctrinal and theological themes to further her mission. Two most important reasons for this strategy that could be adduced are: (i) Teaching the scripture in a concentrated manner strengthens the believer in the faith and aids him to further the cause of Christ in the society where he finds himself. (ii) The directive of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Great Commission: ...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: “Matthew 28:19-20 is best carried out in an environment of concentrated teaching of the scriptures.

The General Superintendent begins at the retreat with a message and later ends the retreat with his message. He sets the spiritual tenor of the retreats with his opening message and ends the retreat with a challenge for mission, a call to holiness and a readiness for the coming of Christ. To understand the in-depth retreat experience and process in DLBC, I interviewed two leaders representing DLBC Alimosho group and Ketu- Alapere group in Lagos. It took much work to book the interviews because of the Covid 19 pandemic in Nigeria and the demands of the ministry. However, I secured a convenient time with the duo in October 2021. The first representative is Olufemi Abiodun, a group coordinator for Akowonjo. The second representative, Laja Ojetola, the

group coordinator for Ketu, granted me an interview on the commencement details of the retreats. At the same time, the latter gave information on the consummation aspect of the retreats. The practice of retreats as a mission approach has two elements or has a two-pronged approach, namely, the discipleship of the members and, secondly, the invitation to win new people to Christ. Abiodun admits that retreats in DLBC are times of separation from the community to acquire spiritual uplifting from Christ. However, it is also a time for mission and evangelism and an opportunity to win souls to Christ. According to his insights:

The retreat begins with announcements at the various district churches across regions or cities in Southwest, Nigeria. The theme of the retreat is given and everyone is full of expectations of what will happen at the retreat. Each location and district, through the members of the house fellowships and laypersons in charge are to publicize and invite new people to the retreat programme. Other routines in the district churches include provisions of raw food for the retreat, such as yam, rice, garri and soup ingredients as contributions. Others can opt for live animals converted to beef during the retreat.

The retreat is a spiritual forum to help all kinds of people, Christians and non-Christians alike. It is an opportunity for Christians to be refreshed and equipped for victorious Christian living and to pursue the Great Commission, while for non-Christians, it is a time of entry into the kingdom. Abiodun reiterated further, 'The retreats have four stages of preparations. They are called the 4Ps of retreats: Preparation, publicity, prayer, and participation. These are a systematic approach for holding the retreats. Handbills are printed and distributed for publicity. Goals for the programme are set in terms of conversion, salvation and discipleship'. Laja, the group coordinator for Ketu, briefly described the other processes following the commencement of the retreat programme:

Different work areas are identified during the retreat, and the members volunteer to serve during the retreat. Volunteer work includes sanitation, accommodation, kitchen, welfare, ushering, and security. The more professional areas of volunteer services are media, electronics, Choristers, and Bible Study leaders in small groups during the retreat. These are spiritual aspects of the retreat. Nobody is allowed to serve in this section if such a person is not saved, sanctified and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Moreover, such individuals follow the

beliefs and practices of the DLBC with conviction and dedication. The laypersons in this section must have spent at least seven years as members of the DLBC at the minimum.

In light of the above arguments, a retreat as a mission approach is not only a physical activity; it involves spiritual preparation before, during and after the retreat. For example, at the retreat, a group of district churches is led by a pastor's representative for administrative responsibilities and spiritual oversight. The budget regarding the exact financial contributions for the retreat is calculated and divided across all the districts' churches. Nobody is forced to contribute, but the burden of meeting the needs of people and caring makes each leader source funds through the members. The amount is collated at the Headquarters Church in DLBC Gbagada for the operation of the retreats. Free transportation is provided for members and non-members from the neighbourhood and different parts of Lagos to the retreat. Free food and accommodation are also a good attraction for newcomers.

7.4.5 Local, Regional and Global Crusades

The DLBC central focus of mission work began with the lay evangelists and lay participation in mission through personal evangelism. Lay persons are involved in the practice of personal evangelism at various levels. Between 1976 and 1979, Deeper Life took evangelism and Bible Study as the central messages of its ministry. Evangelism was achieved through the distribution of tracts and personal witnessing (Ojo 1988b:147). The lay mission through the DLBC takes place at the grassroots level through house-to-house visitation, bus evangelism and in the marketplaces. Isaacson mentioned lay participation in his account of the growth of the DLBC: "A lot of the evangelistic work at the personal level was done through House Caring Fellowship members inviting neighbours to their meetings, drawing people into the life of the church through participation in a small, almost intimate group" (Isaacson 1990:221). The account suggests that the house caring

members who are lay persons are responsible for the groundwork in mission activity as highlighted in the early part of this chapter, and this is to be regarded as a specific mission strategy. On local evangelism, Fajimi, a zonal pastor in Akowonjo, Lagos, submits:

We plan and conduct local evangelism at the district level once a month centrally in our district churches and Bible study locations on the last Saturday of the month. Individuals also witness in their various opportunities various opportunities in streets through tracts and magazine of the church.

The regional crusades are a strategic approach at the higher level by DLBC. The DLBC organizes crusades across certain geographical locations in the community. For instance, across local government areas in Southwest Lagos, this takes place in Alimosho, Agege, and Ikeja. As Ayegbusi, a group coordinator explains:

We have service locations across Lagos. We divide into five service groups which meet on Sunday Worship Service at Gbagada. These groups are (i) Agege, Alimosho, Ikeja (ii) Gbagada, Somolu, Ketu, Yaba group, (iii) Mushin, Oshodi, Isolo (vi) Festac, Surulere, Apapa, and (v) Lagos Island, Victoria Island. In each of this group, we hold crusades at least once in a year as a means of mission outreaches. (October 2021 interview)

In Nigeria, since 2010 the DLBC programme included a crusade in the metropolitan areas of Lagos and major cities across the Southwest with lay persons as foot soldiers.

7.5 Global Crusades

The Global Crusade is a mission approach by DLBC based on the practice of face-to-face proselytizing, held in various cities in Southwest, Southeast and North-central Nigeria. It is a mass-mediated revival programme which showcase a highly successful organizational and media based model mission for local and global growth of Pentecostal Charismatic Christianity (Gordon & Hancock 2005:390). The DLBC is re-establishing this type of mass gathering as a firm part of Pentecostal charismatic Christianity. The extraordinary planning that goes into the crusade meetings sometimes obscures the obvious. Kumuyi's preaching remains the centrepiece of the Global Crusade (Wacker 2009:490). The enormous strategic mission outreach of the Global Crusade involves major churches and

denominations in Southwest, Southeast and North-central Nigeria, such as the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, (PFN), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) mainline denominations and a considerable number of neo-Pentecostals Charismatic churches as participants. It is a network of Pentecostal mission organizations, movements, and institutions joined together to strengthen and advance the fulfilment of the Great Commission and the missionary activities of Pentecostal movements in Southwest Nigeria under the auspices of Deeper Christian Life Ministry. The Global Crusades come about through a combination of factors beginning with spiritual mapping, strategy mission plan and an invitation by local churches, including DLBC states and regional churches. The Global Crusades appear in syndicated newspaper columns, social media platforms, Facebook, YouTube, and a public relations mechanism that works in proposed crusade cities months in advance, courting both the media and church officials for visible support. The Global Crusade team includes DLBC State and Region Overseers, organizing committees, prayer warriors, crusade moderators, and media staff of photographers, live transmission equipment, security personnel, video producers, and journalists, who document events in church-run magazines and on church websites. The Global Crusades take months of preparations before the next crusade city and sites are announced. The DLBC crusade planner negotiates a suitable venue in collaboration with other churches, raises attractive crusade infrastructures and sets the stage for the Global Crusade. The interview below mentions Oyediran (SO-DLP: 15:06: 2022) DLBC's national campus coordinator's views on the global crusades:

The DLBC strongly believe in the Great Commission and counts it as core to the believer's life and the Church's purpose. Thus, the global crusade is a mission strategy that leverages technology to take the gospel across and beyond geographical borders. Some of the reasons we adopt this as a mission strategy are: (i) The firm belief of the church that the gospel of Christ is for the whole world and the whole world must be given the unfettered opportunity to hear the gospel. (ii) That a majority of the world population has not heard and may not hear the gospel unless a global approach is adopted to spread the gospel to them and (iii) The church believes that the opportunities offered by technology should be harnessed to achieve

the cause of the Lord. Moreso, the same technology has been creatively deployed by the enemies of the gospel of Christ.

