

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP TODAY

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CONTENTS

Dedication	viii
Acknowledgements	ix
Foreword	x
Preface	xii
CHAPTER 1	1
African-Hebrew Music Tradition (Heritage)	1
CHAPTER 2	15
Church Hymnody – The Singing and Composition of Hymns	15
CHAPTER 3	21
Music as a Christian Evangelizing Tool	21
CHAPTER 4	44
Preaching a Key Component/Enabler of Worshipful Living	44
CHAPTER 5	73
Characteristics (mode) of Gospel Delivery	73
CHAPTER 6	101

Centrality of Prayer in Living Christianly	101
CHAPTER 7	116
The Praise and Worship Phenomenon	116
CHAPTER 8	155
Praise and Worship Link to Charismization	155
CHAPTER 9	180
The Litmus Test of True Prayer, Praise, Worship and Thanksgiving.....	180
CHAPTER 10	211
Biblical Texts and Global voices on Praise and Worship	211
CHAPTER 11	251
Pentecostalism – Some Insights/Recommendations...	251
CHAPTER 12	269
Contextualizing Biblical Texts (Messages)	269
CHAPTER 13	308
African Christology	308
CHAPTER 14	328
The Battle of the Sexes in Christianity	328

CHAPTER 15	349
African Women Theology	349
CHAPTER 16	367
A Cultural Practice that Demeans Women	367
CHAPTER 17	380
Praise and Worship at PCEA ST. Andrew’s Church, Nairobi	380
CHAPTER 18	390
Research Methods used on Praise and Worship. A Survey at PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi	390
CHAPTER 19	401
Praise and Worship Research Findings at PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi (April 2012).....	401
CHAPTER 20	418
Praise and Worship – The Way Forward.....	418
CHAPTER 21	433
Summary of what the Bible Teaches about Worship..	433
Epilogue	439
Appendix 1.....	448
Appendix 2.....	450

Appendix 3.....	456
Appendix 4.....	460
Appendix 6.....	463
Appendix 7.....	464
Appendix 8.....	465
Appendix 9.....	467
Appendix 10.....	471
Bibliography	479



ARTICHOKE

See text on pages 216 to 221

Dedication

Dedicated to my wife Felicita Wangeci, and family members Peter, Elizabeth and Grace who patiently shared space and time during the day or at night (when most of the drafting took place), Joseph, Joy and Sam gave moral support from a distance. Thanks be to God. God Bless you all!

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Foreword

In this book, *African Christian Worship Today*, Francis Keiru has addressed a subject that many authors have not been keen to write on. He has deeply examined African Christian worship, and has given important and well-researched information about the subject. The information is well contextualized in an African situation, and is presented in a balanced way. In particular, the author has shown how historically, music has been used as a means of worship among Christians. This kind of information will remind the church, in Africa and elsewhere, to recognize the importance of music in worship.

The book says a lot on African Christian worship in prayer, music, and gospel delivery, Pentecostalism, African Christology and even African Women Theology.

One very important aspect about the book is that the author clearly indicates that worship should be based on the Bible. He says:

The Bible should always be the ultimate gauge for any teaching or doctrine in Christian practice. So any mode of practice in worship should always pass the test of authenticity based on the Bible (page 251-252).

The book is biblically oriented, well researched and informative. It is a wonderful resource in the area of

African Christian Theology, and it is great as academic reference material on African Christian worship in our time.

Rev. Prof. Peter N Kariuki,
Associate Minister,
PCEA St. Andrew's Church,
Nairobi, Kenya.

Preface

The idea of writing this book, titled African Christian Worship Today, was born out of my Master of Theology (in African Christianity) thesis on praise and worship in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa; based on a survey of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, at Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya.

In an effort to see the relevance of praise and worship phenomenon in the Christian Church, I carried out research on praise and worship in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, narrowing on a survey of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, Kenya. After distributing the research findings to the youth through the youth pastor and to several group leaders and some elders, both serving and retired, it occurred to me that there was need to take a further step and expand the research outcome into a book to disseminate knowledge more widely especially in the area of demonstrative worship and preaching. This is the dialogic preaching not so common in the mainline Churches such as Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist and even in the African Inland Church services. The chief reason for the wake-up call to praise and worship (the segment of praise dominated by choruses and portions of common hymns) is due to modern communication through televangelism, music on YouTube and many television channels dedicated to music, evangelism and preaching. In the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the

terminology praise “in” worship and not praise “and” worship is officially sanctioned. It is observable that small words such as “in” as well as “and” can reveal some subtle orientation to the issue at hand such as the praise and worship phenomenon.

Singing is a form of praise to God. You may be praising God for others to hear you declaring the worthiness of God or sing a hymn as a prayer to God. Indeed praise can be recited, as in the Psalms of King David in the Bible. Biblically speaking, you cannot equate praise with singing. The reason for this is because everything we do should be for the glory and praise of God. I Corinthians 10:31 reads; “so whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.” Philippians 1:11 also reads, “may you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation – the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ – for this will bring much glory and praise to God.” Character here denotes “scratches” in one’s personality (or person), visible and distinctive in nature. Nevertheless, singing is a vital form of praise especially as depicted by many psalms. It is no surprise, therefore, that praise is a constant battlefield on which we have to fight to be faithful.¹

Sadly, it is too easy to rob God of all His praise, simply because we fear looking foolish, or we fear what others

¹ <http://matthiasmedia/2012/09/the-role-of-singing-in-the-Church/the-Briefing>.

might think about us, of our voices, or how they may label us! As a result, we play ‘it cool,’ muzzle our gratitude, curb our enthusiasm, and perhaps don’t even connect with the words we are singing! Of course, the antidote to this is not to be impervious to those around us, or unconcerned about how we impact them. Indeed the article below continues to elucidate further and reads that;

“to the contrary, it is God’s will that we should look out for others and endeavor to worship Him only in ways that build them up (I Cor. 14:19).”²
For more emphasis the article continues this way:

But to a Christian – like concern for my neighbor is a million miles away from slavish fear of man – a fear that is ultimately idolatrous and self-serving and not God-honoring.³

In this case, praise and worship may not literally mean singing out for God, but ensuring that one’s voice through music is to give due reverence to God and not merely being banal. On the other hand, praise in worship may simply imply that one is singing out to God in the context of a wider circus of coming before God, the giver of life and sustainer of all things. So in a way, you want to take the stand that praise is an integral part of reverential

² Ibid.

³ AGLS, *Praises to the Most High*, Hymn (Ruaraka Printing Press, Nairobi, Kenya, 1993), 124.

approach to God. Analytically, the action (of singing) becomes an ingredient in declaring the worthiness of God. On the other hand, praise and worship may imply that as we begin the worship service, we praise (sing) to God; and in so doing ensure that the music, the voices, the rhythm, the dance, pitch and any musical gestures are directed to the worthiness and the glory of God; for He alone is worthy to be worshipped. This, therefore, ought to help one see that praise and worship or praise in worship refers to different sides of the same coin.

Now back to praise “in” and praise “and” worship. Adoption or adherence to either is a win-win-situation, because the focus is declaring the worthiness and glory of God to humanity, and to “all people that on earth do dwell.”⁴ Language and the words used need clarity or definition in order to enrich the narration of any subject such as the undertaking of writing works such as this, in the area of living a life full of worship. The author has undertaken praise and worship of God, a subject that has almost been exhausted in the theological world and in the many hymns, and song books used in Church services by the universal Church.

Music for example, as an English word, has equivalents in many languages, such as in Swahili where it is *uimbaji*, and in Kikuyu *ûini*. Music is defined by Advanced

⁴ AGLS, *Praises to the Most High*, 124.

Learner's Dictionary as sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. The definition continues that people sing or play music on numerous instruments. Singing is defined as making musical sounds with one's voice, in form of song or tune. Tune is a series of musical notes that are sung or played in a particular order to form a piece of music. A song is a short piece of music with words that have been made into a tune. This could be a folk, love or pop-song. The musical sounds that birds sing especially early in the morning are also referred to as songs. Verse three of hymn number 13 in the Kikuyu Hymn Book (2003 Edition), is a translation of *Jesus Holy Undefined* (*Jesû Mwega Mûtheru*) reads:

The Birds are humming
As if they are singing songs
They are giving praise to you
Through their music

Folk songs denote music in traditional style of a country or community, which are usually played or danced in festivals and in concerts. By their nature, folk songs assume both social and political inclinations. In Kenya the renowned singer the late Joseph Kamarû in Central Kenya had many songs that touch on political and social issues. One such song which was popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s is "*Ndari ya Mwarimû*," (the "*Teachers' Darling*") which castigated the teaching fraternity's moral that continues to bedevil the learning institutions to date,

where some teachers abuse school girls. This song caused widespread anger among the teaching fraternity, with the Teachers' Union (KNUT) attempting to have the song stopped from being aired by the national broadcaster, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC). Another folk song that has rattled the political class till now is a folk-cum-gospel song *Mai ni Marûrû* (*The Bitter Waters of Mara*). The song angered the ruling class during the Jomo Kenyatta's government, because it put it exposes how rampant corruption was in offices and in all sections of social strata. The uproar it caused occasioned its banned from airing by the then Voice of Kenya (VOK) now, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation.

Joseph Kamarû has many folk songs on love and family life, and courtship. Like in all societies the world over, just as was the case with Charlie Pride, Kamarû's love songs abound in music stores. Even as much reference is made to secular love songs, let us remind ourselves that some noble words such as love can easily get polluted. Love is such a noble and virtuous word, that there is much deviation from the Biblical meaning. Unfortunately, there is no law that can bar such misrepresentation of God's word, due to humanity's' fallen nature. God is love and any reference to it in secular matters should not lose sight of the absolute meaning of love. Love is not God; it is God who is love.

Pop music (popular music), is a popular modern music of the sort that has been pervasive in American society since the 1950s. It gained momentum in 1960s owing to the phenomenon of popular culture. Popular culture is mainly practiced by the less educated in society, both the rich and the poor. This type of music is not popular with the highly educated, who are practitioners of high culture.⁵ High culture, say, in the area of music and entertainment is portrayed as non-commercial, producing non-standardized products and encouraging creative products.⁶ Pop music has found inroads in the gospel music industry, which is dominated by religious singing, popular among African-Americans and other black people, and is characterized by movement and vibrancy. Recent findings show that this music has become popular in contemporary praise and worship.

On the other hand, country music denotes music created by folk and cowboys in America. In the religious sphere, it includes spirituals and in some cases blues, a type of music of slow heavy rhythm with deep feelings of sadness. Music and dance is simply singing and moving in a lively manner following musical notes. Hip-hop music is characterized by dancing, spoken words and steady beats played by electronic instruments. This music

⁵ Herbert J. Gans, *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and evaluation of Taste*, (Basic books, Revised and updated Ed. New York, NY, 1999), xiv-xv.

⁶ Ibid. 31.

genre has found its way in chorus and short songs, popular in praise and worship and in gospel music especially among the youth in churches.

Singing praise calls for vigor, courage and not exhibiting lethargy. Our singing should, in a way, be a rehearsal for the music awaiting us as we serve God in the New Earth (Rev. 22:3). Just as praising God is higher than singing, from another dimension, singing can be seen as a form of prayer. It is not always obvious, but many songs/hymns that we sing are prayers. For example, hymn no. 4 in the Keswick Hymn Book – *God Be Merciful Unto Us* – is sheer prayer. The first verse invokes God's mercy, the second verse calls upon God's good deeds to be known (acknowledged) throughout the world, while the third and fourth verses call upon God's name to be known among the nations and that God may reign among the nations respectively. The last three verses call upon all people to praise God; bless God for plentiful harvest and call upon God's blessings to all people world-wide, so that all may obey God. In various hymn books, there are choruses and hymns that are purely prayer in nature. *Take My Life and Let It Be*, also in Keswick Hymn Book, no. 15 is a pure prayer hymn in its composition. In Ephesians chapter 5 and Colossians chapter 3, believers are called upon to sing psalms. It is common knowledge that music governs human emotions, whether in sadness as in mourning, or on merry occasions such as weddings or birthday parties, whereby either music soothes the soul and or causes

merriment. Finally, because of the deep connection between singing and joy, singing is a natural (or biblical) way of giving thanks (ps. 5:11, 63:7; 65:13; 67:4; 71:23; 84:2; 92:4; 98:8 and 149:5)

CHAPTER 1

African-Hebrew Music Tradition (Heritage)

Music, song and dance has been characteristic of human spirit and interaction from primeval times. Therefore, one can safely state that human beings have been singing from ancient times. In Africa, and more so in Kenya, folk music is characterized by the very essence of life in the community. According to John Mbiti, religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible to always isolate it.⁷ Folk songs that are sang when there is new life (birth songs), lullabies, circumcision and general initiation songs, courtship and marriage songs are infused with religious connotation. For example, among the Agĩkũyũ people, there were songs to amuse the newly born child, during and after birth.⁸ During initiation (circumcision), songs commensurate with the occasion were performed with active dancing. There were songs sang when working in the field, when canoeing in rivers and lakes, and other occasions, such as when praying for rain or for the end of

⁷ John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (Heinman, London. Ibadan, Nairobi, 1970),

⁸ Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, (Secker and Walburg, London, 1959),

calamities like floods.⁹ The style and content of the songs vary according to the group that is singing. For instance, children's songs contain messages made up of repetitive sentences.¹⁰

Music within Sub-Sahara Africa shares common heritage, sometimes, even with music from other regions. For example, Kenyan music shares common traits with music with diverse people such as the Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, some North Americans and Scots in the area of pentatonic, the five-note-scale.¹¹ It is said that music with five scales is easy to listen. This is why the Church has depended so much on it, as it is common in many cultures. However, in Kenya, Bantu music from the coast has melodies not common with other Bantu communities. It is Arabic-Swahili music that has a range of notes beyond the pentatonic scale.

Songs and dances are the hallmark of music among the African peoples. Even in death, musical instruments are played, accompanied with dance. Among the Abaluyia community in Kenya, neighbors bring beer and food, some play instruments, others sing funeral dirges and dance.¹² Manifestation of traditional rites in a Christian burial ceremony leaves some believers agape

⁹ *Integrated English Course for Secondary Schools*, Students' book for Kenya Institute of Education, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Nairobi Kenya, 1989.

¹⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Mbiti, *African Traditional Religions and Philosophy*, 153.

when they see them. Another manifestation of music and dance is well illustrated where a widow is accompanied to the river where she and relatives smear their faces with mud as a sign of mourning. On the way home, the party sings, jumps up, dances brandishing spears, clubs and sticks, shields and utters still cries.¹³ The spirit of singing and dancing cannot be suppressed even in the church worship. It is, therefore, not surprising in Western Kenya that African Initiated Churches abound among the Luo and the Abaluyia communities. Dance as we know consists of rhythmic movements of legs, head, and shoulders, and sometimes hips. One needs to appreciate body movement as they observe a Maasai jump high; followed by rhythmic movement of legs shoulders and glottal sounding. The Kamba and their neighbors to the north, the Mbeere people, excel in drumming and swinging rhythmically from one angle to the other. This musicking (sic) could easily be adopted in praise and worship as there is no contradiction with Scripture.

A scan of Hebrew musicology reveals interesting features, similar to the Sub-Saharan music and dancing. Hebrew music had close association with culture of the Near East. In Genesis 4:21, we see Jubal associated with all who played the harp and the organ. The family members were pastoralists. Just as music was important to herders in traditional Africa, so it was in Hebrew culture. There is indication that music was used in many

¹³ Ibid.

occasions in Hebrew life including the occasions when the aged blessed their children. In Genesis chapter 31, verse 27, had Jacob not stolen blessings from Esau, he would have celebrated the bestowment of blessings in a farewell feast with singing and music accompanied by tambourines and harps. Music was accompanied by dance during joyous occasions. There are many scriptural references in the Old Testament such as Exodus 32:19, depicting this. Unfortunately, the joy in this occasion was frivolous as they were dancing to the idol, a calf they had made.

In cultures of the world, among all peoples, music is part and parcel of life. Just as a child learns the mother-tongue and later engages in conversation about matters pertaining to living such as reading, writing and later engages in human activities such as singing and dancing, music has its peculiarity. Eric Taylor states that, “people sang and played instruments long before ways of writing music down on paper were invented. Even today, nearly everyone can sing, though not everyone can ‘read’ music. Many people can also play instruments without being able to read a note of music; like some of the great jazz musicians, they play by ear.”¹⁴

Unlike in Europe where there are written signs representing musical sounds (notation), in many countries world-wide, East Africa included, music is sung free of

¹⁴ Eric Taylor, *The AB Guide to Music theory part 1*, (Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music Publishing Ltd, Norwich, England, 2002), vii.

notations. Other than choirs, congregations use hymn books that are referred to as “Combined Words Edition.” Where notation is written, the hymnbook/songbook is termed as “Music Edition” or “Harmony Edition.”

It is worth noting that after the people of Israel were rescued from Egypt, population re-migration continued. The Bible has passages warning the Jews not to be lured by the pumpkins or watermelons they were used to eating in Egypt. Even after the Exile in Babylon not all Jews were exiled. When Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem he faced opposition from the likes of Sanballat and Tobias who teamed up with Arabs, Ammonites and Ashodites (Nehemiah 4:7-8). It should be borne in mind that when the northern ten tribes of Israel were assimilated through intermarriages some Jewish cultural traits, music included, were not wiped out. Assimilation as it were, infuses into the cultural traits of the stronger assimilator. It is only a fusion of cultural values that forms a new outlook.

As in African culture, music was also part and parcel of Hebrew religious cultural and social life. The book of Lamentations is a dirge, funeral song, for the destruction of Jerusalem, the great capital city of the Jews. In 2 Samuel 1:18-27, David laments over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. Saul had troubled David immensely but when he died, David composed a song in memory of Saul and his son Jonathan:

How beloved and gracious were Saul and Jonathan!

They were swifter than eagles stronger than lions

Oh how the mighty heroes have fallen in battle
Jonathan lies dead in the hills

How I weep for you, my brother Jonathan

Oh how much I loved you!

As your love for me was deep, deeper than the love
of women (1 Samuel 1:23-27)

In the New Testament we see that the professional funeral mourners of the Old Testament persisted among the Hebrews. When Jesus arrived at the home Jairus, he saw flute players and noisy crowd and ordered them to give way saying that the girl was not dead and raised her to life.

Among the African people, there has been a very thin line between rhythm, the sacred and the temporal songs. For example, during the planting and harvest seasons, songs would be sung in honor of God. For further illustration, during the weeding stage among the Agĩkũyũ people, neighbors would pull together and work in a manner such that weeds would not choke the young crops. This is clear from *Facing Mount Kenya*:

During this time people join in a collective weeding four or five persons or more form a group for team-work, they cultivate one man's field, and so on, until they clear weeds from all their

fields...the friends meet in the garden or field early in the morning and start to work enthusiastically, singing cultivation songs. Sometimes they would challenge cultivators in the next field and compete with them in work and songs.¹⁵

About midday when the sun became unbearable, the work would have been done. At this juncture, they would retire and start feasting joyously for having completed the work, having successfully helped their friends.¹⁶ Harvesting period was a period of numerous dances and songs, as well as performance of various ceremonies especially if good harvest was expected.¹⁷ Looking at such episodes, one appreciates the African communalism (not communism), a value which African Christians should uphold and “export.” Alternatively as this value attracts brothers and sisters in the wider universal church, it should be imported from across the oceans and seas. This is part of living a worshipful life on a universal scale. What is noble from other cultures, and is scripturally tested should carry universal application.

Among the Hebrews, there is no clear evidence of use of instruments in Temple worship but, in the book of Psalms we infer some notions of use of instruments. Psalms 13, 20, 21, 22 and 38, according to the New Bible

¹⁵ Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, 59.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Dictionary, were intended to be sung antiphonally (sung or chanted in response) either by two choirs or by the congregation (Psalms 136, 118:1-4).¹⁸ From Ezra 2:65, after release from captivity, we learn that choirs were formed of an equal number of male and the other of female voices.

Whether they chanted the psalms or sang the texts, there is no evidence to confirm the mode. There is also no evidence of hiring professional women dancers in feasts as recorded in Mark 6:21-22. This is the infamous occasion when Herodias daughter danced for the King and the tragic beheading of John the Baptist. When the prodigal son returned (Luke 15), there was a lot of dancing and merriment that included the slaughter of a fattened calf.

In the new Bible dictionary, there are two figs. 62 and 63 depicting Egyptian dancers.¹⁹ The first one is dancing scenes of the Old Kingdom from Giza with two men, one holding the right hand with their right and left foot up in the air, while behind them is a lady dancer raising her two palms in an apparent cheer-up mode. Behind the other dancer is a lady dancer with a flowing attire and the hair adorned in a flowing tussle tied with a round ball. She has her right leg raised to the level of the dancer's head, and the hair tussle goes down halfway to the floor. The other figure has two lady dancers leaning backwards and held to balance by the two men in a tangle.

¹⁸ New Bible Dictionary, 852.

¹⁹ Ibid., 290-291.

There are also two women well adorned working out a dual dance without holding each other.

One might wonder why write about Egyptian dancers while the intended direction is Hebrew singing and dancing. Ancient culture in the Near East was intrinsically woven through conquests and submission. It is to be remembered that when Moses descended from the mountain of God with the Decalogue, he found people dancing around the calf (idol) they had made. In Ecclesiastes 3:4, it is notable that there is a time to cry and a time to laugh as well as a time grieve, and a time to dance. This is just one aspect of Solomon's general observations about a time for everything (Ecclesiastes 3). As in the African traditions, behind these dances, there was some religious significance.²⁰ There were professional dancers who performed especially in times of triumph from battle. Upon crossing the Red Sea (sea of Reeds), Miriam, Moses' sister, led women in song and dance playing tambourine (Ex 15:20). Another victorious singing after military success is recorded in Judges 21: 19-23 where young men were to lay wait amidst vine yards to catch young women during their dances and marry them. Men are not depicted in the Bible as good dancers, with the main occasion where men are seen singing and dancing being when David danced with all his might. He was seen by all the people of Israel with shouts of joy and blowing of ram's horns (2nd Sam. 6:14-15).

²⁰ Ibid. 289.

Since the Bible states that Christians are the New Israel, a holy people and a holy priesthood, music should play an important part in Christian worship and celebration. Just as it was an expression of love and thanksgiving, Christians are duty-bound to hold on the practice. Just as it was a creative way to pass down oral traditions through lullabies, Christians should emulate music as a vital force to pass God's works down history path. The song of Moses and Miriam after crossing the Red Sea is a classic example. It was a festive epic poem celebrating God's victory that enabled people to lift their eyes and mind to the Lord, their deliverer. After being provided with water Israel sang for God (Num. 21:17). Just before entry into the Promised Land, there was thanksgiving and praise (Deut. 32:1-43). Deborah and Barak's song of praise and thanksgiving to God for Israel's victory over King Jabin's army at Mount Tabor is yet another example available to Christians to emulate (Judg. 5:2-31).

Hannah, Samuel's mother prayer of praise (1 Sam. 2:1 ff) and Zachariah John's father prayer are epitomes of thanksgiving (Luke 1:67-79). Upon completion of the Temple's foundation, there was resounding song of praise (Ezra 3:11). Mary's song of praise at the conception of Jesus is yet another piece of scripture with an awesome sample of things we should praise God for. Isaiah's prophetic song about how the redeemed will sing in the New Jerusalem finds fulfilment in the Revelation of John (Rev. 5:9-10; 14:3; 15:3-4). Last but not least, is Song of

Songs—Solomon’s song of love celebrating the union of husband and wife. In praise and worship of God, let it be acknowledged that in married life romance is biblically given prominence, in youthful as well as in old age. In old age the fireworks of physical passion may not be so prominent, but there is some obscure quiet but equally critical process of bonding that occurs with every tender touch and embrace.²¹ In old age reaching out in words, glances and caresses day in, day out can produce a relationship of priceless quality.²²

Whatever one does in worshipful living, it ought to give glory to God as much as it embraces holy or sanctified benefits to the Christian or the individual. The union between husband and wife is so sacred that the Church is referred to as the Bride of Christ/Bride of the Messiah. In the Old Testament, running after other gods is referred to as adultery. In the Song of Songs, the theme is sex and its importance when confined and expressed between a man and a woman who have committed their life together in marriage. Sex is to be enjoyed in mutual pleasure, and not mere selfish enjoyment. Apostle Paul has a wide range of instructions that touch on sexual control, with admonition on generosity on sexual relations and sexual needs between husband and wife. Sex-deprivation from each other is discouraged. However, the couple should ensure they have time for God!

²¹ [Http://www.crosswalk.com/what young love should know about old love.](http://www.crosswalk.com/what-young-love-should-know-about-old-love)

²² Ibid.

(1Corinthians7:1-6). Paul only gives counsel and not command. Though not married, God had given him insight to understand the complexity of human body, the psychology and different situations such as health and other situations such as career demands that might inevitably make a couple live as absent husband or wife. Even while living away from each other “the author of letter to the Hebrews” curtly warns that, “let marriage be honored among all and the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the immoral and adulterous (Hebrews 13:4). The Bible is emphatic on sex sin as abominable, since one sins against one’s own body. It destroys family life ruthlessly. What Solomon may be saying on the love song is explicitly supported by Paul, although he lived a celibate life.

Before the next chapter on Church Hymnody, it is important to briefly present some technical hints that constitute the core of western music and other musicologists particularly the African music. In the mainline churches we largely use translated music from western churches using European tunes. Even when these hymns are translated into local languages, the European tunes and notations are used. However, it is clear that western music is distinct in itself. What distinguishes Western music more than anything else from other musical traditions is that, it is made up of mixtures of simultaneous sounds of different notch (harmony) often combined in very complex ways. This simultaneous combination of tones, especially when blended into

chords, is pleasing to the ear.²³ This has however been achieved at a price. In comparison with other musical cultures, e.g. India, Western music is limited in rhythmic and melodic subtlety.²⁴

This means that Western music presents poorly the expected strong regular repeated pattern of sound or movements. This melody, especially the main tune in a song, is limited in quality. Melodic subtleties, those small but important details in enhancing tune (melody or pitch), in a song get restricted.

On the other hand, Arab-Swahili music is a mixture of Indian and African influences. It is known as *taarab*. It uses Middle-Eastern Indian and African drums, plus a wide range of stringed instruments to produce a rhythm that is syncopated and soothing. Syncopating produces beats that are unaccented hence, the soothing melody.²⁵ In contrast to heptatonic (seven notes-do-re-me-fa-sol-la-ti). Pentatonic scale has five notes per octave (the interval encompassed by such notes). If the Arab-Swahili population embraced Christian faith, *taarab* music would be at home with western Christian music that uses stringed instruments such as the violin. African music heritage yearns for incorporation into church music other than just adopting the western tunes. It has been proven possible to incorporate African ways of singing

²³ Webster's Dictionary of English language,

²⁴ Eric Tylor, *The AB Guide to music Theory Part 1*, (Associated Board of Royal School of Music, 1989), 57.

²⁵ w.w.w.pbs.org/wneAfrican.swahili/swahilimusic-lo.html.

and praising using African tunes, rhythms and gestures. This is mostly notable in the African Initiated Churches. For example, the song *What A Friend We Have In Jesus*, when sang in vernacular (Kikuyu language), adopts a tune that enables singers to sing in a manner whereby the tunes are punctuated with breaks where pairs move around greeting each other with actions of high-five. The thunderous clapping and hops create a joyous praise-mood!

CHAPTER 2

Church Hymnody – The Singing and Composition of Hymns

The main reason for delving into the music history of the Hebrews and some African people is simply because history and the present cannot be detached. Past events influence the present events. Likewise, today's happenings will influence tomorrow's ways of doing things. Church music in praise of God would be greatly enhanced if we stood on the shoulders of our famous composers of Hymns such as Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Charles Wesley was a great churchman. In the book, *Great Church Men, Number 8, Charles Wesley*, written by Frank Colquhoun asserts that "few will question Wesley's right to be regarded as the Prince of English hymn writers." In terms of numbers, leave alone the theological depth, Wesley published 4,480 hymns and left in manuscript form of not less than 2,840 others. In total he composed not less than 7,320 hymns. Amazing! Right?

A general glance at major church hymn books will attest to the fact that the 18th and 19th centuries were an epic of church hymn writing. In the Church Hymnody, third edition, composers were men and women who lived in the second half of the eighteenth century, nineteenth century and up to the first half of the 20th century. Earlier

hymns composed by theologians such as Thomas Aquinas (1227-74), Isaac Watts (1674-1748) are an exception.

The *Hymnal* was authorized by General Convention in 1937 by the Episcopal Church, U.S.A. The commission was to look at the hymnals of 1892 and of 1916. They looked at viewpoints of reality, religious feelings, literally worth and usefulness. Hymns suitable for children and hymns which voice social aspirations of the day were included.²⁶ Like other hymn books for congregational use, the hymns are arranged as per Christian year—Advent, Lent, Easter, Ascension, Saints and Holy days, Thanksgiving and Holy Communion. Hymns for children and general hymns composed the bulk of 800 hymns contained therein. Authorship of the hymns therein dates from mid-18th century. Majority of the hymns were composed in the 19th century and early 20th century.

Junior Praise, compiled by Phil Burt, Peter Harrobin and Greg Leavers, published by Marshall Pickering, Great Britain 1992 has 503 songs. Like any hymn Book worth its salt, it has categories that include Advent, Ascension, Christmas, Easter and Holy week, Harvest, Lent, Palm Sunday, Pentecost God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, followed by songs on Trinity. The general category covers Bible and Scripture songs such as, *The Best Book To Read Is The Bible* and *I Will Make You Fishers Of Men*. Then follows Bible story

²⁶ The Hymnal, *The Church Hymnal Corporation*, (New York), p iii-iv.

songs such as, *A Boy Gave To Jesus Five Loaves And Two Fish*, *Mister Noah Built An Ark*, etc. There are about four songs on blessings and doxology. The other categories deal with Christian living, the Church, commitment (dedication) such as, *Blessed Assurance* and *I Have Decided To Follow Jesus*, and so on. Confession takes space for seven hymns/songs. Friends and the family encompass fourteen songs such as, *A Naggy Mum* and *Bind Us Together Lord And Brothers And Sisters*.

The other classifications of songs, hymns or choruses cover God in creation, guidance, praise and worship (149 out of 503 songs in the book), prayer and songs about prayer, rounds and party songs (songs for several singers each of whom sings the same melody starting at a different time and songs with parts for several voices, usually without accompaniment respectively). More in this classification are the categories that include service and giving, songs suitable for the very young, spirituals, times of sadness and songs for work and play.

The theme of this book is praise and worship of God. The author has taken great efforts to see what Christian hymnody offers to the congregations. A broad spectrum on how the hymns are stratified is an effort to give appropriate adoration to God; for everything comes from Him and exists by His power and is intended for His glory is outlined. All glory to Him forever! Amen (Rom. 11:36). Jude's message which focuses on apostasy calls for staunch defense of Christian truth and because He is supreme and has no equal, he inked prayer of praise thus:

Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into His glorious presence without a single fault. All glory to Him who alone is God, our savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power and authority are His before all time, and in the present and beyond all time! Amen (NLT)

There are thirty-three hymn books from which the Kikuyu Hymn Book has drawn worship hymns, songs and choruses used in the Kikuyu worship services (cf. Appendix 1). It would not be within the scope of this book to look at how hymns/songs are categorized. A few examples have been analyzed above in regard to the Hymnal. The writer feels compelled to analyze how the hymn book has classified the songs in the hymn book as the songs have been borrowed from the worldwide Church hymn books and adopted for worship services in Kikuyuland. Hymn books among other communities bear similar semblance as they are translations of the western music.

The Kikuyu Hymn Book was first published in 1915, with its fourth edition being published by S. P. C. K in 1935. The fifth edition was completely revised, enlarged and published by Uzima Press in 2003. Like all major hymn books from where most hymns are borrowed and translated into the Kikuyu language. This edition was

entrusted to a joint committee of the P.C.E.A. church, and AIC. This hymn book contains 610 praise hymns, songs and choruses. The Hymn books from where hymns are compiled from are indicated. For example, *Andũ Othe a Gũkũ Thĩ (All People That On Earth Do Dwell)* is indicated that tune is long meter (LM) and is from GB (Golden Bells) no. 10). Scriptural base for each hymn is also indicated. Praise and worship of God is serious business in the Universal Church of Christ. The Kikuyu Hymn Book (*Nyĩmbo cia Kũinĩra Ngai*) has hymns that cover the whole spectrum of Christian witness as found in Scripture. There are thirteen hymn categories.

The first batch deals with approach to God, that is doxological that includes praise, confessional lyrics, prayer concerning discernment and those concerned with holy word of God. Next in line are hymns regarding good news and God's mighty works and salvation in Jesus Christ. Within the category one can also find hymns related to the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. This is followed by music dealing with reception of the word, including holding firmly to the faith, mission and mission work, stewardship and Christian service, Christian journey and the fighting involved, witness and inviting people to receive the Good News and the victory of the saints.

Sacramental hymns include children and adult baptism and the Holy Communion lyrics. There also hymns for miscellaneous Church ceremonies such as the holy matrimony, dedication of the clergy and deacons, Christian burials and everlasting life and dedication of

church property and items such as pianos and Holy Communion vessels.

There are hymns for New Year and other important days including planting and harvesting seasons. There are also hymns for closing service. There are sacred songs suitable for Evening prayer and worship. The other categories include musical lyrics that affirm faith and Christian service, miscellaneous hymns concerning teachings from the Bible. There is a section on songs suitable for children and various choruses. There are also hymns suitable for benediction, praise of God and closing ceremonies (Doxology, Litanias, Benediction and vespers (evensong, matins). Finally, there are five last hymns nos. 604 to 610 classified as *some other ancient hymns*. These are *Jubilate Deo*, *Benedicite*, *Benedictus*, *Magnificat* *Te Deum Laudamus*, *Nunc Dimittis* and *Venite Exultemus* which are popular within the Anglican Community under Church Province of Kenya (C.P.K).

CHAPTER 3

Music as a Christian Evangelizing Tool

After the general survey on Christian Hymnody, we now look at Colquhoun's assessment on Wesley's contribution to Christian music and Christian witness. In his assessment, Colquhoun has varied assessment of Wesley's hymns/songs. Today's gospel music composers need to borrow leaf from the following comments;

Some were very short consisting of only four lines each, it is equally true that others were of unusual length extending to twenty or thirty verses. Some of the hymns which are best known to us today are but a number of verses selected from much longer poems. This is true, for instance, of two magnificent hymns—*soldiers of Christ arise* (Church Hymnal 441 Keswick Hymn Book 40 and *O for a thousand tongues* to sing (The Hymnal 325).²⁷

Before making further allusions to the Great European hymn composer, it may be useful to give a summary of the African Christian contribution to the universal Church of Christ. The reason for this is to show

²⁷ Colquhoun, *Great Churchmen*, Number Eight, 3-4.

that historically, from historic point of view, Christianity in Africa is not a Western religion. The Biblical story is webbed into Africa, including the fact that the Hebrews lived in Africa for 430 years. Previously, one of their ancestors Abraham, sojourned in Africa (Egypt) to escape famine. Jesus, as an infant sought refuge in Egypt, as Mary and Joseph escaped from Herod's infanticide. In its infancy, proclamation of the Gospel found root in the Mediterranean Africa, as much as it found proper ground in Jerusalem and Cappadocia, before it spread to Rome and the rest of Europe. It is the Euro-American cultural trappings that create the notion that Christianity is a Western religion.

Biblically speaking, the core of Gospel is the Good News that Jesus became truly human as He fully retained His deity, died on the cross for humanity's atonement. He rose on the third day and ascended into Heaven. He is coming again at the end of time. The New Earth and Heaven will be revealed. When all those who will have embraced salvation by faith, through His Grace shall be gathered in Heaven. However, before His coming, we are to live in this world but not be of the world. This salvation; this restoration, through sanctification finds all human beings in their cultural setting. Praise and worship of God as revealed in the Bible does not demand that one is uprooted from their culture. At 300 AD just before Emperor Constantine declared Christianity a state religion after the Great persecutions, theological environment was

much richer in Africa than elsewhere. It is from Africa that European Christian centers came into being.

In his book, *How Africa shaped the Christian mind: Rediscovering the African seedbed of Western Christianity*, Thomas C. Oden, affirms that Africa has played a decisive role in the formation of Christian culture from its infancy.²⁸ It is further stated that some of the most decisive intellectual achievements of Christianity were explored and understood in Africa before they were in Europe via Rome. Athanasius (298-373) (remembered Athanasius Creed) was a deacon when he accompanied the bishop of Alexandria to the Council of Nicaea in 325 (Nicæan Creed lives with us).²⁹ Athanasius fought Arianism to the hilt. Arius held that Christ had no humanity in Him and that he was a demi-god. So among his writings, *Incarnation of the Word* stands out as it is central in Christian belief.³⁰

For 2000 years, the Coptic Church of Egypt and in Upper Nile continues to declare that Jesus is Lord, God the creator and that the Holy Spirit works to reveal the purpose of God through the written word. It will be recalled that many Christians were martyred due to their allegiance to the lordship of Jesus Christ instead of

²⁸ Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa shaped the Christian mind: Rediscovering the seedbed of Western Christianity*, IUP (Books, Downets Grove, Imprint of Versity Press), back cover page.