The Global Crusade is a form of strategy to reach the people with the gospel, particularly from the Southwest to the rest of Nigeria. The programme is held at Alpha location which is the centre of the Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK) and the rest of the locations across Nigeria joins in all Deeper Life Bible Church locations beyond Southwest Nigeria. In the Southwest, the GCK was held in Lagos in December, 2021 Ibadan in February 2022 and Abeokuta in April 2022. It moved to Ilorin in June 2022. The strategy involves the lay persons' mobilization for the Global Crusade as a strategic mission outreach.

7.5.1 Miracles, Signs and Wonders

Global crusades of DLBC transcend locality but are locally organized globally transmitted and contextualized locally peculiar to cultural landscapes and mission contexts. The General Superintendent, Pastor W.F. Kumuyi preaches from the Alpha locations for 50 minutes, followed by an altar call for salvation. The people who indicated their response to the altar call have 10 minutes with counsellors. This is followed by ten minutes of miracle prayers for sickness, diseases, infirmities, for the blind, the lame and the miraculous manifestations of the power of God. Kumuyi speaks directly. In a telling metaphor, Kumuyi said in his early work with Scripture Union, 'We used every modern means to catch the ear of the unconverted and then we punched them straight between the eyes with the gospel'. A series of testimonies were given during a personal observation at the Global Crusades with Kumuyi (GCK) held in January 2022 at the Deeper Life International Conference Center (DLICC) Mowe, Ogun State and subsequently at Ikorodu Lagos from July 28 to August 2 2022. In January, cases of divine healing occurred with Amao Sofoluwe, a drug addict who was delivered while giving his

testimonies with tears. Thirty-five years old, Martin Okechukwu, diagnosed by a medical doctor with stones in one of his kidneys, was healed by the prayer of the man of God. Deborah Omara testified, 'Praise the Lord, I was not a member of Deeper Life, but was invited here to attend the 'Great Emancipation Crusade' by Pastor W. F. Kumuyi. I have been carrying fibroid in my womb for seven years, but during the previous GCK in July, after the prayer of the man of God, the fibroid was supernaturally removed from my womb, praise the Lord' (GCK- AUG- 202;08;2022). Kumuyi possessed the gift, that elusive combination of wisdom, grace, faith, precision, vocabulary, and a divine power imbued by the Holy Spirit. He prays for a few minutes and leaves the rest to God to confirm. The Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK) has been characterized with signs and wonders with the power of the Holy Spirit.

7.5.2 Campus Crusade Strategy

In the archival records of the DLBC, I found a campus Mission Strategy to which the current strategy of Deeper Life Bible Church can be traced and a connection can be made to January 2022 "Impact" organized by Deeper Life Campus Fellowship. The archival records reveal amongst others the goals of the outreaches of DLCF as follows: (i) To lead students, corps members, staff and other members of the Campus community to personal encounters with the Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, (ii) To disciple believers into deeper knowledge and revelation for holy living, healthy, balanced and fruitful Christian lives in their environment, and (iii) To get students, corps members and staff involved in practically fulfilling the Great Commission of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Ojo in his writing on campus revival mentions:

The doctrinal emphasis contributed its rapid geographical spread. Moreover, from the mid-1970s, the leaders of the Charismatic revival who were graduating from Nigeria's higher institutions shortly established independent Charismatic groups to share and propagate their Pentecostal experiences and to continue their campus activities. By 1974 more than ten Charismatic organization had been established by graduates already influenced by the revival.

Some of the earliest groups were the Hour of Freedom Evangelistic Association, Onitsha, established in 1970. In 1971, the Souls Harvesters was formed in Warri; the Master's Vessels Group in Umuahia about 1972; and the Deeper Christian Life Ministry was established in Lagos in 1973. (Ojo 2018:3)

Within a short time, more students accepted the experience, and it soon spread to other Christians groups such as the Student Christian Movement (established in Nigeria about 1937) and Scripture Union (established in 1887), and to other universities. In fact, by 1973, the revival was so strong that some Christian students hoisted a big banner at the gate of the then the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) with the bold inscription, 'Welcome to Jesus University'. In a similar vein, the DLBC began the Higher Institution Programme (HIP) as an offshoot of its Campus Fellowship in 1979 under the leadership of Dr Richard Akinniyi. It metamorphosed into Deeper Life Campus Fellowship in October 1982. The Deeper Life approach to the campus was to adopt a novel evangelistic method. I asked a question about why DLCF adopted a creative evangelism strategy. Akinniyi remarked, "Meine-Freude lends itself to a novel interpretation; it is a German language phrase which means "my joy". The programme was designed by Brother Sola Akinyemi (electrical and electronics student) and Goke Ojodare (education department) at the University of Ife, in March 1984. The evangelistic programme drew over one thousand participants with the help of many students' executives at the Deeper Life Campus Fellowship (DLCF) which the mother church adopted as a model of outreach to the rest of the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. The Deeper Life Campus Fellowship National Coordinator, Dr. Segun Shafe was the arrowhead of the programme. Dr. Segun Shafe, is now the General Overseer of Banner of Grace Church, Nigeria. This was a specific mission strategy that forms part of the project presently. For Deeper Life it was from 'Meine- Freude' in March 1984 to 'Impact' in January 2022. The preacher in 1984 was the General Superintendent (Pastor William Kumuyi), and at 'Impact' it was the same General Superintendent, Pastor W. F. Kumuyi

who was the speaker. The venue for the earlier crusade was the University of Ife in 1984, while the latter took place at Deeper Life International Conference Centre in January 2022. In between they had the programme called "Act Right –Say no to evil" and in October 2020, a programme titled "Emerge" was held at the University of Lagos. The key debates here are the mission approach of DLBC. Pastor Kumuyi preached at the former as the speaker; the latter was accompanied by a famous guest musician, Dunsin Oyeekan, with the chairperson of First Bank Nigeria- Mrs Ibunkun Awosika. These are a few strategies and mission approaches the study can accommodate to highlight the roles of lay Pentecostal mission in the context DLBC mission outreach programme in Southwest Nigeria.

7.5.3 Ibukun Famosaya: Arisen Mother of our Generation

Ibukun, or IBK is essentially a women's prayer phenomenon 'for women only' named "Arisen Mother for our Generation". It is a mobilization by lay women for prayer in Ibadan in Southwest, Nigeria. The leader is a medical doctor at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The lay women in the group are about 200. They pledge to intercede for mission and the deplorable socio-political situation in Nigeria. The prayer meeting is an all year on and meets every day from 5.00 am to 6.00 am. The Covid 19 pandemic was a contributing factor to encourage lay believers for a time of prayer for divine interventions in human affairs. This is a time of fervent prayer with a focus and burden for reversing the evil experience peculiar to women and general spiritual attacks on families and homes. IBK can be understood from the standpoint of moral subjectivation and the techniques of the self by Marshall who notes that 'The ordeal of everyday life and the spiritual tradition that underwrites the quest for supernatural solutions to everyday problems give this desire both poignancy and pertinence' (Marshall 2009:148). This type

of approach to prayer can be linked with the discourse interpretation of Kalu, who mentioned that ‘The ordinary Pentecostal in Africa may be less concerned with modernity and globalization and more about a renewed relationship with God, intimacy with the transcendental, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, and protection by the power in the blood of Jesus as the person struggles to eke out a viable life in a hostile environment’. It could be that many African Pentecostals enjoy a certain "moral innocence of the global economy” (2009:86).

The centre of the prayer focuses on family redemption in God's mission, revival in the church and national progress influencing and affected by global socio-political issues. Each week is dedicated to particular issues, a leader leads the women, and all the women pray. During the prayer, there is speaking in tongues sporadically by the women as well as prophecies on a particular situation. Another exciting dimension of the prayer meeting is the book review every Thursday. A leader in the group is chosen to review a book. A single book might be divided into five sections with some chapters combined, and the review takes five weeks. All the lay women are given the assignment to read the book and give feedback on Thursdays. The feedback is summarised, and issues arising from the book are classified into different categories of spiritual warfare prayers on the following day, which is a Friday. The IBK prayer group in DLBC reveals how lay women spend their time in prayer for God's mission and engagement in specific social and spiritual contexts. Interviews with one of the leaders, Foluke Olarewaju, in Oshogbo and Lagos yield insights into the purpose and strategy of the prayer. She was of the view that ‘we cannot leave the world as it is, but challenge the forces behind the problems, turmoil, crisis going on in the homes of believers and we invoke the name of Jesus and authority of the believers and uproot the root cause’. She spoke from her understanding of agricultural extension and rural sociology, using the term roots.