²⁹ F. B. Welbourn, *East African Christian*, (London, Ibadan, Nairobi, Accra, Oxford University Press, 1965), 44.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

affirming that the emperor was Lord! All Christians, Protestants, Catholics and Pentecostals have to join the Coptics in Great Confessions. Thomas Oden reminds us that: The Coptic calendar commences with “the Era of the martyrs,” which according to Coptic calculations is August 29, 284, the beginning of the Diocletian era of persecution in Africa. That is the day one of Egyptian Christianity.³¹

Let it not be hidden from our eyes and minds that *Desert Fathers and Mothers* (as in Monasticism – priests and nuns), who in early Church history pervaded church life in Palestine, Syria, Cappadocia, France and Ireland copied St. Anthony, that young man who sold his father’s inheritance (land) left his sister under the care of Church with part of the proceeds, and escaped to the deserts of Egypt in pursuit of holy life in monastic living.³²

Later, Carthage and Alexandria became centers of Christian thought (Theology). Brilliant theologians such as Clement of Alexandria, St. Augustine (and his mother Monica), St. Athanasius (alluded to above) Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Lactantius and Tertullian left indelible marks in early Church legacy. They must have composed songs which were sung in low tones in house-churches. In those days persecution forced people to worship undercover due to the massive persecutions.³³

³¹ Oden, *How Africa shaped the Christian mind*, 123-124.

³² *Ibid.*, back page.

³³ *Ibid.*

When we recite Athanasius creed, it is worth noting that he was son of Africa. The writings of Tertullian especially concerning love and marriage from biblical perspective are a brilliant theological treatise which cannot be challenged easily by today's theologians. Teaching on the Lord's Prayer and what salvation entails is amazing from the available original sources.

In brief, African martyrs such as St. Felicitas, Perpetua and St. Cyprian of Carthage are but just a few epitome of Christian heroes of faith in the African context. The martyrdom of Mark in Alexandria, the martyrdom of seven men and seven women of Scilli had taken place before that of Felicitas, Perpetua and Cyprian.³⁴ There is no known record of how they praised and sang their praise songs. One can only deduce that it was full of faith and emotions just as the apostles sang while in prison (Peter and John). These African Christians must have borrowed cue from Jesus' disciples.

With the Muslim invasion of Mediterranean Africa, in Egypt and the Sudan, buried is lot of Christian history, monasteries that lie in the sands of Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and other unidentified locations in North Africa. A day might dawn despite the political tumult in the region, when through inter-faith understanding that funds will be available to unearth the rich Christian history in church history up to about 700 AD (C.E).

³⁴ Ibid. 122-123

It is noteworthy that between 42 and 692 C. E, for 660 years of African Christianity before Arab conquest must have been expressed in the African mode.³⁵ Latin was the official language of the Church. There was no vernacular literature. Although Phoenician might have been used in sermons, the Berber language was never heard in Church (Welbourn, East African Christian).

It has been explained that sure enough, the translated hymns carry all the theological meat as found in the Bible. The crux of the matter is whether hymns will continue to be sung in imported tunes or it will be necessary to adopt African tunes and instruments. It would be appropriate to sing and add some dancing and jumping as the Bible puts no caveat to it as earlier stated.³⁶ (See biblical texts 2 Sam: 6:14, Ps. 149:3, 150:4). Mbiti also suggests that portions of scripture can also be chanted as in many churches in Ghana. Musical sounds should prove useful if familiar tone is adopted.

African Christian voices from Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central and Southern Africa have been crying for recognition of a peoples' ways of life (culture), ethos and religious outlook as the Gospel message is received. Below is a summative statement vindicating the need to consider the relevance of the Gospel to different

³⁵ Ibid. 125

³⁶ C. G. Baeta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa* (International African Institute, London, Oxford University Press, 1968), 335.

peoples, different ages, and at a specific level even putting into account the gender aspects:

Christianity is a religion intended for, and is suitable for every race and tribe of people on the face of the globe. Acceptance of it was never intended by its founder to denationalize any people and it's indeed its glory that every race of people may profess and practice it and imprint upon it, its own native characteristics, giving it a peculiar type among themselves without it losing anything of its virtue. And why should there not be an African Christianity as there has been European and Asiatic Christianity.³⁷

Music is a good tool in proclamation of the Gospel. Music attracts people. In evangelism music used should not ignore African traditional tunes. Singing in familiar tunes, tempo and style draws even passersby if there is a crusade outdoors. A majority of the hymns sang in mission established churches are direct translations of Euro-American hymn books but local musicians should introduce African beats to them. Looking at the Kikuyu Hymn book, credit should be accorded to those who translated with great accuracy, the European (English)

³⁷ Mark Shaw, *Kingdom of God in Africa: A Short History of African Christianity*, now life literature, Sri Lanka, 2006, 257-258, in Sanneh, Lamin, *Translating the message*, "The missionary impact, on culture Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993),144.

words into African (Kikuyu) vocabulary. However, African music differs in stress or intonation from the European musicology. For instance the hymn—*O Lord God When in Awesome Wonder* (hymn no. 73) in the *Mission Praise Hymn Book* when sang in English sounds quite inspiring. The sort of slow-beat motion is quite moving. When sang in the Agĩkũyũ language, the tone and pitch as is in the English Songbook becomes drudgery and listless. It poses a challenge because in African music, the leader has much freedom in directing any piece of music. One is persuaded in great measure to agree with F. B. Welbourn when he writes that: “In traditional singing, a leader has great freedom to alter his solo parts from occasion to occasion. The rhythm of music springs out of natural rhythm of words in language where intonation is also important to the meaning, music flows also the natural way.”³⁸

Welbourn has more on this that, in Western music, it is possible to take music from one set of words and fit it to another as is common in western hymn-books.³⁹ However, it is not so in African music. In this case, African words cannot be forced into European verse-meters. Music naturally produced by African musicians using native languages yields spontaneous rejoicing while singing.⁴⁰

³⁸ F. B. Welbourn, *East African Christian*, (London, Ibadan, Nairobi, Accra, Oxford University Press, 1965), 150.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

It is because of such technicality that what a European churchman/woman may find a piece of music inspiring while the African Christian may not be all that excited. Welbourn puts this clearly in the following manner, “the translation of European words into African words which will fit the original European tune makes what is really great deal of musical nonsense. African words need music which springs out of them directly, not music which is forced upon them from outside.”⁴¹

When the words are gotten from the Bible, the music produced by the locals is characterized by spontaneous rejoicing distinct from droning the words from a mission hymn-book.⁴² Droning denotes “a continuous low sound made by some musical instruments for example the bagpipers over which other notes are played or sung.”⁴³ When an African beat is involved in an African musical piece, vibrancy comes up. In some cases a drummer could be having as many as nine types of drums to choose from.⁴⁴ When music is thus locally produced, it is not a wonder that there is spontaneity in dancing and rejoicing. This is in contrast to singing lifelessly with the aim of dignity, a form of worn-out ritual, according to Welbourn.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary 6th Edition.*

⁴⁴ This was observed by the author on a concert staged by Kenya Boys Choir on Easter Sunday, March 27, 2016. They had a musical display at Galleria shopping Mall, Nairobi at Langata-Magadi Road junction.

There is now a paradigm shift in the way African Christians conduct preaching, praise and worship. African initiated churches made a break with mission churches early last century especially in Western Kenya notably *Legio Maria, Dini la Msambwa and Dini ya Roho*. *Akorino* sects in Central Kenya chose the African way of praising God in a vibrant manner using drums and clapping alongside *Kayabas* and rattle (*njingiri*).

In the early seventies new African churches among them the Deliverance Church, Bethel Church and Chrisco Fellowship emerged. Round music, dancing and shouts of Amen became the order of the day along with preaching and giving testimonies. Pentecostal churches such as the older Full Gospel Churches in Kenya, Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM) sprung up and got into the ecclesiastical scene. They adopted their own mode of worship-praise and worship with shorter hymns and choruses and took to modern drumming and modern guitars. Indeed, a mode of preaching and worship labelled as demonstrative worship and preaching emerged. The preachers found it easier to engage the congregation and abandoned the pulpit in order to move to and fro on the Church floor. The year 2000 onwards has seen a phenomenal growth of ministries such as Winners Chapel, House of Grace, Redeemed Gospel Church of God, Evangelistic Ministries led by husbands and wives all over the country especially in Nairobi and its satellite suburbs such as Ongata Rongai, Githûrai, Kangemi and Riruta Satellite. This very picture is replicated in many

urban centers in Kenya. The Roman Catholic Church is changing face especially in Uganda, where there is rise of Pentecostal Parochial, reason being that the Church fears losing members to the Pentecostal Churches' influence. Citing Mark 16:20, a bishop in a BBC broadcast (at 6:45 pm Monday, 23rd November, 2015 justified the move stating that the disciples went everywhere and preached and that the Lord worked through them, confirming what they said by many miraculous signs. In this regard the author agrees with the NLT comment on the verse (Mark 16:20) that:

Mark's gospel emphasizes power as well as servanthood. Jesus life turned the world upside down and continues to do so. The world sees power as a way to gain control over others. But, Jesus chose to serve others. He held children in his arms healed the sick, washed the disciples' feet and died for the sins of the world. Jesus followers today receive the same power to serve as believers; we are called upon to be servants of Christ as Christ served. So we have the same mandate.

The then impending Pope Francis visit to Uganda in four days at the time on Friday November 27, 2015 the charismatics hoped, would find favor with the supreme head of Roman Catholicism. In the protestant Churches such as the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, St.

Andrew's Church Nairobi healing and deliverance ministry has its position in the Church, albeit low-keyed. The author is a member and Church elder in the parochial. Deliverance ministry is led by non-clergy. Praise and worship of God is multi-faceted. Manifestation of Pentecostalism in the early Church was evident as early as AD 70. It was termed Montanism due to its founder by the name Montanus: "Montanus, a young convert to Christianity came on the scene in the region of Asia Minor in Phrygia. He started to prophesy and was joined by two prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla."⁴⁵

Their teaching was based on John 14:16 and John 16:12-13. Seeing that Christ's promise of *paraclete* (helper) as fulfilled; then John 16:12-13 was an open charter as the spirit having descended on them would guide disciples to all truth revealing the future to them; "visions, revelatory dreams, speaking in tongues, prophetic utterances of predicting and divine comfort and rebuke and other extra-ordinary religious experiences also abound amongst montanists."⁴⁶ Although modern Pentecostalism saw its rise at Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1901, modern Pentecostalism and charismatics stand on the shoulders of Montanists as their spiritual ancestors.⁴⁷ Sadly at a later stage, Montanists fell into a heresy known

⁴⁵ N. R Needham, *2000 years Christ power, Part one: The age of the Early Church Fathers* (Gates head, Great Britain, Rev. edition, Athenaeum Press Ltd 2002), 104 – 110.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 106

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

as Sabellianism which taught that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were not three distinct persons, but only one person acting in three different ways. This is a pitfall to be avoided by Pentecostal churches by all means. Systematic theology reveals that Jesus was fully God and fully man, yet one person. Gifts of the Holy Spirit need to be understood holistically. Charismization, that is, the appropriation of personal experience of the Pentecostal experience and the spiritual gifts as listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 need sound elucidation. How the various gifts can be manifested in praxis (1 Corinthians 12:28) points to the notion that Pentecostal and charismatic religiosity in Africa found in both classic and in neo-Pentecostalism must submit itself the ultimate gift – love (1 Corinthians 13).

Still on the changed phase of Christianity, there is need to look at examples outside East Africa. Sacred music is a powerful weapon of passing Gospel truth to the people in popular culture. For example, in Kenya majority of Christians are those who have only primary education and quite a number of them have gone halfway in the primary education cycle. Those who have gone through secondary education constitute relatively small portion of the population as completion rates are below the expected threshold.

Through musical sounds that sing in the mobile phones, as one waits to respond to a mobile phone call, gospel messages are impacted to the one who is receiving the call. The one receiving the call is able “to identify” the

“spirituality” of the one whom he/she is calling by the music lyrics installed in the phone played before the call is answered.

However, one has to put into account as to the reason why one has downloaded such a gospel tune. As the gospel was preached through the missionary endeavor, literacy levels were low or nonexistent. Through singing of hymns, the Bible messages were received. My mother though a lover of education—for she was keen to see that both her boys and girls were enrolled in school—did not know how to read or write. Yet in matters of Christian faith and life, I would not have claimed to have Christian spirituality anywhere close to hers. The songs she sang and the prayers she conducted before meals baffle me to this day. The same picture was similar in Europe when literacy levels were low. During Europe’s Reformation Era, creative reformers taught scripture through memorized verses and songs.⁴⁸ Jenkins continues and states that “protestant doctrines and biblical lessons that were formulated in songs and jingles soon echoed every country fair and market.”⁴⁹ Charles Wesley used a similar approach in his revival campaigns.

As a revival evangelist Wesley’s songs were at times stinging the audience. He never shied to directly

⁴⁸ Philip Jenkins, *The New Phases of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), 31.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

project the message point blank in the open air crusades. For example,

In his hymn “*Jesus Christ, The Savior Of All Men* – there is a verse beginning with sinners, believe the Gospel. In another hymn after magnifying the Grace of God in his own soul he would fling out an invitation with such lines as outcast of men to you I call, Harlots, and publicans and thieves. He came to the lost to seek and save.⁵⁰ Another stanza would run in this way:

Come, all ye Magdalen’s in lust
Ye raffians fell in murder old
Repent and live: despair and trust;
Jesus for you to death was sold
Though hell protest and earth repine,
He died for crimes like yours – and mine.

By his hymns, Charles Wesley preached the gospel in song and through this medium he instructed the masses in the essentials of Christian theology. He saw great teaching value of hymns as well as their evangelistic power.⁵¹ Martin Luther before him had seen the propagandist value of song in evangelism. It is worth

⁵⁰ Frank Colquhoun, *Great Churchmen*, Number Eight, Charles Wesley (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd, undated),9.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

noting that Wesley's hymns were directed to individual's call to salvation as well as correcting some heresies such as Unitarianism which was prevalent among English Presbyterians.⁵²

Wesley, therefore, composed hymns on Trinitarian doctrine exalting Godhead of the Lord Jesus. Some of his hymns challenged Quietism among a section of Moravians, who taught the doctrine that faith alone and doing nothing was enough. Just wait for God to act. This should be a wakeup call for gospel artists as they compose gospel music today. Indeed, some of their music deals with societal issues. All that remains is for them to yield and with reasonable price tag, and allowing their songs to be incorporated in Christian hymn books. Excessive royalties can easily deprive the Church what would amount to invaluable heritage!

High Christian culture in Kenya and Africa in general is minimal. In our churches, very few people have gone through theological institutions. Again, not many have even taken religious education in their secondary schooling. In many churches very few people take Theological Education by Extension (T.E.E). Theological culture remains the preserve of the clergy and those who have trained through T.E.E. So critical in the Church is the nature of music that has emerged in the praise and worship phenomenon, that it is gaining root in the

⁵² Unitarianism is a denomination which officially merged with universalists in 1961 that rejects doctrine of Trinity and deemphasizes tolerance of religious opinion.

mainline churches. The clergy and the educated lot in churches should consciously and deliberately embrace the demonstrative worship in song and dance in the popular Christian worship style. High culture in mainline churches was an import of Euro-American Christian outlook. Earlier in the book, it has been mentioned that Missionary Enterprise inevitably preached the Good News unmistakably carrying with it foreign cultural strappings. That is why hymns were translated into vernacular and used the musical notes as in the English hymns. Amazingly, those of us who worshipped in upcountry churches in the rural settings and could sing hymns in the Kikuyu language can easily sing songs in an English hymn book, even if one had not sung the hymn in English language before.

In Churches today, one finds that due to the great use of music, both the imported and the local compositions since the beginning of the last century, Christians across Africa have used local music traditions in praise and worship of God. It has already been mentioned that African Initiated Churches (independent churches) have taken the lead. In chapter one, no effort was spared to show that musical traditions in Africa penetrate to every stage in one's life cycle; and every season, during planting, cultivation, waiting for harvest and during harvesting. When the African Christians yearn for selfhood in the area of praise, just as in the other aspects of church life, it is no rebellion of any sort. No! It is merely obeying and going in line with our Master Jesus

Christ, as He came not to abolish the law but to perfect it. The religious heritage that God had bestowed to African peoples before the Gospel reached the Eastern part of Africa in the late 19th century and much earlier in Western hemisphere of the continent much earlier in the 18th and 19th centuries should enrich praise of God. Due to limitations in literacy and movement, cross-cultural behavior was not widespread except among neighboring communities. This is why some writers while presenting analytical perspective on engagement of Christianity with African concepts and way of life put it that, “the difficulty for Africa is of course that it never had a general high culture of its own.”⁵³

Here, there is haste to put it that from the aspect of music and dance in Sub-Sahara Africa, dance and merriment cut across all peoples. It is also most likely that the Berbers and other tribes shared musical flavor with the Southern sector of the continent before the Muslim conquest, which found Christian-infighting when the Donatists rebelled against imposition of Christian values from Rome across the Mediterranean. Donatists were a Christian group that broke from the Roman Catholics in 312 AD, whose leader was Donatus. They opposed state interference in church affairs through a peasant revolt. Even today, not one country, not even the United States can claim to have a high culture of its own. Gains has this to say to clarify this point:

⁵³ Baeta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa*, 129.

Several writers, particularly conservative ones, continue to criticize what is usually called “popular culture” cultural studies, in mostly humanistic academic discipline that had become popular since this book was originally published has spawned additional critique of popular culture, but it has also mounted some defenses. Without popular culture, cultural studies would lack academic turf it can call its own.⁵⁴

In the same way, a church that will miss the notion of demonstrative worship in the praise and worship at the beginning of worship service will be denying itself the very life-line of survival. Through frequent singing of hymns, through the association of texts with emotionally powerful music, Christians internalize biblical passages, stories and doctrines.⁵⁵ The High culture of the protestant clergy (Presbyterians included), do not only put emphasis on the Bible (the Word). The Bible and the hymnbook go hand in hand. Even more so, where popular culture or where majority of Christian folks are not so much biblically literate Christian faith, practice and worship is embodied as faith of the Bible and the hymnbook.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Herbert J. Gans, *Popular and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste*, (New York, Basic Book, 1999), 78.

⁵⁵ Jenkins, 31.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

The role of music in Christian living is so central, so cardinal, that in many churches the mainline congregations as well as in charismatic Churches make a distinction between the official head (moderator, vicar, bishop, or father-in-charge/senior pastor, etc.) and the music leader. In PCEA St. Andrew's Church in Nairobi, music is emerging as a powerful component of church life. There is a parish music director and a music director. Under these two leaders, there are sub-leaders in charge of various music groups in the church: the Church Choir, the New Song, Joyful Sounds, and the Praise Team. The Praise Team incorporates a few members who guide other sub-choirs, such as the Fishers, a group of youthful teen worshippers who hold their services at 11:00 am on Sundays. This service is distinct from the first service, which is composed mainly of young worshippers (ages 18-35) and young families.

There was a youth director, a well-trained theologian and former banker, who had studied theology at the double master's level. In recent times, youthful praise teams are being incorporated into the praise and worship segment of Sunday worship services during the 9:00 am and 11:00 am services in the main sanctuary. This is in addition to their main role in the first service at 8:00 am and in their base at the 11:00 am service.

All in all, whether the composition is a hymn or a chorus, hymns and choruses are based on the Bible. It is fascinating how a composer turns to the Bible (OT) and composes a hymn that connects Old Testament prophecies

to the New Testament in typology. There are many examples, but the two samples below should suffice illustratively:

From the text of Psalm 67, the great hymn "*God Be Merciful to Us*," no. 4 in the Keswick Hymn Book (KHB), is such an inspiring piece when sung in Kikuyu. In the New Living Translation, the theme of the psalm is that joy comes from spreading news about God around the world. There is a connection between the psalm and Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission). Every verse in the psalm links God's ways, God's praise, joyful singing and justice, universal praise, yields and harvest, and the fear of God to all people that dwell on earth, culminating in a plea for mercy, seeking God's face, and receiving favor for all mankind. Each of the seven verses has a stanza in the Kikuyu Hymn Book no. 254 (2003 edition) "*Ūtūigũire tha Ngai*." It is such an inspiring prayer, especially when sung with somber drumming, as has been the case in many rural churches in Central Kenya, the Kikuyuland.

Another hymn that draws its message from the Old Testament and connects with Christ is Hymn no. 451 in the Kikuyu Hymn Book, "*Ni Ngwenda Thayũ Ngoroinĩ Yakwa*" (literally, "*I Need Peace in My Heart*"). It is Hymn no. 6 in the Hymnal for the Church of God, titled "*O for the Peace that Floweth*." The hymn draws inspiration from Isaiah 48:17-18. From these two verses, the composer was inspired by the imagery of peace flowing like a gentle river and righteousness rolling over

you like waves in the sea. This inspiration resulted in five stanzas with a very rich Gospel message.

Stanza one seeks God's peace to flow into the singer's heart gently, to live joyously to life's end. The second stanza warns that the time is ripe to realize that life is not easy in this world and that life is short, hence the need to work hand in hand with the Lord. Stanza three declares that this is the moment to quench life's thirst and that the water of life is given by Jesus (echoing the words of Jesus at the well with the Samaritan woman). The last line affirms that when we reach the wonderful life, that water will be ever-present.

The next stanza warns that time is short before we come face to face with the Lord, where we shall face sorrow no more after He takes us to His heavenly dwelling. The final stanza, number five, implores the faithful Christians to radiate godly light because many people are in darkness. Indeed, the Lord is coming soon to meet all His people.

It's important to note that most of the hymns draw their substance from the New Testament. As we sing, we are reinforcing the word in our hearts and minds, and expressing it through our voices. Where there is no inhibition, through body language such as dance, there should be evidence of inward joy and inward purity.

As a personal testimony, the author enjoys singing in vernacular, whether in private praise and quiet time or in fellowship with familiar brethren. I feel my heart, the seat of holy emotions and holy affections, is better wired

when I sing the same hymn in Kikuyu rather than in English. The lines draw richer meaning to realities in my Christian walk. On the other hand, in corporate worship, there is no devaluation of devotional substance. As Christians, we are called to belong to the body of Christ. Although the relationship to Christ carries a personal dimension, an individual believer cannot live in isolation (1 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:21-22, 3:6, 4:16; Colossians 2:19; and 1 Thessalonians 4:17).

For Christians who cling to the hymns-only approach to praise, let it not be seen as an anomaly. Throughout the slightly more than two thousand years of Church life, different gospel champions have had such inclinations. For example, John Calvin was so much for Christians singing Psalms that his contemporaries mistook his views on Christian music, which they labeled as “exclusively psalmonaly.”⁵⁷ The Reformed Church in Geneva agreed with the early church fathers who opposed musical instruments and sang Psalms without accompaniment.

⁵⁷ Needam, 229.

CHAPTER 4

Preaching a Key Component/Enabler of Worshipful Living

The value of music sung with holy vigor, incorporating indigenous tunes, tempo, and rhythm, is invaluable in furthering demonstrative preaching. When we preach on one hand, and listen to the word of God on the other, we give due honor to God. We show even more honor and adoration when we not only listen but also put into action what is preached to us. James is explicit on this:

So get rid of all filth and evil in your lives and humbly accept the word God has planted in your heart, for it has power to save your soul. But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise you are only fooling yourselves (James 1:21-23).

The legacy of pulpit preaching is finding its challenge in modern Church life. In the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and other mainline churches, Pentecostalism and Charismatic renewal are rather hazy. This is probably because the mission-established churches with their established liturgy tend to ignore the notion that ways of worship, though directed by church tradition,

change with time and place as they encounter different cultures and chronological ages of the worshippers. This exemplifies the reason for existence of the Sunday School, to instruct children appropriately. It is also the reason the church has a hymnody referred to in this book known as Junior Praise. This is why a section of Christian fellowship would even go into creating a hymn book fit for them. For example, the Kenya Students' Christian Fellowship published a hymn book—*Sing unto the Lord*—in September 1999, printed by AIC, Kijabe Printing Press. The logo has the image of Mount Kenya on the front cover page with an eagle soaring high and Acts 2:32 interwoven with the KSCF logo. Acts 2:32 reads: "God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are witnesses of this." In this songbook, one finds 29 choruses, 42 English hymns, and 18 Kiswahili hymns. As is necessary, an index of first lines and a section indicating all permissions granted are included.

What this songbook has done is to contextualize praise within the students' fraternity. It is reiterated here that this mini-local contextualization within a fellowship in one country is a need that should be addressed at a continental level. Cultural heritage could also be incorporated, and whatever is good for the universal Church in the form of tunes or rhythm can be exported for the benefit of the Church universal. This strong recommendation is emphasized several times in this book. Cross-cultural values that do not contradict biblical

teachings are best shared in a two-way traffic pattern of export-import exchange.

Billy Graham's, (*Mikutano ya Kenya Nzima*) in 1960 had a song Book.⁵⁸ It is composed of thirty-three hymns in both English and Kiswahili. They were tailored for his evangelistic mission in Kenya. On all accounts, it was a spiritual spectacle as evidenced in his evangelistic crusades worldwide. Demonstrative preaching, as a wing of adoring God and learning from God in a participatory manner, is very much aided by praise in choruses and a mix of short lines of popular songs and hymns. Pulpit preaching is rather constraining as the preacher cannot move about. The only active action is when a preacher asks the worshippers to greet him/her by waving hands in the air. There are preachers who request that the congregants greet each other, welcoming each other to the house of prayer. Demonstrative/participatory worship is an emerging issue in the PCEA and in other mainline churches. According to the advanced Learners Dictionary, to emerge is to start to exist, to appear and to become known. This novelty, as implied in the area of worship, is affecting traditional liturgy that restricts the preacher at the pulpit. For that reason, a moveable glass pulpit is finding acceptance among youth services and in Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches. In some churches such as PCEA, Lang'ata parish, the author

⁵⁸*Mikutano ya Kenya Nzima* – is a Kiswahili version of Billy Graham's Evangelistic Campaign in Kenya.

witnessed that in the course of the service a health skit was included whereby the worshippers are given a chance to stretch out. This enlivens the sermon delivery.

Preaching in demonstrative worship rules out passive listening. Demonstrative preaching helps the pastor, “seek to lead every person to a place where one must meet God face to face and find no way of evasion or escape from the impact of one’s mind, heart and conscience.”⁵⁹ In any case, it has been stated that listening to a sermon with purpose and intensity is a way of adoring God. By listening to the message as it is preached, you are accepting the gift of life from its Author and engaging in communion with God. You enrich your living by the very essence of propitiation that the Almighty God confirms to give your audience through the Word. One continues to be sanctified through the preached message, which may carry the threefold purposes of exhortation, rebuke, or simply giving direction to one’s life. God is holy and above everything else (Psalm 99:1-3). Indeed, to love God with the totality of one’s being—heart and mind—is to worship him.

Sermons delivered from the pulpit are conventional with the least expected response from the audience, save for claps or applause at the end of the sermon. Maguire offers several modes of sermon delivery: hortatory, dogmatic, non-directional or neutral, and insensitive to social needs of the audience; or it can

⁵⁹ Leslie J. Tizard, *Preaching: The Art of Communication* (New York, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1958), 18.

be interactive, dialogic, thus acknowledging the potential influence of the preacher's biases.⁶⁰ I repeat here that, the latter is not possible unless singing has prepared the audience, as music enhances the audience spirit of participation having prepared the inner-self through the vigor of musicking.⁶¹ At this juncture, let it not be seen as if one would only be prepared to hear and digest the word of God after singing short choruses and portions of moving hymns. Preachers have often chosen hymns appropriate for various stages of a worship service.

A hymn before the sermon usually aims to draw the worshipper's spirit to expectantly receive the word from the preacher. Hymns such as "*Master, Speak! Thy Servant Heareth*," when conscientiously and solemnly sung with inner conviction, prepare worshippers to eagerly receive the message. Another impactful hymn is "*Lord, Thy Word Abideth*," which, based on Isaiah 55:11, emphasizes both speech and action as communicated by the prophet. Worshipers should understand that the preached word of God should produce spiritual results,

⁶⁰ James T. Maguire, *A scale of preaching style: Oratory vs. interactive preaching*. URL: [Http://jstar.org/stable/351485](http://jstar.org/stable/351485), under religious research, Vol. 22 No. 1 (Sept 1980) 63 Accessed March, 25 2009).

⁶¹Musicking is a term coined by Christopher Small in 1998 that has gained wider acceptance as definitive of music not just a product (noun) but a process (a verb). It also refers to participation in music through performance, listening, rehearsal, practice, composition or movement (Roberta King, et al, music in the life of the African Church.

akin to how rain and snow cause grain to grow, yielding bread for the farmer.

In times when people seemed to ignore the message, prophets like Jeremiah conveyed their messages through dramatic actions, such as wearing an ox yoke (Jer. 27). God's word, sent forth through the pulpit or any other platform, as affirmed by the prophet Isaiah, will always bear fruit, achieving what God intends and prospering wherever it is sent (Is. 55:11b NLT). During Sunday worship services or any other occasion, it is the preacher's duty to convey God's message to the congregation as they are inspired to do so. Mbiti offers advice to preachers for Sunday services:

The Sunday worship is the only occasion when most Christians have an opportunity to hear church's teaching, and our pastors and catechists do well to redeem time and use it more for teaching than bombarding their congregations with countless moral injunctions.⁶²

This position is supported by the emphasis that the Pastoral Epistles place on teaching about the Christian faith. For instance, 1 Timothy covers various aspects of Christian living, including leadership roles, warnings against false teachers (1:3, 4:7), and other miscellaneous topics such as proper conduct and church order for

⁶² Baeta, 330.

worship, elders and overseers, deacons, widows, and teaching on impartiality. The epistle also addresses the challenge of false doctrine, emphasizing the importance of remaining firm in true faith and trustworthy teachings.

The Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments, provides comprehensive injunctions for any Christian aspiring to live rightly. Above all, the law of loving God with one's whole heart and loving one's neighbor as oneself encapsulates God's will on how pilgrims should act and behave in this world without being of the world. Another example can be drawn from Titus, where pastoral advice is similarly rich, focusing on combating false teachings, selecting elders, and promoting sound doctrine, with Titus himself set as an example. Philemon explores themes of forgiveness and the relationship between servants or domestic workers and their employers.

Regarding preaching, it is notable that in the Old Testament, prophets delivered messages. They preached about God's judgment on the waywardness of the nation Israel, condemning the people for spiritual infidelity and idolatry. Jeremiah, however, also preached a message of hope regarding God's promise to establish a new covenant (Jer. 31:31ff), where God's law would be written on people's hearts and all would know the Lord. Isaiah addressed national sin and waywardness, as well as individual moral failings, condemning practices like magic, witchcraft, sorcery, divination, and astrology (Is. 47:12). Isaiah prophesied about the incarnation (Is. 9:1-7), and Micah prophesied more precisely about the Messiah,

Jesus Christ, predicting his birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2-4). Micah foretold that the ruler of human hearts would come from Bethlehem Ephrathah, despite it being a small village in Judah (Mic. 5:2-3 NLT);

This ruler is Jesus, the Messiah. Micah accurately predicted Christ's birth place hundreds of years before Jesus was born. The promised eternal King in David's line, who would come to us as a man, has been alive forever – “whose origin is from the distant past.” Although eternal, Christ entered human history as the man, Jesus of Nazareth.

The prophets also denounced national sins, delivering a wide spectrum of messages. Jeremiah rebuked Zedekiah (Jer. 34) and pronounced judgment for idolatry (Jer. 44). He prophesied against Egypt, Philistia (Jer. 47), Moab (Jer. 48), Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazar, and Elam (Jer. 49). Detailed judgment concerning Babylon is outlined in Jeremiah 49 and 50. Jonah reluctantly preached in Nineveh, delivering a message of judgment and hope from the gracious and compassionate God (Jonah 1:2; 4:2).

All that the prophets proclaimed led to the new dispensation of grace in Jesus Christ through his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension into glory, where he now intercedes for us as High Priest. Our church ministers, pastors, evangelists, and Christian theologians are called to emulate Christ, the High Priest, in preparing

their sermons and prophetic utterances, ensuring they deliver messages confirmed by God.

Having reviewed what preaching entailed in the Old Testament, a brief examination of preaching in the New Testament dispensation will enrich sermon preparation, recognizing that praise and worship of God is a serious and sacred responsibility. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines preaching as giving religious discourse in a public place, especially in a church during a service.⁶³ The New Bible Dictionary defines preaching in the NT as the public proclamation of Christianity to the non-Christian world. It continues that it is not a religious discourse to a closed group of initiates, but an open and public proclamation of God's redemptive activity in and through Christ.

The primitive meaning of the term is much more enlightening which means to proclaim as a herald.⁶⁴ Preaching and Teaching is at times understood as one and same thing, but public proclamation (Keryma) and didache (Apostolic ethical instructions) are not one and the same thing although they share strands of substance. In Mathew chapter 4, we read that Jesus travelled throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, preaching everywhere the Good news (heralding the Good News) about the kingdom.

In the ancient world in the Middle and Near East where the Hebrews history grew and took root before the

⁶³ Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary

⁶⁴ New Bible Dictionary, 1023.

coming of the Christian era, herald was a figure of considerable importance.⁶⁵ Only a person of integrity and character was employed by the king to make all public proclamations. Integrity implies wholeness, stemming from the root word "integer," which means a whole number. Character refers to the essence of a person, where morals and personality traits are deeply embedded, akin to the marks and decorations found on clay pots.

Likewise, in preaching, the herald (human vessel) must exemplify impeccable character. It is humbly submitted that the wave of prosperity gospel is undermining preaching's biblical essence. While Scripture acknowledges the principle that "you shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain" (1 Corinthians 9:9-17), this should not justify preachers prioritizing material gain over proclaiming salvation through God in Christ and receiving due support as prescribed in Scripture.

It is the duty of church members, deacons, and elders to ensure the clergy are cared for as proper workers. Unlike in the Roman Catholic Church where clergy are often celibate, Protestant congregations rightly compensate church workers fully. This support aligns with the resources provided through offerings and special gifts, which the faithful contribute for church maintenance and mission work. Cheerful giving, indeed, is an act of worship.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Examples of New Testament preaching should inspire ministers, pastors, and evangelists to delve deeper into God's word when preparing sermons and teachings for the laity. In Mark 1:38, Jesus directed his disciples to preach in various towns. Defending themselves before the Sanhedrin, Peter and John declared, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). Paul passionately stated, "For preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I don't preach the Good News!" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Understanding that preaching is pivotal in worship services, especially on the Resurrection Day, it bears heavy responsibility for both the preacher and the worshippers. Through the Holy Spirit, worshippers are called to be attentive and respond to the voice of God. As succinctly stated in the New Bible Dictionary, "Preaching is not a relaxed recital of interesting but morally neutral truths; it is God Himself breaking into the affairs of man and confronting him with a demand for a decision."⁶⁶

Today, the kind of preaching centered on "Christ crucified," as Paul proclaimed, often meets resistance, much like it did in his time. In the book of Acts, Luke recounts how the early disciples embraced and spread the new life ushered in by Christ. Over time, the teachings and practices of these early followers, known as *the People of the Way*, became tradition (*paradosis*).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

The birth of Jesus Christ, the initial phase of his redemptive story, was foreseen in the deliberation within the Trinity—*Whom shall we send? Who will go for us?* (Isaiah 6:8). This divine plan is further evidenced in Genesis 3:15 and Galatians 3:16, revealing that the Son brings good news to the oppressed (Isaiah 61). According to Matthew, Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah as the chosen servant of the Lord (Isaiah 42), demonstrating care for the lowly and healing the needy (Matthew 12:15-21).

Paul, humbly acknowledging himself as the least of the apostles (Ephesians 3:8-9), elevated the Gospel of the Risen Lord to new heights despite previous persecution of Christians. Today, we are called to preach nothing more and nothing less than this same Gospel. The Old Testament served as the Bible for the early Christians, initially labeled *the People of the Way* before the term "Christian" was adopted in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

It's crucial to recognize that the messages and traditions passed down about the interactions and proclamations of the twelve apostles and other disciples formed the earliest Christian teachings (the *Kerygma*). Mark's Gospel, the earliest written, succinctly states that Jesus is the Son of God who performed signs and wonders as prophesied, was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended to Heaven. Matthew traced Jesus' genealogy, while Luke provided a synoptic narrative based on Mark and Matthew. By the end of the first century, John addressed misrepresentations of the Kerygma

theologically, asserting that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God" (John 1:1ff).

In Paul's Epistle to the Romans, we witness his transformation from persecutor to apostle, who received direct confrontation from God and later contributed significantly to the New Testament. The Roman Church, established by the Pentecostal diaspora, was initially visited by neither Paul nor the chief disciples. Although Paul desired to visit, he eventually arrived as a prisoner. In Romans chapters 1 to 11, Paul provides a theological treatise on God's work in Christ as prophesied by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, and Joel. Joel prophesied the Pentecostal outpouring that Jesus promised, resulting in the Holy Spirit's advent and the subsequent Christian era.

From Romans chapter 12 to its conclusion in chapter 16, Paul outlines the expected response of Christians as a redeemed people, emphasizing worshipful living through total surrender and following the teachings of Jesus. The Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus, is actively at work in the world, and the Pentecostal experience remains crucial in Christian teaching. However, the emphasis on specific manifestations of the Spirit's power has historically led to divisions among believers, as seen with early controversies and modern classifications like classical Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism.

Notably, neo-Pentecostalism has seen a surge in prosperity gospel teachings that border on apostasy. This phenomenon has been perpetuated through media channels, where some preachers stage fake miracles for

financial gain. Authors like Paul Gifford and Philip Jenkins have explored these trends in works like *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* and *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*. Despite these challenges, the authentic church must confront these deviations from biblical faith with discernment and clarity, seeking to uphold the integrity of Christian teachings amidst global cultural shifts:

The rate at which churches are springing up, with all kinds of people, including drug dealers and rapist becoming bishops, apostles and right reverends overnight, they could undermine the development progress of the country.⁶⁷

Kenya is grappling with the rise of individuals who, overnight, transform into church ministries despite questionable backgrounds. These so-called preachers often peddle half-truths that manipulate emotions, yet church leadership remains largely silent. It is imperative for the church to establish a clear theological stance on such matters, drawing from biblical principles to discern any perceived heresy.

The spread of the prosperity gospel has exacerbated stress within families, as promises of material

⁶⁷ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing Africa (Economy Hurs and Company*, London, 2004), 41.

success frequently go unfulfilled. The excessive focus on financial prosperity has bewildered many, leading to involvement in pyramid schemes and financial fraud under the guise of religious teachings. Such practices disregard the biblical doctrine of honest labor, portraying quick wealth acquisition as akin to sorcery and idolatry.

Unemployment, particularly among youth, remains a pressing concern. While God provides abundantly through natural resources like soil, minerals, and rain, Scripture emphasizes the necessity of diligent work (Genesis 2:15-17). Laziness and reluctance towards work are condemned both biblically (2 Thessalonians 3:10) and socially, while diligent labor is encouraged with the admonition to work hard and cheerfully (Colossians 3:23).

Moreover, societal injustices that hinder opportunities for work are denounced by the prophets in the Old Testament. Individual responsibility in earning a living is underscored as part of worshipful living, requiring adherence to God's word in all aspects of life.

Both ordained clergy and believers share responsibility within the holy ecclesia, the priesthood, to educate Christians that while miracles continue today, life on earth is not without its challenges. God bestows wealth and success to be shared among those less fortunate, recognizing that not all possess equal talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Diligent work is thus a biblical mandate, with laziness condemned (Proverbs 18:9) alongside warnings

against the misuse of preaching for personal gain rather than for the mission of God (*Missio-Dei*).

In the face of modernity, scientific discoveries have advanced while human rights movements have challenged absolute moral values as outlined in the Bible. This challenge requires courage, akin to how St. Paul, St. Peter, the author of Hebrews, and St. John proclaimed the gospel even before the term "Christians" was coined in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

When preaching, it is essential to present what God has accomplished through Christ (Romans chapters 1-11) and to challenge listeners to respond to this message. Just as Paul did, church ministers, pastors, and evangelists should recognize and honor those who preceded them in the faith. Paul commended Ananias, Andronicus, Junias, Priscilla, Aquila, Epentus, Mary, Ampliatus, Urbanus, and Stachys in Romans 16:7-17, highlighting the importance of acknowledging co-workers in the mission of God.

As ministers transition between congregations, they should value the memories of those who supported their ministry in previous locations. This fosters a sense of continuity and corporate effort in advancing God's mission, where individual contributions fade as Christ is exalted through selfless service. Such recognition brings honor and glory to God's name.

In Africa, storytelling is valued for its ability to pass down meaningful narratives, distinct from gossip.

When preparing or delivering sermons, the following advice is beneficial:

When we read books or listen to sermons, we should check the content of what is written or said so that we won't be fooled by smooth talk and glowing words. Christians, who study God's word, asking him to reveal the truth, will not be fooled even though superficial Christians may easily be taken in. We have an example, of believers who carefully checked God's word, (Acts 17: 10-12) as a model of how to do it.⁶⁸

Conversely, when preparing a sermon, a preacher should avoid misleading the congregation. According to Pauline theology, believers experience salvation in three phases: they have been saved (past tense), are being saved (present tense) through ongoing sanctification by grace, and will be saved (future tense) at the Parousia, Christ's return at the end of time. At that point, time will be transcended into eternity, as described in Mark 13:24ff.

A.M. Hunter succinctly captures Pauline theology in his book "Introducing New Testament Theology," making it accessible even to non-specialist readers. He describes salvation in these terms: "Salvation as a past event rests on the finished work of Christ—what he did for humanity on the cross—and looks back to the moment

⁶⁸ Comment on Romans 16:17-20, *Life Application Bible*

when the sinner, by an act of faith, appropriated that deliverance."⁶⁹ But salvation is also a present and progressive experience; something happening presently in a new realm – the kingdom of His beloved son (Col. 1:13).⁷⁰ Thirdly, salvation is a future blessing—we shall be saved. Paul grew in eschatological insight as he grew in grace so that his latter letters reveal a change of emphasis (especially about *Parousia* as compared to his earlier letters (notably I and II Thessalonians). At Parousia Christ who is our life shall appear (Col. 3:4) and usher heavenly life with a “spiritual body.”⁷¹

In all other epistles except the letter to the Romans, Paul's writings follow a similar pattern. In 1 Corinthians chapters 1-11, he addresses specific issues troubling the Church: divisions in the Church reflected in the context of Christian wisdom and the power of God versus wisdom from the Spirit (1 Corinthians 1:18 – 2:16). Sexual immorality and the sanctity of marriage are given significant weight. Idol feasts and food sacrificed to idols are dealt with in depth. The Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts, and the supreme virtue of love vis-à-vis all other spiritual gifts and orderly worship are well explained. Advice to preachers is given in 1 Corinthians 14. It seems that in his urgency to address specific problems plaguing the church, Paul temporarily forgets the core of the gospel, focusing

⁶⁹ A. M. Hunter, *Introducing New Testament Theology*, (Bloomsbury St., London SCM Press Ltd.), 92

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 100 – 101.

instead on Christ's resurrection as a precursor to the resurrection at Parousia in chapter 15. Collection (tithes, offerings, and greetings to the saints) is addressed in chapter 16. Christian life is a journey, a pilgrimage, as depicted in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. In this letter, Paul provides a comprehensive dossier on preaching and teaching.

In his second letter (2 Corinthians), Paul discusses God's role as the source of all comfort, forgiveness, and the position of ministers under the New Covenant, along with the glory of the New Covenant where the law is written not on tablets of stone but on the hearts of God's people (2 Corinthians 3:3). Supporting church ministry takes center stage (2 Corinthians 8:1- 9:15).

Pastors and ministers should not shy away from preaching on offerings and related issues concerning the mission of God (*Missio-Dei*). It should be clear that Paul speaks about giving generously (2 Corinthians 9:8 – 14). The New Testament omits the term tithe, which does not imply “planting seed” or buying God's favor, as seen among some misguided preachers in certain "one-man" or "husband-wife" establishments within neo-Pentecostal congregations. In His earthly ministry, Jesus and His disciples required resources (money) to carry out their work; Judas Iscariot was their treasurer. In Luke 8:1-3, we see that women such as Mary Magdalene, Joanna (wife of Churza, Herod's business manager), Susanna, and many others contributed from their own resources to support Jesus and His disciples. If we do not engage in giving to

support Christian missions, we are failing to please God. The letter to the Galatians explicitly states that the gospel is none other than that of death and resurrection and grace from God. Paul's stance for the Gentiles is rooted in faith rather than mere observance of Jewish law. This is the essence of freedom in Christ and life in the Spirit (Galatians 5). This marks a fundamental aspect of worshipful living; a life in which we praise and worship God with reverence.

Ephesians highlights the Spirit's work and unity in Christ, emphasizing the need for church unity (Ephesians 1-4:16) and presenting a theology of salvation for all humanity regardless of race. As such, living as children of light, imitating God as dearly loved children, should be the human response (Ephesians 4:17-5:2). Impurity, greed, obscenity, foolish talk, coarse joking, and immorality are condemned because they signify anti-Christian living. Therefore, chapters five and six outline how husbands and wives, children and parents, and domestic workers (household staff) should conduct themselves, alongside guidelines for labor relations. Paul then reminds us that living as Christians requires wearing the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). For preachers, evangelists, and intercessors, they should follow Paul's example and request prayer from Ephesian Christians, so that when they preach, they may boldly make known the mystery of the gospel (Ephesians 6:19).

The letter to the Philippians urges believers to emulate Christ's humility. Humility, a virtue now

considered rare among Christ's followers, is extolled, along with the call to persevere and make perseverance evident to all (Philippians 4:4-5). The letter to the Colossians opens with thanksgiving and prayer, emphasizing the supremacy of Christ and liberation from human regulations through life in Him. This should be a central component of sermons, enabling congregants to recognize that personal faith in Jesus' saving power is not optional for Christian living. Direct personal encounters with Jesus help individuals live without constantly checking over their shoulders or behaving in certain ways for fear of others' judgments. Christians often place epitaphs in their homes such as "Christ is a guest in our home, listening to every conversation." Likewise, sermons should call listeners to accept Jesus, supported by a team of spiritual confidants praying that the Word will go forth and not return empty. This is a biblical promise that should embolden any Christian proclaiming God's message to the people.

Salvation through faith calls Christians to live a new life—a life of worship. This new life should be characterized by prayerfulness. Employers, whether in domestic settings or elsewhere, are given guidance on how to interact with their employees. A biblical framework for engaging in domestic work or other areas of economic production is articulated. A worshipful life includes obedience in the workplace, fair treatment of workers, and just wages. The Bible provides guidelines

for creating good and safe working environments, whether in homes or industries (Ephesians 6:5-9).

Recognizing the centrality of the family as a godly institution and its value in living for God, Paul also conveys this message to Colossae, emphasizing mutual submission between husbands and wives (Colossians 3:18-19). Relationships between children and parents are addressed, with parenting—especially pertinent in the digital age—given emphasis. Fathers, who may lack maternal instincts and sometimes provoke or irritate their children, are specifically cautioned against such behavior. Teaching about marriage, family life, raising children, and corporate responsibility in Sunday schools should be preached as essential. Relationships between Christians and domestic workers should be conducted in a Christian manner, addressing situations where pride and a sense of superiority may lead to unfair treatment of domestic workers.

On a national scale, industrial relations should be handled with care and concern, considering all factors to avoid debacles such as those experienced in Kenya from September to November 2015. This turmoil arose from a lack of coordination between the two teachers' unions (The Kenya National Union of Teachers and the Post Primary Teachers Union), the Teachers Service Commission, the Salaries and Remuneration Commission, the Industrial Court, and the Treasury. An impractical salary award by the court created waves across the government, prompting the Executive to

declare openly, “can’t pay, won’t pay.” This situation left every government institution perplexed. Similar issues occurred during the 100-day doctors' strike and the recurring nurses' strikes in late 2016 and mid-2017. A resurgence of nurses during the 2017 election period bordered on blackmail, a pitfall that needs to be avoided.

Sermons urging Christians to fairly remunerate their domestic workers should be preached. Churches should also be encouraged through biblical teachings to pay pastors and ministers of the Word fairly. The effective preaching of the gospel requires adequate compensation for those who deliver this Good News. Conversely, worshippers should give their resources cheerfully and generously (2 Corinthians 8:1-15) for God’s missionary work, as well as for charitable contributions to the poor (2 Corinthians 9:7-13). All contributions should be handled with care and used to enable the world to understand and embrace the life made available through the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus, who now sits at the right hand of God.

The epistles of First and Second Timothy and Titus explain what God has done through Christ's grace and how humans should respond to this undeserved favor by living righteously. When believers live rightly, those around them witness godliness, thereby honoring God. Philemon addresses a specific issue between a slave owner and a runaway slave, Onesmus. Paul appeals for reconciliation, addressing the problem of slavery long before it became entrenched in the Trans-Atlantic Trade,

within Europe, and ultimately ended by figures like William Wilberforce.

Paul's message to the Thessalonians emphasizes that persecution due to their faith was foreseen by Christ. The Holy Spirit continues to strengthen them through tribulations. Although the timing of Christ's return is unknown, the hope of being united with Christ in the resurrection remains. Being prepared while not neglecting daily duties is the Christian way of life—a principle applicable today. Laziness and lethargy in work are incompatible with holy living, discouraging dependency syndrome among Christians (Proverbs 6:6-11, 13:4, 24:30-34, Colossians 3:23).

Living in anticipation of Christ's return holds significant importance. Paul, a diligent apostle and preacher, requests prayers from the Thessalonian Christians so that the Lord's message spreads rapidly and is honored wherever it goes. He seeks prayers for deliverance from wicked and evil people. Likewise, pastors, ministers, and evangelists should earnestly seek prayers from their congregants. Exhorting proper living and avoiding idleness, as Paul did with the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 3:11-13), provides a model from apostolic teaching for pleasing God.

Peter, unlike Paul, initially lacked sensitivity towards other cultures until he experienced a vision (Acts 10:9-48). The first church council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-35) addressed the Jewish requirement that Christians must adhere to Jewish laws, including circumcision and

other rituals. Worshipful living demands respect for all people regardless of color, race, tribe, or clan. Similarly, people of different beliefs should be respected as potential converts, fulfilling the Great Commission's mission field (Matthew 28:18-20).

First Peter is divided into two main sections. The first chapter praises God for granting humanity a living hope through the incarnation story. Like Paul's letters, the second section teaches how to live for God, addressing labor relations, marital relationships between wives and husbands, and advice on how older people should interact with the young. These lessons are crucial for Christian communities to combat ageism, a problem seen even in homes where children may disregard parental advice due to perceived nagging or lack of information.

Sermons addressing ageism and promoting respect for older people are essential. While not all may have formal education, their wisdom and life experience, guided by God, should be shared with the younger generation. Before formal education was widespread in Africa and during Europe's Dark Ages, people lived fulfilling lives without literacy. Despite the abundance of information available through the internet and ICT, not everything found online, such as through Google, is absolute. Absolute living standards are found in Scripture—the life manual. Therefore, for those aiming to live a worshipful life, exercising divine discernment in choosing websites, movies, books, and music is crucial.

Peter does not present the gospel as a path free from difficulties. Like his Master Jesus Christ, he acknowledges the sufferings endured for being a Christian (1 Peter 4:12-18). Worshipful living does not exclude pain or other calamities such as drought, sickness, persecution, misrepresentation of the gospel, and even death as martyrs.

The second letter of Peter is addressed to early Christians. To Peter, the Good News of salvation and grace culminates in the Morning Star (Jesus) illuminating human hearts. False teachers who emerged in early Christianity posed a threat to the faith. Growing in knowledge of God is emphasized. Combatting false teaching and preaching involves sticking to the apostolic message and addressing modern-day misinterpretations of the Bible, where isolated verses are overemphasized to the point of distortion. Listening to such teachings, whether on the street, paid media broadcasts, or radio stations, does not honor God and does not align with worship as revealed in Scripture.

A preacher who ignores misguided preaching would be doing a disservice to the congregation, as some might be deceived into joining in false practices such as fabricated claims of divine healing. Peter devotes an entire chapter to remind believers of Jesus' second coming (2 Peter 3). Clearly, both Peter and Paul present Christianity in a holistic manner, emphasizing that preachers should similarly convey the Good News.

Peter and Paul preached from different backgrounds: Peter had firsthand interaction with Jesus in history and tended to focus on Christian life and service, while Paul emphasized grace and faith. However, as seen in Romans 6:15, though Scripture is pivotal in freeing Christians from the law, it does not permit continued sinning. Similarly, Peter stresses the importance of growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Despite their different emphases, the two apostles' teachings were complementary. Peter held Paul's theological insights in high regard, as explained below:

And remember our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with wisdom God gave him – speaking about these things in all his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and there are those who are ignorant and unstable have trusted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction (2 Pet. 3:16 – 17) NLT.

Epistle to the Hebrews contains the theology of the initial church. The writer is unknown. African ancestral theologians such as Tertulian in his writing *De Pudicitia* thought Barnabas wrote it. Clement and Origen of Alexandria (*Soul Liability of Sources*) had talked on it. Clement thought it was Hebrew dialect but translated by

Luke.⁷² All in all, to show it has not been possible to know the author, Origen observed that the real name of the author is only known to God.⁷³ What this epistle epitomizes is that Jesus is God's final revelation in His Son (Heb. 1:1). The OT finds fulfilment in Jesus through Davidic line (Heb. 7:14). Just like the apostolic writers especially Paul; upon hearing the Good news, the salvation story is mooted. One gets saved. But there is the present dimension of growth through sanctification in daily living. Finally, there is the final rest whose mediator is Jesus. The work of Christ accomplished through his own blood is vindicated by faith. Heroes of faith are catalogued in chapter 11 of the letter to the Hebrews.

Johannine theology revolves around God's love through Jesus (John 3:16). This life is abundant life (John 10:10b). Jesus is the bread of life. He is the living water, the good shepherd unlike the shepherds castigated by Ezekiel (Ez. 34). Eternal life according to John is knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3). Eternal life is to be had even now, given through his son (1 John 5:11). Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He is the true vine upon which the branches are able to bear fruit. Hence, there is need to heed Jesus' teachings in order to live a fruitful life where by God is praised earnestly and adored fully in reverence and awe.

Now that we have looked at the gist of what the apostles preached to the world then; how do you preach

⁷² Hunter, 512.

⁷³ Ibid., 117.

today? Jesus voice was not recorded but from such words as verily, verily I say unto you we live to realize that at times he was emphatic. When He dispersed people who had made the temple a market place, it is realized that at times he got agitated. When Paul motioned to the crowds and began his defense, we note some oratory. Again, when Peter addresses the crowd (Acts 2:14-40), oratory and quotes from the Old Testament exhume sense of purpose and confidence.

CHAPTER 5

Characteristics (mode) of Gospel Delivery

It matters how the message is preached or proclaimed in Church, or in any forum such as in a crusade or in a fellowship meeting. The expected result also depends not only on the preacher, but more so on the congregants/hearers of the word. There is a plethora of preaching styles, ranging from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism as well as in Orthodoxy.

In Roman Catholic Churches, the Mass, centered on the Eucharist, takes center stage in worship services. However, since Vatican II (1962–1965), celebrating Mass in local languages, including preaching in vernacular languages, has brought spiritual warmth to worshippers. African musical beats have become commonplace in Roman Catholic services, with the use of African traditional musical instruments widely adopted. In Orthodox churches, a somber, ritualistic mode of preaching dominates. Among Protestants, there are sharp differences in preaching styles between pastors in mainline churches and those in charismatic and Pentecostal assemblies.

Generally, however, as noted in the preceding chapter, churches are moving away from pew-pulpit controlled preaching to more flexible styles. Televangelists, especially from the USA, have been

emulated by many preachers in new religious movements. Demonstrative preaching and worship are widely fashionable. Music has been used to create moving sermons, thereby revitalizing preaching.

Meanwhile, pulpit preaching in Protestant churches restricts the movement of the preacher. The clamped pews also hinder movement. When a preacher may call for movement, such as asking members to welcome each other in the worship service, there is evidence of constrained movement. During altar calls, movement is severely hampered. This calls for better space and a reconsideration of church architecture and space allocation in oblong or rectangular churches as new ones are built. Roman Catholic Church buildings with circular seating patterns offer better movement for worshippers and the preacher alike. Indeed, some Pentecostal churches are adopting circular buildings that provide ample worship space. In the author's local PCEA, St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, special arrangements are made for worshippers to present their offerings during thanksgiving services in a sectionalized arrangement. When offerings need to be taken to the altar table, it often takes a long time due to the seating pattern designed for a congregation where offertory bags are passed from person to person.

By and large, the Reformation abolished "action"-oriented preaching and worship. The Reformation passed on traditions that were not in tune with systematic theology, which examines issues using biblical texts and

seeks to remove apparent scriptural contradictions. For example, justification by faith alone may seem to contradict the book of James. Ephesians 2:8-10 teaches that we become Christians through unmerited favor, not through our own efforts, abilities, intelligent choices, or acts of service. Nevertheless, salvation results in acts of service (Life Application Study Bible comment on these verses). However, a thorough examination shows that James does not negate salvation by faith alone. This is because good works are inevitable by-products of sheer, pure faith in the atoning power of the cross. There are many other instances showing that a systematic examination of biblical teachings is the way to live a truly worshipful life.

At times when a section of Christians adopts a preaching style or unfamiliar mode of Christian life, rather than looking down upon them, there should be empathy, not disdain. For preachers, it is important that sermons be prepared on biblical hermeneutics. Congregations need to understand how to benefit from living out the entire Bible. For instance, Jesus should be seen in Genesis just as He is visible in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, and other prophets, or in history, as seen in the hope the Hebrews had in exile. It should be acknowledged that God appointed Ezekiel as an exilic prophet to tell the people that though away from Jerusalem, the message of hope was theirs (Ezek. 28:25-26). Ezekiel preached that a new awareness of their dependence on God was necessary in their daily lives, as God was their good shepherd (Ezek. 34:11ff).

In sermon writing or note-taking, a preacher should not fail to review how other anointed preachers have undertaken the task of proclaiming the word of God. Throughout church history, there have been periods of spiritual awakenings that have seen the church grow both numerically and spiritually. Revivalism pioneered vibrancy in preaching in the sense that:

If a person makes “decision for Christ” it is almost imperative to do something such as getting out of his comfortable pew and going forward. Revivalism has been seen as a profound bit of fork drama expressing most successfully the religious convictions of its participants.⁷⁴

Where preaching and the response to the sermon are participatory, such as the mode of worshippers moving forward to present their offerings at the altar, White commends this, stating that "in it, there is more than giving money for church use. In a large dimension it is a token of us, offered through the surrender of a bit of our property."⁷⁵ When a preacher engages worshippers in activities, participation encourages interaction. Employing a lively or semi-participatory method in worship services discourages a sleepy mood, which is often observed in services, especially in hot weather. Mergenthaler offers advice on fostering interactive

⁷⁴ James F. White, 104.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

engagement, stating that "several things to foster interactive quotient include encouraging people to externalize what they feel internally, worship staff becoming less visible, and involving as many senses as possible."⁷⁶

In the same book, the author informs that two-thirds of the unchurched said they would prefer to come back to an informal church experience.⁷⁷ In the book *"African Theology: Contribution of Pioneers,"* it is noted that "Africans living in Europe are ill at ease with local liturgical celebrations that appear too cold to African immigrants. There evidently follows a certain coolness in interpersonal relations among believers."⁷⁸

In chapter four of *"African Theology: Contribution of Pioneers,"* there is a mention of hortatory, dogmatic, and unidirectional or neutral insensitive preaching that does not consider the social needs of the audience. When preaching, a preacher should include worship and share not only the joys of life, but also its sorrows and perplexities.

The value of a conventional sermon compared to an interactive one cannot be easily gauged. Unless a sermon is prepared for an interactive model, worshippers

⁷⁶ Sally Mergenthaler, *Worship Evangelism: Inviting unbelievers into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids, Mt. Zondervan Publishing House), 1995), 117.

⁷⁷ Mergenthler Sally, *Worship Evangelism*, 43.

⁷⁸ Benezet Bujo, Junenal Ihinga and Juvenal Ilunga Muya, ed. *African Theology: The Contribution of pioneers* (Nairobi; Pauline Publications, Africa 2003), 170.

might question why they are being provoked to respond. In the New Testament, the apostles, as described in chapter four, followed apostolic teachings as their guide. Peter, Paul, and others understood their calling, preaching powerful messages that led many people to follow the Way of Jesus. For instance, when Peter healed the crippled beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, it led to a significant sermon delivered by Peter. Reading this passage leaves the reader with a sense of awe. The immediate response from the priests and the Temple captain was to arrest Peter and John. Their defense gave them an opportunity to proclaim the gospel boldly.

The value of hortatory-dogmatic sermon delivery versus an interactive style is difficult to pinpoint precisely, but Maguire offers this caution: “While the interactive style seems promising for fostering personal faith more effectively, preachers who use it to encourage greater involvement of the laity in church social ministry should expect some resistance.”⁷⁹

Relativism and secularism are exerting influence on preaching, with oratory becoming less acceptable to contemporary audiences. The democratization of governments and social institutions is fostering a call for dialogue. In some religious circles, Isaiah the prophet is cited to support a dialogic approach to managing Church

⁷⁹ James T. Maguire, URL: [Http/www., A scale of preaching style. Oratory vs. Interactive Preaching star.](http://www.org/stables/3510485) Org/stables/3510485, under religious research vol. 22 No 1 September 1980, 63 accessed, March 25, 2009.

affairs. Through the prophet, God calls for dialogue: “Come and let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson they shall be white like wool” (Isaiah 1:18). In the NLT, the passage reads: “Come let us argue this out, says the Lord. No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow.”

The demand for interactive preaching necessitates a high degree of training and a supportive team of service leaders. Horne offers valuable advice for those inclined to adopt this style of preaching extensively. This is because it requires innovation and unparalleled imagination to effectively engage listeners. He emphasizes:

The modern preacher must preach to men (sic) who are greatly influenced by secularity, who are very conscious of power achievement, yet are frightened and unsure of their future.⁸⁰ Unless he (sic) can preach the gospel with power, offering redemption and power he (sic) will feel like a midget preaching to giants.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Mary N. Getui, ed., *Worship Among the Hearing – impaired in Nairobi*, in., *Theological method and Aspects of worship in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Action Publishers 2000), 107

⁸¹ Chevis F. Home, *Crisis in the Pulpit Faces Future Shock* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Company, 1975), 12.

Feeling small or unworthy should not deter one from abandoning the style of delivering the word. The challenges posed by technology and the preparation required for interactive preaching should not discourage clergy from using visual arts in worship. For example, incorporating drama, interpretative dance, and other visual media can be effective. Horne explains that in the pursuit of innovation, some preachers may veer into the realm of the bizarre. Pitts cautions against such excesses, illustrating with:

For example, in West Africa, some preachers do preach as if they were actors; preaching begins with a brief introduction that takes a few minutes, emotional build-up follows, and then the emotional climax.⁸²

In this article cited above, Pitts is critical of excessive emotions when he says that:

The preacher of the word relies in his oral culture to enliven, punctuate and contextualize the meaning of his (sic) discourse while his (sic) audience never lets him (sic) out of their sight. The congregation may approve various points by

⁸² Walter Pitts, *West African Poetics in the Black preaching Style*, URL; [Http://www.jstar.org/stable/445040](http://www.jstar.org/stable/445040). *American speech* Vol. 64 No. 2 (Summer 1989), Duke University Press), Accessed March 25, 2009.

shouts of “Amen” or “Preach it.” The hearers at times get excited and run down the aisle jumping vigorously behind the pulpit; the actions at times appear kinesics.⁸³

When actions appear kinesics the implication here is that to understand it, you would have to apply the study of body motion as related to speech to understand the phenomenon so displayed by the preacher

While still on dialogue method of delivering a sermon or of preaching there is need to note that participation should be varied in nature. Charles Koller affirms this and explains further that beyond dignity and worth on the part of the preacher, there is one agreement that:

The speaker must project the voice with sufficient volume. Proper pitch and tempo are likewise important. An audience that listens faster than the speaker is bored. And an audience distracted by mannerisms or faults of speech, dress and decorum is partly lost. A bad delivery may make best sermons ineffective.⁸⁴

⁸³ Pitts, *West African Poetics in Black Preaching*, 17.

⁸⁴ Charles W. Koller, *Expository Preaching without notes*. (Grand Rapids, M. I. Baker Book House, 1975), 107.

In preaching, calls for personal salvation, where individuals commit to follow Christ, should not be neglected by a preacher who values their calling. However, it's crucial for the minister, pastor, or evangelist to be clear and specific. Lloyd Perry cautions that "invitations should be clear and specific; otherwise, broad and vague invitations may increase statistics but not the number of saved individuals."⁸⁵

Here is an illustration: After a moving sermon, the preacher might ask if anyone in the congregation wishes to commit their life to Christ. Often, several individuals may raise their hands or stand up in response to the call. They are then prayed for and invited to remain behind to briefly meet with the clergy, deacons, or discipleship team for further guidance. However, in cases where no one responds to the invitation, some preachers, feeling disappointed that no one has come forward, may be tempted to broaden the invitation. They may ask those with special needs or those wanting to pray for difficult family or friend situations to stand or raise their hands, which can attract many worshippers, given life's challenges. While this is acceptable, it shifts the call from specific to very broad.

Altar calls for personal commitment to Christ's cause should always be clear and direct. The invitation should target specific responses rather than casting a net to catch every possible response. Accepting Jesus as Lord

⁸⁵ Lloyd M. Perry, *Biblical preaching for today's world* (Chicago Moody Press, 1973), 1969.

in one's life is a Spirit-inspired decision, saying "yes" to God, guided by the Holy Spirit who reminds and guides us in all things.

In contemporary preaching, ministers of the Word must be well-prepared. Through prayer and seeking God's guidance, they should ensure that the message they deliver is what God wants the congregation to hear. It is inappropriate to mimic sermons from other preachers or prepare messages hastily. In contemporary preaching, there is a risk of ministers imitating the mannerisms, dress, or speaking styles of famous televangelists like T. D. Jakes. Each minister of the Word has unique qualities given by God for their ministry. Self-acceptance and confidence are crucial for effective preaching. Tizard, who has written on the art of communication, wisely advises that "God does not wish to be served through the abilities of another person, but only through our own."⁸⁶ Leslie Tizard aptly advises preachers in the following manner:

I think of a preacher who has tremendous power of playing upon the emotion of an audience or congregation. I have seen him not, for we must be fair in a sermon, but in an address to keep his audience almost continuously in fits of laughter.

⁸⁶ Leslie J. Tizard, Preaching: *The Art of Communication*, (New York: George Allan & Unwin Ltd, 1958), 32.

They hang upon his words waiting for his next “crack.”⁸⁷

The lesson learned here is that a preacher who exhausts people with jokes may find that when they transition to the main subject, the audience may not be receptive because they perceived the jokes as endless. Preachers possess diverse gifts, as biblical teachings affirm that the variety of gifts is intended to strengthen the Church in honoring God (Romans 12:4-8). Not everyone shares the same gifts. Like every Christian, a preacher must understand their identity and how best to convey the gospel message. The gifts a preacher possesses—whether in preaching, evangelism, vocal delivery, musical expression, and so forth—should enhance the proclamation of the Word as the minister shares the bread of life. "There is no doubt that these gifts vary in nature, power, and effectiveness according to God's wisdom and grace, not merely based on our faith."⁸⁸

A significant Christian population has likely heard evangelical sermons from Billy Graham, either in person or through his televised broadcasts. Throughout his ministry, Graham utilized simple Biblical texts and specific hymns, making a profound impact on his listeners worldwide. Large crowds have responded to his altar calls in churches and stadiums across the globe.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Notes on Rom. 12:6 (*Life Application Study Bible*), 1916.

Regarding preachers with poetic imagination—a gift in itself—Tizard warns them not to indulge in fanciful creations for mere pleasure. Instead, they should illuminate truth, as failing to do so may lead to emotional detachment.⁸⁹ She continues to say that such preachers might as well be talking to an empty auditorium or to any other collection of people.⁹⁰

The Bible teaches that laughter is good for the heart (Prov. 17:22), making humor a valuable tool in preaching. It serves as a noble instrument to engage and uplift congregations. However, the misuse of humor can be dangerous, leading to vanity rather than fostering seriousness. Humor should aim to lighten hearts so that listeners can approach serious matters with openness. Occasionally, humor might not resonate with everyone, yet in many aspects of life, excessive rigidity can breed negativity. Therefore, some church cultures advocate for a recovery of humor to bring vitality to congregations.⁹¹ Drakenford recommends humor at the beginning of a sermon as it creates expectation, but with a caution! “Humor offers unique method of gaining attention, introducing the subject and building rapport. But the

⁸⁹ It is my considered opinion that where there is no positive response on the altar call, the preacher should know that he was just a vessel. God is the one who draws a person to Himself. Human effort is not good enough. Just plant the seed and let God water it!

⁹⁰ Tizard, *Preaching: The Art of Communication*, 50.

⁹¹ John W. Drakenford, *Humor in Preaching* (Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 19.

preacher has a long way to go in his task of conveying the message to his hearers successfully.”⁹²

In the realm of humor, sometimes the audience stimulates the minister, especially in neo-Pentecostal congregations, to new heights of pastoral excellence and insightful sermonizing. However, there is a pitfall in this approach. Instead of simply presenting the sermon, it can lead to orchestrating the needs of the congregation.⁹³ In most cases, however, it is the minister who calls for “Amen”, “praise the Lord”, “thank you Jesus.” and then audience participates. Niles says that such words may not be humor, but there is no sadness either.⁹⁴ In churches when the preacher finds that the congregation is rather somber, words such as, “Am I speaking to somebody,” calls for attention then the congregation responds, “Amen! Yes.”

From a biblical perspective, humor, a significant element in participatory worship, is not wrong. "A merry heart is good like medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). Irony and satire, for example, are biblically sanctioned forms of humor. Irony, which involves using words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning, is evident in the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:27): "Shout

⁹² Ibid, 19.

⁹³ Lyndrey A. Niles, Rhetorical Characteristics of Traditional Black Preaching, *Journal of Black studies*, Vol. 15 No. 1 Communication in the Afro-America (Sept. 1984), Sage Publications, Inc. URL: [Http://jstor.org/stable/278116](http://jstor.org/stable/278116) (accessed March 25, 2009).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

louder," Elijah said. "Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling." Satire, an art form that uses humor to highlight people's faults, is clearly exemplified in Isaiah 44, particularly in verses 15-17:

It is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it, he makes an idol; He bows down to it. Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal; he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, Ah! I am warm, I see the fire. From the rest he makes a god, his idol, he bows down to it and worships (Isa. 44:15).

While we criticize excesses in cracking jokes, monotonous, passive listening fall short of expectations since the Bible advocates joyful, lively preaching as part of worship experience (Psalm 100:2). In the traditional liturgy in mainline churches, such as the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, one finds advocacy in Psalm 99, which calls for worship of God in reverence and awe. This is probably what the Presbyterian *Practice and Procedure Manual* refers to, when it states that worship of God calls for dignity and warns on carelessness in worship of God.⁹⁵ Reverence is a profound feeling of respectful admiration for God, while awe is characterized by feelings of deep

⁹⁵ *Practice and Procedure manual*, clause 2:12, 11.

respect for His majesty. These two aspects, reverence and awe, are complementary to joyfulness, stemming from a deep admiration for God, which represents different facets of the same spiritual experience.

Therefore, as we acknowledge the greatness and holiness of God, we require both reverence, awe, and the joyous expression of pious gladness. "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10) does not advocate passivity but rather calls for peace and quietude. In our busy lives, it's important to take moments to honor God quietly and reverently, especially during our "Quiet Times" when we meditate on His Word. Psalm 37:7 emphasizes the need for calmness and contentment, which fosters the joyful outpouring of worship.

It logically follows that when we grasp what God has done for us, there will naturally be gladness and joy in our worship, both in the preaching and in our response to the preached word.⁹⁶ "Preaching in participatory worship must take into account new modes of consciousness and new bearing in life" is Sweazeys assertion.⁹⁷

As technology evolves, adaptation to change is vital. It is commonly said that the only constant thing in this life is change itself. This is well illustrated by Swenzey with the words: "Contemporary assumptions are

⁹⁶ Tokunboh Adeyemo, General Editor, *Africa Bible Commentary*, (Nairobi, worldwide Publishers, Zondervan, 2006) 705.

⁹⁷ George E. Sweazey, *Preaching Good News* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976), 14.

in many ways different from those of a few years ago. Innovative services have been held in church; some of whom old rituals had gone stale and they may have made worship a new discovery for others, making preaching a cooperative enterprise.”⁹⁸

Many statutes, such as the *Practice and Procedure Manual* of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, and likely those of other mainline churches, may be lagging behind in adapting to contemporary modes of delivering the Gospel. As previously noted, Pentecostalism has influenced mainline churches significantly. For instance, at PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi, there are multiple services on Sundays. The first service (8:00 am – 10:00 am) typically draws young people and families, featuring a worship style distinct from the second service (9:00 am – 10:30 am), attended by middle-aged and elderly congregants alongside younger attendees. The sermon preached here shares the same title as that delivered in the 11:00 am to 12:30 pm service. Within the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, there is a noticeable shift towards contemporary worship practices.

Numerous examples abound illustrating the apostolic proclamation (*Kerygma*) and the *didache* (apostolic teachings on Christian living) concerning Christian hope (Acts 9:2). The early Christians, known as the people of the Way, were encouraged to break away from their old lives, emphasizing honesty, purity,

⁹⁸ Ibid., 50-54

truthfulness, sober living, hard work, and promoting decent family life as foundational aspects of their faith.⁹⁹

Let it be clear to the reader that as we study these fundamental Christian ethics, whether in the letters of Paul (cf. Thessalonians, Galatians, Colossians) or sections of 1 Peter and the author of Hebrews, all refer back to the teachings of Jesus.

Clergy and evangelists, entrusted with the grace of God distributed to all believers in the holy nation and as a holy priesthood, would stray from their calling if they preached differently from how the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, preached. Preaching should emulate Jesus' style. Jesus taught through sermons, illustrations, and parables throughout His ministry, revealing the true essence of faith and how to avoid a fruitless life. He used everyday elements like water, a fruitless fig tree, shepherds and their sheep, fishing and fishermen, and a wedding at Cana of Galilee to convey profound spiritual truths of the Gospel. This model remains indispensable in preaching today. Contemporary preaching would benefit from using stories, proverbs, and traditional wisdom, especially those found in the Book of Proverbs, to connect with listeners.

Paul, a paradigmatic preacher and missionary, has left a rich legacy that clergy and all Christians should follow. He prioritized prayer in his ministry, seeking prayers from fellow Christians as previously noted (Rom.

⁹⁹ Hunter, 82.

15:30). Prayer serves as a source of comfort during trials, allowing believers to reflect on God's actions in their lives and present their petitions for His guidance. Yet, Paul also viewed prayer as a weapon for spiritual warfare and intercession for others. Like Paul, church ministers, preachers, and evangelists are engaged in spiritual battles for Christ's kingdom. Paul's request for prayer should be our earnest desire: "Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me" (Rom. 15:30).

Paul's concern in dealing with real issues among Christians is evident in his fear that his mission to Jerusalem might not be accepted (Rom. 15:31). In our time, when undertaking such missions, messengers may be tempted to approach with pride, assuming acceptance due to the recipients' neediness. Romans chapter 16 serves as an appendix to Paul's letter, concluding with greetings to companions, co-workers, and those actively advancing the mission and evangelism. Sending greetings was customary in the apostolic church and serves as a commendable example for Christian living.