7.6 Summary

This chapter has examined the lay mission approach of two of the Nigerian Pentecostal charismatic denominations the Redeemed Christian Church of God and the Deeper Life Bible Church. It has presented their mission approaches for the involvement of lay persons in Pentecostal Christianity. The approaches are diverse and multidimensional in every aspect of their mission praxis. There is no uniform way to describe their typologies and strategic mission practices. In the chapter, I have examined RCCG's mission approach to the vision and mission of church planting, process and patterns. The SHEMBAGS mission approach is critically examined from the empirical evidence provided by the lay congregations. The grassroots ecclesiology gives voice to the denominational mission approach from the bottom up of the church hierarchy.

The mission approach of Deeper Life Bible Church goes from intra-mission to inter-mission by situating itself in the geographical space for the spread of the Christian faith. The retreat mission strategy evidences its dynamic discipleship and commitment to holiness Pentecostal mission. Its Crusade Mission theology is the latest approach embedded in the Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK) from a local to a global audience using sophisticated technology to express its conversionist theology. My early summary of the narrative of emerging Pentecostalism sets out what I believe to be the central elements of Pentecostal ecclesiology, theology and missiology. Its pragmatic spirituality enabled it to change its shape as it became a globalizing spirituality, connecting and establishing an indigenous grassroots fellowship of Spirit-filled people of God. The mission narratives of the origins of the selected denominations suggest an essential ecclesiological principle: the Holy Spirit does not erase difference but renders difference non-divisible. The next chapter discusses conclusion of the thesis, its findings and contribution to knowledge and further research on lay Pentecostal mission.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

I began this study by examining the origin of lay persons and clergy by sketching out the origins and contours of lay and clergy understanding of mission and how it spreads from the Catholic, Protestant, Ecumenical, and Evangelical to Pentecostal-charismatic Christianity. The focus is to investigate the roles and involvement of lay persons and clergy in Christian mission. The study of laypersons involvement in mission has advanced beyond conceptualization and participation, leading to various theories on lay liberation, lay release, lay frozen, and lay theology, to mention a few. All these theories are meant to help to transform lay persons' mission paradigm. Different missiologists and theologians were engaged to contribute to the study, to help investigate the importance of the lay mission and harmony between clergy and lay persons in both the mission and church hierarchies.

The problematic of this study is found in the conflicts between the lay and clergy's distinct roles in mission, theology of lay-clergy engagement, their spirituality, the birth and growth of the lay ministry, (Lakeland 2003; Gibbs et al. 1965; Grimes 1962; Stevens 2000; Stevens & Zmud 1999). The thesis, thus, sought to answer the main research question: How do the Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualizes lay persons' involvement in Christian missions? I have used the term conceptualize specifically to determine the critical roles the lay persons play in mission and their impact on the Church and the community. In addition, three other questions were asked to help find answers to the main research question:

- 1) How does the RCCG mobilize the lay congregation for mission?

- 2) How does theology of mission influence the lay Pentecostal mission in the DLBC?
- 3) What is the lay Pentecostal mission approach in RCCG and DLBC?

This thesis has explored and analyzed lay Pentecostal missions and their implications for contemporary missions. While the entire thesis is devoted to answering the main research question, the question on how the RCCG mobilize the lay congregation for mission constitute the details of chapter five. The question on how theology of mission influences the lay Pentecostal mission in the DLBC is responded to in chapter six. The last question on the strategy and approach for the lay Pentecostal mission is answered in chapter seven. These research questions explored my investigation of Pentecostal churches in two ways.

- One, it unravels the multilayer dimensions that underpin mission in the lives of the clergy and lay persons in the RCCG and DLBC in Southwest Nigeria as indicated in the main research question.
- Two, the investigations provide themes and analyze the relationships between the clergy and the lay persons and how they engage with mission. The thesis proves the commitment of the DLBC and RCCG congregations to Pentecostal mission.

I selected RCCG and DLBC as churches for my case studies to understand how they conceptualized lay and clergy missional practices considering that the founder of DLBC, William Kumuyi, was excommunicated as a lay man because of his passion for preaching the gospel, when not ordained. Similarly, the founder of the RCCG Josiah Akindayomi was reprimanded as a lay man for printing and circulating tracts when he was not ordained. I used an in-depth study of my data from my interviews, participant observations and qualitative case studies with 50 participants from RCCG and 40 from DLBC to generate relevant themes from these interviews. The most recurring of the 70

generated nodes were how lay persons can preach, the role of lay persons, lay persons obeying the command of Christ, lay persons spreading Christianity, the mobilization of lay persons, theology of mission and lay mission approaches. An in-depth examination reveals that the role of the lay persons in mission is rooted in the freedom given to lay persons to preach the good news of Christ without them being ordained was responsible for the growth of the two churches since they were established in 1952 and 1973, respectively.

Some scholars like Matthew Ojo, Ruth Marshall, and Asonzeh Ukah identified lay and clergy mission involvement. However, this study further provided clues to how lay persons and clergy implement practically missional practices relevant to Southwest Nigeria. These were not part of central studies by Matthew Ojo, Ruth Marshall, and Asonzeh Ukah. The involvement of lay persons had been conditioned on ordination or possession of ministerial credentials in the Apostolic Faith Church and Cherubim and Seraphim, where the founders of these churches were members. Therefore, to contribute to the work of other researchers and scholars on the mission practices by lay and clergy in mission, I proposed a study of lay and clergy involvement in mission practice in Southwest Nigeria.

8.1 Engaging the Lay Persons

The lay persons can be considered the hermeneutics of the Church- the voice and interpreters of the mission's message to the world outside the Church. The mission's ultimate goal is to present love, equality, diversity, mercy, compassion and justice throughout God's creation. The lay person espouses a sense of being called, an inclination to serve the body of Christ. Marshall's previous research on DLBC pointed out that

The lay people attending the Bible study across many denominations coined the name. The Bible study group was an interdenominational Pentecostal movement at the beginning. However, from the view of Ruth Marshall, the remarkable rise of the Deeper Life could not be prefigured in the little group that met in the seating room of Kumuyi every Monday in the early 1970s. The expansion of Kumuyi's movement during the 1970s occurred in the same informal fashion, at the initiatives of the engaged converts, who were entirely lay persons. (Marshall 2009:70)

The ministry of the lay persons in RCCG and DLBC revolves around many things that make these churches functional, such as prayer, liturgy, baptism, social engagement and discipleship. It develops the identity, competence and skills for the mission in the lay person. It has an approach which focuses on evangelism, discipleship, and worship. Throughout the research, I have demonstrated the importance of missions to lay persons and the clergy. Lay mission is a new paradigm because the wave of participation in public and street ministries seeking new membership and expansion of a denominational church is very significant. The study shows a progressing and promising mission involvement of lay persons, which requires investigating why they do what they do in terms of engagement of the community in mission, especially in the selected Pentecostal churches. There appears to be a vigorous mission campaign by lay persons who had been commissioned either as deacons or witnessing leaders, church representatives or ambassadors for Christ. The lay persons considered themselves the ambassadors of the Pentecostal mission. They have proved to be reliable and committed to the spread of mission and have prioritized this as a fulfilment of their calling. As a result, they have understood by their involvement what is to be prioritized and conceptualized by participation in mission.

8.2 Lay Mission Phenomena

I noticed two types of phenomena of mission understanding, namely, centrifugal and centripetal. The centrifugal depicts 'go and proclaim' while the centripetal denotes 'wait in the church's mission. Both the churches moved into the community through the lay

persons' ministry and prefer a centrifugal mission practice. The 'go' is understood from the Great Commission paradigm, which forms the fundamental basis of their mission. The Great Commission, (GC) has been the dynamic factor that drives the mission operations. The Scripture portion on the GC is a fundamental reason to their participation in the mission. The GC's appeal was more significant than position or fame because it is the mission imperative and bulwark for their mission enterprise. RCCG sees the GC as the heartthrob of the Pentecostal mission, while the DLBC considers the GC to be the crux of Christian mission.

8.3 Research Findings

As itemized below, I found several themes in the research that constitute fundamental participation in the mission process, specifically in chapter four of my thesis. Sending has been imperative in the growing Pentecostal mission denominations. Within the context of the research, I have found that lay persons were engaged as the key players in the spread of the gospel. The sending, as demonstrated by lay persons from the empirical analyses in chapters four and five, causes a shift from *Missio-Dei* to Pentecostal understanding that every born-again believer (though not all the born-again) in these Pentecostal churches are lay people involved in mission in the life of the church and the community. The thesis demonstrates that the lay persons know what they ought to do outside the church to complement what they do inside the church as pointed out in chapter one of the thesis. The sending of the lay persons is seen as the de-facto multiplier effect on the 'going' essence of the mission in line with the Great Commission and the development of the mission capacity of the lay congregants.

The thesis arguments demonstrate the yeast effect of the nucleus of lay persons, especially in the creation of preaching and mission centres in RCCG and the start-up of

numerous Bible study locations by the DLBC for lay propagation of the Christian faith. The intentionality mission is cardinal in the research findings. In chapter four of the thesis, I found the repetition of the purpose of the mission and its intentionality as a constant theme and pattern. These lay persons believe that doing a mission is part of their ministry's responsibility and callings. I found out how mission affected the growth of the two denominations by five elements, namely, (i) vision; (ii) decision; (iii) worship; (iv) equipping and empowering; (v) preaching and teaching; and (vi) community. The lay persons mentioned how the Pentecostal mission has been redefined and democratized through the vision of the Pastor as a dominant priority; the mission was not limited by method and geography in their contexts. The lay persons have significant representation and voice in the mission decision process as a democratic element of these Pentecostal mission denominations. At every hierarchical level of the church, mission decision is reflected through higher participation by the lay persons. This is what I called the mission hieracholology, as expressed by Yevs Congar. The practice of mission is from the bottom up. I discovered in DLBC that scripture is predominantly interpreted as the basis for mission. The overriding focus and organization of Bible study have exemplified the lay congregation's critical contributions to engagement in mission. The bigger picture of hermeneutics from the regular Monday Bible study in DLBC reflects how the Bible has been missional and how lay persons can serve within the same context. Bible study has been the theological centre of the DLBC since 1973. Most of their worship has been inspired by mission concepts regarding themes and liturgy. Exuberant worship among the Pentecostals, especially in RCCG, acknowledges the presence of the Lord, as Priest, King and Redeemer. Again, the worship seeks incorporation of every tribe within the prescient of the mission arena as a prospect for outreaches. Testimonies play significant roles when newcomers are invited to worship service as a means of evangelism to attract people into

the church. Most people are attracted to the faith through hearing testimonies. The Arena of the RCCG in Mowe, along the Lagos Ibadan express way with a capacity for 200,000 Holy Ghost Service participants in 2012 bears witness to the role of worship in mission. See Funke Adeboye's Accounts of Lekki Holy Ghost service of the RCCG concerning mission (2012:155)⁷⁰ The role of the community in mission could not be better understood except by the Provost of the Redeemed Bible College, Joel Oke, who shared how the king of the community is a member of the RCCG in Ede, Osun State. It is the practice of the RCCG to allow traditional rulers on the front podium of the Arena during the monthly Holy Ghost service. This is because they believe in the community's active role in the mission.

One fundamental element of mobilization is resourcing mission through finance (Akintoye DLW-LP 15:08:2012). The DLBC wants the missionaries and churches to fund mission and contribute all they can mobilize as funds on their own or use their personal resources to support the mission, such as the use of leave allowances, selling personal properties, and the use of profit from business. On the other hand, it allows groups of district churches to come together and raise resources for retreats, crusades, and mission outreaches. The fundraising is done mainly by lay persons who are not the clergy, although the clergy also make contributions. The Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK) is prominent in this; the funding for the mission comes from the lay congregations. Lay

⁷⁰ First, a modified version of its monthly Holy Ghost Service was introduced to the wider public. Called the Special Holy Ghost Service, it was packaged as an interdenominational all-night prayer meeting and, like other large meetings, was characterized by testimonies of healings and other miracles. The first in the series, the Battle of the Gods, was held in 1994 at the Tafawa Balewa Square, Lagos, and attracted 67,000 people (RCCG 2002). In 1998 another programme, called the Holy Ghost Festival, was launched. His first meeting, Divine Visitation, took place at the expansive Lekki Beach in Lagos. It was estimated that about 6 million people attended this all-night programme (RCCG 2002). Because of the mammoth crowd that attended, subsequent meetings were moved to the Redemption Camp, the international headquarters of the RCCG located outside the city of Lagos. Here the programme was expanded to a three-day event, and later to a one week event. In 2001 its name was changed to the Holy Ghost Congress.

persons form the congregation, and they give. In comparison, the RCCG funds the mission directly or through partnerships (Mfom 05:07:2022 RCL). Sources of finance for the mission are through the church members according to their willingness and ability to give. DLBC does not accept money for missions from 'outsiders'. It does not allow politicians to contribute to missions. No philanthropist is allowed to contribute. In RCCG, funds come from both members and non-members for resourcing the mission. For instance, political office holders attending the Holy Ghost Service can contribute to missions; and money is also accepted from philanthropists.

8.4 Theological Insights for Mission

The insight into the mission work by DLBC can be clearly understood by its theology and the empirical data on why the church practices mission and why the mission is a significant way of viewing their world. Without understanding its dogmatic theological frameworks, it is not easy to comprehend DLBC's unstinting commitment to its mission. Most leaders and lay persons who were interviewed did not possess any significant theological education but rather educate and inform themselves through the study of scriptures. There are two categories of lay persons, (i) The elite class with professional academic degrees, (ii) Ministers without formal education as well as without a theological education yet called into the ministry. There is the establishment of a denominational Bible school where the lay and professional pastors are trained in Bible doctrines and the approach to mission. In addition, DLBC established the IBTC in 1980 to train pastors and full-time workers on short-term missions as key to evangelization.

8.5 Contribution to Knowledge

Originally the lay persons were the receivers of ministry in the mainline churches. I discovered that the context has changed in the case study, that the lay persons are now

active as givers of ministry in contrast to having been the recipients of ministry. The research explicates the outward mission of lay persons in the RCCG and DLBC. What the lay persons do outside the church, rather than what the lay persons do in the church, is unique to mission practice in Southwest Nigeria. The research discovered the following (i) how the lay persons function as pastors without a formal ordination. They are called district coordinators in DLBC, though they are pastors, (ii) the commissioning of lay persons supersedes ordination in RCCG, (iii) lay persons are the hermeneutics of the church by interpreting the message to mission in the communities, (iv) lay persons are the public face of the Pentecostal mission. In contrast, the back end of missions is the lay persons while the clergy represent the front view of the church. This is referred to as 'missiology of the altar'(Dempster et al. 2011b:24), and (v) lay persons are the personification of mission- sodality and modality.

This study has contributed insights into Pentecostal mission practice in Southwest Nigeria. The analyses have highlighted significant dissimilarities in the Pentecostals' approach to mission practice in similar cultural, language and geographical locations. The primary research question is: How do the Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Southwest Nigeria conceptualizes lay persons' involvement in Christian mission? From the interviews conducted and their analyses, it is apparent that the perception of lay informants is concerned with mission as a matter of priority with the process of conceptualization of the mission.

The thesis has contributed to knowledge in the following ways: (i) It contributes to the debate on missiology concerning the role of the laity in Pentecostal missions, (ii) In the study on Pentecostals in Nigeria, several studies and books were written by Matthew Ojo, Asonzeh Ukah, Ogbu Kalu, Nimi Wariboko, Richard Burgess and Ruth Marshall.

However, only a few focus on lay Pentecostalism in Nigeria, and my research has contributed to filling this gap, (iii) Studies about RCCG are many, but there are relatively few on DLBC. My thesis will contribute to research materials on DLBC and its engagement in mission. RCCG has been over-researched, but very little on DLBC has been published. My case study on DLBC is unique for this purpose.

The lay persons and clergy in DLBC and RCCG embraced and practised mission with a sense of priority and destiny. Samuel's comments in chapter four and Odesola's vigorous Christian in chapter five attest to the positive implication of the first research question. The research has expanded the lay mission theory to new frontiers through interviews as an empirical study of key Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria. The finding sees lay persons as 'back end developers' for Christian mission. During the fieldwork and interpretation of various collected data, I discovered that lay persons could be considered 'backend developers' on how the churches practice mission work. The clergy represent the front end of the mission, while the lay persons are the back end propelling the mission.⁷¹. The front end is the tip of the mission on top, while the back end is the mission iceberg below. The thesis elucidates the layperson's conceptualization

⁷¹**Missiology of Front-end versus Backend Developer** Building a website or application is usually divided into two main parts: the backend and the front end. Front-end development involves making the user interface, the buttons, the forms, the layout etc. In addition, a front-end developer must know how to take the user through an experience to get the desired outcome. The backend, however, has yet to be seen. What happens when you click certain buttons? Well, it doesn't just stop at the front end. The front-end developer must write code that communicates with the backend, which will retrieve information when clicking a button. The backend may have to perform complex calculations before responding. The backend is also where all the pages are stored. Without a backend, there is no front end, as there would be no place for the browser to download content.