The role of women in church life is exemplified, among others, by Phoebe from the church in Cenchrea, an eastern part of Corinth. Mrs. Aquila (Priscilla), both as an individual and as part of a couple, sets an example for couples, particularly church ministers and their spouses, on excelling in church ministry. This applies especially to partners in churches that follow the New Testament pattern. Ministers, elders, deacons, and in modern times,

other support staff such as accountants and honorary treasurers, cooperate in stewarding the church's resources, finances, and other assets for the advancement of God's kingdom on earth.

It's important to stress, as Paul has mentioned, that he doesn't mind the gospel being preached even if it stems from jealousy, as long as the gospel is spread. However, caution is necessary regarding ministries led by a single person or couple where tithes, offerings, and other contributions seem to be used solely for their own benefit. For ministries that do not allocate church finances for the advancement of God's kingdom, forgiveness is sought.

An observable phenomenon in church life is that many saved Christians seem not to have been freed from the allure of money. Therefore, I urge all—priests and ordinary Christians alike—to manage church resources and money collectively. Christian couples should also use the same standard in managing their resources. The love of money, whether it belongs to the husband, or secret accounts held by either spouse, can cause instability in the family. In marriage, couples agree that whatever one has or will acquire in the future is shared: “I give or share with thee!” It is important to reinforce the rituals and sacraments believers have participated in through sermons from time to time.

Living a worshipful life demands that a household is not destabilized by the way money is used. This calls for utmost cooperation as in other areas of family life. The list of noble women in the Bible is inspiring, with many

who worked fairly hard, such as Junia, the wife of Andronius. Ampliatus, who according to New Bible commentary is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament, was probably a wealthy woman, whose tomb has been found in the catacomb of Domitilla.¹⁰⁰ Other women mentioned include Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis; three women who labored in the cause of Christ. There are many men included in this commendation and greetings. I have however not put down their names, because there is a point I want to hammer home. In the universal church of Christ although the Roman Catholics do not ordain women as priests, through the sisterhoods, women continue to play an important role in education, healing ministry, and in the ministry of intercessory prayers, just as priests (fathers) do.

In the Church of England, it is encouraging to see that for the first time, there has been a female bishop, Rachel Treweek consecrated as bishop of Gloucester on January, 25, 2015. In the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, yes there are women ministers, but as a Presbyterian I have observed that the women ministers in my opinion continue to be subjugated by the patriarchy that is not only in society in general, but it is a vice so pervasive in church/Christian life. Here I bring illustration as put forward by Karl Barth to urge the church leadership not to discriminate against female ministers by their male counterparts when he says that: “The adjective ‘Christian’

¹⁰⁰ *New Bible Commentary*, 1159.

will have to carry the sense grounded in the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ and oriented in the effected justification, sanctification and vocation of man in him.”¹⁰¹ In-fighting among the clergy in a parish or in a parochial setting should be avoided totally. Marginalization of ministers/ pastors on gender basis should be avoided. Sermons are not just for them (congregants) and not us (clergy). Proclamation of the word is for all.

We are justified (declared not guilty) by Grace. Clergy should by extension perform priestly work by means of grace; to deal with each other fairly. For example, when electing who leads in the parish follow the laid down principle as spelt out in 1 Timothy 3: 1-13. Sanctification, the day to day cleansing on moment by moment basis, from one issue to the other in daily living is possible due to the saving power of the cross supported by the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer. Vocation of man (sic) in Christ should be run with pure heart. Gospel, delivery should be carried out by servant leaders typified by Jesus act of washing the disciples’ feet. The leader (priest, evangelist, deacon etc.) must be servant of all (Luke 22:26).

In his unpublished thesis on theological foundations for successful leadership, Njenga has made several recommendations about church leadership. He

¹⁰¹ Kari Barth, *The Christian life, Church Dogmatic, Vol iv Part 4*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1981), 37

emphasizes the urgent need for leaders to be selected based on biblical and theological principles, particularly emphasizing qualities of servanthood. His findings highlight significant concerns among respondents: 92.8% affirmed a low level of servant-hood among leaders, while 90.1% noted a lack of integrity. Additionally, about 85% doubted whether their leaders were genuinely called by God to ministry, and over 90% expressed a desire for more consistent teaching of the Word of God by their leaders. Njenga's research underscores that church leadership is increasingly influenced by secular leadership patterns, a trend he strongly advises against.¹⁰²

It is not widely recognized that African Women's Theology exists. Detractors sometimes attempt to equate it with secular feminism, but in essence, it differs significantly. In the African Church, women have an equal or similar role to play in building the ecclesia, as evidenced in the New Testament Church, such as in Romans 16. Both the church and families cannot truly worship and please God if women are discriminated against based on gender. The creation story does not depict woman as coming from man's rib alone. The Bible states, "Let us make human beings in our own image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, and all wild animals on the earth

¹⁰² Theological foundations for successful leadership: *A case study of selected Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK)*, master of Theology in African Christianity, (Daystar University, May 2011.

and small animals that scurry along the ground." Thus, God created them male and female.¹⁰³

Female and male humanity are both created in the image of God. Male humanity is a partner with female humanity, and both are expressions of humanity. A balanced church and society require both genders. Praise and worship of God would be distorted if there is male dominance in church life or household environments. The family mirrors the church in miniature form. Living a worshipful life necessitates both genders living harmoniously at home, as outlined in Ephesians chapter 6. Romans chapter 16 should be viewed as the "Magna Carta" of women's positioning in both the church and society. The abundant life proclaimed by Christ in John 10:10 is straightforward: "I came so that you may have life in abundance." Christ's purpose is to give fullness of life to both men and women, without one gender depriving the other of this status.¹⁰⁴

Paternalistic language in Hebrew culture historically marginalized women, relegating them to subordinate roles. However, God consistently portrayed women as heroines throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, figures like Ruth, Deborah, Miriam, Jael, Hannah, Hagar, Jephthah's daughter, Leah, Naomi, Noah's wife, Sarah, Rahab, and Zipporah stand out. In the

¹⁰³ NLT-*Life Application Study Bible*, Gen 1:26-27.

¹⁰⁴ Heavily borrowed from lecture notes by Professor Philomena Njeri Mwaura on a course TEO 625 African Women Theology, Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya.

New Testament, notable women include Mary, the mother of Jesus; Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist; the Samaritan woman; Peter's mother-in-law; the Syrophoenician woman; Anna the prophetess; Dorcas (or Tabitha); Prisca (or Priscilla); Joanna, a disciple of Jesus; and Mary Magdalene. These women hold significant places in biblical narratives.

Gender polarization remains a pervasive problem in humanity, contrary to God's intended plan. It is disheartening to recall the misogyny expressed by early church fathers like Tertullian (160-220 AD), who infamously labeled women as the devil's gateway. Similarly, Clement of Alexandria's derogatory remarks towards women are unfit for print. Augustine of Hippo's (354-430 AD) argument that only men fully image God, while women do so only through their husbands, exemplifies how androcentrism distorts God's intentions for humanity—intentions for which Jesus came, died, rose, and ascended to redeem.

Human beings are prone to forgetfulness or worse, moral decline in this fallen world. Augustine's own theological reflections, despite the pivotal role his mother Monica played in his Christian upbringing, illustrate the persistence of male pride and egoism. The church must remain vigilant against corporate gender-based misconduct or sin, mindful of the pitfalls that can arise from such attitudes and behaviors.

For the church to truly worship and praise God in a meaningful way, it must earnestly address women's

issues with the same gravity as other pressing reform agendas such as racism, classism, neo-colonialism, globalization, and equity. Contextualizing Biblical texts within the framework of Christ's redemptive grace is essential to dismantle gender stereotypes.

Reclaiming and documenting women's achievements throughout the Bible and the church's history spanning 2000 years is crucial. Only by rectifying historical wrongs and injustices can the true reflection of God's worship be achieved. The muted voices of women in church hierarchies and "cell" fellowships must be amplified. It is noteworthy that in new religious movements, especially in neo-Pentecostal assemblies and the proliferation of church ministries, women's voices are increasingly prominent in public spaces like parks, shopping centers, and markets.

The church and society at large must move beyond lip-service and embrace practical measures to acknowledge and empower women in homes and communities. While affirmative action laws exist in politics, their implementation often falls short or is disregarded. Men acknowledge the significant nurturing role of women (mothers/wives) in raising children through counseling, yet they often assert blind authority in decision-making under the guise of "head of the family."

Equality between husband and wife does not imply identical roles but acknowledges each partner's unique contributions. A husband and wife complement

each other as spouses, each bringing their strengths to the partnership. Genuine equality entails mutual respect, equal rights, privileges, and balanced decision-making within the family and broader society.

Husbands and wives should function in harmony as they raise and nurture their children, reflecting God's design for marriage. Together as a couple, they are united for the purpose of propagating and caring for humanity. The biblical concept of submission (Ephesians 5:22-32; Colossians 3:18-20) between husband and wife is mutual and Spirit-guided, recognizing each other's individual gifts and their shared love for Christ. In Christ, mutual responsibility involves caring for one another, ensuring that godly offspring are raised (Malachi 2:15-16).

In a Christian marriage, both husband and wife engage in spiritual leadership modeled after Jesus' servant leadership (Luke 22:26). When a wife submits to her husband out of love for Christ, this submission carries dignity and purity. Similarly, when a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the Church, out of love for Christ, mutual submission neutralizes any unholy behaviors towards each other. Just as acidity and alkalinity in chemistry are balanced in life issues through life in Christ, so too do mutual respect and submission neutralize any disharmony.

Living a worshipful life within a family setting involves demonstrating God's sovereignty and grace through mutual respect and balanced roles. The delivery of the Good News should emphasize gender-balanced

roles and mutual recognition within families. Families that embody gospel principles enrich church life and Christian witness, fulfilling the Great Commission.

This discussion on gender roles and responsibilities in the context of gospel delivery is just a glimpse of how the Gospel addresses various aspects of human life. It extends to social justice, wealth creation, and equity in societal issues such as poverty, homelessness, negative ethnicities, and corruption. The Bible provides guidance in all these areas, which are part of the human experience that Christ came to redeem. The kingdom of God, characterized by love, should permeate all interactions and dealings in these spheres of life.

The mode of Gospel delivery requires that gender be a non-issue. Church ministers, pastors or priests be of either gender in line with the spiritual gifts of teaching, healing, evangelizing and leadership as may be manifested in the ecclesia of the disciples of Jesus Christ. See Appendix 7.

CHAPTER 6

Centrality of Prayer in Living Christianly

Prayer is central in Christian life, and is indispensable in Christian living. Jesus Himself prayed, and even taught his disciples how to pray. Prayer is a key element in worship of God. After prayer the next vital element of worship to be discussed will be worship of God through music. Other elements of worship such as reading the Bible (Scripture), intimations, listening to the word of God, speaking in tongues, celebrating sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Table, admitting and readmitting members into the *ecclesia* (the gathered people of God/the Church), Religious oaths, offering and vows, benediction or blessings at the end of a sermon/service and evangelical tools in crusades such as musicking; all these constitute elements of worship.

In the remainder of the book, detailed discussion will focus solely on praise and worship within the context of music, alongside prayer. "Praise and worship" is a customary practice among individual believers and collectively (ecclesiastically) among gathered believers in church settings. It occurs in cell groups, fellowships, prayer sessions, retreats, and various church functions like weddings and even during preparations for burials.

The discussion on prayer as a component of worship will explore its corporate dimension. A survey of prayer in pre-Christian times among African peoples will be outlined to illustrate that God's power has always attracted humans to His awesome power and benevolence. Following this, a review of prayer among the Hebrews in the Old Testament will follow. It was through the Israelites that God revealed His salvation story (the Incarnation), which continues to be proclaimed through the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

As the fullness of time approached (around 6 or 7 BC) and came to fruition around 30 AD, God did not abandon the Gentiles, including Africans, Asiatics, and other cultures, leaving them in total darkness without awareness of His existence. These cultures recognized God as the source of life for humanity. God does not excuse any people, even those without a written Law (Romans 2:12a). All people on earth possess God's law within their worldview. Therefore, in any society, God prevents people from becoming as callous as evil desires them to be (Romans 2:14-15). Across the globe, evidence of cultural practices that uphold morality, such as prohibitions against theft and murder, continue to exist, reflecting manifestations of prayer life among people worldwide.

Among the Agĩkũyũ (the author is a Mugĩkũyũ), prayer was associated with beseeching God (*Gũthathaiya*

Ngai) or simply to worship God.¹⁰⁵ Agĩkũyũ people believed (believes) in one God (*Ngai*), the creator and giver of all things. Prayers touching on many aspects of life with the accompanying sacrifices were offered. They included those that touched on sickness, planting and harvesting seasons.

Fatherhood of God comes out clearly in prayers offered by various peoples, the Agĩkũyũ, Azande, Nuer of Sudan and others.¹⁰⁶ Various addresses of God as Father, My Father, Great Father or Father of my/our Father are common. Without much more illustrations let it suffice to say that “Africans are notoriously religious and each people have their own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”¹⁰⁷

Mbiti is not alone in writing about God’s revelation to African people. Idowu presents us with samples of prayer to God. The first one is a hymn of prayer committing worshippers’ case to the Divinity. Here is a hymn of adoration:

He who makes the eye, makes nose
It is the Orisa I will serve;
He who makes one as he chooses,

¹⁰⁵ Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, (London, Secker and Warburg, 1959), 232.

¹⁰⁶ Mbiti, *African Traditional Religious and Philosophy*, 49.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

It is Orisa I will serve
He who sends me here
It is the orisa I will serve¹⁰⁸

In times of sickness prayer such as:

Father of Children!
Prepare medicine for the children
The children have no medicine
Here is a song of rejoicing which signifies an
assurance of certain blessings:
I make sacrifice of a bird
I make sacrifice of a bird
My affairs become very prosperous
I make sacrifice of a birds

Just as in the Christian faith and practice, the heart and center of prayers in religion of the Yoruba is petition. Adorations is also central, as observed above. Prayers among the Yoruba (as in many African peoples) are not offered in formal worship but anywhere as the occasion or situation demands.¹⁰⁹ The above illustrations are meant to stress that the gospel arrived among African peoples where the soil of the heart was fertile to receive it. Belief in the “living dead” and ancestral “worship” was good enough to connect the African convert to Christian faith

¹⁰⁸ E. Bolaji Idowu O Lodumare: *God in Yoruba Belief*, Longman, London 1970), 114-115

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 117.

in line with the communion of saints as in the Apostles Creed. For God hasn't left himself without witnesses (Acts 14:17). Even after most of the exiles return and rebuilt Jerusalem. Daniel and the Jews who remained in the Medio-Persian Empire continued to witness about God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Moses. Daniel proclaimed the End Times, resurrection and eternal life (Daniel 12).

During the vast rule of King Xerxes with over 147 provinces that stretched from India to Kush (upper Egypt) Queen Esther and Mordecai saved the Jews from an impending annihilation conspired by one, Haman. Triumph of the Jews was stunning among the Kings of media and Persia (Esther chapters 8, 9 and 10).

In this section, the focus is strictly on prayer as a major component of praising and worshiping God. It is emphasized that while God chose Israel as the vehicle for divine revelation to humanity, other cultures also had a recognition of His majesty. An example is Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who served as a priest of the Midianites. Despite his non-Israelite background, he worshipped the true God. Similarly, figures like Melchizedek, the King of Salem (possibly Jerusalem), who was a priest of the Most High God, exemplify worship outside of Israelite circles.¹¹⁰ Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine to Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20) underscores his recognition of God's authority. In Psalm 110:4, Davidic kingship is

¹¹⁰ D. A. Carson et.al. *New Bible commentary*, (IVP Academic, Nottingham England, 1994), 560

tied to a divine oath, proclaiming the Messiah as "a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek." This linkage highlights the continuity and significance of priesthood beyond the confines of Israelite religious tradition.¹¹¹

Now, as David meditated on his dignity as priest-king, it became a telescope turned on the messiah and look forward to the perfect priest king; a full reality of what David was only a shadow cast beforehand. When Hebrews (6:20-7:28) uses Melchizedek in order to show that Jesus is a true priest though without Aaronic ancestry, it was fulfillment of line of truth reaching back through David to Abraham.

The prayer life among the Hebrews shared similarities with that of African peoples, yet it had a distinct advantage due to God's choice of a specific lineage—Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel)—to unfold the salvation history culminating in Jesus, the God-man who became the sacrifice for humanity's sins. As our merciful high priest, Jesus sympathizes with human weaknesses because He experienced human life without sin. He understands our vulnerabilities and temptations intimately, having undergone hunger, thirst, fatigue, and sorrow, as Scripture records (Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-3; 8:1-13).

Jesus demonstrated human emotions, such as righteous anger in cleansing the temple and deep sorrow at Lazarus' death (He wept). His profound distress on the

¹¹¹ D. A. Carson et.al. *New Bible commentary*, (IVP Academic, Nottingham England, 1994), 560

cross, where blood and water flowed and He cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" reveals His intense emotional experience (Matthew 27:46). This brief reflection on the superior biblical revelation of God's plan of salvation leads us to consider prayer in the Old Testament before exploring prayer in the New Testament and its practice in today's Church.

The Psalmist sets stage on the importance of prayer explicitly; "open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your law" (Ps. 119:18). Prophet Joel admonishes that when we bring our requests to God in prayer we should always accompany them with confession of sin and humility of heart. Repentance is a vital element in approaching God in prayer. Turn to me now, while there is time! Give me your heart with fasting, weeping and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, instead tear your hearts (Joel 2:12-13a).

In matters of the heart, encompassing the entire personality, particularly in relation to intuitive feelings, emotions, and the soul or spirit, individuals are summoned to approach with humility and awe in their adoration, confession, praise, and supplication to God in prayer. Prayer reaches the heart of God because fundamentally, God initiates grace for a person to pray to Him. Prayer, understood as "the highest activity of which the human spirit is capable," can also be seen as communion with God, provided that we recognize the emphasis on divine

initiative.¹¹² There are about sixty whole psalms and fourteen parts of psalms which may be called prayer.¹¹³

Scanning through the Book of Genesis, one encounters several revelations about prayer. For instance, when Seth grew up, he had a son named Enoch. It was during this period that people began to worship the Lord by name (Gen. 4:26). This suggests that their understanding of God was quite basic. During that time, people lived in a religious context where belief in multiple gods was prevalent.¹¹⁴

During the patriarchal period people prayed (Gen. 15:2ff, 18: 23ff, 24:12-14). As in traditional Africa, prayer in patriarchal times was closely connected with sacrifice as in Genesis 13:4, 26:25 or in Genesis 28:20-22. Before the exile in Babylon intercession was most prominent. The prophets warned of the impending catastrophe. Hence pleading for mercy was evident. The Book of Daniel (9) is largely a prayer of intercession. The ministry of the prophets was pervasive with prayer. During the exilic period along with ceremonies such as circumcision, fasting and Sabbath observance, prayer was very important.¹¹⁵ Upon their return from the Babylonian Exile after seventy years, as recorded in the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra, devotion and prayer became integral aspects of societal worship. In Nehemiah 8, there is a depiction of

¹¹² Ibid., 1019.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ *New Bible Commentary*, 212.

¹¹⁵ *New Bible Dictionary*, 1020.

covenant renewal accompanied by the confession of the people's sins. Additionally, Ezra dedicated the rebuilt Temple in Ezra 6:13-22, highlighting the importance of prayer and dedication in the restoration of worship practices after the Exile.

The biblical portrayal of prayer in the Old Testament did not adhere to specific patterns or regulations, much like it is today. There were no fixed rules governing its content or ritual. In the Gospels, parables provide significant teachings on prayer. Parables such as the friend who asks for three loaves of bread at midnight (Luke 11:5-8), the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8), and the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:10-14) illustrate various aspects of how to pray and how prayers are answered. The Lord's Prayer serves as a paramount model for prayer. Firstly, it emphasizes acknowledging the sovereignty of God—"hallowed be thy name." Terms like "I Am Who I Am," "Alpha and Omega," and "Yahweh (Jehovah)" deserve utmost reverence and should not be used carelessly or inappropriately.¹¹⁶ The Kingdom we pray for presently manifests in the heart, impulses, and desires aligned with God's will and law. This transformation involves denying the old natural self and embracing a new life characterized by free obedience, anticipating the glory yet to come.¹¹⁷ This kingdom is the rule of God in the hearts of men, women, and children,

¹¹⁶ Karl Barth, *The Christian Life Church*, Dogmatics Vol. IV Part 4, William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan), 155.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 244.

enabled by the Holy Spirit guided by the love of God and extending to all human beings. Other areas address forgiveness, help in temptation, and deliverance from evil, as He is the source of all sustenance and sovereign over all life and existence.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the apostles prayed during severe hardships, such as when Peter and John were in prison. The Pentecostal experience empowered their prayer life. Church leaders were men of prayer. Through prayer, Peter raised Tabitha (Dorcas) from death. Paul's call to Macedonia came through a vision (Acts 16:9). Around midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God while the other prisoners listened. Their prayer was followed by their release through an earthquake that opened the prison doors (Acts 16:22ff). Kneeling, praying, embracing, and kissing each other goodbye was a cherished way of parting among the followers of Christ (Acts 20:36).

In the Pauline Epistles, Paul is portrayed as a man of prayer. He prays that believers would know God's will and be complete through union with Christ (Colossians 1:9-15). Prayer and its connection with the Holy Spirit illustrate that prayer is a gift of the Spirit. John emphasizes that believers should pray in spirit and in truth. Paul states that believers must pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion, staying alert and persistent in their prayers for all believers everywhere (Ephesians 6:18).

Jude, the brother of James and Jesus, emphasizes that believers should pray in the power of the Holy Spirit

(Jude 20). The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that prayer is possible because Jesus, the High Priest who was God-man, intercedes for believers in Heaven. Individual believers have direct access to God through prayer. Nevertheless, corporate (ecclesiastical) prayer is by no means demeaned. In Hebrews 10:19-25, the people of God are encouraged to enter the presence of God with sincere hearts, fully trusting Him. Neglecting to meet together is discouraged. In his Epistle, James states that prayer should have correct motives (James 4:1-3). Praying for the sick is an obligation. James also advises that when perplexed about life's issues, wisdom is to be sought from God, as Christ is the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24, 2:1-7).

In his First Epistle, John advises that believers' requests will be heard by God with a clear conscience and without fear. Whatever we ask from God will be granted because through obedience, our requests align with God's will (1 John 3:21 ff). There is a direct relationship between prayer and the will of God. Prayer is efficacious, especially in intercessory matters, but there are situations where prayer becomes ineffective due to the outright rejection of Christ (1 John 5:16), as was the case with the antichrists of that time.

The focus on prayer in this book centers on prayer as a primary element in the praise and worship of God. However, it's important to note that for both individual Christians and the church as a whole to fully engage in prayer with other believers, they must recognize key

elements of effective prayer as outlined in Hebrews, the Gospels, and the Epistles of James and John. Foremost among these is that prayer must align with the will of God (Matthew 6:10, 26:39, John 15:7). Submission to God's will is crucial (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Built upon the foundation of God's will are faith (Mark 11:24), obedience (Psalm 66:18, Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 15:29), and confession of sins, both individually and corporately.

Humility, not pride, makes prayer effective (James 4:10). This is exemplified in the contrast between the prayer of the tax collector and that of the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14). Forgiving those who have wronged us (as demanded in the Lord's Prayer), praying earnestly (Daniel 9:19), and waiting upon the Lord are also crucial aspects of prayer life. The Psalmist succinctly expresses this in Psalm 130:5-6;

I am counting on the lord,
Yes, I am counting on him
I have put my hope in his word.
I long for the lord more than the sentries long for
the dawn.

As expected, praying effectively in private positively impacts prayer in small groups or fellowships, and extends its efficacy to the entire assembly of believers in the church. There is a clear multiplier effect. It's important to note that praying together is emphasized in the Lord's Prayer: "Our" Father, give "us" this day "our"

daily bread, forgive “our” trespasses, do not lead “us” into temptation, etc.

Scripturally, fasting is also incorporated during times requiring intense supplication. The saying "when the going gets tough, only the tough keep going" applies to prayer in the Christian life. For instance, Anna, a widow who lived to eighty-four, "never left the Temple but worshiped God with fasting and prayer day and night" (Luke 2:37). Before commissioning Barnabas and Saul for mission work, the early church prayed and fasted. Fasting fosters humility and underscores the reliance on God to overcome obstacles in life.

Fasting can be either partial or total, lasting a day or more. Among Christians today, partial fasting typically involves abstaining from food while drinking water is permitted. Fasting is not legalistic but an act of self-denial to focus on specific issues or matters. It's common for Christians to engage in three-day fasts or progress to a seven-day fast. Extended fasting for up to three weeks is not uncommon, especially when prayer groups unite for challenging situations facing the church or nation, such as before general elections.

In African countries, where transitions of power during elections can be tumultuous, there is a growing trend of churches organizing corporate prayer and fasting, sometimes lasting 40 days. This practice aims to seek God's intervention for peaceful transitions and national stability.

As African Christians, prayer holds immense importance, just as it does across the universal Church, in living a worshipful life. Prayer connects individuals with the Author of life, and a life devoid of prayer is devoid of purpose. Material wealth and robust health alone cannot bring true happiness unless they are centered on God. The biblical cautionary tale of the rich fool who placed his trust in material abundance illustrates this truth (Luke 12:13ff). It is ironic that one can possess wealth yet lack wisdom.

There should be a proper attitude towards wealth and its accumulation; life transcends mere possessions. Through prayer and thanksgiving to God, genuine fulfillment in life becomes attainable. Living in a relationship with God and prayerfully engaging in His work is profoundly fulfilling and honorable. However, caution is necessary to avoid viewing prayer as a magical solution or depending solely on personal efforts.

The customary use of three days, seven days, and forty days for fasting finds its roots in various significant periods in biblical and historical contexts. For instance, the pattern of three days, seven days, and forty days resonates with Trinitarian thinking, the six days of creation culminating in rest on the seventh, and significant periods like Jesus' forty days of temptation, Moses' forty years in the wilderness, and his subsequent life stages.

In contemporary culture, the maxim "life begins at 40" reflects a similar concept of new beginnings and

maturity, aligning with these biblical patterns and their spiritual significance.

CHAPTER 7

The Praise and Worship Phenomenon

Having considered the main element of a worship service, it is important to culturally consider the area of worship phenomenon. This chapter on praise and worship of God will examine in detail what it entails to sing, to make melody, to dance in response to tunes, to make noise unto the lord, the applauding, commending and extoling God's worthiness in sound. Singing involves use of voice to produce musical sounds. Birds and insects produce melodious sounds. It's fascinating how hymns often capture the essence of nature praising God. In the Kikuyu Hymn Book (2003 enlarged edition), hymn number thirteen, stanza three, beautifully portrays birds singing as if they were making music in praise of Jesus. This imagery reflects a deep appreciation for the natural world joining in harmony with humans to glorify God, echoing the sentiment found in Psalm 148 where all creation praises the Lord. This hymn stanza not only celebrates the beauty of birdsong but also emphasizes the universal call to worship and praise our Creator. It is a verse drawn from hymn no. 299 in the Keswick Hymn Book, *Jesus Holy Undefined*. The subject on Praise and Worship of God is naturally drawn from Psalm 100:1-2:

Shout to the lord, all the earth!
Worship the lord with gladness,
Come before him, singing with joy.

Acknowledge the Lord is God!
He made us and we are his
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture (NLT).

Any believer can shout and praise God in words, even if no melody or tune is involved. However, music composition in any society is not the role of every individual. The ability to create music is a special talent given by God through common grace, similar to the specialized skills of surgeons or athletes, such as the Kenyan long-distance runners. Composing music requires those endowed with a knack for melody and the ability to express God's goodness, mercy, and spiritual insights through songs, choruses, and hymns. Even in folk music, there are individuals with the special talent to observe social-political situations and compose music that reflects those themes. In a previous chapter, it was mentioned that Joseph Kamarû, a Kikuyu music composer is well known in Central Kenya. Initially he composed social-political songs but later he started composing Gospel music, joining many other gospel singers in the field of contemporary Christian songs.

Among the Hebrews, music formed an integral part of Hebrew social life and had its place in the religious life.¹¹⁸ From 1 Chronicles 15:16-24, we see that David organized a Levitical choir, accompanied by an orchestra of performers who played various musical instruments such as harps, lyres, and cymbals. These singers and musicians, who were professional performers and composers of music, were tasked with singing joyful songs (1 Chronicles 15:16b). The scripture in 1 Chronicles 15:16-25, as noted in the Life Application Bible (NLT),

¹¹⁸ J. D. Douglas, *The New Bible Dictionary*, 852.

emphasizes this organization and the roles of the Levites in worship through music:

The great musical procession was designed as a worthy accompaniment to this great occasion (moving the Ark of the Covenant). It heightened the excitement, elevated the people's hearts and minds and focused their attention on the event. It also helped seal it in their memory for years to come. Beginning any task by praising God can inspire us to give him our best.

The same notes admonish that as we develop the practice of giving praise to God, we shall experience greater joy and strength to face anything. Thankful people worship wholeheartedly (Life Application Bible Col. 3:16-17). In Hebrews 1:4 ff., we are charged not to regard any intermediaries or authorities as greater than Christ Jesus who was God-man (in the Incarnation) is God. He alone deserves our unreserved worship. In praising, singing, and adoring God, this should be done wholeheartedly, with proper motives; no pretense, no vanity; not in a baneful manner, but with pure, sincere worship.

Just like Abel's individual sacrifice was accepted by God, the many Abels' sincere worship will naturally yield into an ecclesiastical corporate acceptable worship of God among the community of believers (the Church). It should not be lost to us that Christians did not give themselves the title Christian. This label was given to the People of the Way (the way of Christ-like behavior) by non-Christians in Antioch. As Christians, our motives in singing as choirs, worship teams, leaders in praise and worship, or when presenting a song or hymn as an

individual in the congregation; sincerity and purity of heart and motive is what matters most.

The Bible stipulates that they that worship the Lord must worship him in spirit and in truth need not be repeated. Our hearts (the seat of our emotions), our mind (the intellectual power), whether one is schooled or illiterate as is common in traditional societies, should approach God in truth. The right spirit is a prerequisite in musical praise as in other aspects of worship of God. When the heart and the mind are in tune with God, then the soul (that by-product of what the heart yields) and the mind become the principle of life. That principle of life will love God truly. The love of God will overflow into love of self (self-esteem) and then move the believer to love the neighbor as self. Put simply, guided by sincere love of God for what He has done through grace, there shall be harmony among the worshippers, among the choir members, and among the pastoral team. There shall be no quarrels among them.

The Bible lays stress on joyous singing involving dancing as the occasion may demand. As the Ark of the Covenant was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem, David was dressed in a robe of fine linen, and so were all the Levites who carried the Ark over. Singers and Kenaniah, the choir leader, also wore uniforms. However, as David joined the others skipping about and laughing with joy, it drew the contempt of his wife Michal who watched the event from her window (I Chronicles 15:27-29). It is worth noting that there are several Michals who would

wish their spouses or any other worshipper to succumb to human dignity at the expense of worshipping God in song and dance wholeheartedly. One day, I heard the following statement from a BBC broadcast when talking about the role of music in human life which I take to be relevant in our context: “music is like a string that has joined human life throughout the ages. Words are expressed in musical notes in times of joy, sorrow, or in praise of God.”

In this book, there is persistence in referring to some African traditional religious practices because the revelation that indigenous peoples have had was divinely revealed. As in the Jewish Old Covenant, the gospel finds not an empty heart, but a personality that has godliness upon which the Grace of God in the New Covenant finds abode

Among the Yoruba people of Nigeria, in their traditional beliefs, music may be quiet, loud, or noisy, depending on the kind of worship in which it occurs.¹¹⁹ The explanation continue:

It may be just singing; it may be singing accompanied by clapping, or singing accompanied by instruments. Instruments may be two pieces of bamboo, sticks or metal, held by each member of the congregation; it may be a drum, it may be a stick, and a gong or sticks and gongs, it may be all the three together.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Idowu-Olodumare, *God in Yoruba Beliefs*, 113.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 115.

When the Yoruba converts to Christian faith the instruments could be used in Christian songs and hymns.

As in music the modes of prayers, posture and attitude at worship could be used to bring in Christ to the Yoruba. Their sacrifices could find fulfilment in Christ is sacrificial act on the cross just as it was to the Hebrews who had elaborate sacrificial system for atoning for sins.¹²¹

As African Christians, let us not discard what is good in our African cultures, whether it's our musical heritage or familial and societal values, as long as these do not contradict the Gospel. It's important to remember that all Old Testament believers—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Samson, Jephthah, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, and all the prophets—prepared the way for the New Testament era. Knowledge from the Old Testament is invaluable in understanding the New Testament. If we simply discard our traditional music heritage, we will miss out on appreciating the New Testament theology of praise and worship of God. While the New Testament fulfills the Old Testament, the Old Testament is also understood in the light of the New Testament.

In the introduction section of the Church hymnody (Third Edition), cultural considerations are emphasized in

¹²¹ Ibid.,113, 114-128.

the following manner: "On the other hand, while maintaining faithfulness to the Divine in worship, there should also be consideration that the music is appropriate to the variety of emotions involved in people's worship and to their musical abilities."¹²² The Word (the Bible) is never oblivious to the cultural mandate. Contextualizing music content, tunes, rhythms, and instruments is essential. In this regard, when compiling the church hymnary, members were admonished that:

The committee therefore had to keep in view the requirements of a number of somewhat differing communities not only in Britain but overseas. It also found it necessary to include a number of hymns of more or less local provenance or use to meet the specific needs of some particular branch of the church.¹²³

Praise or singing is just a branch of worship of God. It is therefore pertinent to delve deeply into the biblical notions of praise other than music to understand more clearly what it entails to live a worshipful life. In Isaiah chapter 58, we have a picture of true and false worship in general life and in the area of musical praise.

Mere church attendance without sincerity, including fasting, is not approved by God if done as a

¹²² Oxford University Press, *The Church Hymnody* (Third Edition), 1981, viii.

¹²³ *The Church Hymnary* (3rd Edition), 1981, vii

routine to please oneself (Is. 58:3). Oppressing domestic workers or exploiting employees in general industries is unacceptable. Infighting and quarreling are hindrances to worship that God approves and that which pleases Him. Without sharing food with the needy and clothing the naked, it portrays mere religiosity which in effect is sheer vain show. When vanity becomes the order of the day, people miss the point of living in vital relationships, hence missing an essential link with God.

Genuine compassion for the oppressed, the poor, and the helpless are marks of true worship (Isaiah 58:8-10). The word of God warns against doing good only to those who can reciprocate (Luke 14:12-14). Similarly, Jesus did not outrightly condemn having parties for family get-togethers as He himself attended such occasions (John 2:1-11). Jesus disapproved of doing good only because we can benefit from our actions. It is appropriate to do good to those who are not in a position to give us anything in return, for God recognizes and rewards such actions Himself.

Grudem states that the term worship can be defined as an act of glorifying God and that everything we do should glorify God. However, it is noticeable at once that this definition is rather too broad for the human situation, considering Pauline theology of salvation in three tenses: "we are saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved at Christ's Second Coming." By Christ's death and resurrection, we are acquitted of our sins' stain. We are being sanctified daily in our faith journey, yet we

have not reached perfection. How then can we do everything to glorify God? Christians are forgiven sinners whose lives are guided by God through His mercies and grace.

Now, if we assert that all we do ought to please God, what about when we falter, hate, get angry, and sometimes curse our enemies? We find anger and vengeance in the Book of Psalms, especially in Psalms 10, 23, 35, 59, 69, 137, 139, and 140, which carry messages calling for revenge due to the "hate element," anger, and vengeance, which Christ addressed in His teachings.

Be holy because I am holy. Is there a sinless perfect person? St. Augustine in his letter *Augustine, Letter 167:10*, holds the view that; “Just as grace sovereignly rescues the sinners’ will from the bondage of sin, the same grace could (in theory) sovereignly make the liberated will completely sinless even now, on earth.”¹²⁴

It is commonplace to wonder whether one can be saved, and claim so while on this earth. However, going by the past-present-and future tenses as explained by Apostle Paul, one can safely say, yes. Needham illustrates this when he states that:

By wise permission of God, Christians still sin, even as Christians still die. Immaculate souls, like immortal bodies, will have to wait for another

¹²⁴ R. N. Needham, *The Triumph of Grace: Augustine’s Writing on Salvation*, (London England, Grace Publication Trust, 2000), 243.

world. Augustine's bracingly frank vision of persisting sin in the life of the regenerate has been fully shared by all the great theologians and saints, Catholic and Protestant, Jansenists and Calvinists, who have followed his footsteps.¹²⁵

It is common when a Christian passes on to talk of "one has rested from his/her hard labor." The normal Christian life as warfare has been God's way of dealing with the evil one. Apostle John, having lived into ripe old age, had witnessed Christian growth close to the end of the 1st century (C.E.). He must have observed or heard how fellow followers of Christ had been tortured, persecuted, and killed. Some stood firm, while others faltered and maybe recanted their faith under persecution. He could therefore boldly write in 1 John 1:8-10: "If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts" (NLT).

Sin is a complex phenomenon, applicable more than just when we commit bad deeds or make deliberate bad decisions. Even subtle motives such as envy or criticism of colleagues or friends, whether conscious or

¹²⁵ Needham, *The Triumph of Grace*, 243.

unconscious, constitute a matrix of sin. Our singing, singing groups, and choirs should be free from these ills.

Genuine praise of God should be experienced by every believer. Singers and worshippers need to feel a strong sense of God's presence in corporate worship. A believer should experience emotions in their consciousness that are unique to times of worship. Then each individual should desire that such feelings are present in everyday life. Christians need to sense that God is ministering to them. In summary, individuals need to identify hindrances that prevent them from experiencing genuine praise even on weekdays.¹²⁶

Praise and worship is a notion used in contemporary worship as the first part of a worship service. It is characterized by choruses, short hymns, or parts of well-known hymns. This is a deviation from the liturgical format in mainline churches that begin services with prayer, followed by a doxological hymn, several hymns interspersed between prayers of intercession, adoration, Bible readings, and preparation to hear the sermon, a recessional hymn, and so on. In the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, St. Andrew's Parish in Nairobi, there is a preference to refer to that part of the service as praise "in" worship.