Let's take the example of Google maps. It has a front end, a search bar, and a bunch of other stuff. For simplicity's sake, we'll look at one use case. Let's say you want to travel from London to Liverpool; you would enter that into the search bar. Till now, all you have used is the front end. When you hit enter, the front end sends the search query to the backend, and the backend looks for that journey data in its database. This data will need to include all the routes, car, bus, walking, train etc. These would be trip information as well as coordinates. When you decide on the journey, the front end will take the coordinates and give them to the map, drawing a path so you can see your journey. This is the analogy of mission relationships between the lay person at the back-end and the clergy at the church's forefront.

of mission. There is evidence of pragmatic appeal to the spread of Christianity, organized mission propagation, and participation in God's redemptive mission. No study is available on lay and clergy participation in Pentecostal mission in Nigeria with keeping in mind the growth of each church from less than 100 members to over hundreds of thousands in Southwest Nigeria as lay dominant churches. The outcome of this research will add to the body of knowledge in understanding charismatic Pentecostal missions in Nigeria.

The research has expanded the lay mission theory to new frontiers as an empirical study. First, the finding sees lay persons as a 'back end strategy' for the Christian mission. I use the typology or concept of front-end and back-end development to interpret, analyze, and evaluate the clergy-laity mission framework. The thesis presents a contribution to the Lay Pentecostal Mission concerning 'back end development'. McGrath examines the historical, theological, philosophical and scientific aspects of the interaction between religion and science (McGrath 2009:10). The lay persons are the new front door to the church, and mission is the dominant factor (pathways) the clergy employs to reach the community with the gospel.

Secondly, I discovered from the data analysis (Chapter four) that the democratization of lay ministry depends on the divide and the fundamental mission model and mission approach of the church and leadership involved. I disagreed with the position of Pentecostal pieces of literature that the democratization of lay ministry means the liberation of God's frozen people (Heavenor 1964:468).

Third: the office of the clergy has invested a vast amount of authority in religious spirituality. A vast amount of power invested in the clergy has given such a person the freedom to adapt religious norms, beliefs, values, and charis to shape the followers' lives in line with his interpretations. In the mission's work, he is the most potent element in

providing direction over and above the lay persons, especially in implementing Christian missions to the world. This accounts for splits in some churches, especially in Africa when the lay people are prevented or controlled from expressing their gifts and functions effectively through mission mobilization. The lay persons are there to support the ministry and mission to the extent that as much as the clergy allows or permits these due to the hierarchical nature of most Pentecostal denominational structures. The solution to the perceived difference between the two modalities can be resolved through common and ministerial sharing in the unique priesthood of Christ.

Fourth; the difference between the clergy and the laity emerged because of the concept of hierarchy in Protestant, Evangelical, Catholic and Pentecostal churches. During the interview with the RCCG director of research at the RCCG national secretariat, I discovered that hierarchy is inadvertently created when lay persons are ordained into the ministry. Elaborating further, he mentioned that there are three levels of ordination in RCCG (Bolarinwa 2018). The first is the ordination to a deacon; the second is the ordination to a pastor; and finally, the commissioning of pastors. In the Evangelical Church, ordination is seen as the recognition and spiritual contributions made by the person to be ordained into a specific leadership function. Kraemer argued 'The line of demarcation was formed by "ordination". The "duo genera" (Two bodies or classes) with increasing emphasis meant a superior and inferior class (Kraemer 1958:54). The mission is influence-wielding in the community in terms of leading a spiritual and physical change. The craving in the heart of the clergy for a mission goes beyond the nature of the Church, but gaining tangible and intangible things aids the position occupied in Christendom. The clergy occupies the forefront of community opinions wielding enormous power. Mission is perceived as a source of power and ambition in ministry. The

power is attached to positions occupied within the echelon of the Church and the hierarchy occupied.

My research builds on the body of knowledge showing additional models of lay participation in mission and how the clergy implement mission through the mobilization of multilayer cells of active lay persons in the Church. In addition, I make a significant contribution to lay mission mobilization through the empirical study of two contemporary Pentecostal denominations in Southwest Nigeria with similar social contexts but with varied interpretive analyses and dissimilar mission structures and practices.

8.5.1 Analyzing the Evidence

There are two ways in which the case study evidence can be analyzed. The first was to analyze the data based on the original theoretical propositions and the research objectives that flowed from them. The other was to develop a descriptive framework once the case study had been completed. Yin recommends that the former is preferable. This study unequivocally adopts a theoretical propositional approach to the research's evidence analysis (2009:35; 2013:59). The extant works of literature have tentative support for lay-clergy identities and dichotomy because of the emergence of hierarchies in the Pentecostal Church tradition. Nevertheless, the binominal distinction of the clergy-laity reality common to all Catholic and Protestant church traditions and Ecumenical to Pentecostal denominational strands are well established in the literature (Kraemer 1958:79; Congar 1965:102; Hai 2009:4; Connolly 2004:375). The current monographs are linked to the issues of clergy, lay persons' mission, and Pentecostals' response to civil war, revolution, and austerity. The failure of the old established churches to offer alternative practical solutions to the growing needs of the people in Southwest and Southeast Nigeria was a critical concern. Marshall and Burgess have presented the

dynamics of Pentecostal revival through revolution and civil war metaphors. Andy Lord researched the actions of Pentecostals in times of austerity. The alternatives to producing mid-range theory are a push to the edges. Studies from these earlier scholars have suggested that people only seek God in times of turbulence and chaos (Burgess 2009:39,60; Marshall 2009:73–87). Burgess and Marshall shaped their studies through multiple primary sources based on over a hundred churches across Nigeria. The churches were indigenous, neo-Pentecostal, and a few classical Pentecostal and mainline denominations. Ukah exclusively studied the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The first two studies account for Nigeria's cultural, social and political context. The current research differs from the previous studies; it is a comparative case study of two Pentecostal churches in Southwest Nigeria.

Ojo examines the rise of Pentecostalism in Nigeria through young men and women who labelled themselves pastors and evangelists without theological training (2006:9). Wariboko's work presents a multidisciplinary study of how Nigerian Pentecostals conceive of and engage with a spirit-filled world. It seeks to discern the spirituality of the charismatic religious movement in Nigeria concerning issues of politics, national sovereignty, economic development, culture, racial identity, gender, social ethics, and epistemology (2014:23). None of these studies has researched the overarching role of lay persons in mission as the object of their research. Therefore, pushing the study beyond the current position requires the following questions: What happens to mission in a period of stability and peace in a nation? How will the Pentecostal churches respond to a peaceful climate without political upheavals? Again, what happens to mission when the community and environment are in a state of equilibrium?

8.5.2 Diversities, Dissimilarities and Unity

It is not comforting to see a study of Pentecostal missions in a similar context with dissimilarity in practice because of the denominations in which the research is conducted. Most of the praxis in one of the denominations is foreign to the other in a similar cultural environment. Four broad issues of dissimilarities emerged in the research: ordination, women's ministry, dependency/independency, church model and typology. The RCCG ordains lay persons as deacons and pastors for ministry, even including the ordination of women. However, DLBC recognizes the transformation of lay persons to leadership positions by mere recognition without any form of ordination. Women do not play active roles in the core leadership of the DLBC. However, women are given specific leadership roles equal to men at the bottom of the leadership ladder. Women have complete jurisdiction over women only in all matters of faith. In contrast, the men play superintendent leadership roles over the church, unlike the RCCG, where women are at par in leadership roles with men, almost at every level. The church structure in DLBC is a command and compliance method of operations. All the districts that made up the group are to do most of their missions and programs according to the instructions given from the top of the hierarchy down to what the lay persons are to do, possibly through the House Caring Fellowship (HCF) system at the grass-root level. This may give the flexibility to lay persons at the front door of the denomination. However, all the district churches in DLBC depend on the church headquarters at Gbagada, which centrally coordinates the activities of all state churches in Southwest Nigeria.