Now, praise "and" worship of God or praise "in" worship of God, or praise as you worship, giving reverence to God is, in the author's view, essentially the

¹²⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1013-1014, – drawn from the questions for personal application).

same thing. The two notions are just a matter of semantics or the nature of phraseology. Praise is contained in worship but not separated from it. The true essence is that worshippers are out to sing, shout, and dance, glorifying God with their hearts and minds. There is not much one can observe, but an individual can feel the worshiping mode when the soul tilts to genuine adoration of God, who is our maker, keeper, and provider in our lives. When we genuinely worship God a number of things happen. Grudem provides them as:

Delight in God, we draw near to God, God draws near to us and He ministers to us, the Lord's enemies (our enemies) flee and some evangelistic spirit pervades among the worshippers. Non-believers or Christian alumni (nominal-Christians) may turn their hearts to live for Christ (I Corinthians 14: 23-25).¹²⁷

We were created to worship God. Therefore, a genuine approach to our Creator has everlasting benefits. A Christian is a citizen of this world as a pilgrim, a sojourner, but his citizenship is in Heaven. Heaven is variously described and depicted in the Bible. For instance, in Matthew 25:34, genuine followers of Christ are invited, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of

¹²⁷ Ibid., 1003 – 1009

the world.” In the Book of Revelation, those who will enter the kingdom will continue worshipping God (Rev. 22:3). So, one can safely state that adoration of God in truth and in spirit is just rehearsing for a spectacle that awaits them at the end of time. At the end of time, time will be swallowed in Eternity. The Bible says that the sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon will have no source of light; then the Morning Star (Jesus) shall be the light (Mark 13:24-27 and Rev. 22:1-5). Heaven is not just a notion; it is a place. John the apostle, who worked with Jesus and lived to a ripe old age, often considered around 90 years by many writers, attests to this in his Gospel through the words of Jesus himself:

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and also trust in me. There is more than enough room in my father’s home. If it were not so, I would have told you. When everything is ready, I will come and get you so that you will always be with me, where I am (John 14:1-3).

As we worship and praise God, we are reminded that this is just a stage, a rehearsal for eternal praise of our Maker! By grace, if one believes this, Heaven is assured. As already stated with reference to Isaiah 58, true singing is distinguishable from mere praise if those who are eager and enthusiastic to sing exhibit or project their lives in practice. Strictly speaking, you may consider praise and singing as theory, oblivious to practice in the spirit of

truthfulness before God Himself and those participating or listening.

A singer's heart and audible voice, just as with a preacher, should have affections and emotions attached to God, seeking blessings as much as hoping others will be blessed. We often see preachers pray that the Lord speaks to them just as they expect their listeners to be blessed. The life lived in daily situations should intuitively reflect affections and emotions attached to God in music and dance. At no time should the music leader, choir, or members of the praise team allow their hearts, the seat of emotions and the mind, to be filled with self-aggrandizement. Otherwise, as Prophet Amos says, God will not be pleased with such music: "Away with your noisy hymns of praise. I will not listen to the music of your harps" (Amos 5:22-23).

What delights God in praise and worship (or praise in worship), as reiterated here, is that in music, we carry the spirituality embodied in singing and praising into the open spaces of daily activities in our offices, gardens, and industries. Whether one is an employer or an employee, and particularly in our family circles, the joyous mood evident in praises should be seen outside houses of worship. If we do this, Christ's promise of bringing abundant life will find us suitable vehicles for healing fallen humanity.

It is in these true, real, actual concrete situations that God will be honored. It is here that we shall ascribe to the worthiness of God. It is in this manner that true

connection with God and humanity will be wired in praise as we sing and enrich the realm of religious affections that are generated in music. Our hearts should be filled with music, even after the praise session ends. Musical verses should find room in our memories in daily lives. In musicking humility is paramount. As we beat drums, play guitars, modern organs, and keyboards, let us remember that it is possible to adore God without them. With humility and proper honoring of Sunday as a special day of worship, as we are guided by either the choir or praise teams the Lords says:

I will be your delight.

I will give you honor and satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestor Jacob. I the Lord has spoken (Is. 58:14).

When it comes to praising God unreservedly, many Christians face a pitfall where holy affections are missing if we fail to express our minds and religious emotions. It is evident that African Christians, despite their background of overt expression of joy in song and dance, often face inhibition due to religious and social constraints inherited from Euro-American styles of singing. When the Gospel was preached in Africa—first in the 15th century in Western Africa and later in Eastern Africa in the mid-18th century, and more extensively at the turn of the 19th century—African musical elements were often suppressed. The tunes used in traditional

African music were disregarded as unsuitable for Christian hymns. This issue has been extensively discussed by African theologians such as Mbiti and Idowu. This mindset has impoverished African styles and expressions in the worship of God.

In the old covenant, Israelites were grateful to God for their unique role as instruments of His revelation to humanity. Now, under the new covenant of forgiveness and grace, Christians, as the New Israel, are designated as a holy nation and a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9). This underscores the importance of joyfully expressing praise and worship to God. Psalm 27:6 affirms this mandate: "Then I will hold my head high above my enemies who surround me. At his sanctuary I will offer shouts of joy, singing and praising the Lord with music."

As previously noted, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines music as sounds arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. Whether acapella or instrumental, excitement should be a key element in praise. While there are numerous musical styles stemming from various cultures, biblically speaking, praise of God should be both exciting and graceful.

Pioneers of African theology like Mbiti, Idowu, and others, including Mûgambi Ndûng'û Ikenyae who explores African counseling and psychotherapy, lament the disregard or neglect of African religious heritage,

particularly in the realm of African musicology.¹²⁸ As African countries were gaining political independence in the early 1960s, Mbiti argued persuasively for the use of drum in worship and suggested a particular application of this to the rite of baptism; he did not however mention dance.¹²⁹ In his latter works, Mbiti explains that Africans celebrate music with dance and rhythm: Music, singing and dancing reach deep into the innermost parts of African peoples, and many things come to the surface under musical inspiration which otherwise may not be readily revealed.¹³⁰

As Christians, when praise of God is rooted in African expressions, and Gospel proclamation takes center stage, holy affections in the heart will naturally manifest during corporate worship. To enrich the worship experience, the Church should incorporate many songs and hymns written by African gospel artists. There is an over-reliance on translations of Euro-American hymns and gospel songs, as authenticated by the committee that compiled *The Church Hymnody*, as noted earlier.

In contemporary Africa, charismatic growth has pulled mainline churches from “hymns only praise” into a combination of praise and worship and hymns in a worship service. This is now quite appropriate and admired by majority of worshippers. “Worship is enhanced by praises as it becomes participative and

¹²⁸ Baeta, 146.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 147-148.

¹³⁰ Mbiti, 67.

exhilarating. After musicking testimonies enable non-professionals and the voiceless to generally, express themselves and be heard.”¹³¹ Mainline churches are usually said to be so westernized that the western individualistic approach to faith, weakens the communalism, a mode of life that has been taken for granted in traditional Africa. In it, raising children, teaching morality, good manners and show of respect was a corporate endeavor.

In African Communalism, faith finds expression in cell-group fellowships. Today, due to the individualistic approach to life and religion fostered by missionary churches, such as the creation of "district cells" in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), very few people attend these house-based meetings. This disparity becomes evident during church attendance on "Elder Sunday worship," organized once every year by PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, and in other PCEA Churches. During Elder Sunday Worship, parish members worship within their local neighborhoods or estates, particularly in urban settings. In rural areas, this concept may be reflected in the use of terms like "ridges" (rûgongo).

Over the decades, the Roman Catholic Church has made strides in recognizing the need for acculturation, not only of liturgy through the use of native languages since

¹³¹ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy*, (London, Hurst & Company, 2004), 195.

Vatican II (1962-65), but also by incorporating local music, tunes, and dance into the praise and worship of God. Additionally, theological issues such as the understanding of evil (demonology) and healing in charismatic circles have been acknowledged and addressed by the Catholic Church.¹³² In the year 2000 Vatican issued an instruction regularizing healing services in the Catholic Church. This promulgation was seen as influenced by activities of the Zambian Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo.¹³³ In Kenya, there is clear division among the mainline Protestant churches, the Catholic Church, and the Kenya National Congress of Pentecostal Churches and Ministries concerning healing ministries and engagement with national issues involving matters of faith.

The evangelical response to the Kenyan government's intention to register Christian church activities in January 2016 was firm and critical. The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, represented by its 26 bishops, described the proposed law as an attempt by the government to micromanage worship.¹³⁴ The mainline Protestant churches' reaction appeared subdued in contrast. For the Catholic Church, any rule not sanctioned by the Vatican would not be welcomed. This could have triggered the swift reaction to the government's intended move. Living a worshipful life requires that the church

¹³² Gifford, *Ghana's Now Christianity*, 200.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Daily Nation, Wednesday January 13, 2016.

moderates secular power from undue intrusion into faith issues.

The Ethiopian church, with its inherent Semitic theology, has a persistent and prevalent ritual dance due to its African heritage.¹³⁵ Today, as African Christians, we no longer share the missionaries' fear of possible syncretism, where drumming might be associated with exorcism or where playing the guitar could be viewed through the lens of secular dances. Similar concerns existed during the Reformation, when items used for secular music were deemed inappropriate for Christian worship.¹³⁶ In African traditional life, festivals were colored with dancing and drumming.¹³⁷

Reluctance to accept the drum in church music initially hindered genuine praise. However, over time, the drum gained acceptance as a musical instrument. If drumming and dancing had been fully embraced without reservation, it would have solidified authentic praise of God. Today, the keyboard is prominently featured in praise and worship, not only in urban churches but also increasingly in rural churches. Drumming has also found its place in church music, often incorporating rhythms that blend with keyboard and guitar melodies.

In Pentecostal Assemblies and some neo-Pentecostal churches, African rhythms characterized by

¹³⁵ Baeta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa*, 148

¹³⁶ 2000 Years of Christs' Power: Part three, Renaissance of Reformation, 229-236)

¹³⁷ Baeta, 206.

single beats interspersed with double or triple beats in rapid succession are commonplace. In contrast, in mainline churches like PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, young worshippers embrace and enjoy participatory and vibrant singing. As praise songs progress, it is common to hear calls for "let-us-praise in the African way," prompting ululations (a-ri-ri-ri), dancing, clapping, and movement. The introduction of drums in worship services has added a distinctly African flair, enriching the worship experience with a touch of romance.¹³⁸

When members of mainline churches worship in independent or charismatic congregations, one cannot help but agree with Mbiti when he asserts that "Africans are extremely fond of dancing, and Africans do so in celebration."¹³⁹ In worship services where languages other than English are used, hymns sung often retain their original tunes and translations from English and American churches.¹⁴⁰ The Kikuyu hymn book (*Nyĩmbo cia kũinĩra Ngai*), is a compilation of hymns from Redemption songs (RS), Hymn Ancient and modern, etc., A full list is provided as Appendix 1. In his article, *The ways and means of communicating with God* (in Baeta: *Christianity in Tropical Africa*), Mbiti states that "the fact that all these hymns are translations, and are sung to imported tunes, it

¹³⁸ Ibid., 227.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 334.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

makes their teaching appear foreign.¹⁴¹ If African tunes and instruments were used this would link the hymns to the musical life of the people. What he is saying is that, if African musical instruments such as the drum, *kayaba* and *wandĩndĩ*, etc., are used in church music, their rhythmic beats would awaken emotions since, gauged from the African perspective, the piano or the organ is too weak for that.¹⁴² As has been argued from time to time in this book, Mbiti is explicit that:

It may be of value also to explore the possibilities of using certain amount of dancing where this is likely to prove an effective witness of the Church. After all before the Lord, dancing has religious value in the Bible as in 2 Sam. 6:14, Ps. 149:3 and 150:4.¹⁴³

In praising and worshiping God, emotions often surge within worshippers when the heart (the seat of human emotions), along with other vital organs like the brain and the body's adrenaline, influences the mind. This arousal leads to a vigorous and meaningful expression of emotions.

In plain language, Webster's Dictionary defines "Affections" as a false appearance or assumption of a state, quality, or manner. However, in religious contexts,

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Baeta, 335.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 334.

the definition of Affections shifts. Some religious behaviors or manifestations, such as glossolalia (speaking in tongues), may appear false to outsiders, but they are real experiences for those who participate in them. This is often observed in praise and worship settings where the worship leader may engage in seemingly unusual behavior, jumping up and down among an enthusiastic congregation. "Affection" is more specific than "passion," referring to vigorous and lively acts of the will or inclination.¹⁴⁴

Affections are characterized by their sustained nature compared to passion. For instance, during a football match, athletics, or any competitive game, spectators often display intense passion. However, after the game, this passion typically diminishes. Sometimes, this passion can escalate into anger, leading opposing teams to engage in physical altercations. In contrast, affections are different. Apostle James describes true religion as faith in God that actively meets the needs of the deprived (James 2:18-22). Edwards further elaborates on this concept, stating, "Who would deny that true religion largely consists of vigorous and lively inclinations and acts of the soul, or fervent exercises of the heart?"¹⁴⁵ Drawing support from the Bible, Edwards derives powerful principles for Christian living. He asserts that God has endowed humans with affections, which serve as the spring of their actions. The vigorous,

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 7.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 8.

lively, and sensible exercises of the will are none other than the affections of the soul. This stance finds solid support in the Bible. The religion that God demands and accepts does not consist of weak, dull, and lifeless wishes that barely elevate us above indifference. According to God's Word, we are called to be earnest and fervent in our faith.¹⁴⁶

Several scriptural verses support Edwards' stance. Romans 12:11 states, "Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically." This implies that every act related to faith—whether witnessing, praying, singing, or loving one another—should be done with genuine affection. Deuteronomy 10:12 charges Israel to love and worship God with "all your heart and soul." Earlier, it was explained that the soul essentially combines the state of the heart and mind. From the state of the heart (the seat of our emotions) and the intellect (the mind), all our actions are triggered, including how we praise and adore God.

In Deuteronomy 6:4-6, the same message is reiterated: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord (Yahweh) is our God, the Lord alone. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commandments I am giving you today." God, who is love, is the source of all holy affections. Love is the prime life force from which all other holy affections emanate. Examples of these affections essential in true praise and worship of God include fear of the Lord, hope, holy joy, rejoicing,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

gratitude, compassion, and zeal. In our fallen world, which Christ came from Heaven to redeem, praise and worship of God encompasses not only zeal and enthusiasm but also religious sorrow, mourning, and brokenness of heart, all of which are biblically approved behaviors (Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 61:1-2, Isaiah 51:17, Isaiah 57:15, Isaiah 66:2). These verses illustrate that a broken spirit is a true sacrifice, and a broken and repentant heart is acceptable to God. There is also the message to "Wake up, wake up, O Jerusalem; revive the spirit of the lowly. Humble and contrite hearts form the core of these scriptural teachings."

Isaiah 61:1-2 introduces Christ as the Messiah in the Old Testament: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for captives and to comfort those who mourn." In His sovereign wisdom, God understands that while we are exhorted to rejoice always, there are times when religious sorrow or sorrowful moods arise due to heavy issues affecting our lives. Therefore, it is not uncommon to see a Christian experiencing sorrow, although joyous situations are abundant. Christian life should not be characterized by being moldy, rusty, morbid, or listless.

In 1 Peter 1:8, we find an example of such behavior that might appear unconventional as a demonstration of joyful living. The verse reads: "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (NIV). In the King

James Version, it reads: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." John Edwards states that;

This kind of joy is different from worldly joys and casual delight; of vastly more pure, sublime and heavenly nature, being something supernatural, and truly divine and ineffably excellent; the sublimity and exquisite sweetness of which there is no words to set forth unspeakable also in degree. It is pleasing to God to give him his holy joy, with a liberal hand, and in large measure, in their state of persecution.¹⁴⁷

The importance of praising and worshipping God in music, song and dance is in my view vindicated by Edwards when he talks about ordinances and duties that God has appointed as a means and expressions of true religion. He talks of prayer and singing praises to God in the following manner:

To instance in the duty of prayer, it is manifest, we are not appointed to this duty to declare God's perfections, his majesty, holiness, goodness and all-sufficiency, and our own meanness, emptiness, dependence and our wants and desires, to inform

¹⁴⁷ Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 5-6.

God of these things, or to incline his heart and prevail on him to be willing to us mercy, but suitably to affect our hearts with things we express and so to prepare to receive blessing we ask.¹⁴⁸

On the duty of singing he has this to say:

Singing praises to God seems to be appointed wholly to excite and express religious affections. No other reason can be assigned why we should express ourselves to God in verse, rather than prose, and do it with music but, only, that such is our nature and frame that these things have a tendency to move our affections.

This conveys the message that while praising God, Christians should not hesitate to express virtuous affections through song and dance. Televangelism, originating in America, has spread to countries like Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya, influencing the style of praise. In mainline churches, alongside traditional liturgical services, praise and worship have become commonplace. Where multiple services exist within a parish, youth services are common, termed as contemporary services. In these services, praise predominantly uses gospel songs or parts of hymns combined. In services attended by older congregants,

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. 15.

praise and worship, although more subdued, remains a regular component before returning to structured liturgical patterns.

Around 2004, there was limited dancing and movement in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and many other mainline churches. The Roman Catholic Church, ahead of others, embraced the indigenization of music in worship earlier through Vatican II (1962-65), authorizing the use of vernacular languages during Mass. It is noteworthy that praise and worship generally follow a liturgical framework, albeit with pronounced use of local musical instruments and dancing. Any new element in worship, if consistently incorporated over time, becomes part of the liturgy. Further discussion on the phenomenon of praise and worship will follow in subsequent chapters.

Having made extensive observation, one should not lose sight of the fact that the church has universal character. Without an iota of doubt, great hymns of Christendom have enriched the Church.¹⁴⁹ This has been previously discussed in an earlier chapter. The term "Christendom" illustrates that hymns from the missionary era carry characteristics and elements that mirror the culture and aspirations of the missionary societies that dispatched evangelists and missionaries to Africa. According to Webster's Desk Dictionary of the English Language, one of the meanings of Christendom is simply

¹⁴⁹ Baeta, *Christian Church in Africa*, 334.

"the Christian world," encompassing diverse cultures. Culture encompasses all aspects of a people's life, including science, technology, music, and their overall worldview.

For instance, there are occasions where a hymn translated into a local language may not resonate directly with African worshippers. This is because the foreign elements and characteristics reflect the socio-cultural aspirations of the missionary societies that originated them.

In the Kikuyu Hymn Book hymn no. 170 is a translation of hymn no. 290 in the Golden Bells titled, *Eternal Father Strong to Save*. It is the same hymn in the Redemption Songs hymn no. 420. The hymn addresses the theme of dangers at sea, likely serving as a prayer song for missionaries on their oceanic journeys. Such a hymn may not evoke strong emotions or affections among African worshippers. Few Africans, particularly those inland, have experienced sea voyages, let alone crossing a lake or even a stream in a boat.

In other cases, where enculturation is attempted, the song would appear gender insensitive and or it may border on ageism. Except for children hymns or choruses and hymns should be inclusively sang. The popular hymn *Stand up, Stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross* (Hymn no. 272 in the Kikuyu Hymn Book) gets its value distorted in an effort to enculturate. In the Golden Bells (no. 506), the same hymn exalts all people to stand up for Jesus. In the translation the call is to *Aanake* (young men)

to stand up, stand up for Jesus. Women and elderly men are missed out in this fervent call to stand up for Jesus in fight against the evil one. The most likely explanation is that among the Agĩkũyũ people and their Maasai neighbors to the West only *Aanake* (young males) and morans (Maasai warriors), went out for battle; not the elderly and women.

The point being made is that in the praise and worship of God, the Kikuyu Hymn Book with many hymns whose meaning carries universal message of the gospel, there is need to incorporate locally produced Christian songs. It is reiterated that local gospel music artists may have to consider less royalties as the church seeks to incorporate their gospel songs in the Kikuyu Hymn Book; this should apply to other groups of people such as the Akamba, Kalenjin and the Luos among many other peoples in regard to vernacular hymn books. The feasibility of this suggestion is supported by the introduction of the Kikuyu Hymn Book, fourth edition, which was first published by SPCK in 1935 (originally in 1915). The 2003 edition, which was completely revised and expanded, includes numerous hymns, songs, and choruses of local origin.

Today, there are many gospel music artists whose music is distributed through cassettes, CDs, and DVDs. While artists naturally rely on sales of their products, placing excessive emphasis on the commercial aspect could deprive congregations of a rich source of musical praise. The value of their praise songs is evident at

wedding receptions and funerals. Therefore, composers and producers are encouraged to allow some of their music to be reviewed by specialized church committees so that their songs can be included in future editions of Christian hymn books in local languages. There is no reason why such praise songs and hymns cannot be embraced by the wider universal church, similar to how non-religious music spreads across cultures worldwide.

Efforts have been made to stress the need to contextualize not just the gospel message, but especially in the realm of praise. It would be unwise to argue that God's revelation and praise in song and dance did not exist before the Gospel was preached in Africa. God's general revelation is universal, and His means of grace has a global appeal. It may sound repetitive, but it is crucial to emphasize that when the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ is preached, there is an aspect that the messenger of the Word might overlook. In the receiving culture, not all cultural traits should be expected to become obsolete.

On the contrary, Jesus did not come to abolish the Laws of God (the Ten Commandments), but to fulfill them. He inaugurated the law of love, forgiveness, repentance, and grace. Thus, Jesus did not nullify the divine revelations in the Old Testament; rather, He introduced the new wine of the gospel. He ushered in a life of forgiveness and provided access for all people to approach God in a new way, distinct from the elaborate sacrificial system of Hebrew worship. The freedom to worship God in the Christian era should encourage

peoples worldwide to embrace the praise of God as outlined in the Bible.

Therefore, to all African peoples and indigenous inhabitants everywhere, whenever the Gospel, the Good News message of salvation, is preached, take heart and worship and praise God using the positive cultural values that God has generously bestowed upon all. When these positive values are blended with Biblical teachings, the abundant life promised by Jesus becomes attainable. Several examples of such rich heritage are listed below.

In his book, *Concepts of God in Africa*, Mbiti gives examples on how music, singing and dancing were widespread among Africans in their religious ceremonies and rites. The Bavenda (from South Africa) are said to worship God with singing and dancing.¹⁵⁰ It would be in order to do so in Church life. Among the Jie (from Uganda), in their annual sacrifices and prayers they affirm them with singing and dancing that God will give them rain and cause crops to grow.¹⁵¹

In the Christian context, the joy of singing and dancing should continue. In their big religious traditional assemblies the Shona (Zimbabwe formerly Southern Rhodesia) used cymbals and trumpets with much clapping of hands.¹⁵² They too should embrace this cultural musical heritage that the Bible definitely affirms.

¹⁵⁰ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, (London, S.P.C.K, 1971), 218.

¹⁵¹ Mbiti, 218.

¹⁵² Ibid.

Examples of dancing and singing are many, but one more example is from the Tonga (a people found in Malawi and Zambia). When praying for rain they traditionally sang and danced communally.¹⁵³

These examples have been given to validate a case of praise and worship to be vigorous, joyous and vibrant. In 1 Kings: 1:40 when David anointed Solomon as king, all the people returned with Solomon to Jerusalem, playing flutes and shouting for joy. The celebration was so joyous and noisy that the earth shook with the sound. In the gospel of Matthew 9:23 when Jesus arrived at the official's home, he noticed the noisy crowds and heard the funeral music. Flute playing and the noisy crowd shows that the funeral preparation, the mourning and the associated activities stirred empathetic spirits in reverence to God as the Giver of life and a savior in death. There was excitement that Jesus was on the way to the synagogue ruler's house. Similarly, in the Christian era we occasionally notice joyous funeral songs when the believers are confident that the departed had set and lived a God-loving life. Dancing at funerals is a sign of defiance against the forces of death and the life which goes on.

Just as in Africa, music and dance was an integral part of Hebrew social and religious life.¹⁵⁴ One outstanding example of music, song, and dance is the occasion of deliverance from Egypt when Miriam, Moses' sister, along with other women, danced in celebration

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ New Bible Dictionary, 852

(Exodus 15:20ff). Music, singing, and dancing during festivals are well-documented throughout the Old Testament (2 Samuel 1:17-27, 2 Chronicles 20:28, Isaiah 5:12, Amos 6:5, and Isaiah 26). These passages highlight funeral music, frivolous party music lacking regard for God, and genuine songs of praise, respectively.

The biblical musical instruments originated from the Middle and Near East. The lyre, for example, was used by the Chaldeans around 2500 BC.¹⁵⁵ Strings (harp is recorded in Genesis 4:21). Jabal, son of Lamech, was born to him by Adah, one of his two wives. He is credited as the first musician and inventor of the harp and flute (Genesis 4:21). The psaltery, an instrument plucked with fingers, is mentioned in 1 Samuel 10:5, Daniel 3:5 ff. The dulcimer, a form of bagpipes, is recorded in Daniel chapter 3 along with other instruments like the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and pipes. Wind instruments made of reeds, such as pipes, are mentioned in Isaiah 30:29. Percussion instruments included bells, cymbals, timbrel, and tabret, as referenced in various passages like Psalm 150:4 and Job 30:31.¹⁵⁶

As stated earlier, music has been a catalyst of joy in human civilization in all cultures in all parts of the globe where humans have lived. The tendency to ignore local African musical instruments terming them as inappropriate for worship of God is therefore misplaced. However, there is a cardinal point which is that, an

¹⁵⁵ New Bible Dictionary, 1375.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 855-856.

instrument is amoral. It is neither good nor bad. It is the user who would make it good or bad, holy or unholy. Africa has some science to offer to the foreigners in terms of the musical instruments. But how can we do so when we have been brainwashed to believe that they are not good to use in the churches? We need redemption from the problem of looking down upon indigenous instruments.

When Salvation Army was founded by General Booth in the 19th Century, it tried to meet the needs of the unchurched masses in the growing industrial towns. Their hymns were sung in popular tunes with a question embedded in their corporate psyche –‘Why should the devil have all good tunes?’ Hence the music was accompanied by a brass band.¹⁵⁷ A similar trend is evident in the expanding slum settlements of our East African cities. Mainstream churches situated on hills, such as PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi, the Mini Basilica in Nairobi’s CBD, the Anglican Cathedral near Upper Hill by Uhuru Park, AIC Milimani in the upscale Upper Hill area, and CITAM midway on Valley Road, are often exclusive, making them inaccessible to the marginalized. Churches like the Salvation Army, however, have mastered the approach of reaching out to such communities. Well clad in smart uniforms in their characteristic musicking they normally reach many down-to earth populations. Few of us are aware that the Church

¹⁵⁷ F. B. Welbourn, *East African Christian*, London, Ibadan, Nairobi, Accra Oxford University Press, (1965) 24.

Army started a school for the blind in Thika and operates a hostel for the ambulant sick in Kampala.¹⁵⁸

A noticeable fact in the worldwide Church is that there are individuals who are unwilling to accept outward expressions of religion simply because such practices were acceptable to their grandfathers, but not to them.¹⁵⁹ The advice given to these individuals is that heritage serves as a sinew that connects human civilizations, including the Christian faith. Therefore, modernism should not be an excuse for anyone to disregard their roots. Maintaining a genealogical connection to the Bible provides a profound sense of rootedness. Remember, "back to the roots" is a popular maxim in social circles! The Bible should guide what is considered "chaff" and "wheat," not individual whims. Before concluding this discussion on using a people's musical heritage to strengthen earnest praise and worship of God, a broader review from non-African sources will be presented in detail.

J. Nathan Corbitt's theory posits that the purpose of music in religion, much like in other facets of human existence, plays a pivotal role in the dynamics of life, faith, and beliefs that constitute our worship. Music, according to his theory, serves as one of the expressive

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

languages of worship.¹⁶⁰ Worship without music would be dry or lean and unattractive. Roberta King shares this position when she states that “when culture dynamically interacts with music, church growth is evident.”¹⁶¹ The author observes that this holds true in the new Church Movements, cum-church ministries such as Neno Evangelism, Grace Ministries among myriads of other smaller church groupings. Jean Ngoya Kindula an African, hails this stand of non-`African musicologists when she states that “music is invariably an identity and a culture maker.”¹⁶²

Calvin M. Johansson advances a theory related to Christian growth, asserting that "of the three main activities of church life towards maturity—namely evangelism, teaching, and worship—music, when used as part of these activities, also advances the same cause. It invariably supports these three pillars." According to Johansson, "Music moves beyond what has been assumed or claimed; it goes right to the heart of God's purpose, helping mightily in the process of holistic maturation."¹⁶³ Living a worshipful life therefore requires that singing

¹⁶⁰ Nathan, J. Corbitt, *The Sound of Harvest: Mission in the Church and Culture*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998), 53.

¹⁶¹ Roberta King et al *Music in the life of the African Church*, xii.

¹⁶² Kidula, in Kings et al., 101.

¹⁶³ Johansson Calvin, *Music and the Ministry: A Biblical counter Point*, (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), --

and praising God be done wholesomely, taking into consideration culturally hesitated musical practices. Music should not be seen merely as an auxiliary to the three acclaimed pillars of ministry mentioned above. Instead, music should be considered as the fourth component of church ministry.¹⁶⁴ Just as it is with Christians elsewhere in the world, the more African Christians listen to or sing songs, the more they are comforted and assured of God's omnipotence and goodness.¹⁶⁵ Christianity has, therefore, been received and practiced in music.¹⁶⁶

It then follows that, musicking with vibrancy should be the norm rather than an exception in a worship service. The propositions given by Corbitt on the role of music in worship, together with King's statement on culturally enriched music and church growth, and her attachment of African Christian spirituality to the way Africans sing, bear on what constitutes the phenomenon of praise and worship. Any church that clings to a "hymns-only" approach risks denying worshippers a vital aspect of worship.

In summary, worship of God through the voice (singing praises, giving thanks musically, shouting with joy), coupled with musical instruments, creates a lively approach to God. Body movements such as lifting hands, bowing, clapping, and dancing all show reverence and

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 18.

¹⁶⁵ King, et al. *Music in the life of the Christian Church*, 99

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

adoration. Collectively, these actions promote spiritual growth, which facilitates the teaching and receiving of the Word, enriches preaching and evangelism, and promotes discipleship aimed at fostering maturity. Christian maturity leads to church growth, reflecting vitality and energy, as Paul taught and exemplified the Church as a body where every part contributes to the life and energy of the whole.

CHAPTER 8

Praise and Worship Link to Charismization

Having anatomized the convolution of praise and worship of God, this chapter discusses in details the pitfalls that a church may find itself in, if it ignores biblical foundations in dealing with some discipline issues with the members. This phenomenon is reflected in the author's lived experience and concrete examples. The phenomenon of praise and worship in Christian worship services on Sundays, in cell fellowships, in wedding ceremonies, and in funeral preparation meetings, or in any other Christian gathering, has emerged.

The phenomenon has changed the worship service pattern in Kenya due to the influence of charismization. This contrasts with hymn singing, which has been characteristic of missionary-established churches, commonly referred to as mainline churches. In Europe or the Americas, such mother churches include the Episcopal Church of the United States, The Lutheran Church, and Baptist Churches. In Eastern Africa, mainline churches broadly include the Anglican Church, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, the African Inland Church, and the Catholic Church. Distinct from these are ministries such as Billy Graham Ministries, Christal Cathedral, and T. D. Jakes Ministries. Here in Kenya, such ministries include

Christ is the Answer Ministry (CITAM), Neno-Evangelism, The Glory is Here (Bishop Margaret Wanjirû), and Maximum Miracle (Bishop Mûirû).

There are many other smaller ministries scattered all over the country in both urban and rural areas. To illustrate the numerical strength of these single or husband-and-wife-led churches, refer to Appendix 2 for church establishments found in the southern suburbs of Nairobi City County in Ongata Rongai, Kiserian, and Ngong suburban areas, with churches along the road belonging to different administrations. The majority are one-man neo-Pentecostal churches, while others are husband and wife ministries or churches.

A survey was also conducted by the author in mid-January 2016 along Karen (Nairobi) through the Southern Bypass onto Nairobi-Naivasha–Gilgil–Ol’Kalou–Kipipiri–Ndunyu Njeru–Engineer–Njabini flyover circuit (see Appendix 3). This survey revealed that neo-Pentecostal churches and Pentecostal churches outnumber mainline churches such as PCEA, AIC, ACK, and the Roman Catholic Church. The numbers would be overwhelming if informal settlements were included. The recorded churches are only those located along the main roads.

Another category of church establishments includes Pentecostal churches that are offshoots from mainline churches such as Legio Maria, African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa, and the Akorino sect. These churches mix hymns and choruses,

singing using African musical beats and rhythms with extensive use of drums and other local instruments, such as iron rings. They are classical African Initiated Churches, and their musical styles have much to do with the use of African musical instruments and rhythm.

The Church is said to be moving to the global South. In the global North, especially in Europe, material prosperity tends to pull many into the pitfall of self-sufficiency. In the Bible, there are similar incidents whereby as the Hebrew people prospered, they tended to run astray from God. The religious life of the Israelites, the chosen vehicle of God's revelation to humankind, had a pattern of anticline and syncline – a wave pattern. When they obeyed God, then Yahweh lifted them up. When they abandoned the Lord God, He left them for a spiritual free fall. But a strand of hope always remained.

As mission-established churches took root in Africa, particularly in Kenya, believers used to hold open-air meetings or crusades in marketplaces. As African nations fought for and gained political independence, Christians in general seemed to move more towards material prosperity and confined worship to churches. Mud and timber off-cut structures were replaced by stone-built church buildings. Then it appeared that worshippers rested on their laurels, feeling satisfied with what they had already achieved, and no longer striving for more.

The reader may excuse the use of excessive examples from the PCEA. The author is a member of this church, and therefore, the views expressed below about

PCEA should be considered credible. “*Ciûngano* (crusades) of the 1950s and early 1960s are no longer in the mainline churches’ calendars. The church ministers confined their ministries among the members. Reaching out to the unchurched was left to evangelists who more often than not are not facilitated or required to go out there, to fish men and women into the net (the church). The youth who have the energy and spiritual rigor to preach in the market places or city open places are not facilitated to do so. History repeats itself. In the 18th century England a similar picture had emerged during the times of Charles and John Wesley’s:

At that time, preaching was confined to Churches. For strict churchmen as both the brothers were, they would almost have regarded it a sacrilege to preach to Gospel anywhere other than in a consecrated building.¹⁶⁷ Two things happened that pushed the Wesley’s to move out to the streets. The first was the closing of church doors in their face owing to the opposition of the clergy to the new “enthusiasm.” The second was the inspiring and courageous example of their colleague George Whitefield, who on Moorfields and Kennington Common, drew congregations numbering up to twenty thousand persons to hear the Gospel.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Colquhoun, *The Great Church men* No. 8, 11.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

In Kenya, open-air preaching has always been a prominent feature of revival movements. Some young Christians, feeling constrained by restrictive formalism in worship, broke away and took their worship outdoors. The author provides examples to illustrate this trend.

In the mid-1970s, the Limuru Evangelistic Team, led by the late Bishop David Kimani, gave rise to Bethel Church. Today, Bethel Church is led by Dr. Joseph Moilo, a preacher and microbiologist who is also a close friend and spiritual confidant. The author personally witnessed the emergence of Deliverance Church in Kenya, founded by figures like the late Apostle Joe Kayo (who had his own ministry), Rev. Mugoma (who later returned to the Anglican Church), and others such as Ondiek. These churches were born out of a reaction against the formalism in worship. Here, formalism should not be confused with order and decorum. Rather, it refers to the encasement of worship styles influenced by Western cultural norms that may not align closely with biblical teachings. For instance, it could involve singing without much bodily movement or emotional expression in corporate or individual prayers, punctuated with phrases like "Yes, Lord." After a lengthy discourse with the Samaritan woman at the well Jesus, declared that:

Believe me woman; a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem. Yet a time is coming, and has now come when the true worshippers will worship

the father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4: 21-24), NIV.

In military terms, evangelists serve on the front lines of action. Just as the hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers" employs military imagery for readiness, it's important to recognize that the church engages in a spiritual battle against our adversary, the devil. Evangelists are akin to foot soldiers in this campaign within church life. They wield spiritual weapons—be they pistols, guns, or cannons—in their efforts to reach the unchurched or to reconnect with Christian alumni, those who were baptized but have since limited their church attendance to Christmas, Easter, weddings, and funerals. Within churches, there are believers who once held strong faith but for reasons not fully understood, have retreated. These are the one Paul is crying for:

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you. Did you receive the spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? (Gal. 3:1-5), NIV.

In modern church settings, it's highly unlikely to address the congregation, majority of whom are authentic

believers, with harsh pronouncements. Nominal Christians, often referred to as alumnae Christians, are tolerated out of fear of losing members. Hard-hitting messages are more commonly delivered by evangelists in open-air meetings or through one-on-one encounters during catechetical training. Church leadership should seriously consider the following counsel regarding the importance of evangelists in churches.

It has been clearly stated that evangelists are on the front line of spiritual engagement. However, in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, there are few church ministers specializing in "Evangelistic Enterprise." While some ordained ministers may have served as evangelists before their ordination, the fervent evangelical spirit often diminishes over time. It's true that not everyone can be an evangelist, as God has given diverse gifts—some are teachers, prophets, miracle workers, and caregivers. Nevertheless, evangelists should be esteemed among the workers in God's vineyard. The highest honor for an evangelist should be inclusion in the pastoral team. If this integration is lacking in mainline churches, urgent steps should be taken to rectify it. When an individual is appointed as an evangelist, it signifies a charge to bring people to Christ (2 Tim 4:5). Such individuals are called to proclaim the Gospel through persuasion and reasoned discussion (Isa. 1:18).

Therefore, it is imperative that this individual works closely with ordained pastors or ministers in nurturing the converts. A minister or pastor should

prioritize having in-depth sessions with the evangelist to be briefed about the new members joining the congregation. Just as Paul and Barnabas preached and appointed elders in every church, a solemn ceremony was conducted to entrust them with responsibilities. Upon their appointment, they prayed for them with fasting, committing them to the care of the Lord, in whom they had placed their trust (Acts 14:23).

It is worth recalling that Philip the Evangelist was one of the seven deacons chosen to distribute food (Acts 21:8). Upon their selection, "these seven men were presented to the Apostles, who prayed for them and laid hands on them" (Acts 6:6). Each Christian receives grace through Christ within his church. The Bible states that Christ appointed some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers (church ministers).

The term "ordain" in the dictionary means to appoint someone as a priest or minister of a church. However, from a biblical perspective, ordination sets aside Christ's co-workers for specific tasks among believers. Church elders are ordained for spiritual oversight as ruling elders (in Presbyterianism). Church ministers are elders who fall into the category of teaching elders. With this detailed analysis, it is emphasized that where an evangelist is not an elder, an ordination service should be considered. An evangelist should not merely be an employee of the church like any other worker. Having now argued for the proper placement of evangelists in

mainline churches (with PCEA as an example), the next part will illustrate how missionary-established churches unnecessarily lose members to newly emerging churches and ministries.

Due to inherited traditions in worship and doctrinal inclinations not solidly based in scripture, mainline churches lose members, especially among the youth. Another example that I have experienced shows that the Presbyterian Church of East Africa has continued to lose talented members to other churches. This example is from Kirenga Church, my former rural church where I grew up as a Presbyterian member within the Universal Church of Christ. In the mid-seventies, a revival took place, and a number of young Christians were seen as “rebels” with Pentecostal tendencies, characterized by *glossolalia*. Fearing excommunication, they moved out and began praying in the home of one of their parents. Slightly over three decades later, these young men are pastors. Dr. Joseph Mugwe Gitau, Sammy Irungu, and Peter Gitura now lead their own congregations. They teamed up and sought association with the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya. Their evangelization efforts inside houses and in the open air have led to significant growth of the Full Gospel Churches in Lari district. They have large houses of worship at Nyambari on the Nairobi-Naivasha Highway, as well as in Githirioni, Kirenga, Ha-Mathare, Gitithia, and Lower Lari at Kamahindu! We still fellowship with them on a one-to-one basis when occasions arise. This initial team was joined by others, and

their efforts have made a distinctive mark in Christ's vineyard.

In his High Priestly Prayer (John 17), Christ prayed that we may be one: "Now I am departing the world. I am leaving them behind and coming to you. Holy Father, keep them and care for them—all those you have given me—so that they will be united just as we are" (John 17:11). Despite this, from a physical perspective, churches and denominations have been fractious. Divisions occurred not only spatially but doctrinally from primeval times. A good example of how Christians should agree to disagree in the Lord is seen between Paul and Barnabas over the issue of taking John Mark with them on their second missionary journey. Paul took Silas with him. Barnabas rightly understood that blood was thicker than water and embraced his cousin John Mark. The cause of their disagreement was that John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not shared in their work (Acts 15:38).

An evangelist from PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi emphasized while preaching one Sunday that as believers, we should not simply be "yes" men or women who unquestioningly accept everything we are told. Instead, we should exercise the power of discernment to understand God's perspective in given circumstances. Disagreements do not necessarily need to lead to bitterness; they can be handled amicably in this current dispensation of forgiveness and grace through Jesus

Christ our Lord. Between Paul and Barnabas, their discussion ran thus:

Let us return to each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are getting along.” Barnabas agreed and wanted to take John Mark, but Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not shared in their work (Acts 15:36-38)

By tracing back through history, we are reminded that both parties embarked on their evangelization missions in different directions. Barnabas and Mark sailed to Cyprus, while the believers sent Paul and Silas off, entrusting them to the Lord's grace (Acts 15:40). Paul and Silas traveled through Syria and Cilicia, and then to Lydia of Philippi through Macedonia, including the regions of Phrygia and Galatia (Acts 16). Along their journey, they even ended up in prison (Acts 16), yet this did not hinder the spread of the Gospel.

Looking further back, the Donatist Church in North Africa played a role in facilitating Muslim conquest. They had theological grievances, particularly regarding those who renounced their faith under persecution, but their movement primarily served as a religious expression of nationalist revolt against Rome. This discontent with Roman leadership across the Mediterranean made it easier for invaders to encounter a

dissatisfied populace who offered little resistance.¹⁶⁹ For 2000 years, disagreement on many areas of Christian doctrines has persisted. Regarding speaking in tongues, this is a gift and may not be apportioned to all Christians. However, it should not be a divisive element. The greatest of all break-ups was in 1054 after the fall of Constantinople to Muslim invasion. Two major blocks emerged: the Orthodox East and the Catholic Church in the West. Later on, Protestantism emerged from the Western Catholic Church. The reason for the break-up was mainly doctrinal. The point to lay stress on is that these break-ups and later ones, such as Pentecostalism, should not deter true worship of God as referred to in earlier portions of this book.

The general guide, as given in Isaiah 58, is a good reference material to be a barometer that measures the degree or extent to which we are authentically worshipping God and truly living a worshipful life. The law and the prophets dissipated as the new Age of the kingdom came. However, Jesus refuted the notion that the law in the Old Testament and its moral demand was out of date. The law did not cease to be valid. Luke writes that, "It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the law and express disapproval for divorce" (Luke 16:17-18, NIV). It is worth noting that Luke had promised Theophilus that he would investigate everything about teachings of Jesus as he wrote them

¹⁶⁹ Welbourn: East African Christian, 156.

down (Luke 1:3-4). The position of Jesus and Old Testament law was one such area of Jesus' teachings that divorce in the law was sanctioned due to the hardness of peoples' hearts. There was no virtue attached to it.

In the realm of praise and worship of God, life is not always bread and butter. Things get rough and sour, but God's strength and grace see Christians through. Through the power of music and praise, "whereupon the other prisoners listened, suddenly there was a great earthquake and the prison was shaken to its foundations, doors flew open and chains were broken" (Acts 16:25-28). We are required to use our intellect as well as emotions in our Christian living. After the dust settled, Paul claimed his Roman citizenship status, which caused the authorities to apologize to the duo (Acts 22:22-29). They proceeded on in their missionary journey. They went on to Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens, and then to Antioch of Syria and Ephesus. In the Acts, we learn of Paul's third missionary journey and its accomplishments. The exploits of Barnabas and Mark are, however, not documented by Luke, the author of the book. Nevertheless, we know that they soldiered on for Christ. When Paul was in prison, he pleaded that John Mark visit him along with Timothy because "he is helpful to me in my ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11). Paul was lonely as he only had Luke with him. On the occasion of the second missionary journey, Paul had disapproved of Mark as a worthy companion. Now in prison, he reaches out to him (Mark) through Timothy, his son in faith. In living a life that pleases God (a worshipful

life), forgiveness is a cardinal virtue. Even where there is disagreement on a doctrine, forgiveness and forbearance are necessary. Charismization, so pervasive in praise and worship, should be exercised with humility that God gives.

Paul pleads, "Please come as soon as you can; Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus has gone to Dalmatia" (Luke 11, Timothy 4:9-14). In Christian living, problems come in the way of ministers. The laity are duty-bound to help the ministers, church elders, and deacons in the ministry. It is noteworthy that Paul had left his cloak in Troas along with his scrolls (books). His cloak was probably his winter coat. The church and ministry call everyone to help in their advancement. This pleases God as it is worshipful living.

We live a life of praise and worship. Worship involves all that we think and do in life. Each believer is called upon to embrace a reconciliatory spirit as evident in Paul and Mark. In the worship life of the church, deserting church ministers and dishonoring them is counted as unrighteousness. When a minister "forgets his/her coat" in the course of their busy schedules along with their books and preaching notes, make an effort to travel and take them to the servant of the Lord. Paul's plea is relevant today as he says, "When you come, be sure to bring the coat I left with Carpus at Troas. Also bring the books, and especially my papers (parchments)."

As church members, we cannot claim to offer true praises and be worshippers of God if we conduct ourselves as Alexander the Coppersmith who anguished Paul's spirit. Let us not fight against everything our preachers say or preach (2 Tim. 4:14). From the Bible, therefore, we can confidently state that we have guidelines as to how believers, especially the leadership, can accommodate varying points of view and enable the proclamation of the gospel to proceed. In this chapter, there is an underlying theme that churches or different denominations have their space in preaching about the kingdom of God. This kingdom is the rule of God's grace in human hearts, minds, and spirits. Paul understood this and had much to say about rivalry in determining and judging one another as to the authenticity of evangelization endeavor. Paul clarifies this:

It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does that matter? The important thing is that in every way whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice (Phil. 1:15-18 NIV).

If Paul could assert such things while in prison, church leadership should re-examine its position regarding discipline and dealing with supposed "errant members" who may worship slightly differently from the established format. This is especially evident in practices like speaking in tongues (glossolalia), healing, and deliverance from satanic forces. The author has been pained to show how young, anointed worshippers were "discarded" and left to fend for themselves in church life until they found some refuge.

In Matthew 16:19 and 18:18, believers and their leaders are given authority to address life issues that are not clearly discernible, with the assertion that whatever they bind on earth will be bound in Heaven. However, there is a caveat placed on this authority. Before reaching such decisions, careful evaluation is required. It is necessary that all parties, whether large or small, come together before God in prayer before taking action (Matt. 18:19-20).

Preaching is not a preserve of the clergy, that is, priests, ministers and the ordained elders, deacons or even group leaders. Preaching is announcing good news and calling hearers to turn to God and experience the freedom of God's acceptance and love.¹⁷⁰ This type of proclamation is most fitting for evangelists who have the gift to draw crowds in estates, towns, and shopping centers in rural areas. Evangelists are mandated to speak

¹⁷⁰ *The Topical Study Bible* – notes on Acts 8:4).

out, not necessarily to teach. They gather people to houses of worship where they can be taught. There exists a very thin line between preaching, evangelizing, and teaching, yet it is distinct (1 Tim. 4:13). Teaching or discipleship involves further instructions for those who have already believed.

Leadership in mainline churches should be bold enough to support their talented individuals to venture into city parks, city squares, and marketplaces to attract members. After all, Jesus instructed his disciples that he would make them fishers of men and women, bringing them into the fold, the Church! John Wesley (1707-1788) and his brother Charles Wesley were such talented individuals in the English Church. They boldly went against ecclesiastical norms and, like Paul, preached nothing other than Christ crucified. At times, they were excessively bold, singing short songs in the streets, calling a spade a spade. The following quotes are repeated though talked about in chapter one singing and composition of hymns. Their repeat here bears orientation on charisma.

Come, sinners, to the Gospel, feast, let every soul
be Jesus guest
Ye need not be left behind; For God has bidden all
mankind
Sent by the Lord, on you I call the invitation is to
all;
Come all world; come sinners, thou!

All things in Christ are ready now¹⁷¹

After magnifying the grace of God to his own soul; he would voraciously fling out to all and sundry to partake of the same grace and share the same experience:

Outcasts of men, to you I call,
Harlots, and publicans, and thieves!
He spreads his arms to embrace you all;
Sinners alone His grace receives;
No need of Him, the righteous have,
He came the lost to seek and save.

Come all ye Magdalene in lust,
Ye ruffians fell in murders old;
Repent, and live: despair and trust:
Jesus for you to death was sold;
Though hell protest and earth repine,
He died for crimes like yours.¹⁷²

A good lesson here is that unless one has a song of praise in ones' heart about what Christ has done or is doing in their life, they cannot confidently worship, praise and proclaim the word of God confidently. Like many powerfully anointed evangelists, when it dawned on him that it was no longer tenable to remain a member of the established church he wrote a poem to his brother John:

¹⁷¹ Colquhoun, Great church Men, No. 8, 12.

¹⁷² Ibid., 9

When we first set forth to minister the word,
Say, did we preach ourselves, or Christ the Lord?
Was our aim disciples to collect, to raise a party,
or found a sect?
No; but to spread the power of Jesus name,
Repair the walls of Jerusalem
Revive the piety of ancient days,
And fill the earth with redeemer's praise.

Like many revivalists after Charles Wesley and his brother John, sentiments on the issue of breaking away from the established church are articulated in the following words:

‘I am quite clear it is neither expedient nor lawful for me to separate; and I never had the least inclination and temptation to do so. My affection for the church is as strong as ever; and I clearly see my calling; which is to live and die in her communion. This, therefore I am determined to do, the Lord being my helper’.¹⁷³

His music style was out of step with the formal worship of the time. He expressed exuberance that had never been seen before. Colquhoun writes that the ecstasy and joy he displayed were previously unknown in

¹⁷³ Colquhoun, *The Great Church men*, No. 8, 32

worship, which had traditionally been reserved "only for dancers and jigs."¹⁷⁴

It is widely accepted that Martin Luther's personal connection with the Savior was influenced by St. Augustine, who famously stated that the human soul remains restless until it finds rest in its maker. The Methodist societies in America eventually gave rise to the Methodist church as a denomination.

Throughout the centuries, spiritual revival has often faced opposition from established churches. As noted in a previous chapter, Priscilla and Maximilla encountered resistance over the issue of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Even today, the concept of being filled with the Holy Spirit is downplayed in mainline churches. It is argued that once confirmed and having become a full member and participant in Holy Communion, there is no need to doubt one's spiritual fulfillment. However, the Bible is clear on this matter. The fruit of the Spirit, as outlined in Ephesians 5:22, includes love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, is biblically sanctioned and was manifested on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12). Yet, some believers continue to dismiss this specific phenomenon. The question remains: is it not biblical?

As we continue to praise and worship God here on earth, every believer, whether ordinary or a leader in the

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

Church such as a priest, deacon, or elder, is obligated to adhere to the principles of Scripture. In preaching, witnessing, and fellowship, one cannot impart what they do not possess. When a beggar asked Peter and John for alms, Peter's response was clear: "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!"

Some controversial issues in Christian doctrine divide believers because leaders do not always strictly base their decisions on biblical principles. If the fruit of the Spirit is fully embraced with humility and a recognition of God's grace, there could be harmony, tolerance, and genuine love, especially in areas where issues are ambiguous due to local or cultural contexts. Authentic praise and worship of God requires the exercise of grace, peace, and mercy in all aspects of Christian living, enabling everyone to align with Paul's reflection when he ponders thus:

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again?
Or do we need, like some people letters of
recommendation to you or from you? You
yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts,
known and read by everybody (2 Corinthians 3:2).

To truly praise and worship God in spirit and truth, one must live as a living epistle—a challenging yet biblically sanctioned aspiration, especially if believers are to be regarded as saints (Phil. 4:21). Singing and music

dedicated to praising God constitute a significant aspect of adoration. As previously mentioned, God continues to bless certain individuals with special grace for composing and performing music that glorifies His actions and interactions with humanity and creation.

The extensive review of Charles Wesley's musicology in relation to evangelism is crucial for contemporary Christians. From his repertoire of over 7,000 hymns, both long and short, we learn how to worship and praise God with the religious fervor and spiritual depth befitting the Creator who sustains the universe. Through saving grace and general gifts, God bestowed musical talents upon all humanity, albeit to varying degrees. Wesley's hymns encompass profound theological doctrines such as the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation (Christmas carols), Atonement, Resurrection, Ascension, the Holy Spirit, and Church life. Even subsequent composers and hymnal editors have arranged hymns in this structured theological pattern. Colquhoun notes that Wesley's numerous short hymns based on selected scripture passages—over five thousand in total—demonstrate his extraordinary breadth and accuracy of biblical knowledge.¹⁷⁵

As we sing short hymns or combine various lines of one hymn or another in praise and worship today, let us be less critical of what some critics term as shallow music lacking theological depth. Short statements such as

¹⁷⁵ Colquhoun, *Great Church men*, 29.

"praise the Lord," "Hallelujah," or even the word Amen could be pregnant with religious/holy affections to the pronouncer or the utterer.

As the book enters the next seven chapters on praise (music) in church life, it is important to note that today's popular revival hymns, long or short, are needed in modern evangelism. A song like "I refuse to die young" is good in modern times where lifestyle diseases have been the main curses, including non-contagious illnesses such as cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and diabetes. The song would also bring home the message in cautioning against sexual immorality and the HIV-AIDS scourge.

Hymns have theological values. If an individual gazes at Heaven and sings affectionately, one would derive a lot of theology from the hymn book. The only shortcoming is that the few minutes that a hymn takes in corporate singing may not give ample time for meditation. Charles Wesley's hymns were a product of the Evangelical Revival. In more recent times, "revival" hymns continue to inspire Christian living. Modern evangelism needs revival hymns, songs, or choruses that combat the free fall in sexual immorality as spelled out in Scripture. Hymns that exude the value of one-man-one-wife living are seriously needed. Songs that combat homosexuality, lesbianism, and same-sex marriages should have emerged yesterday, not today or tomorrow.

Instead of leaving the fight against corruption to the Fourth Estate per se, there is a need for Christians to

compose hymns/songs to combat this vice. Melody and pitch more often than not override the meditational consideration cited above. That thoughtful, or systematic concern is subdued. But short pronouncements in choruses may create a creed sort of imprint especially in a youthful mind that has been conditioned to instant communication, instant computation, instant interaction in conferencing, and even in fast foods culture, get-rich-quick that breeds greed and theft of public money and betting so as to become instant millionaires.

Therefore, drawing theological teaching from hymns may not be as edifying as when one reads the Bible in personal or group devotion. Sometimes one might just sing along absentmindedly. However, it is evident in many hymn books cited in the appendix (I) that, scanning through hymns that deal with the passion of Christ, the hymns sung during Eastertide bring Christ's suffering to life. Holy Communion hymns, particularly those which refer to the institution of the Holy Table of the Lord, awaken holy affections for Christ as they are sung softly at the start of Holy Communion or in the worship service in general. Even more so, as bread and wine are served, background music recorded or live from a choir or praise team raises holy affections for the participants in the Lord's Table.

Any divine service should be governed by certain rules in the choice of hymns. Through various discourses and examples given in regard to music composition, it is clear that some hymns have objectivity; that is, they carry

weight based on theological facts that can be proved if put under scrutiny. Other hymns are subjective, meaning that they are composed using the author's own ideas and opinions rather than facts and are therefore sometimes unfair to a wider audience or singers. For instance, the song about calling harlots/Magdalena to Christ would not fit in a congregational setting as not everybody would feel the passion Charles exuded. Passion is that unfulfilled desire one is unable to accomplish. The frustration borne by an individual should not be imported to worshippers who may not have that very strong feeling or enthusiasm.

A similar advice is that there should be a balance between "new" or contemporary Gospel hymns and the old familiar ones which the worshippers can sing easily. Hymn books are a creation of technical committees. Whenever need arises, the Church or Christian societies or definitive fellowships such as the Kenya Students Fellowship create committees of experts to seek, amalgamate, and create a hymn book tailored to the aspirations of a people for worship and praise of God.

Having examined how Christians view praise and even doctrinal differences in this regard, and more so how resistance to change has shaped the church landscape, the next several chapters will examine in detail the phenomenon of praise and worship.

CHAPTER 9

The Litmus Test of True Prayer, Praise, Worship and Thanksgiving

Just as in other aspects of worship, the adoration of God; praising of God in the right spirit should be evident in the way a singer or worshipper lives. Praxeology should be evident in life outside the choir group or the congregation environs. Debate on the type of praise and the way people sing is quite healthy. However, all in all, the litmus test is the way an individual, a choir, a praise team, or a praise leader carries themselves in the Christian walk with God and with other people. The vigor and fervor exhibited in musical talents should translate into living Christianly. As an element of worship, singing should enrich one's spirituality, especially in the area of prayer. Indeed, from a biblical lens, praising and singing should facilitate the individual's disposition to be Christ-like. The servanthood living is what is envisaged.

Prayer, praise, and thanksgiving go in company with each other. Praise and thanksgiving are so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them. There is no dichotomy. Praise and thanksgiving are triggered by answers to prayer. With gratitude, that inward emotion of the soul arises involuntarily. Praise is obviously webbed with prayer. The joy, the exuberance in song, the sweet

melody has its button on prayer. Singing is one method of praise. The character of singing reveals the measure of praise. In view of this, much modern singing in mainline churches does not yield a hearty, lively praise to God. There should be serious thought carrying with it a devotional spirit. Otherwise, flippant, light singing in a congregation lacks what it takes to awaken a devotional spirit. The grace of God in the heart induces spiritual singing and thus inspires the song. It is not the musical taste or talent that matters most. The inspired heart is the best music teacher. The notes and the scale of singing are subordinate to any artistry in praise of God. Music that breaks from the heart matters most.

In living a worshipful life, the believer's musical voice allows the lips to overflow because the heart is in tune with God. Believers, in general, should avoid glorification of choirs and exaltation of the musical powers of the singers. As much as it has been affirmed that praise and worship are good for evangelism, there is a caution needed in this regard. The glory of God and the good of the souls of the congregation take precedence.

Hearty singing connects our minds with who God is. As we do this, we feel peace and contentment and thus transform our outlook on life (Isaiah 26:3-4). Perfect peace (shalom) becomes a gift of well-being and wholeness of mind in a steadfast manner. This wholeness, coupled with the call to lifelong trust, basing one's faith on God's word, the Rock of Ages, in whose clefts one hides and finds safety, remains secure. In I Chron. 16:25

and Rev. 5:11-14, we find that He is the Alpha and Omega, our Creator, Provider, Healer, Redeemer, Judge, Defender, and much more; each individual finds solace in Him. Indeed, praise is humanity's destiny for all who will live a Christ-centered life (Phil. 2:9-11). Having thus laid the premise upon which praise, prayer, and thanksgiving stand, the next move is possible. The rest of the chapter will present praise in a concocted and convoluted configuration. If the reader does not find comprehensive clarity, this will be fine since prayer, thanksgiving, and praise bear no semblance of dichotomy.

For the sheer purpose of emphasis, it is hereby restated that mainline churches/ established churches or in earlier centuries in Europe, the established church, at times, it was hard to accommodate new ways of worship and new styles of praise. In the Presbyterian church of East Africa, the manner of worship is prescribed in the *Practice and Procedure manual*. Following the Scottish tradition the worshipper is expected to begin meditating immediately one enters the place of worship.¹⁷⁶ The ordering of worship among other issues requires that "people are to stand first in liberty with which Christ has set them free." and that all things be done decently and in order.¹⁷⁷ Public worship should follow prescribed form which will allow flexibility for spontaneous expressions.¹⁷⁸ However, a caveat is placed: it must be

¹⁷⁶ *Practice and Procedure manual*, 11.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ PCEA, *Practice and Procedure*, 11.

noted that carelessness in public worship may be both an offense to God and a stumbling block to the people. Carelessness, by definition, may imply that not much thought or attention is given when one is worshipping, and that one is bound to make mistakes. Here, the author hastens to postulate that the carelessness denoted is the way one may sing and behave, which does not tally with or is not in line with the missionary-taught mannerism in the way one projects musical expressions, such as dancing or responding with words such as "Amen" or "Hallelujah" as the message is preached. Such responses are thought to be the preserve of the charismatics. Whatever liberty is exercised, it is important to bear in mind the traditions practiced in the Church, the manual stresses.¹⁷⁹ Until up to around year 2000, Presbyterian worship liturgy was followed as is in the Church Service Book.

Praise and worship segment was introduced officially in the year 2003.¹⁸⁰ It emanated from elder district cell group prayer meetings that preferred choruses in their meetings. Presbyterians live among friends who are Pentecostals and mingle in social meetings such as women's groups, weddings, and solemn gatherings such as funerals. In such encounters, praise gospel singing had been common. In his farewell address, Rev. Dr. David Githii, the former moderator of the 17th and 18th General

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 11-12.

¹⁸⁰ The Presbyterian Church of East Africa, *Resolutions of 17th and 18th General Assembly Nairobi*: Presbyterian Publisher, 20017) 39- 40.

Assemblies of the PCEA (2003-2009), stated that "the PCEA style of worship should be modeled in the African context." He noted that "the Scottish missionaries, in giving the gospel, wrapped it in Scottish cultural aspects which are today hampering the delivery of the gospel in the PCEA to embrace more young people."¹⁸¹

Before Githii's tenure of office in 2003, the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, was less talked about either in sermons or in prayer groups, and in the Presbyterian Church life in general. Praise and worship is a subgenre of Gospel music. It is defined by Roberta King as that sung section of a worship service, a devotional time common in non-liturgical, charismatic, or Pentecostal groups.¹⁸² Gospel songs (music) originally were Christian songs that expressed people's experience of knowing God in the light of sin, grace, and temptation. They expressed the Good News about Jesus.¹⁸³ It was introduced in the PCEA in order to revitalize Presbyterian manner of conducting praise.

In the mainline churches, praise may involve a single hymn at the beginning of a worship service, which is usually doxological; this indeed constitutes praising and worshipping (adoring) God. It would be judgmental to demean the practice due to the absence of dancing in it. To praise and to worship are two different sides of the

¹⁸¹ Alex, Ndegwa "*Maverick PCEA Moderator calls it A Day*," (The Standard, April 15, 2009).

¹⁸² Ibid., 175.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 175.

same coin that are distinct. However, both embrace giving glory to God. All praise may be seen as worship, but worship is more than praise. As noted earlier in the book, there are many elements in a divine worship service. Worship involves all believers' actions, such as bowing down and thus honoring Adonai (the Lord). Biblically, worship is an act of daily walk in the servanthood of Christians (Ps. 2:11, Rom. 12:7-8, Deut. 13:4). Thus, a Christian life should be an act of worship. Praise, on the other hand, consists of song, music, words, and voice. Outward activities such as clapping, singing, and dancing express praise. These actions express thanks and respect to God.

It is critical to observe that while praise is observable and heard, worship, by and large, is only experienced by the worshipper. This is the case with meditation. When one concentrates and listens to the Bible reading or a sermon prayerfully with fervor, this is also an inward experience. In giving tithes and offerings, the giver also experiences an inward touch with God. However, between the two—the outward and the inward expressions—the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is crucial for efficacy. Other than this, if one dares as Paul did, it is biblical to aspire that one's life becomes a sort of recommendation letter other people can read in day-to-day living. James is vehement on belief and practice. Praxeology is the center of his letter to the Jewish Christians who were scattered throughout the Mediterranean world because of persecution. The Epistle

of James is an epitome of genuine religion. In the six chapters, he deals with genuine faith, controlling the tongue, and true wisdom. What a Christian should give is compassionate service. Christian living concerning sharing what one has is outlined. Mahatma Gandhi (a Hindu) observed some Christian families during his abode in South Africa and gives us some insights on practical Christianity that can be read like a book.

In his autobiography, he describes his contacts with some Christians who preached to him about Atonement, telling him that it was where God's infinite mercy lay.¹⁸⁴ He would not be convinced through preaching. However, after observing some Christian friends of his in Pretoria, he remarked that "Christian friends had whetted my appetite for knowledge which had become insatiable, and they would not leave me in peace even if I desired to be indifferent"¹⁸⁵

In Durban, Gandhi observed a Christian family friend and had the following words on what practical living entails:

In Durban, Mr. Spenser Walton, the head of South African Mission found me out. I became almost a member of his family. Mr. Walton had a manner all of his own. I do not recall ever having invited

¹⁸⁴ M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiment with the Truth*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, India, 1927) 113-116.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 147.

me to embrace Christianity. But he placed his life as an open book before me, and let me watch all his movements. Mrs. Walton was a very gentle and talented woman. I liked the attitude of the couple.¹⁸⁶

Let it be observed that Gandhi's acquaintance with Christians in Pretoria, and then with the Waltons, should be an eye-opener to the fact that our walk with the Lord Jesus should be evident to all; to fellow Christians as well as non-Christians. In our Christian living, believers are exhorted to present their bodies, behavior, thoughts, and all as a living sacrifice. Gandhi observes that though a talented woman, to him Mrs. Walton was a humble woman. Pride is a vice that we need to eschew. The Bible teaches us that we were created to live humbly with dignity, but we complicate our living through uncalled-for ostentatious lifestyles. Mahatma Gandhi has more accolades for the Waltons.

I liked the attitude of the couple. We knew the fundamental differences between us. Any amount of discussion could not efface them. Yet even differences proved helpful, where there are tolerance, charity and truth. I liked Mr. and Mrs. Walton's humility, perseverance and devotion to work, and we met frequently.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

This scenario, the compliance with what we purport to live for and thus be true disciples, is one of the values any devout Christian man or woman should endeavor to copy. As we purpose to praise and worship God in spirit and in truth and hence live a worshipful life, it is fitting that we learn from this great mind, a Hindu who championed non-violence even as the Indian sub-continent struggled to free itself from British imperialism that ruled India for close to two centuries, 1757-1947. The colonial era in India had begun in 1502 by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the French. Christian life should be open to all around us. Here is another lesson we learn from Gandhi as he interacted with Christian friends who were a contrast to the Walton family: “At their suggestion, I attended the Wesleyan Church every Sunday. For these days I also had their standing invitation to dinner.”¹⁸⁸

In contrast to the Walton’s praxis on what the Church preached in the context of the Gospel in relation to salvation, Gandhi appears to have been disappointed. The following statements show this:

The Church did not make an impression on me. The sermons seemed to be uninspiring. The congregation did not strike me as being particularly religious. They were not an assembly of deviant souls; they appeared rather to be world-

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 148.

minded people, going to church for recreation and in conformity to custom. Here, at times I would involuntarily doze. I was ashamed, but some of my neighbors who were in no better case, lightened their shame, and soon gave up attending the service.¹⁸⁹

In most religions, worship and praise are expressions of the relationship with the Deity. In the Jewish religion, as well as in Christianity, the praise and worship of God are well articulated in the scriptures. Christian heritage is such that the Old Testament tenets of worship blend with the New Testament dispensation, which is devoid of the elaborate sacrificial system that was nullified by the Cross. Christianity is anchored in repentance, forgiveness, and Grace. It follows then that praise and worship of God through music are anchored on the Grace that enables repentance with the resultant forgiveness. In the foregoing chapters, it has been stated that holy zeal in worship, praise, or prayer should be natural. There should be no guile. As the community of the faithful in praise and worship of God, the words of Jesus to Nathaniel would be appropriated by every worshipper. As Jesus chose his disciples, he noted Nathaniel's sincerity and remarked thus: "Here comes an honest man - a true son of Israel." Nathaniel asked Jesus

¹⁸⁹ Gandhi, *Autobiography*, 148

how he knew him, and Jesus retorted, “I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”

The point being made here is that truth and honesty are indispensable in life. When Nathaniel was told by Philip that they had seen the Messiah (the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about – that is Jesus of Nazareth), Nathaniel doubted the pronouncement, wondering whether any such a great thing would emanate from Nazareth! However, despite the initial misgivings, Nathaniel declared, “Teacher, you are the son of God – the King of Israel” (John 1:49).

It is amazing that the birth of Christ in Nazareth had been pinpointed with utmost specification by the prophet Micah: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from distant past” (Micah 5:2). Here we see Nathaniel dialoguing with Jesus. Prayer and praise should therefore be honest. One should not be so concerned with who is sitting next to you in a church setting. The encounter is between the individual and God, although the milieu would be in church, the Assembly, a group fellowship, or a prayer cell.

A New Testament author, the writer of Hebrews, sees sincere singing or praise as the fruit of our lips (Heb. 13:15). For emphasis, it is repeated that Pauline Epistles exhort Christians to speak with one another in Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in their hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16). The heart, the seat of the human spirit, should be fully engaged in musical

praise in the realm of spirit and truth. Truth here denotes the actuality and reality in adoring God, not out of obligation but because one realizes that in Him we live and have our being (Acts 17:28). Therefore, whatever we do or plan to do would be in vain if we pretend to love or adore God without zeal.

Psalm 145:5, translated in the Life Application Bible, reads, “I will meditate on your majestic glorious splendor and your wonderful miracles.” In the Topical Study Bible, the same verse reads, “Bend down the heavens, Lord, and come down; touch the mountains so that they billow smoke.” The verse speaks of the glory of God. The Lord’s Prayer states, “Hallowed be Thy name.” We praise and worship God because He alone is to be respected and feared in honor, as His glory is rooted in His very nature, which is why the verse uses words such as majestic glorious splendor. In the African Bible, the translation reads, “They will speak of the splendor of your majestic glory, tell of your wonderful deeds.”

God’s character should dwell within Christians. As Jesus performed miracles and preached about the Kingdom of Grace and repentance, He impressed upon the Apostles that they must carry on God’s revelation to humanity—the disciples of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Jesus has left a glorious impact through His death, resurrection, and exaltation, awaiting His eventual return.

In a Topical Bible Study, a commentary on Psalm 145:5 emphasizes that every Christian worthy of the

Gospel is commanded to honor God in all their actions until they share in Christ's heavenly glory. In prayers or singing, vital energy from Christ should never be seen as routine. Reverting to the legalistic Jewish worship of the Old Testament instead of embracing the New Testament focus on repentance, forgiveness, and grace would be a mistake. The mere use of musical instruments with hearts and minds distanced from God has been disapproved by Isaiah and Prophet Amos. Isaiah disparages instruments (Isaiah 14:11) because music had become mere entertainment, while Amos criticizes how David's instruments contributed to Israel's complacency (Amos 5:23, 6:5).

These prophets echo what Paul calls a noisy gong or clanging cymbal when true reverence for God is absent due to a lack of love (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). Over slightly 2000 years of Christianity, musical instruments have been debated in Kenyan churches, with instruments like the guitar facing opposition here and there. Looking back in church history, Early Church Fathers such as Augustine, Chrysostom, and Clement of Alexandria spoke against instruments due to their association with secular music and perceived sensuality, advocating for sacred music only. The church in Kenya has grappled with similar debates; established churches like the PCEA have integrated instruments like the guitar and *kayamba* to the drum, previously accepted by missionaries as part of cultural musical heritage. This was a step towards enculturation.

Other than Nathaniel, who was recognized for his genuine approach to faith in Jesus despite his doubts, another example of sincerity of heart in accepting Jesus as the Messiah and embracing a new way of worship is found in the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4). Her sincere engagement with Jesus bridged the cultural divide between Jews and Samaritans, leading to the theological concept of living water, where whoever drinks it becomes a spring of eternal life (John 4:13).

She openly acknowledged her unconventional marital history, which led her to recognize Jesus as a prophet who knew her past relationships intimately. This conversation underscored that true worship is not confined to specific places like temples, mountains, or caves, as discussed in previous chapters. True worship, as reiterated multiple times, is found in those who worship God in spirit (since God is spirit) and in truth (with sincerity). Worship of God and His presence transcends physical locations.

In the Old Testament, Hannah's prayer for a son exemplifies sincerity in prayer (1 Samuel 1:9-11). Her genuine heartfelt prayer, accompanied by movement of her lips, initially led Eli to mistake her for being drunk. Hannah's subsequent prayer of praise (1 Samuel 2:1-10), if set to music, would inspire many Christians to turn their thanksgiving prayers into songs of praise. The plea of the centurion, though he was not Hebrew, amazed Jesus:

When Jesus arrived in Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him (NLT); asking for help (NIV) “Lord my young servant lies in bed paralyzed and racked with pain” “Jesus said I will come and heal him” (Luke. 8:5-7)

In sincere faith in Jesus, the officer did not count himself worthy of Jesus’ visit. Using his military experience, he simply sought Jesus command (word) and that the servant would be healed! His faith, trust and recognition of God’s power wowed Jesus; “I tell you I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel” (Luke. 8:10). In our worship, praise and prayer the centurion is an exemplary mentor. “Go home what you have believed has happened.” And the young servant was healed that same hour (Luke 8: 13). Sincere and honest mere utter faith is a requirement in our approach to God.

Another biblical example of fervent prayer in our worship of God is seen in the event of healing Jairus daughter (Mk. 5:22, Luke 8: 41ff). Jairus sincerely, fervently fell down before Jesus pleading. Unfortunately, a miracle within a miracle happened as a woman with hemorrhage touched Jesus, causing a stir as Jesus realized some power had left him. As this was being sorted out, message reached that Jairus daughter was dead. Jairus couldn’t give up and therefore waited. Finally, the daughter was raised to life (Mk. 5:21-43).

In Christian living, being righteous, devout and living in the spirit and earnestly believing Jesus is coming

again are not options. Heaven is real. Jesus promised that he was going to prepare a place in Heaven. Simeon had such qualities. So when Jesus was presented to him in the Temple he honestly said:

“Lord, now I can die in peace! As you promised me. I have seen the savior; you have given to all people. He is the light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel” (Luke 2:29-35).

In the Old Testament, we find outstanding examples of Elijah, Daniel, and many others who worshiped and praised God zealously without fear of physical death. Elijah, a human like us, warned of a prolonged drought due to people's wickedness (1 Kings 17:1ff), speaking in the strength of the Lord, whom he worshiped.

Being right with God yields positive effects, as James recognized when he wrote about the power of prayer (James 5:13-18). This was evident when Elijah raised the widow of Zarephath's son, prompting her to declare, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the Lord truly speaks through you" (1 Kings 17:24). Miracles often accompany Christians who seek God wholeheartedly.

Another true worshiper in the Old Testament is Daniel, who interpreted the handwriting on the wall without accepting gifts (Daniel 5:12-28). True worship

and praise of God distance themselves from idolatry, which includes not only man-made or carved images but also contemporary forms of false worship like greed and the worship of money, referred to as mammon in the Bible. Daniel teaches that our prayers should include repentance and requests aimed at honoring God, not because we deserve help, but because of God's mercy (Daniel 9:18).