RCCG operates an independent and decentralized structure of leadership. The parish and province churches have a degree of freedom to practice missions. Individual parish churches can carry out program independent of the province. Thus, the degree of freedom and flexibility is very high in the RCCG. The programme varies across times and

places in RCCG in ways that use the skills and talents of the lay persons, as the case may be. The RCCG believes religion and politics have something in common, while the DLBC separates religion from politics. DLBC sees the merger of religion and politics as a fundamental contradiction. For DLBC, the religious and the political can never be merged; the sacred and the secular exist in reality on parallel lines. The DLBC does not embrace the culture of the community, but RCCG does. For instance, the RCCG wants the community to be part of the decision-making process in "Let's go a fishing", and believes that the Spirit of God could work through the secular people in the neighbourhood in God's mission. Any part of the culture which does not contradict the scriptures should be embraced in the mission. One primary reason which accounts for dissimilarities and diverse mission practices amongst Pentecostal churches is linked to the multifaceted gifting and manifestations of the Holy Spirit shaping the individuals and corporate bodies of Christ for the mission (Abayomi: RCL; 20:03:2021). The growth and influence of the selected Pentecostal denominational churches in Southwest Nigeria have reflected the importance of lay foundation in Pentecostal mission. From a very insignificant beginning with very few lay persons in 1952 and 1973, the two churches have both become mission senders within the culture and community with flourishing mission praxis. As a result, these two churches have both presence and prominence in local missions in Nigeria. Also, on the international level, the two churches have become global mission participants in every African country. (Ojewale et al. 2021:71).

After having conducted a series of interviews across parishes and provinces of the RCCG, districts and group locations of the DLBC, the outcome of these interviews demonstrates that the two churches are present in the geographical areas of Southwest Nigeria. Another prominent finding reveals that there are an increasing number of lay participants in local mission than when the RCCG began in 1952 and DLBC in 1973,

respectively. The growth of the two Pentecostal churches in the Southwest could only be understood in the roles and involvement of the lay people in mission. For instance, each church operates a house fellowship system in Southwest Nigeria with over 10,000 house fellowship locations across Lagos alone. A lay person leads each house church. The increasing participation of lay persons in mission could only explain this. The two churches may possibly have up to 10,000 parishes in Lagos, with parish pastors for RCCG and District pastors for DLBC representing the clergy population (Marshall 2009:73–74, 240). Following the inauguration programme of the DLBC with 35,000 seats in April 2018, with a few numbers of Bible study locations in 1983 after the decentralization of the church, and now with over 150,000 members in Lagos, it is because of the priority placed on mission by the clergy and lay persons. The rise in the participants of the Holy Ghost Service to over 200,000 participants every month at the Redemption city is due to lay persons increasing participation in mission. Interviewees gave responses that could be interpreted as the back end of the Church, while the clergy represents the front face of the Church. They indicated ecclesiological and missiological perspectives that the RCCG and DLBC have functional mission strategies through church planting, the 'Let's go a fishing' programme, Bible study, retreats, and local and regional crusades. The interviewees also indicated mission as a priority and the emphasis on local mission outreaches by lay persons.

8.6 Further research on lay Pentecostal missions

Mission-oriented Pentecostal churches must move forward towards a biblically, spiritually grounded and dynamic mission mobilization process. Traditional models have emphasized evangelism, sending, and praying. However, a better and more holistic mission mobilization is possible by 'crossing the boundary' and removing the dead log in

the layperson's rank and file. It is assumed that when you are born again and baptized with the Holy Spirit, participation in mission becomes automatic for the lay persons and the clergy. However, I discovered that even when people are baptized with the Holy Spirit, they are still averse to mission (Chapter five). There are lay persons and clergy baptized with the Holy Spirit but still sit and preach in the congregation with the feeling that God's sovereignty is a condition for human salvation with or without proclamation and the spread of the gospel (chapter four). Again, the perception of a few lay persons, is that only the clergy are ordained for the propagation and spread of mission (mission is for the clergy alone). The lay persons pass the buck to the clergy as 'mission champions' in the mission mobilization process. This remains an unspoken assumption. Some lay persons believe that the clergy are the mission force for the harvest field without realizing it. As a result of this misconception, many field missionaries, including Pentecostal churches, continue to teach theologically filled mission exegesis with mission-less practices, which results in a congregation drifting from a sense of mission. Unfortunately, this perception is different from the focus of this research and the theology underpinning the mission.

The genuine mission activity could be drowned by this assumption that the work of mission belongs to the clergy alone and not the whole Church of God. The research has concentrated on proclamation and participation in mission by lay persons and the clergy. The two Pentecostal denominations claim that they do mission and respond to people's spiritual, physical, social, and economic needs. What are their limitations and drawback? There is a need to use similar methods to study non-Pentecostal churches in the same context to see whether the results which emerged here on clergy and lay persons' participation in mission will generate a similar outcome. The research combines a range of sophisticated, multi-faceted approaches to how lay persons and clergy make up and act

on the missionary impulse (in a social world) in Southwest Nigeria. It lends itself to a vibrant contemporary concreteness of how the Church should understand and practice its mission.

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APPENDICES

Primary Sources

Case Study One: Redeemed Christian Church of God

1. BMB-RCL RCCG Research and Development Director. Personal interview, 18 July 2017.
2. WMO-RCL RCCG Parish Pastor. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017; 24 August 2019.
3. EF-RLP RCCG lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017; 6 March, 2019.
4. TF-RLW RCCG lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017.
5. JF-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017.
6. RM-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017.
7. AF-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017.
8. MM-RLW RCCG Zonal Pastor. Personal interview, 15 October, 2017
9. MM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 15 October, 2017.
10. BM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 4 May, 2018.
11. SM-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 15 October, 2017.
12. EM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 24 October, 2017.
13. CF-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 5 April, 2018.
14. JM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 9 May, 2018.
15. GM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 9 May, 2018.
16. BM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 30 January, 2019.
17. LM-RLW RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 2 November, 2018.
18. AM-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 24 October, 2017.
19. EMA-RCL RCCG former Parish Pastor. Personal interview, 5 October, 2019.
20. MM-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 17 September, 2017.
21. BMA-RCL RCCG Provincial Pastor . Personal interview, 8 January, 2019.
22. TMA-RCL RCCG Assistant Provincial Pastor. Personal interview, 8 January, 2019.
23. VM-RLP RCCG Lay person. Personal interview, 20 August, 2018.

Case Study Two: Deeper Life Bible Church

1. DMR-DCL DLBC First National Higher Institution Programme Coordinator in 1981. Now Deeper Life Campus Fellowship. DLBC Clergy. Personal interview, 10 July 2019.
2. OM-DLW DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, 8 November, 2019.
3. FF-DLP DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, 10 July 2019.
4. DF-FLP DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, November, 2019.
5. LM-DLP DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, 22 July 2018.
6. AM-DLW DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, 5 November, 2019.
7. WF-DLW DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, 5 November, 2019.
8. AM-DCL DLBC Ghana National Overseer from 1980 to 2001. Personal interview, 17 August, 2019; 19 October, 2019.
9. TF-DLR DLBC Bible Study Leader, Ijebu Ode, 1978. Wife of National Overseer DLBC Ghana from 1980 to 2001.
10. JMP-DCL DLBC National Overseer Europe and DLBC London from 1990 to 2006. Personal interview, 13 May 2018.
11. FF-DLW. DLBC Lay person. Personal interview, July 2018.
12. OMS-DCL DLBC Bible Study Leader, Agege Lagos 1980 to 2000. Personal interview, 25 December, 2018.
13. RMC-DCL DLBC Region Overseer Idah 1999 to 2004; and Kabba, 2004 to 2011.
14. PF-DLP DLBCF University of Lagos. Personal interview, 22 July, 2018.
15. OMJ-DCL State Overseer, Kwara, Oyo and Kano States. 1980 to 1992. Personal interview, August 2017.
16. MMP-DCL DLBC Missionary to Philippines 1980 to 2006. Personal interview, December, 2018.