Lastly, two examples of thankfulness accompanied by praise are Mary's song of praise, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), and Zachariah's song upon the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:57-79), particularly verses 68 to 79. Mary's words exemplify any Christian disciple, praising God for raising her from lowly estate to honor, rejoicing in her Savior, and proclaiming God's victory. Zachariah's Benedictus in verses 68 to 79 rejoices in the fulfillment of prophecy, proclaiming the era of forgiveness (v. 77). Both Mary and Zachariah sincerely thanked God for visiting them. These examples of sincerity in prayer, worship, and praise convey a simple message: integrity and divine wholeness are crucial in the Christian walk.

Now, regarding the use of musical instruments, a deeper look into historical context can help us understand the progressive acceptance that an instrument should not be banned simply because it is used in pop or country music. As mentioned earlier, an instrument is an object that can be used for noble or ignoble purposes. During the Reformation, there were differing views on the use of

instruments in worship. John Calvin, for instance, advocated for singing Psalms exclusively without instruments. Similarly, Martin Luther and Charles Wesley composed hymns but did not permit the use of instruments.¹⁹⁰

When the church split into Western and Eastern blocks in 1054 C.E. following the fall of Constantinople (modern Istanbul), the Western Roman Church embraced the use of instruments in church worship. However, in the Greek Orthodox Church, and continuing to this day, instruments are not used in worship.¹⁹¹ It is worth noting that the Roman Church left singing to the priests and trained choirs.¹⁹² The reformers championed by Martin Luther and John Calvin, restored singing to the congregation. This restoration is taken for granted by modern Christians; which should not be the case. They recognized God's people constituted the choir.¹⁹³ This is the "choir element" in contemporary praise and worship, where worshippers exude joyous vibrancy. Calvin emphasized that singing was a joyful expression. He advised that the joy and melody must be sanctified by the Word, and that the Holy Spirit would enable the singer to grasp the spiritual meaning of the words in a song.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ [Http://christianresources.com/asccappellinghtml](http://christianresources.com/asccappellinghtml), Biblical Historical facts: accessed on April 14, 2011 at 5:00 pm).

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² [Http://www.prea.org/pamphlets-37.html](http://www.prea.org/pamphlets-37.html) accessed on April 5, 2011 at 1:00 am).

¹⁹³ [Http://www.prog.org?pamphlet-37.htm](http://www.prog.org?pamphlet-37.htm)

¹⁹⁴ [Http://www.prog.org?pamphlet-37.htm](http://www.prog.org?pamphlet-37.htm)

Praise and Worship (accepted in PCEA as Praise in worship) is loosely identified as a Pentecostal worship. True to it, however, praise and worship encompasses the following characteristics:

Chief among them is expressive participative service, through which congregations seek God's presence through sacramental use of contemporary worship songs. These songs are fast-paced that extol God's greatness and power. This is followed by mellow music that emphasizes the believer's personal relationships with God; uninhibited singing, dancing and *glossolalia* are the rule rather than the exception.¹⁹⁵

Psalm 100 and 149 provide clear biblical sanction for the characteristics of praise and worship. Psalm 100:1 exhorts, "Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth," while verse 3b encourages, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise." These verses emphasize singing new songs and praising God in the assembly with musical instruments such as tambourines and harps.

However, it is important to note that dancing in worship should be scriptural and edifying. Dances like jigs and twists in hotels or public places may not serve this purpose and could lack spiritual edification. The context of dances in night clubs, which tend to be sensuous and

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

outside the realm of holy matrimony, is cautioned against in Scriptures, echoing the lessons from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Such modern-day parties and gatherings characterized by indecency are not aligned with biblical principles and are viewed critically by the Scriptures.¹⁹⁶

God's people engage in dance as a way to praise and glorify God for His greatness and goodness. Sometimes, dancing expresses human emotions of elation, demonstrating religious affections. However, during times of sorrow, such as funeral arrangements or other moments of pain, dancing ceases and mourning begins. It should be noted that some Christians condemn all forms of dancing, while others view it as facilitating praise and adoration of God. It is important to emphasize that the type of dancing seen in social occasions where men and women hold each other is not found in the Bible.

Biblical dancing is seen as an instrument or channel for expressing one's feelings, as exemplified in Exodus 15:20-21 when Miriam, Aaron's sister, led all the women in rhythmic dance to celebrate victory over the Egyptian army. Sensuous dancing, where men and women hold each other as seen in modern parties, was observed by Moses when he descended from Mount Sinai. Upon witnessing such obscenity, Moses broke the Decalogue in anger.

The phenomenon known as Project X, which began in the Netherlands in 2012 and has since spread

¹⁹⁶ Webster's Desk Dictionary of the English Language, 72.

widely, involves young men and women participating in activities characterized by misogynistic tendencies and a careless attitude towards drug abuse. This situation requires prayer, as God may judge a nation where youth engage in such degradation. Both man and woman were created in God's image (Genesis 1:27), and neither gender holds more of God's image than the other. Both are equally responsible for caring for nature, both animate and inanimate. The mistreatment of women and girls devalues them, and addressing this vice requires the collective voice of the Church.

Reflecting on events in Kenya in early 2016, it was evident that the police were the only arm of society grappling with these issues, whether in Nairobi, Eldoret, Mombasa, or Yatta in Masinga. In summary, intoxication, drug abuse, and pornography are the outcomes of such behavior. Some involved in these activities come from Christian homes, many bearing baptismal names. Both the Church and the nation cannot escape the consequences of this new societal behavior among the youth. History teaches us this lesson (cf. Genesis 19 – Sodom and Gomorrah).

As previously mentioned, the use of musical instruments in worship has been a debated issue for centuries. While praise and worship enthusiastically incorporate the sound of praise music, some choose to praise without instruments, either due to economic constraints, especially in rural areas, or simply by personal choice. Today, acappella singing (music without

instruments) is associated with the Restoration Movement of the early 19th century led by Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell. Their goal was to establish a church that adhered closely to the practices outlined in the New Testament.¹⁹⁷ It seems as though instruments interfere with New Testament teachings on praise.

In Hebrews 13:15, Christians are encouraged to sing together, offering music as a sacrifice of praise and the fruit of their lips confessing God's name. During a thanksgiving service at St. Andrew's Church, Nairobi, part of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, when the pastor recited Psalm 104:4 ("Enter His gates with thanksgiving in your heart"):

When we come together Lord, may you make our worship communion of thankful stories beyond the sound of drums and the guitars, let the sound of hearts soar our time of worship to yield a sweet scenting sacrifice. When we gather, remove from us dullness and disinterest and detachment; instead let us be an assembly alive with thankful hearts.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ [Http://www.gotquestions.org/restoration-movement.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/restoration-movement.html) accessed on April 5, 2011 at 11:00 pm.

¹⁹⁸ PCEA St. Andrew's Sunday bulletin, "Thanksgiving Service" (April 3, 2011).

The connotation in this congregational response is that beyond musical sounds what matters most is the inner joy coming from mind and spirit.

In the New Testament, the sound of music follows the Old Testament pattern but without instruments. Paul exhorted believers to sing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs among themselves, making music to the Lord in their hearts (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16). This underscores the importance of worship in the totality of Christian life. In addition to singing, Christians are commanded to teach and speak to one another through hymns and spiritual songs.

Praise and worship hold significance in Heaven and will continue at the close of this Age. At the heavenly throne, the angelic multitudes proclaim that salvation belongs to God and the Lamb, reflecting the praise of the redeemed multitude as seen in Revelation 4:8-11, 5:9-14, 7:10-12, 15:3-4, 19:4-8, and Nehemiah 9:6ff. While the praise of Heaven in Revelation 5:8-12 celebrates the Lamb's initiation of the kingdom of salvation, universal worship of God awaits its consummation in the future.¹⁹⁹

Heaven is a place coveted by all. Amid the hustle of life—economic pursuits, politics, family dynamics, and challenges, including corruption and unjust legal systems—the human mind becomes muddled. In this preoccupation with earthly matters, the clear vision of Heaven, once vivid at the outset of our faith, often fades.

¹⁹⁹ D. A. Carson, ed. *New Bible Commentary*, (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008) 1434.

Let's explore fundamental insights about Heaven from someone who lived closely with Christ. Unlike most Apostles who faced persecution and martyrdom, he lived to old age. In the Island of Patmos, God revealed to him how Heaven is:

The walls are made of pearls – each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold (the gold we treasure so much that wealth of nations is stored in gold bars), as clear as glass. No temple could be seen for the Lord Almighty and the Lamb is its Temple. And the city has no need for the sun or moon, for glory of God illuminates the city and the Lamb is its light ...but it is for only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 21:21-26).

What more? The foundations of the city are adorned with twelve gems—jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, carnelian, chrysotile, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, and amethyst. It's disheartening that in our daily routines and engagements, thoughts of Heaven and the Afterlife are often discarded or forgotten. They are only revisited during sickness, death, or other human calamities, which is a significant mistake. Examining hymns typically associated with burials can further emphasize the author's point:

Here we suffer grief and pain (Hymnal companion no 509) when sung in vernacular (Kikuyu), it is very moving. The hymn is clear that here we experience death, we get sick but it will not be so in Heaven. Those who loved Jesus in this life will proudly march into Heaven. Those who went before us whom we fondly referred to as comrades, we shall find them there (based on Rev: 21: 3-5).

Other hymns such as *There Is A Happy Land* (Golden Bells no. 562), *For Ever With The Lord* (Golden Bells no. 314 Keswick Hymn Book no. 453) and others such as shall *We gather at the River, There Will Be No Dark Valley, Far, Far Away Beyond The River, Jerusalem The Golden, This World Is Not My Home, In My Father's House* and many others, all pull our souls heavenwards during mourning events/burials.

From Apostle John, the Church gains a glimpse of Heaven, as mentioned earlier. He is known as the disciple whom Jesus loved, and we thank God that he lived to a ripe old age. He witnessed the persecution of Christians firsthand. With such direct experience, he understood Jesus, who existed before and was God incarnate, becoming human to die and offer humanity Christian hope. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, he will also raise those who are in Christ at the end of the Age,

transforming them into eternal life in his kingdom (John 11:25-26, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 35-57).²⁰⁰

Christian living and worship of God emphasize the equality of men and women. In the kingdom of Righteousness, distinctions such as male or female, Jew or Gentile, slave or free cease to exist—all are unified in Christ. Before delving into how men and women are often misled by comforts in possessions, knowledge, and scientific advancements, it's important to acknowledge that prioritizing these pursuits over honoring God can lead to idolatry. In this regard, it is significant to agree with Grudem when he asserts that Heaven is not merely a state of mind but a real place.²⁰¹

The Bible, which means "Swahili-Bibilia" or "Biblioteka" in Russian (meaning Library), reveals this with certainty. In our Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Our Father who art in Heaven" (Matt. 6:9). Jesus is in heaven at the right hand of God (1 Peter 3:22). At the Ascension in Bethany, the disciples watched Jesus ascend into Heaven. In Heaven, Jesus went to prepare rooms for the believers whom he redeems. Stephen, "Full of the Holy Spirit," gazed into Heaven (Acts 1:11). All this evidence is capped by John's Revelation of the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21 and 22).

²⁰⁰ Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Literature Department, *United Catechism for East Africa*, (Jitegemea Publishers, Nairobi, undated), 7.

²⁰¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1159.

Only those who live worshipful lives shall be ushered into glory (Rev. 22:12-21). John lists a catalogue of vices that worshipful believers should avoid. These believers are those who have surrendered their bodies as living sacrifices. They should not be cowards, corrupt, murderers, or immoral. They should not practice witchcraft or idol worship, placing issues ahead of devoting their energy, resources, and time to a godly life. They must not be liars (Rev. 21:8).

Enlightenment, economic prosperity, advanced educational achievement, success in career-making, more often than not, replicate the story of the rich fool in Luke 12:13-21, whose fertile farm produced fine crops. Then he forgot the Provider and laid his trust in what he possessed. In Psalms, warnings are given severally against self-sufficiency. Psalm 62:10 states, “Do not try to get rich by extortion or robbery. And if your wealth increases, don’t make it the center of your life.” In the Book of Proverbs, the same counsel is reiterated: “Rich people picture themselves as wise, but their real poverty is evident to the poor.”

The point being made by references to matters pertaining to death, mourning, and the riches people acquire is to emphasize one thing: worshiping and praising God should not be negatively or positively aroused by happenings. Whether in death or life, whether rich or poor, God requires our reverence of him, not because we affect his being but because he delights in our honoring and hallowing his Name! The scientific

knowledge that God bestows upon us human beings through his general grace to humankind should be a vehicle of his revelations about his bounty and not something to distance ourselves from him. Karl Barth teaches that hallowing God's name should run deeply in our spiritual veins, with zeal and passion being the outward signs. He makes references to Ps. 37:4, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Isaiah 37:32, 2 Kings 19:31, Zechariah 1:14, Zephaniah 1:18, 3:8, Ezekiel 39:25, and concludes with Isaiah 59:17, where Isaiah says that God wraps himself with zeal (delight) as a mantle.²⁰²

Stressing that zeal of man for honor of God's name is not so simple a matter because sometimes it can be inappropriate. He cites examples of incidents/occasions as in Num. 11:28ff, Gal. 1:14, Phil. 3:6. This lower zeal in unlike Elijah's (I Kg. 19:10).²⁰³ All in all, whether zeal is such as was exhibited among believers after the Pentecost, Barth concludes that "there has to be in the Christian life a kind of necessary Christian passion and zeal for the honor of God."²⁰⁴ Conversation with God, whether in music or in prayer, in preaching or in serving should have joy; be lively as these would be emanating from holy religious affections.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Karl Barth, *The Christian Life, Church Dogmatic, Vol. iv, Part 4, lecture fragments*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1981), 113-114.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 115.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

Dancing as an expression of one's feelings about God is sanctioned in scripture, along with musical instruments, as already elaborated in an earlier chapter of the book. Dancing for God is not limited to one category of people; it is for all believers, whether rich or poor, young or old, provided there is no bodily impairment. In musical praise, dancing, usually accompanied by ululations, shrills, laughter, and moving together in body rhythms, is uplifting.²⁰⁶ It is interesting to note that even with the biblical background outlined comprehensively in this chapter as in other portions of this book, the manner of Praise and Worship of God continues to raise mixed reactions in the Body of Christ.

We note that with the rise of Protestantism, music in theological terms was said to instill calm to human soul. At the same time dancing to sacred music was not permitted.²⁰⁷ Praise and worship often feature choruses and short songs, sometimes arranged into continuous pieces, especially when accompanied by dancing to the rhythm of the song. This style is prevalent in popular music. The mix becomes particularly interesting and exhilarating when verses from traditional hymns are incorporated, especially when accompanied by

²⁰⁶ Roberta King, et al, *Music in the life of the African Church*, Waco TX: Baylor University Press 2008), 3.

²⁰⁷ Julius Portney, *Music in the Life of Man*, (New York, Chicago, SF, Toronto, London: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1963), 85.

instruments or when the majority of worshippers use their vernacular language, their mother tongue. A good example would be singing a hymn.

*I have wondered far from God,
Now I am coming home....and then continues
It was grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fear relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.....
What can wash away my sin
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again
Or, Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine
Oh what a foretaste Glory divine
Heir of salvation purchase of God
Born of his spirit, washed in his Blood, then the
chorus.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my savior all the
Day long
Down at the cross where my savior died
Down where for cleansing I cried,
There to my heart was blood applied
Glory to his name.
Glory to His name, Glory to his name;
There to my heart was the blood applied,*

Glory to His name.

One might argue that combining verses from different hymns dilutes their theological integrity, as hymns are primarily based on Scripture. However, the emotional intensity created by piecing together these verses fosters a conducive mental and spiritual readiness to engage with other elements of worship.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Bible serves as the definitive source on how to adore, pray, praise, and thank God. The style and manner of singing or praising are fully guided by Scripture, whether accompanied by instruments or not, and when and how to worship are detailed in Scripture. When faced with doubtful or controversial approaches, the systematic approach is to refer to the standards laid out in Scripture. Both Old and New Testament references provide valuable guidance, and traditions over the Church's 2000-year history offer insights into what has been successful or problematic.

CHAPTER 10

Biblical Texts and Global voices on Praise and Worship

In praise and worship of God; praise, worship and the dual notion; praise and worship will be discussed singly. Without a deep understanding of these three terms, there's a risk of narrowly viewing praise and worship as the sole solution for our spiritual life, potentially misrepresenting the complete picture of honoring God.

Examining the roots of these terms and their biblical references clarifies that contemporary music genres can be as theological as hymns. As discussed in previous chapters, both choruses and songs serve to praise and adore God, similar to hymns, though they may involve more active expressions like dancing during praise and worship.

Praise in the Old Testament has roots from the word *halal*, which denotes noise. The word *Yada* which was originally associated with bodily actions and gestures that accompany praising is also used. *Zamar* is also a word connected with playing or singing music.²⁰⁸ In the New Testament, praise is rooted in the word *eucharistein* which literary means to give thanks in music and song.

²⁰⁸ J. D. Douglas, organizing editor, *The New Bible Dictionary*, 1018.

Eucharistein is a term implying intimacy with one being praised. An allied terminology, *eulogein* which means to bless is more formal than the latter.²⁰⁹

The Bible contains passages commanding praise (Exodus 15:20-21; 2 Samuel 6:14). It defines praise as the sacrifice of our lips (Hebrews 13:15). Scripture sanctions clapping hands and shouting (Psalm 47:1), and includes musical instruments and dancing as biblical components of praise (Psalm 150:3-5). Making joyful noise, lifting holy hands, and being loud in praise are also commanded or sanctioned (Psalm 98:4-6, 134:2, 33, 95:1-6). Yet, praise is also described at times as being still (Psalm 46:10).

Praise can be simply defined as our reaction to what God has done or who God is. It can also be a response to a specific deed or act, as in Isaiah 25:1, "O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for you have done marvelous things, planned long ago."²¹⁰

Worship is a response in obedience to God. Without God revealing himself to us, we do not know how to follow him.²¹¹ In traditional Africa, over a thousand tribes developed concepts of God through his creation—the moon, stars, sun, mountains, caves, valleys, mighty trees, rivers, and other natural manifestations. These

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ [Http://churchmusicain-jobs.com/praise_and_worship.html](http://churchmusicain-jobs.com/praise_and_worship.html), accessed on March 30, 2010.

²¹¹ Ibid.

concepts shaped their traditions, religious beliefs, and practices. "In all these societies, without a single exception, people have a notion of God as the supreme Being. This is the most minimal and fundamental idea about God found in African societies."²¹²

Traditional African religion encompassed beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, and religious officiants. As discussed earlier, the African perspective on life, attitudes of the mind, logic, and reactions to life events—such as planting, harvesting, rites of passage, and funerals—was deeply intertwined with religious practices. In traditional African societies, belief and action within the realm of religion were inseparable; they constituted a unified whole. The belief in life after death permeated and continues to permeate all aspects of society.

The African concept of God, as understood before the advent of the Gospel, provided fertile ground for the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, emphasizing grace and forgiveness. It is worth noting that African Traditional Religious thought shares many similarities with Hebraic worship practices. In the Bible, the concept of worship in both Old Testament and New Testament is clear as the Hebrew word *boda*, and the Greek word *Latreia*, show that in order to offer worship to God, his servants must prostrate themselves and thus manifest reverential fear and adoring awe and wonder.²¹³ The simplicity of house-church worship services typically

²¹² Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 29.

²¹³ Douglas, *New Bible Dictionary*, 1340.

revolves around praise, prayer, scripture reading, and exposition.²¹⁴

The English word worship comes from Anglo-Saxon word *weorthscipe* meaning to ascribe worth to an object. In its highest meaning, to worship God is to ascribe worth to Him. To worship God is to ascribe to him supreme worth for he alone is worthy. In the Old Testament the word *hishahawh* means bowing down. Another term, *abodah* translates as service; which implies complete service as a servant of God.²¹⁵

In both the Old and New Testaments, public worship is designated to a specific day, set apart as seen in Exodus 20:8-11. Certain groups, such as the Levites, were entrusted with leading in priestly duties (Numbers 3:10), while prophesying and music were also led by designated individuals (1 Chronicles 25).

Following the Resurrection, the first day of the week became the customary day for public worship (John 20:19, Acts 20:7), a practice observed by most Christian denominations except for the Seventh Day Adventists. Worship is consistently commanded by God (e.g., 2 Kings 17:36) and affirmed by the people (e.g., Psalms 100:1-2) throughout the Bible, with numerous examples of formal worship recorded. Notable instances include Abraham

²¹⁴ Ibid. 1340.

²¹⁵ J. Nathan Corbitt, *The Sound of Harvest; Music Mission in the Church and Culture* (Grand Rapids; MI: Baker Books 1998), 53.

and Jacob (Genesis 22:5; 35:1-7) and the returned exiles as documented in Ezra and Nehemiah.

In the Gospels and Acts, Jesus, the apostles, and the early church engaged in formal worship (Luke 4:15-27; Acts 3:1, 2:42-47, 20:7). Even the hosts of Heaven engage in formal worship (Revelation 5:8-14; 7:9-17). The principles governing true worship include devotion to God alone, wholehearted love for God, humility, and reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit (implied from Deuteronomy 5:6-8, John 4:23-24, and Romans 8:13b-14). Rituals alone are insufficient; inner love and devotion of the heart are paramount.²¹⁶ In the New Testament, specific elements in Christian practice are recorded. They are reading scripture, preaching, praying, singing, giving tithes and offerings, exercising spiritual gifts, and celebrating the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Pauline teaching on the use of diverse spiritual gifts is spelled out in I Corinthians 12. As stated earlier, singing (praise) is a basis of Christian practice in a worship service. It stands out as an element of worship of God. In any case, music is part of life among peoples even outside the religious sphere.

The dichotomy of true worship or praise is not easy, but from the Bible, true worship consists of reverential acts, authorized by God, that are directed to him and performed to honor him or his name. Reverential acts, benedictions/blessings, Psalm singing,

²¹⁶ Douglas, *The New Bible Dictionary*, 1340.

lawful/religious oaths and vows, and fasting are not easily recognized as elements of worship. Genesis 17:1 defines worship as a way of life, walking with God and being blameless. Understanding the elements of worship, major or minor, will aid Christian understanding of living a worshipful life: a life that pleases God and mirrors the love of God to non-believers. Glorifying God in all things, as called for in I Corinthians 10:30-33 and Romans 12:1-21, requires a closer look. It is a multi-layered component like the vegetable artichoke.

The artichoke is a large edible flower head containing many fleshy scale-like bracts. The plant artichoke itself is an herbaceous thistle-like plant. The flower head has rendered it to be called globe artichoke due to its spherical shape. The bottom thick green petals (bracts) can be eaten when well cooked. These loosely layered petals are easily plucked out as flakes. The inner core (the kernel) is rather compact and carries a whitish-purple hue. Artichoke is used here to illustrate the importance of all the elements of worship because there are about twelve outstanding benefits of the vegetable artichoke that are deliverable from each of the bracts of this edible vegetable head. The kernel, that innermost component, holds the vegetable head in place. It is succulent and thus keeps the flake sturdy and juicy. It gives succor to the vegetable as it remains on the shelves in a vegetable shop or supermarket.

In a similar manner, the various elements of worship—some major such as praise or prayer, and even

the Lord's Supper; others such as kneeling or reverential disposition—constitute worshiping in spirit and in truth. The Holy Spirit gives succor to the faith even when the believers' spirits are low and in despair. What are these qualities in the artichoke that energize physical health that call for comparison with the elements of worship in our approach to praise and worship of God?

Artichoke regenerates the liver and decreases cholesterol. If well-cooked or prepared the value to the liver and the gall bladder is immense. It increases the bile secretion. Hence it is said to be cholerectic and hepatoprotective as antitoxic. It works well for dyspepsia or binary colic and hepatic insufficiency. In case of hepatitis, artichoke is highly recommended²¹⁷

Preparation for internal use (internal medicine) typically involves three forms: infusion of leaves, stem, or roots (50-100 grams per liter of water); fresh juice extracted from leaves, taken in a daily dose of one or two grams, ensuring it is not overly sour; and dry extract preparation from the leaves.²¹⁸ Artichoke is also diuretic, depurative as it eliminates urea by increasing the volume

²¹⁷ George D. Pamplona – Roger, *Encyclopedia of Medicinal plants*, Education and Health Library, 3rd Edition May 200, Madrid, Spain) 387

²¹⁸ Ibid., 387

of urine excreted. Below is a straight forward narrative that reads quite plainly:

Artichoke is high in antioxidant content (surpassing cranberries, pecans, blue berries, grape juice, and unsweetened baking chocolate, red wine and even orange juice. It also surpasses cooked broccoli, kiwi fruit and cooked red bell pepper. Its dietary fiber surpasses that of lima beans, cooked green peas, stewed prunes, oat bran muffin, avocado, peanuts or even medium raw carrot.²¹⁹

Artichoke provides several health benefits, serving as a digestive aid through its gentle leaf extract for indigestion and upset stomach. It also offers significant brain and cognitive benefits due to its richness in vitamin K, which helps protect against dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, artichoke contributes to cancer prevention, serves as a source of folic acid, helps control blood pressure, and supports bone health with its vitamin K content. It further aids metabolic function with its nutrient manganese and contains compounds that neutralize free radicals and other toxins harmful to the body.²²⁰ Fresh juice made from artichoke leaves is

²¹⁹ [Http://www.oceanicmist.com](http://www.oceanicmist.com) 1 2-unexpected _artichoke-health benefits

²²⁰ [Http://www.lifeextension.com](http://www.lifeextension.com) magazine/2011/the amazing Artichoke.

recommended to be consumed with each meal. When using dry extract, the daily dose should be around two grams, taking into account that some individuals may find the sour flavor of infusions or juice to be less tolerable.²²¹

The above information is intended for comparative teaching purposes and should not be used as medical advice or prescription. Jesus often used familiar objects and concepts to convey profound truths. For instance, he referred to himself as the Good Shepherd in contrast to the shepherds mentioned in Ezekiel chapter 34. He also used water, which constitutes up to 70% of the human body, to illustrate himself as the living water, doing so at Jacob's well. Metaphorically, he used sheep and goats to represent the righteous and the unrighteous. Jesus cursed the non-productive fig tree as a symbol of unfruitfulness.

In today's context, people often focus heavily on health matters such as physical exercise, healthy eating, and beauty products aimed at maintaining optimal health. Similarly, praise and worship of God encompass numerous elements, each contributing significantly, much like the edible bracts of an artichoke head, which are valuable when properly utilized. Teaching each element of worship effectively enriches Christian faith and thereby enhances Christian living, ultimately glorifying and honoring God.

²²¹Ibid., 387

Biblical spirituality fosters the right attitude toward personal or corporate worship, leading inevitably to Christian maturity. Living a worshipful life necessitates adherence to God's law and grace, with praise and worship being conducted in spirit and truth. This comprehensive approach—glorifying God in all activities, living a worshipful life, and praying sincerely and truthfully—embraces all elements that constitute worship. Each component is inherently valuable, akin to each tract in an artichoke, laden with its own significance. Therefore, all elements of worship are essential in honoring God.

This book seeks to explore this intricate approach to demonstrating God's worthiness. Humanity is created as the pinnacle of God's creation, designed in His image and likeness. To glorify God in all things, as exhorted in 1 Corinthians 10:31, our actions must be motivated by love, ensuring that everything we do reflects God's love and brings glory to Him. This glory is manifested through loving God with our entire being—heart (emotional center), mind (intellect and capacity for thought), and by loving our neighbor as ourselves, as illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37).

The Bible is clear that one cannot claim to love God if they are at odds and lack charity toward fellow human beings. In light of this, two questions should guide our actions: Is this action glorifying God? How can this action honor God? Paul and others after him mention specific actions such as dietary choices—whether one eats vegetables, meat, boiled or roasted—along with drink

choices like Coke, Fanta, or beer. All these matter because the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, where God's spirit resides. The Christian perspective on food need not always adhere strictly to Jewish prescriptions today. The biblical perspective on cleanliness focuses on what comes from the heart. The heart, as the core of life, is crucial. Psalm 104:15 indicates that food and drink affect the "heart," which encompasses the whole person—physically, intellectually, and psychologically. Terms like character, personality, will, and mind in modern usage reflect aspects of the biblical concept of "heart."²²²

This body must therefore be kept in good condition. As we converse with our children, friends, co-workers, strangers, and even in husband-wife relations, our speech must be wholesome. It's essential to remember the adage that "talk is cheap but action is expensive." We must walk the Christian path. In Luke chapter 6:46-49, there's a clear admonition that calling upon the name of the Lord requires concrete action in response to what we believe God is saying. Anything less than putting our beliefs into practice will leave the believer vulnerable, akin to a house built hastily on a weak foundation. When life's crises arise and turmoil engulfs us, it can lead to both spiritual and physical destruction, even loss of life.

Worship of God also involves our relationship with the Holy Spirit. Just as the inner core of the artichoke supports the edible parts of its leaves when cooked, the

²²² *New Bible Dictionary*, 509.

indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a believer provides strength to live a godly life even when our mindset and willpower are weak. When we worship God in truth (through the True Vine) and in spirit energized by the Holy Ghost, we can cry out "Abba, Father," acknowledging our Heavenly Father. A life that calls out to Abba embraces the redemptive work of Christ as Lord and Savior, longing to be empowered by the Holy Spirit who serves as our counselor and teacher. To worship is to ascribe worthiness to God, for in Him we live and move and have our being:

Our life, our DNA, is enabled by God. He gives us the breath of life. He provides the air we breathe freely in equal measure. Whether you are at the Equator, in mid-latitudes, north or South. We are equitably given oxygen and nitrogen and carbon dioxide equitably.²²³

God designed our bodies to function according to how He intricately knit them together at conception. The amazing uniqueness of human fingerprints is utilized by biometric science for personal identification. Praise and worship of God in spirit and truth find empowerment in the Holy Spirit. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we should live authentically. Our engagement with music in praise and our reception of sermons require that our lives align

²²³ However, this varies or thins out with attitude.

with our beliefs. The emotions we display in church on Sundays should reflect how we live daily, a point emphasized throughout this book.

What pleases God in praise and worship—singing hymns, listening to sermons, giving tithes and offerings, and other acts of worship—is that we approach these acts with reverential fear, honoring and respecting God. It is in these moments of truth, reality, and concrete application that God's worthiness is acknowledged. It is through these acts that true connection with God and humanity is established in praise, singing, and holy religious affections.

The Book of James does not dismiss the fact that we cannot earn our salvation, for we are saved by atoning grace. However, James exposes hypocritical practices and teaches correct Christian behavior. The primary lesson James imparts is that it is insufficient to merely profess Christian faith; it must be lived out. Actions speak louder than words. In other words, as mentioned earlier, talk is "cheap"—it is easy to articulate truthful statements, but actions that carry out biblical truth are "expensive." They require sacrifice and self-denial, necessitating putting aside selfishness to live out biblical teachings. Words and actions must be aligned. Where there is a disconnect between words of faith and actions, repentance is necessary. We are reminded that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces in the heavenly realms.

Genuine faith inevitably produces good deeds, which are beneficial both to ourselves and to others. We must practice justice in society (James 2:1-13), control our speech (James 3:1-12), avoid reliance on our own plans and possessions (James 4:13, 5:6), and above all, pray for one another and remain faithful to God.

Before the Christian era (C.E.), Isaiah (700-681 B.C.) echoes the sentiments of the prophet Amos that truly ascribing worthiness to God should move from theory to practice. Isaiah chapter 58 lays bare this doctrine, plainly teaching us what to do. Regarding prayer and fasting, the principle is that we must first cease from fighting and quarreling before engaging in these two cardinal Christian disciplines (Isaiah 58:3b-4). Humility is to be practiced by engaging in acts of penance (Isaiah 58:2). As we pray, praise, and worship God, there is a need to re-examine how we live in our homes, conduct our businesses, and behave in farming practices, including the use of agricultural chemicals. A pertinent question is whether we adhere to instructions regarding the use of pesticides, as improper use can harm consumers of our produce. Manufacturers of pesticides and herbicides should conduct thorough research before releasing their products for agricultural use, and the use of these chemicals should be regularly evaluated.

Isaiah also raises questions about visiting prisons and orphanages to alleviate societal oppression. Observing how the people of God observed the Sabbath day (and in the Christian dispensation, Sunday, the first

day of the week in relation to the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ), Isaiah 58:14 teaches that Sunday is a gift from God, set aside to remove us from our normal activities. It is a day to recognize that God alone is worthy to be worshipped, appreciating His role as our creator and sustainer. It is not a day for self-serving recreation or mundane activities like mere outings and golfing, instead of first gathering with our households in places of worship.

Another essential aspect of Christian living is how others perceive us—the praxiology of our beliefs. As witnesses of the Gospel of Christ, how do non-Christians view our beliefs in relation to our practices? Mahatma Gandhi (a Hindu) attempted to live a life of non-violence based on the Sermon on the Mount in the Bible during his time in Durban, South Africa, as previously mentioned. He spoke of encountering true Christian families who lived out their faith authentically. While the details of this story are recounted in his writings, it suffices to state here that he loved Christ but criticized Christians for not practicing what Christ taught them. The parable of the lamp (Luke 8:16-18; Mark 4:21-25) teaches that a lamp is lit to allow people to see clearly. Christians, therefore, must shine brightly to illuminate the teachings of Jesus.

We are currently living in a miraculous and digitally revolutionary era where life's issues are spinning like a roller-coaster. The overwhelming number of TV channels available for surfing includes services from providers like DSTV, Go-TV, Star-Times, and others,

which have inundated homes. The internet, WhatsApp, Facebook, Skype, Truecaller, and social media in general have both positively and negatively invaded our lives. Magazines, tabloids, and newspapers flood readers' minds with a mix of positive and negative life issues. Whether one likes it or not, negative influences permeate society unchecked.

There are individuals promoting atheism, contrary to human inclinations towards the ultimate Author of life. Polytheism also holds considerable influence, despite its philosophical inadequacies. Across cultures throughout history, sufficiency has traditionally been sought in Deity. Natural events such as dating no longer strictly adhere to traditional venues like events, churches, schools, or colleges. Advertising for spousal seeking is becoming increasingly popular, whether through print media, FM radio stations, or mobile phones. Gambling proliferates through numerous radio channels and roadside advertisements in Kenya. The honorable desire to marry or find a spouse has been overshadowed by the highly publicized advocacy for gay rights, including homosexual and lesbian unions.

There are now improved beauty products for creating the ideal lady. New and improved products, fast foods, diet drinks, glamorous hair styles for both men and women are out there. Mouthwashes, hand washes, rather than normal soaps abound. All types of tooth brushes adorn supermarkets beauty booths. *Nyama choma* (roast meat) zones abound despite their association with gout. In

all this the Bible has the answers to correct living, dressing, and eating, trading and even farming. The Bible warns on excessive drinking and meat eating in *nyama choma* zones. “Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat” (Proverbs 23:20). Gluttony is against living Christianly. (Deuteronomy. 21:20; Proverbs 23:21; Matthew 11:19 and Luke 7:34)

As previously mentioned, the artichoke offers numerous health benefits. Similarly, the elements that constitute the worship and praise of God are all vital in living a Christian life. Individually, each element may not provide complete satisfaction, but when combined together effectively, they create a wonderful spiritual nourishment. Our profound confessions of Christian faith should be enriched through practical application. The Bible can be likened to a colossal artichoke that took approximately 1,600 years to fully develop. The early fathers (and possibly mothers) of faith carefully selected and preserved writings, resulting in the Protestant Bible containing 66 books. However, the Roman Catholic Church includes an additional seven books known as the Apocrypha. These books, termed deuterocanonical, were written in Greek and were outside the Holy Land, which is why they are excluded from the Jewish Bible.²²⁴

For instance, the Book of Wisdom addresses Jewish faith within Greek culture, unlike the Gospel of

²²⁴ St. Paul communication/Daughters of St. Paul (Paulines), *The African Bible*, (Nairobi, Kenya, 4th Reprinting 2005), 1080

John, which employs the concept of "logos" to affirm that Christ, the Messiah, embodies the "logos" valued in Greek culture. Apostle John based his writings on what he had personally witnessed and experienced with the Lord Jesus Himself.

To lead a worshipful life can be described in various ways, including making a personal covenant with God, being born again, taking up one's cross and following Jesus, accepting the Lordship of Jesus Christ, or simply being saved. God has fulfilled His part, and now the responsibility lies with humanity (Romans 12:1). Living out Christianity within the context of a worshipful life requires responding to what God has done through Christ our Lord, as detailed in the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans.

The essence of worship transcends mere process; it involves a relationship with the Holy Trinity, the focal point of all genuine biblical worship. Worship must be intentional, in spirit and in truth, informed by Scripture, intimate, and intense. This foundational idea permeates the preceding chapters of this book and underpins true worship of God. The role of music in praise is extensively discussed in the Bible. Praise acknowledges many of God's attributes: His kingship (Psalm 47:2, 7-8), His majesty (Psalm 96:6-9), His role as creator (Psalm 33:6-9), His redemption (Psalm 96:1-2), His providence in history (Psalm 105:5-45), His provision for nature (Psalm 65:9-13), and His care for the needy (Psalm 113:7-8). Each of these references is interconnected throughout the

Bible. God is also praised for His love and compassion (Psalm 57:9-10). Humans are commanded to sing, while the rest of creation also praises God (Psalm 30:4, Psalm 148):

Praise to God constitutes part of a large number of Psalms. Some are almost entirely praise; others contain elements of praise. The Psalmist praises God, for who he is – the king over all the earth, clothed in splendor and majesty. They praise him for what he has done in creating the world, in redeeming his people, and in caring for them throughout their history. We praise him for what he continues to do in nature, in providing for the daily needs of his people, in showing them love and compassion. Often the desire to praise God results in command to sing. Praise to God is not limited to human beings; for all creation is called on to praise the Lord. We too should praise the Lord.²²⁵

After discussing the scriptural foundations of praise and worship, it is essential to review global perspectives on the subject. Various writers advocate for the phenomenon of praise and worship, while others prefer traditional liturgies inherited from Euro-American mission-established churches.