Deeper Life Bible Church 2021 Primary Bibliography

S/N	Names	Alias	Code	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Education	Religious Status
1	Pastor Williams Kumuyi		WFK-GS	Male	80	Married	PhD	General Superintendent
2	Kayode Oyediran		OSO-DCL	Male	58	Married	PhD	DLCF National Coordinator
3	Martin Dada		MD-DCL	Male	55	Married	PhD	Clergy
4	Festus Adedokun		FA-DCL	Male	58	Married	M.Sc	Clergy
5	Joseph Ogedengbe		JO-DLW			Married	M.Sc	Clergy
6	Mary Ogedengbe		MO-DLW	Female	28	Married	B.Sc	Lay Person
7	Fajimi Isaac		FA-DLW	Male	53	Married	M. Engine	Lay Person
8	Aleghe Nkruma		AN-DLW	Male	54	Married	Tech Educ	Lay Person
9	Thomas Jesuyemi		TJ-DLP	Male	43	Married	High School Leaver	Lay Person

10	Joeph Ajibako		JA- DCL	Male	49	Married	Tech Educ	Clergy
11	Obasi Francis		FO- DCL	Male	59	Married	B.Agric	Clergy
12	Adelaja Ojetola		AO- DCL	Male	60	Married	M.Sc	Clergy
13	Femi Oyetoro		FO- DCL	Male	63	Married	B.Sc	Clergy
14	Bose Olaniyan		BO- DLP	Female	52	Married	B.Sc	Lay Person
15	Titus Owolabi		TO- DCL	Male	65	Married	Tech Educ	Clergy
16	Sola Coker		SC- DLW	Female	57	Married	M.Sc	Lay Person
17	Gbadebo Shafe		GS- DLW	Male	63	Married	B. engine	Lay Person
18	Israel Ogunlade		IO- DCL	Male	61	Married	P.hd	Clergy
19	Felix Akeredolu		FA- DLW	Male	49	Married	MBA ACCA	Lay Person
20	Dupe Ojo		DO- DLP	Female	50	Married	B.Sc	Lay Person

21	Joke Olagunju		JO- DLW	Female	55	Married	N.C.E	Lay Person
22	Iyitor Henriata		HI- DLW	Female	58	Married	Tech	Lay Person
23	Arit Okon		AO- DLP	Female	52	Married	B.Sc	Lay Person
24	Feyisara Afolabi		FA- DLP	Female	53	Married	M.Sc	Lay Person
25	Blessings Sunday		BS- DLP	Female	26	Single		Lay Person
26	Femi Abiodun		FA- DCL	Male	64	Married	B.Sc, M.Sc LLB.	Clergy
27	Daramola Elegbeleye		DE- DLP,	Male	39	Married	B,Sc	Lay Person

OXFORD CENTER FOR MISSION STUDIES

UNITED KINGDOM

RESEARCH THEME

Engagement of Lay People for Christian Mission: A Case Study of Selected Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Southwest Nigeria.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FIELDWORK

THIS RESEARCH FOCUSES ON LAY PEOPLES' INVOLVEMENT IN CHRISTIAN MISSION

This research aims at hearing your voice and contributions to the debate and in-depth research on lay people (ordinary people in the church) involvement with Christian mission in our contemporary times. This research process pays a great attention to your personal views, experience and unique insight to grass root Christian mission.

A. WHAT IS CHRISTIAN MISSION?

- I. How would you define Christian mission?
- II. What would you say mission is all about in your denomination?
- III. What is the proportion of time you devote to mission per week etc?

B. ORDINATION AND CLERGY IN MISSION

- I. What is your understanding of ordination in your church denomination?
- II. What do the ordained ministers do in your church denomination with respect to Christian mission?
- III. What do you understand as the work of the ordained ministers in your church denomination?
- IV. What are the spiritual conditions or qualifications for ordination in your church denomination eg,(callings, charismatic gifts, character, leadership gifts, gender age)?
- V. Who does the ordination of ministers?
- VI. What are the known reasons for their ordinations in your church denomination?
- VII. When does your denomination ordain a lay person as a minister?

C. THE ROLE OF LAY PEOPLE IN MISSION

- I. What do you understand by a lay person or an ordinary person in your denomination?

- II. What is the role of lay people in your denomination?
- III. What is the understanding of lay people within your denomination?
- IV. What are the roles of an lay people outside your denomination?
- V. In what ways are people involved in mission in your denomination?
- VI. What are the requirements to be fulfilled by lay people in order to be involved in church mission?
- VII. What are the key roles of lay people during the worship service?
- VIII. Is Christian mission the task of the Pastors alone ?
- IX. What are the differences between ordained and non ordained ministers in your church denomination?

D. THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF MISSION IN YOUR CHURCH

- I. What biblical texts / narratives inform your practice of mission?
- II. What theological beliefs motivate you to engage in Christian mission?
- III. What is your understanding of theology of mission?
- IV. What does your denomination teach about mission?
- V. What mission approaches are practiced by your denomination? Eg mass evangelism, house to house evangelism, friendship evangelism, work place / market place, social work)
- VI. What do you do in response to your denomination's teaching and beliefs about Christian mission?
- VII. What mission training does your denomination provide for lay people?
- VIII. In what ways do you engage in mission?

E. HOLY SPIRIT / PENTECOSTAL POWER AND CHARISMATIC GIFTS IN MISSION

- I. What does your denomination believe about the baptism of the Holy Spirit?
- II. What is the understanding of baptism of the Holy Spirit by the ordained ministers in your denomination?
- III. What is the understanding of baptism of the Holy Spirit by lay people in your denomination?
- IV. What role does the Holy Spirit play in your mission practice?
- V. What do you understand by Pentecostal mission?
- VI. What do you think is distinctive about Pentecostal mission compared to mission in other Christian traditions?

Charismatic Gifts

- I. What do you understand by charismatic gifts?
- II. What is charismatic mission?
- III. What do you understand by the gifts of the Holy Spirit?
- IV. What role does the power of the Holy Spirit occupy in your worship?
- V. What is your understanding of the role charisma in mission?

- VI. What manifestations of the Holy Spirit have you observed in the context of Christian mission in your denomination?

Holy Spirit and Signs and Wonders in Mission

- I. What is the role of the Holy Spirit signs in mission?
- II. What significant impact has signs and wonders produce in your Christian mission?
- III. How does the gift of the Holy Spirit help you in your mission practice?
- IV. How are the ordinary people empowered in your church denomination for evangelism?

F. MOBILIZATION OF LAY PEOPLE FOR MISSION

- I. What motivates you to engage in mission?**
- II. What is your greatest drive for carrying out Christian mission?
- III. How does your church mobilize lay people for mission?
- IV. What are the motivations for lay people who are involved in Christian mission?
- V. What rewards does your denomination attach for lay people who are involved in mission?
- VI. Who sent you to do mission or how are you sent to carry out mission to the people?
- VII. What form of resources (financial, assets, etc) does your denomination commit to doing the mission?
- VIII. How are the workers equipped for mission work?
- IX. What is mission appeal?

G. MISSION AND THE POOR; MISSION AND THE SOCIETY

- I. What different forms of missions do you carry out in the society?
- II. What is your understanding of mission to the poor?
- III. In what ways are lay people in your church denomination involved in social projects in the community?
- IV. How does your denomination's involvement in Christian mission impact society or the environment?
- V. What do you understand by hospitality in mission?
- VI. Appendix A.
- VII. DLBC Complete Bible Study Series
- VIII. "the scriptures," "fall of man," "qualifications for profiting in the study," "God's plan of redemption," "the atonement," "repentance," "restitution," "salvation through grace," "Christ teaches on swearing", "the believers names", "prayer", "walking by sight or walking by faith", "the interceding Christians", "faith", "scriptural fasting", "personal witnessing", Biblical pattern of evangelism", "communication in evangelism", "Christ mission", "wisdom in soulwinning", "helps for soulwinners", "water baptism", "the Lord's supper", "persecution and trials of faith", Christian forgives", "worldliness and worldly amusements", "Christ centred affection and ambition", sanctification, its meaning and

significance”, the sanctified life”, “sanctification keeping the experience”, “holiness in daily Christian life”, believers security- conditional or unconditional”, non-retaliation, non-resistance and kindness”, the Holy Spirit”, “the promise of outpouring of the Holy Spirit”, “God’s names and attributes”, the Godhead”, bodily healing from the Lord”, “healing and deliverance”, divine ownership”, Christian giving”, “tithes and offerings”, “friendship love and marriage”, reasons for marriage”, “God’s standard for the family”, the Abrahamic covenant”, “God’s covenant with Israel”, “the Davidic covenant”, “this present age in God’s plan”, “the rapture”, “events for the church after the rapture”, “the great tribulation”, second coming and the battle of Armageddon”, the resurrection of the dead”, “hell” and , the new heaven and the new earth”⁷². Complete Bible Study 1983

Figure 6: With Evangeline, Research Assistant at the Redeemed College of Missions Chapel 11 May 2021



Figure 2: With Dr Joel Oke, The Provost pointing out an important facts during the interview in his office. 12 May 2021



Figure 3: An interview with Mrs Abe at the Redeemed College of Missions, 11 May 2021

⁷² Complete Bible Study, published by Zoe Printing and Publishing Company 1983.



Figure 4: Pastor Ifeoluwa Akindayomi and my family after the interview at the RCCG LP 16 on 17 February 2021

GAC1: Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) RCCG Fieldwork

RCCG Fieldwork 16 – 22 August 2021 in Alimosho, Ikotun, Egbeda, Shasha Akowonjo, and Akowonjo parishes and provinces

Events as a Mobilization Strategy by RCCG For Lay Congregation

Type of Events	Numbers Per (100th) March 2021	Numbers Per (100th) April 2021	Total
Birthday	5	10	15
Thanksgiving	7	5	12
Music	2	1	3
Drama	1	2	3
Marriage	3	4	7
Buildings	5	4	9
Think Life	0	1	1
Feast of Esther	1	0	1
Social	12	5	17
Corporate Social Responsibility	3	2	5

Community	1	0	1
Mercy	9	2	11

FIGURE 4A: EVENTS TYPES IN MARCH 2021

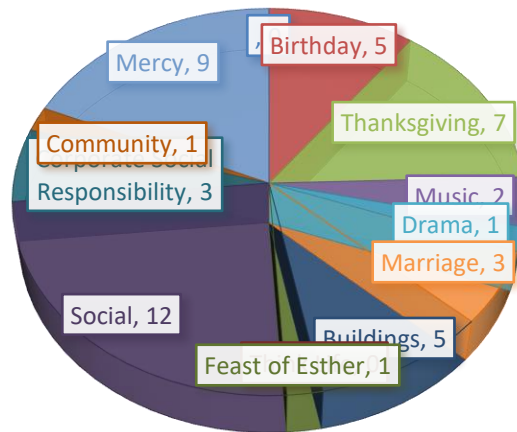
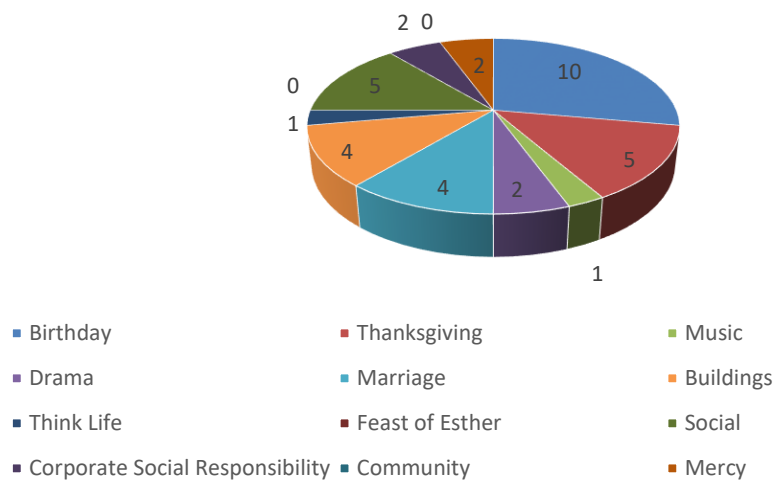


Figure 4b: Event Types April 2021



Thematic Analysis for RCCG Chapter Four

RCCG MISSION INQUIRY

RCCG INTERVIEW SHEET ANALYSIS 1 OF 8

Outreach arm of the church	That do not come to church for whatever also.	God gave his only begotten son.	Everybody will be saved (opportunity for salvation)	Obstacles hindrance on their way very irrelevant so for me
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We call the push and pull effect in marketing	Identify the need for that particular area	Something you must give	He gave some ministerial gifts	We go out to win souls
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Mission is a fluid	In terms of material needs or whatever.	Majorly is to win souls.	The ordained people do in respect to Christian mission?	Workers training on Sunday and go out
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The church then has an organized way of reaching	Unreached here but the mission field	The mission of Christians in the world	Work of the mission goes beyond ordination.	Showing compassion with Dorcas table
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Reach out to them with the work of God.	Education was free for converts	Mission is to ensure that we live in love	Perfunctorily, ordination notwithstanding	Visit the absentees on Sundays
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Mission is a fluid to that that.	Able to win us essentially.	Reach to all nooks and crannies of the earth	Ordination will not help you.	Giving and thanksgiving Sunday
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That	The basis for	Let's go a	Layman just a	Send lay
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ordinarily	mission just	fishing	member of the	persons to plant
people	to win soul.		church,	new parishes

Figure 1: Interview analysis from lay persons and clergy (parish pastors) in Redeemed Christian Church of God.

DLBC MISSION INQUIRY

DLBC INTERVIEW SHEET ANALYSIS 1 OF 5

Christian Mission is a fulfilment of Christ's command	Time is short to preach	One on one evangelism (Personal),	the effort of spreading Christianity	Person to person evangelism	Moving with two or more people for evangelism	Gospel of Christ should be taken to every part of the world
Christ's command in Mark 16:15	Bus/Vehicle evangelism	Take the Good news to every nation	Christian mission could be done individually	Morning cry.	The priority place on mission	The members mostly involve in person to person evangelism
Without Christ in our locality and internationally.	Gospel to all creatures.	Beginning with your community.	Main purpose is to carry out evangelism	Local crusade.	My church focuses on Mark 16:15	The church sends people
Those places in need of the gospel	Ordination responsibility to guide and instruct	But charismatic gifts	Christian activities to meet the needs	Distributing tracts and religious magazines	Mission is on the high side	Christian mission is a calling
Leave his place of comfort to another place	The gospel has not reached	Ordination is the spiritual responsibility	Mass evangelism	Media evangelism.	leave his place of comfort to another place	Obedying the great commission
Go out for evangelism every week	Leadership gifts and character	Follow while calling and gender age come last	Ordination simply means assigning responsibilities	Gospel to all creatures.	Pray for missionaries.	Buy tracts and magazines for distribution
Working position in	Spreading the faith and Christ	New locations and pastors	The people go to hell without	Ordination is when someone is	Also participate in mission	Salvation, Sanctification and Holy Ghost

the church. are needed. Christ selected in foreign Baptism

Figure 2: Interview analysis from lay persons and clergy (District Coordinators) in Deeper Life Bible Church.

General Appendix RCCG Photos

Participant Observation



The Redeemed Christian Church of God Campground, Lagos / Ibadan Express, Nigeria- Over 500,000 in attendance 64th Annual Convention, 1-7 August 2016



the Redeemed Christian Church of God Campground, Lagos / Ibadan Express, Nigeria 4th August 2016.



Photograph of a Cross section Redeemed Christian Church of God, 64th Annual Convention, 1-7 August 2016. Source: RCCG Mission Forum Magazine, December 2016.



Figure 1: An interview with Dr Joel Oke. The Provost of the Redeemed College of Missions, Ede, Nigeria. 12 May 2021



Inspecting RCCG Archival document at the Redeemed College of Missions Library. 11 May 2021.



Let's go a-fishing 40 days fasting and prayer with Pastor Adeboye. Source. RCCG Mission Forum Magazine December 2018.



RCCG Regional Women Mobilization conference, Lagos, 15 May 2021



Pastor Adeagbo Akinlabi, showing me a RCCG mission document during the interview on 8th January 2019



With Pastor Adeagbo Akinlabi, after the interview in his office. We moved to the church podium for a photograph, 8th January 2019.



Interview with Pastor Akintobi, 8th January 2019



After the interviews with the Provincial Pastor Adeagbo Akinlabi and his Assistant Pastor Akintobi 8th January 2019 interviews.

DLBC Photos



Impact Youth Global Outreach Deeper Life Bible Church, with William Kumuyi 5th January 2022



Kunle Ogunkolati at the Deeper Life International Conference Centre, 5th January 2022. Attending the Global Campus Mission Program and for interviews.



Kunle Ogunkolati at the Global Crusade with Kumuyi (GCK) Ikorodu, Lagos 2nd August 2022.



Rise for Prayer after the Interview Session at Ibadan: 21 June 2018