²²⁵ The Bible, *The Topical Bible Study*, (Chicago Illinois, 2004), 655

The contemporary praise and worship phenomenon and its advocacy trace their origins to the United States of America in the early 19th century. While hymnody was burgeoning in Britain, new configurations of churches such as Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists were focused on evangelism.²²⁶ Spiritual songs (Colossians 3: 16) or spirituals as they came to be known were characterized by spontaneous singing, great simplicity and much repetition and commonly consisted mainly of choruses.²²⁷ Just as hymns were folk songs of Britain, gospel songs acquired equal position in America. Sacred solos and songs reached one thousand two hundred songs by 1903 in America.²²⁸ Due to inherent cultural affinities with British popular music, sales in Britain close to eighty million rivalled those of hymns, *Ancient and Modern in Britain*.²²⁹ It is, therefore, observable that choruses and songs that put more emphasis on evangelism and revival than on consolidating faith of the believers are centuries old, just as the hymns are. “Victorian hymnody was geared to instructing people in the faith rather than convert.”²³⁰ In the time of the Watts and Wesley’s hymns were not written for use in Church worship. “They were

²²⁶ King, et.al. *Music in the Life of the African Church*, 31

²²⁷ Ibid., 31

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid., 33

²³⁰ Ibid

designed for prayer-cells and open-air service.”²³¹ In assessing the value of hymns, it's important to note that many were initially written for specific passing occasions rather than for permanent use. This has been discussed previously in reference to John Wesley and his brother Charles Wesley's evangelical crusades, which contributed to the emergence of the Methodist Church. The Jesus Movement, which began in the late sixties, saw hippies embracing a new revival centered on Jesus Christ. This movement fused rock and roll with the gospel message, paving the way for what we now know as contemporary Christian music, a wave that continues to impact today.²³² The "Jesus Movement" injected the church with arts and disrupted conventional worship. Those involved were often labeled "Jesus Freaks" by the Establishment of the day, who found their approach unconventional and sometimes disturbing.²³³

Having passionate hearts for Jesus; Jesus Freaks were willing to extend their passion to all areas of life, be it poetry, music, art or hard choices at life's crossroads.²³⁴ This made congregational music more flexible and less

²³¹ Frank Colquhoun, *Great Churchmen*, Number Eight, Charles Wesley (London: Church Book Room Press Ltd, undated), 5

²³² Toby McKechan & Mark Heinemann, *Jesus Freaks; stories of those who stood by Jesus*, Al Bury Publishing, TULSA, Oklahoma 1995), 10

²³³ Ibid

²³⁴ Ibid

formal; a practice that is being carried on today.²³⁵ The praise and worship movement believes that intense praise of God leads to His presence being concentrated, miracles happening, and demons scattering. As explained in the section on biblical meanings of praise and worship, these two terms hold distinct meanings. Linking intensified praise music with healing is seen as potentially trivializing the Gospel. Healing, according to the Bible, occurs in response to prayer, as stated in James 5:15. Roberta King's definition of praise and worship as "the sung part of service common in non-liturgical churches" is perceived to share the same theological pitfalls.²³⁶ Praising and worshipping God extends beyond the initial phase of a worship service. Other elements such as corporate prayer, scripture reading, the sermon, listening attentively, altar calls, offerings, Holy Communion, and benedictions are integral parts of worship. These elements are akin to the beneficial bracts of an artichoke that contribute to spiritual health. Each act of worship holds significant weight in honoring God spiritually.

However, the research conducted by King underscores the importance of flexibility and less formality in worship scenarios. This was central to uncovering the theological basis for the sub-genre of gospel music known as praise and worship music. The

²³⁵ <http://sswww.reformworship.com>, 2007/08, Praise and worship part 5 of 7, 2007/08, html accessed on March 30, 2010.

²³⁶ King, et.al. *Music in the Life of the African Church*, 178

study revealed tension between traditional "book music" and more expressive "body music," which involves the whole person. King argues that through song, dance, and drama, new ways of praising the universal God can be discovered across cultures and times.

This advocacy for praise music aligns with the perspectives of those who appreciate its dynamic nature. Conversely, it sheds light on why some individuals might oppose praise and worship practices. Addressing cultural concepts of worship and music, J. Nathan Corbitt references theologian Justo Gonzalez, who asserts that worship should be participatory, emotional, festive, interactive, sensual, and engaging, as seen in Hispanic worship traditions.²³⁷

In this context, it is important to consider the needs of individuals with disabilities. Elderly members should not feel excluded from choral praise. The biblical example of the disagreement between Paul and Silas versus Barnabas and John Mark provides a good model to follow, ensuring that the name of the Lord is not dishonored by such disagreements (Acts 15:36-41). Paul and Silas made significant contributions to the Lord's work. While Luke does not detail Barnabas and John Mark's subsequent activities, it is clear they also engaged in evangelism. It is worth reiterating that, as mentioned earlier, Paul later requested Mark's presence while in prison (2 Timothy 4:11) because he was valuable to his ministry. In the

²³⁷ Roberta King, *Music in the Life of the African church*, 176

Church, disagreements may arise over strategies, but they should not lead to division. Individuals should feel encouraged to use their special talents and abilities for the greater good. It is observable that rock and pop music traits, that is, beats and rhythm, are common features in praise and worship phenomenon associated with musicking. Lawhead, a proponent of praise and worship states that “undeniably Christian rock is here to stay; and why not if as Christians we are to be actively seeking the lost, sharing the Good news, calling them to Christ; what better way than in the very form that speaks to them best? We meet non-Christians where they are. Our music is our own.”²³⁸ The thinking here is that, the end justifies the means. This vigorous use of hymns was much used by the Wesley brothers (Charles and John). Colquhoun expresses this position in the following manner:

By his hymns Charles Wesley preached the Gospel in song, and through this medium he instructed the masses in the essentials of Christian theology. John Wesley was quick to appreciate the value of the hymns as well as their evangelistic power.²³⁹

²³⁸ Steve Lawhead: *Rock on Trial: Pop Music and its role in our lives* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press 1989), 83.

²³⁹ Colquhoun, *Great Church Men*.

Evangelization aims to bring the unchurched into the ecclesia where they can be instructed in the ways of God. The Great Commission mandates this outreach, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Effective outreach often utilizes powerful music as a tool to attract people to the Church. Similarly, within the Church community, revival draws strength from music and the accompanying proclamation of the gospel. To underscore the significance of powerful music in preaching the Word, Colquhoun asserts: "It has been said that John Wesley perceived more clearly than any other since Luther the propagandist value of song as an aid to the evangelist."²⁴⁰

Propaganda, understood as the deliberate and systematic spreading of information, plays a crucial role not only in correcting errors in Christian teachings but also in addressing social issues. As discussed earlier, this applies to folk songs or popular gospel songs where gospel artists emphasize that "No Christian should be belittled for liking rock. Conversely, those who prefer rock music should refrain from condemning music that others find beneficial."²⁴¹ His stance on rock and pop music within contemporary praise and worship emphasizes that "God's people should actively encourage whatever is good, worthy, and true in popular music. The Christian community, like the world at large, greatly benefits from the creativity, enthusiasm, courage, and

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Steve Lawhead: *Rock on Trial*, 120

vision that Christian artists bring."²⁴² In the research conducted at PCEA St. Andrew's Church, investigating congregants' views on worship, attitudes toward praise and worship, and their understanding of worship elements beyond praise, supported this perspective, as detailed in the research findings in Chapter 19.

Regarding worship direction, Barry Leisch strongly advocates for praise and worship. He asserts that "dance in music becomes the language of the heart and spirit. Sacred dance is therapeutic, a visual art that congregations embrace, effectively expressing the emotional connection with God."²⁴³ Here is a clear indication that intellect alone is not sufficient for connecting with God. The role of culture, church tradition, music, and appropriate rhythm are relevant areas to examine and embrace in worship. This position has been emphasized in several sections of this book.

Robert E. Webber, another strong advocate of praise and worship, states that after praise and adoration, a leader may offer a prayer with such words as "Father, I adore you," and emphatically states that:

One thing seems certain, and that is, we are not likely to see uniformity of worship throughout the church, not even uniformity of worship among

²⁴² Ibid., 120-121

²⁴³ Barry Leisch, *People in the Presence of God: Models and Directions for worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 37

specific denominations. Convergence of worship itself does not propose uniformity. It suggests that denominations and local churches learn from and borrow from churches of other traditions.²⁴⁴

Reference to John 17, where Christ prayed for the unity of the church, remains a perplexing matter given the historical divisions within the church since its inception. It's understandable if any believer hesitates to interpret this oneness as a return to the unity seen during the Papacy Period with its center in Rome. The Inquisition, as previously mentioned, exposed how easily a humanly organized structure can deviate from God's ways. Looking back at the centrality of the Jewish religion and its temple in Jerusalem (Acts 15) serves as a pertinent example. The split in 1453 AD between the Western and Eastern Churches further emphasized different approaches to worshiping God. The subsequent divisions during the Reformation introduced distinct aspects of biblical worship and praise. Sacred music often carries profound theological insights. A thorough examination of any sacred hymn or song could serve as a sermon or rich devotional material. This perspective has been expanded upon in an earlier chapter of the book, but the following illustration helps clarify the implied unity.

From the Hymn “*Onward Christian Soldiers, Matching unto War* (Golden Bells No. 525 and or 460 in

²⁴⁴ Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House 1994), 133-134.

Redemption songs by (Sabine Baring – Gould, 1834-1924) is a good theological line to take on Church unity as outlined in verse three:

The church moves like a mighty army, the current brethren are walking through a chartered pathway, where others have trodden. We are not divided. We are one body. This body is bonded together by three elements: - hope, doctrine and charity.

Christian hope rests on what God can and will do in our lives through the redemptive work of the cross— Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. Hymn writers, like evangelists and priests, are inspired to spread gospel messages through song. Without hope in the power of resurrection and eternal life, life would be meaningless (Proverbs 14:32; Ecclesiastes 12:10; 1 Peter 1:3-9). Christian hope finds its roots in the Old Testament prophets such as Ezekiel and Amos, where judgment was always accompanied by hope for a remnant.

For instance, Ezekiel 20 recounts Israel's history of rebellion. God would purge the rebels, yet there would always be a remnant through whom God would fulfill His salvation plan. The Sabbath was instituted as a day of rest for people to reflect on their special status in God's plan of salvation, though it was often violated. Hope in eternal life motivates believers of all denominations to surrender

daily to the power of the Cross, seeking sanctification and purification to truly witness the Way of the Cross.

Isaiah chapter 35's message of hope describes a highway called the way of Holiness, where the righteous people of God will walk. 1 Corinthians 13:13 adds faith and love to hope, with love being preeminent in the triune web of Christian virtues. The hymn affirms our unity in doctrine, emphasizing the church's foundation on the Word of God and adherence to the creed of the Triune God (the Holy Trinity). Biblical teachings on the attributes of God, prayer, and combating evil are crucial learnings for believers. This hymn, found in the hymn book "Golden Bells," falls under the category of Christian life, pilgrimage, and conflict.

Differences in church governance do not significantly affect future doctrine. The means of grace—baptism, the Lord's Supper, worship, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and glorification (receiving a resurrection body)—remain integral despite divisions within the Church. Charity, as referenced in the hymn, is fundamental to the Christian church. Whether one is Roman Catholic, Protestant (in mainline churches, Pentecostal assemblies, or independent congregations), Seventh-Day Adventist, Salvation Army, or other denominations, charity signifies Christian love—Agape love, benevolent feelings toward others, generosity to the poor, almsgiving, and leniency in interpersonal interactions. The King James Version of the Bible states that charity (love) strengthens the Church (1 Corinthians 8:1). Paul emphasizes in Colossians 3:14 that

Christians of all persuasions should clothe themselves with love, while urging Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12 to set an example in love, faith, and purity. Peter combines godliness with brotherly affection and extends it to love for everyone. Religious pluralism should not hinder Christian mission or Gospel witness but rather serve as an opportunity for broader outreach and understanding.

After reiterating that there is a lot of theology found in music, the subject returns to music preferences as seen from Webbers perspective and others. Webber's views calling for forbearance in those who are for praise songs and choruses vis-à-vis hymns was significant in the survey done in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi how diversity can be accommodated in unity as the data gathered revealed possibility of this happening. Worship has been enriched through Scripture (gospel) songs and praise and worship in the church, at conferences and festivals, in small groups and in private.²⁴⁵ Another advocate of praise and worship is Kennon L. Callahan, who assesses praise through music as an infinite way of worshipping God as he forecasts that "new forms of music, yet unknown will emerge to help us advance the mission, as God has not finished with us."²⁴⁶ *Missio-Dei*, the mission of God shall exist as long as Christ's return tarries.

²⁴⁵ Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 128.

²⁴⁶ Kennon L. Callahan, *Dynamic Worship: Mission, Grace and Power* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), 85.

Bob Kauflin in his article, the *worship movement phenomenon*, states that praise and worship has renewed God-focused emphasis within the Christian music industry. More and more people are seeking to encounter and exalt God as they listen to Christian music, more so as interest is taking place among the youth. The outpouring of new worship songs is enlarging the repertoire that magnifies the greatness of God.²⁴⁷ Just like Webber, Kauflin warns against criticism of enthusiastic singing and clapping as this practice is authorized by Scripture (Ps. 47:1, Ps. 98.8). Stamping is sanctioned by Ezekiel 6:11 and 21:4. Shouting is also biblical (Ezr. 3:11-13) Kauflin also offers a balanced view of the notion of hymns versus choruses when he states that:

To sing music from more than one generation is, in part, to communicate our larger identity as people of God. We hail from many backgrounds, families, races and tastes, but now we are joined together through the blood of Jesus Christ who has reconciled us to the Father and each other. Christian faith is not about being a certain age or liking certain music or living in a particular time and place. Christians are part of a magnificent legacy that began unfolding thousands of years ago and will

²⁴⁷ [Http://www.. Grace Ministries.org](http://www.. Grace Ministries.org). The Worship Phenomenon, article accessed on January 17, 2012.

continue throughout eternity. To narrow our vision exclusively to a small, culture-bound slice of that history is to embrace a kind of spiritual poverty.²⁴⁸

This does not mean that certain cultural values should be ignored. For example, African musical styles should find space in Christian worship and praise. This includes the infusion of African musical art and traditions into Church life, as expressed in African Theology. This encompasses every local musical style, hymn, drums, dances, clapping of hands, or stamping of feet that has been integrated into Christianity, particularly Western Christianity.²⁴⁹ African beat is easy to follow, making it easy to know where to tap our feet in music.²⁵⁰ Indeed, the melody in most cases is short, repetitive and monotonous but it is effective. Sometimes the whole song is two bars long, and one line of words is used throughout the performance. Yet this rhythm urges people to dance for hours.²⁵¹ What Ssenoga-Zake stated holds true because a

²⁴⁸ H. Bob Kauflin, “*Hymns versus Praise Choruses*,” “[Http://ww. Sovereign Grace Ministries.org](http://www.SovereignGraceMinistries.org), comment on comment accessed on 17, January, 2012.

²⁴⁹ Benezet Bujo, et al., *African Theology: The Contribution of Pioneers* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2003), 170.

²⁵⁰ Jeff Todd Titon, Gen. Editor, *An Introduction to the Music of World Peoples* (New York: Shimer Books, 1992), 69.

²⁵¹ George Ssenoga-Zake, *Folk Music in Kenya* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1986), 11.

chorus may have a few lines, but when repeated many times it can take unexpectedly long duration.

Based on Webber's statement that uniformity in music and singing is not possible, it implies that singing must be approached creatively and with flexibility. This aligns with the views of other writers such as King, Kidula, and Corbitt, who discuss the dominance of choruses in praise and worship. This perspective was instrumental in gathering data on why some individuals prefer choruses in praise and worship.

The General Assembly of the PCEA likely recognized current trends when it recommended incorporating praise and worship into church services. Relying solely on hymns for worship appears to lag behind the global trend of using choruses and gospel songs, which have become standard in praise and worship. This trend is particularly noticeable in Kenya, where gospel music has gained widespread popularity among Christians, especially the youth.

There are also Christian writers who are critical of praise and worship phenomenon. Calvin M. Johansson, a critic of praise and worship has written two books, *Discipling Music Ministry* and *Music and Ministry: A Biblical Counterpoint*. In these short volumes with a total of 307 pages; Johansson has articulated the importance of God's word in matters of music. He urges passionately about use of hymns in contrast to choruses in worship. Here, Johansson thinks that short statements of praise are

not good enough. He thinks that one worships right when you sing theological ideas systematically.

Johansson has asserted that "though not particularly self-evident, in large measure, worship determines the quality of our walk with God, and that the shape of our worship shapes us."²⁵² To worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), is to reach out with one's innermost being to God in love and devotion. To do so in truth is to do it honestly and according to truth. God wants our worship to be in response to what we see and know about.²⁵³ In an article titled *Christian Faith*, Johansson argues that though music was an important tool in praise and worship, singing praise was not enough. We can be conditioned to sing praise even when our hearts had little passion for the glory and honor of God in the world and in the Church.²⁵⁴ This could be true in some instances, but we hasten to note that praise in Christian service serves as a prelude to other aspects of devotion to God, such as prayers, reading the Bible, listening to sermons, and giving tithes and offerings. Praise should not be ignored. According to Johansson, many Christians complained about not understanding hymns, which is not unexpected considering that hymns often contain

²⁵² Calvin M. Johannsson, *Discipling Music Ministry: Twenty-first Century Directions* (Peabody, Massachusetts, Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. 2002), 16-17.

²⁵³ [Http:www.christianfaithcom/for Jesus/praise and worship](http://www.christianfaithcom/for%20Jesus/praise%20and%20worship), accessed on 30/03/2010. 138

²⁵⁴ [Http:www.com](http://www.com), 138

intricately crafted poetry.²⁵⁵ The demise of hymn singing in churches has to do with a host of causes that include unfamiliarity, seemingly irrelevant texts, difficulty of imagery and poor acoustics.²⁵⁶ Having been brought up on choruses, the youth did not seem to think that hymn singing should be part of the service. As a result, worship leaders brave enough to include hymn singing are met with great resistance. Johansson is emphatic that removing hymn singing from worship, was but another means of trivializing our faith, a dangerous unbiblical practice.²⁵⁷

All these notions and analyses, as presented, were included in the study either with approval or disapproval. Results on any or all aspects of praise and worship in the survey resonated with similar sentiments. A Bible commentary on Psalm 33:1-3 aptly states that true praise requires a fresh sense of God as much as it needs the fervor of joy and the skill of good musicianship.²⁵⁸ Skilled musicianship is common in Euro-American hymnody. Johansson is also critical of praise and worship because the songs are mainly choruses. He holds the view that;

Hymns were of higher value compared to chorus worship. Music needed to be aesthetic and based on the word of God and should avoid hedonism

²⁵⁵ Ibid.138

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Johannsson, *Discipling Music Ministry*, 39

²⁵⁸ Carson, *New Bible Commentary*, 505-506.

seen in “me” syndrome, a pitfall to avoid. Hedonism leads singers to concentrating on music they enjoy irrespective of what the majority think.

He asserts that:

Contemporary Christian music (common in praise and worship), was pop in nature as it borrowed its melody, rhythm and harmony for easy gratification whether the beat is rock “n” roll or country music which can land the church in trouble. He further states that “choruses have disclaim for depth and opt for playful, repetitive easily memorable chorus music that can be danced as if one was in a party.”

Here, Johansson ignores the holy joyous affection commanded in Philippians 4:4-5, which urges believers to rejoice in the Lord always. "I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all." If one dances with the gentleness of heart, without anxiety, and in prayer coupled with thanksgiving, hedonism and vanity would evidently be out of the question. In any case, an individual Christian has to appropriate salvation in Christ personally before truly joining other believers. God is awesome and mighty, but He is also a personal friend and helper to each individual who adores Him.

There has been a fear that secular music is invading the "sacred" religious territory. Choruses are valued in evangelism. Contemporary music has established itself in church life globally. The pop music genre infused into praise and worship can draw people into the church. Where the church has clung to traditional worship, membership has declined as the proliferation of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and ministries in Kenya continues to grow, commanding thousands of followers. These followers are not entirely from the unchurched. Quite a number of this huge following are attracted by the popular Gospel music culture of exuberant singing, dancing, clapping of hands, and the accompanying prosperity theology. Indeed, the church would rather cherish Christian heritage than mere tradition.

Heritage denotes cultural achievements passed on by earlier generations. On the other hand, tradition might tenaciously cling to perceived irrelevant notions. These propositions are supported by the movement of members from mainline churches, particularly those gifted in music but lacking appropriate socio-spiritual space in their churches, to charismatic churches where choral praise music is fully incorporated. Gospel music has also invaded the realm of mainline churches and has created a shift in their worship services and music. This has led to pentecostalization and charismization of Christianity in Kenya.

Neglecting gospel choral music might deny mainline churches the opportunity to address the prosperity gospel, which offers a skewed perspective on God's saving grace. God's grace is freely given to all who declare Jesus as Lord. The born-again, as they strive for the crown of righteousness, require sound doctrines. Prosperity gospel, to a large extent, distorts biblical spirituality by heavily emphasizing wealth, health, and blessings beyond the realities of life in this fallen world that Christ came to redeem.

In an earlier chapter, it was pointed out that there have been efforts in the PCEA, particularly by some members of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, to discourage worship practices that would divert worshippers from the established worship life introduced by missionaries and nurtured in Kenya by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. For many years, the PCEA remained an overseas Presbytery of the Scottish Church until the mid-1950s.

As previously mentioned, during the tenure of the past moderator, Githii, in his second and final term as the moderator of the General Assembly, there was an openly vocal group that labeled itself the "silent majority membership" and associated committee, championing dissent against changes in Presbyterian liturgy. Opposition to doctrinal changes or progress often quotes scripture out of context. For instance, Amos 5:23, used in a previous chapter to define true worship, was also cited to criticize "improved worship" by saying, "Stop the noisy

songs; I do not want to listen to your harps. Instead, let justice flow like a stream, and righteousness like a river that never goes dry." Those opposed to the advocacy of praise and worship claim that there was a Presbyterian faith (likely intended to mean Presbyterian polity). A major complaint was that after separating from the Church of Scotland, the PCEA was adopting American theology (whatever that means).

The letter appealing to all congregations to stop supporting the PCEA secretariat (Head office) must have reached the public domain. It was dated 22nd August, 2006 (the author happened to have a copy by default).

In summary, the Bible provides clear instructions on how to praise and worship God. In the Old Testament, various Hebrew words used for praise involve bodily actions, playing instruments, and singing. In the New Testament, the word "eucharistein" depicts praise as giving thanks. Contemporary music genres find their foundation in the Scriptures. Worship in the early church included praise, prayer, reading, and exposition of Scripture, as well as celebrating sacraments like Baptism and Holy Communion.

Praising God, whether through Psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs, provides tremendous strength to believers. The analogy of new wine and old wineskins should guide the church in adopting new understandings when necessary. In history, when Martin Luther grasped the understanding of salvation by grace through faith, he

steadfastly held to this belief. At his trial by church leadership, he famously refused to recant, stating:

Unless I am convinced by scripture and plain reason – I do not accept authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other – my conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything; for to go against my conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 265

CHAPTER 11

Pentecostalism – Some Insights/Recommendations

Before getting to the details on recommendations on praise and worship of God in view of the research in PCEA in general and PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, we have numerous examples from hymns of praise that draw inspiration and lyrics directly from biblical verses. These hymns are found in the church hymnals such as Hymnary, Redemption Songs, Golden Bells and many others. Yes the Bible should always be the ultimate gauge for any teaching or doctrine in Christian practice. Therefore, any mode of praise and worship should pass the test of authenticity based on biblical principles. We have numerous examples from hymns of praise that draw inspiration and lyrics directly from biblical verses. These hymns are found in church hymnals such as Hymnary, Redemption Songs, Golden Bells, and many others.²⁶⁰ John Wesley had religious zeal, but was shocked when he realized he needed salvation. As a missionary in Savannah, Georgia among the Native Americans and other immigrants he discovered his shortcomings:

²⁶⁰ <http://blog.Godreports.com/2015/06>, accessed on February 28, 2016.

“I went to America to convert Indians; but oh, who shall convert me?” He began to search in Scriptures in the Book of Acts.” To his surprise and astonishment “I hardly found any instances there, other than instantaneous conversions” he noted. He found only sudden conversions! None of them were gradual. All were instantaneous.

He returned to England and gave his life to Christ at a service at 28 Aldersgate on May, 24, 1738. The conversion of his brother, Charles Wesley, had taken place on May 21, 1738, just three days before his.²⁶¹ To worship and praise God with biblical hope and to live a worshipful life, as in Isaiah 64:6, comes out loud and clear that: “We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds, we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves we wilt and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away.” Zeal for the honor of God was taught by Jesus when he instructed the disciples how to pray: “Hallowed be thy name.” Karl Barth has put it well for those Christians who prefer quietness, as the Scriptures put it: “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). “My soul waits thou only upon God; for my expectation is in him” (Psalm 62:5). On the other hand, Barth underlines the need for great passion in the following words:

²⁶¹ Ibid.

Christians are people with a definite passion. In no circumstances then, can they be cowards, blind worms, bored boring or commonplace. They are not, of course “angry young men” who seek a reputation by plunging from one emotion and convulsion into the next and indulging outwardly in one eruption into another. Formally their passion may indeed be a burning one. Sometimes it can be and must break out openly and come to very loud expression.²⁶²

The third person of the Holy Trinity did not emerge at Pentecost. There are many references in the Old Testament about the Holy Spirit. From Isaiah 32:14-18, it is clear that only when God’s Spirit is among us do we experience peace. The word of the Lord through Isaiah calls upon Jacob, Israel His servant, to listen to Him and consequently, “I will pour out my Spirit on your descendants and my blessings on your children” (Isaiah 44:3b). Isaiah also warns that when the Holy Spirit is grieved, His leading into all truth and righteousness is hindered. The eating of the fruit at Eden depicts the sin of disobedience, and Christians are called upon not to grieve or bring sorrow to God’s Holy Spirit by the way they live (Ephesians 4:30).

²⁶² Karl Barth, *The Christian Life, Church Dogmatic*, Vol IV Part 4, lecture Fragments, Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing company, 1981) III.

The Pentecostal phenomenon was well prepared by prophets Ezekiel and Joel (Ezekiel 36:26-27, 37:14, 39:29, and Joel 2:28-29). From these passages, it is evident that the Holy Spirit gives power to obey God's decrees and regulations. Living according to these decrees and regulations involves all areas of life, including the way we control or avoid bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, slander, and all types of evil behavior, as enumerated in Ephesians 4:30. In effect, kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiving one another take center stage.

The Holy Spirit guides Christians and gives manifestation of God's presence, as stated in John 15:26: "But I will send you an Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify about me" (NLT). This guidance and manifestation are emphasized in many other parts of the Bible and are accessible through cross-referencing. Why does the contention concerning the Spirit's power and manifestation in speaking in tongues arise? From the times of the early Church, referred to earlier in the book in reference to Priscilla and Maximilla over the infilling of the Holy Spirit, we see that it existed in the primeval Church. In his book, *The Spirit Bade me Go*, David J. Du Plessis quotes the words of Dr. Carl Henry, editor of *Christianity Today* this way:

In the Twentieth Century (now Twenty-First) Christianity, the Holy Spirit is still a displaced

person. Liberal theology exiled this divine person from the life of the Church in favor of simply divine ‘function’. When Christianity lost the Holy Spirit as the divine person who leads into all truth; the Spirit was soon misunderstood (by idealistic philosophy) only as mind, indeed as human mind.²⁶³

In our time, especially in Kenya, the notion of internally displaced persons is a well-known and understood phenomenon, particularly in light of the tribal clashes in 1992, 1997, and 2007/2008. Henry asserts that the ability to distinguish spirits was lost. How right he was. "Whenever the Church makes the spirit of God a refugee, the church —not the Spirit— becomes a vagabond. How sad!"²⁶⁴

The following are the words of Dr. John A. Mackey regarding the way the Church relegates the third person of the Holy Trinity inappropriately:

“A crudely emotional approach to religion is preferable to religious formalism which is purely aesthetic and orderly lacking in dynamic power.” He further states that “one of our serious troubles in the Church today is that it has become legitimate to become emotional in anything but

²⁶³ David J. Du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go*, (N. J. 7060, Lagos International Plainfield, 1970), 10-11.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

religion. There is need for something that will summon one's whole enthusiasm."

When watching football, athletics, and other events such as political rallies, music concerts, and motor racing, the majority of us open the floodgates of our emotions. Plessis sums up his statement by stating, "the moment the Church becomes completely programmed and depersonalized, it becomes a monument to God's memory and not an instrument of his living power."²⁶⁵

Such statements point to the fact that Pentecostal revival in churches is not optional. The Pentecostal experience is not and has never been limited to churches that depart from mainline denominations and adopt the label PENTECOSTAL. Looking at the story of Esau and Jacob, historical/mainline churches have metaphorically sold their birthright for a meal. In this context, the meal represents conformity to formalism and nominalism influenced by inherited religious doctrines passed down through denominationalism. In an earlier chapter, it was noted that modern Pentecostalism began in Los Angeles in 1901. For eight years until 1908, historic churches in America (USA) opposed the Pentecostal Revival and condemned it as of the devil.²⁶⁶

The mood changed in the 1950s as these churches expanded into other continents, marking a shift in spiritual climate. Today in Kenya, mainline churches no longer

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 11.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 28.

harbor significant reservations against traditional Pentecostal establishments. The East African Revival, which started in Rwanda in the 1930s, profoundly influenced Christian expression in East and Central Africa, spreading to Uganda and Kenya where Christians were moved by the Holy Spirit to confess their sins and embrace salvation in Jesus Christ. This revival continues to foster interdenominational fellowship to this day.²⁶⁷ The contention has arisen, and rightly so, with some neo-Pentecostals advocating the prosperity gospel. It is easy to agree with Plessis, who observed in the early seventies that "Divine healing" is now almost universally accepted and practiced across many denominations. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is no longer spoken of in evasive terms or with hushed undertones. Even speaking in tongues is receiving more attention and is recognized as a manifestation of the Spirit for our time.

Biblical teaching should not create division or suspicion. The Holy Spirit has a crucial role in the life of the individual (John 16:6-11), guiding them in all truth. From the individual, the Holy Spirit permeates the life of the Church (1 Corinthians 12). Within the Church, the Holy Spirit assists individuals in joining others in the Great Commission (*Missio Dei* – the mission of God). Paul addresses the baptism in the Holy Spirit by emphasizing that despite diverse backgrounds—whether Jewish or Gentile—believers share a common experience:

²⁶⁷ <http://www.christianitytoday.com>. Issue 4.

"We have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit distributes various spiritual gifts to each person, which differ in nature, ranging from the ability to give wise advice, messages of special knowledge, great faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues (1 Corinthians 12:8-12).

Regarding speaking in unknown languages, Paul refers to either earthly languages or ecstatic languages as seen in Acts (Acts 2:4-8). Special faith is a common belief among believers but can be enhanced in certain individuals during special circumstances. Prophecy can refer to messages imparted through sermons or bold pronouncements made by ministers and leaders during national crises. Such leaders, like Rev. Dr. Timothy Njoya and the late Prof. Wangari Maathai, are often seen as daring advocates who endure hardships and personal abuses for their beliefs. Countless others also embody these principles, living simply and advocating for justice and fairness, embodying Jesus' teachings to accept the Gospel as children do.

Speaking in tongues has scriptural backing. Again, according to Paul, speaking in tongues is not a sign of salvation per se. It is a spiritual gift like the others mentioned above. The fact that one has that gift should not be seen as being closer to God or being "more saved." All the gifts that the Spirit gives are for the growth and edification of the Church; not for individual edification or

glory. In 1 Corinthians chapter thirteen, the supremacy of love above all other gifts is soundly explained. Neither the languages of the earth nor those of angels would outdo the supreme gift of love.

In chapter fourteen of 1 Corinthians, the much-talked-about gifts of tongues and prophecy are unequivocally dealt with. Prophecies could involve predicting the future or communicating God's message to correct spiritual matters or issues among the people, addressing societal maladies, and providing godly insight in difficult matters. It could also involve giving warnings for correction and encouragement to turn to God; otherwise, as the popular adage goes, choices have corresponding consequences. With much humility, this chapter concludes with personal testimony on speaking and praying in tongues.

Sometime in April or May 1974, I attended a service downtown Kampala. It was led by the founder of Deliverance Church. I had accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior a year earlier on March 4th, 1973. I was expectant and longed to learn more about the Lord. One Sunday morning, I attended a worship service in a social hall or school hall. I noticed a strange happening. After preaching, there came a time for exorcising demons. A Kenyan named Muthama was seated at the back of the hall. As the pastor prayed for a person at the front, Muthama dashed forward, stepping on the tables. He did not care to use the space between the pews or desks—I can't remember. The praying in tongues and the

exorcising of the evil spirit baffled me—being Presbyterian, such events were novel to me. Before joining Makerere University in Uganda in July 1972, I had trained as a secondary school teacher and taught Christian Religious Education and Geography for over a year and a half. I had received some solid Biblical education.

Back in my room at Northcote Hall, I decided to seek guidance from the Lord regarding speaking in tongues and demon possession. Fortunately, I had already studied demonology and begun a course in African traditional Religions and Philosophy. Therefore, I did not seek anyone to lay hands on me for spiritual enlightenment but sought it directly from God. I beseeched God in prayer to teach me about the matters I had witnessed that Sunday morning. I was honest with God. Throughout Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of that week, I had my quiet time as usual. On Thursday evening before bedtime, I read the Bible and began to pray. As I prayed, I found my prayers taking a different direction—I was praying in tongues. I paused and opened my eyes to “see” what was happening. What was I trying to perceive? Spiritual things can only be understood through the Spirit. I resumed praying and enjoyed an ecstatic communion with God. That was it! I received teaching from the Lord himself. How do we handle controversies arising from either the right understanding or misunderstanding of any passage or sentence in scripture?

Firstly, the individual seeks God's guidance. Secondly, I highlight the admonition found in the Scots Confession which states: "When controversy arises about the right understanding of any passage or sentence of Scripture, or for the reformation of any abuse within the Kirk of God, we ought not so much to ask what men have said or done before us."²⁶⁸ We look at what the Holy Spirit uniformly speaks within the body of Scripture and what Jesus himself did and commanded. For it is agreed by all that the Spirit of God, who is the spirit of unity, cannot contradict himself. Therefore, if the interpretation or opinion of any theologian, church, or council is contrary to the plain word of God written in any other passage of Scripture, it is certain that this does not align with the true understanding and meaning the Holy Spirit directs, even if councils, realms, and nations have approved and received it. We must not accept any interpretation that contradicts any fundamental aspect of our faith or any other clear text of Scripture, or that goes against the rule of love.²⁶⁹

The principle outlined above has guided the Universal Church of Christ in embracing revivals throughout history. Charismization, Pentecostalism—

²⁶⁸ "Kirk" is the old Scottish word for "Church." It is the old Middle English word for Church too. The Presbyterian Church of east Africa uses the words Kirk session for the parish council of elders who administer a parish.

²⁶⁹ N. R. Needham, 444.

both traditional and neo—and even the phenomenon of praise and worship should be evaluated from biblical perspectives.

Living a life of worship is not a casual stroll in the park. It demands steadfast faith, trust, and holy diligence to live in accordance with the Word of God as preached in churches, fellowships, prayer groups, and smaller communities like prayer partnerships. Above all, the grace of God and the illumination of the Holy Spirit are indispensable in the Christian journey. The church inhabits a spiritual realm while existing in the world. Within this spiritual sphere, the elements of grace, faith, obedience, repentance, forgiveness, and love provide hope in this life and in the eternal abode with God, where Jesus is the eternal light. Therefore, true praise and worship of God serve as a rehearsal—an anticipation of the reality that awaits the redeemed of God at the culmination of time, at Christ's Second Coming.

In the section on preaching within this book, comprehensive guidelines have been discussed regarding how those who break the bread of life (the Word) to their listeners should conduct themselves. Once again, and with love rather than animosity, we revisit the damage caused by the prosperity gospel to the children of God, asserting that material wealth and its abundance are not the promised answer to abundant living as stated in John 10:10. I say no! Proponents of the prosperity gospel often make various promises when you "plant the seed" (money). However, more often than not, the resources

given to the preacher, minister, "apostle," or ministry (whether run by a couple or solely males) end up circulating within a closed circuit. The intended commission (Matthew 28:19-20) may not be fulfilled, and biblical outreach may not be realized. Even in more established indigenous Pentecostal assemblies or churches that emerged in Kenya in the early seventies, the situation may not differ.

There is a call to return to the New Testament model where Teaching Presbyters (ministers/pastors) collaborate with elders and deacons in managing resources. This approach will ensure that the Great Commission is effectively carried out and will foster a holistic and biblically grounded adoration of God in praise and worship. The allure of money poses a serious threat to living a holy life. While we emphasize Pentecostalism and the importance of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter in the life of the Church, those who are comforted must also live honestly and comfortably in His grace. Let there be no chaff among us believers; may those who cause division be transformed by His heart. Let none underestimate that the Comforter has indeed come, as promised by Jesus Christ at His Ascension (John 14:26), to provide the strength and vigor to live for God.

Here we acknowledge that the Holy Spirit reminds the disciples of Jesus' teachings. Even in our time, what is preached and believed must align with Jesus' instructions. The Holy Spirit preserves Jesus' teachings and the

apostolic tradition by spiritually discerning noble, pure, and honorable teachings or ideals.

In our era, some overlook the role of the *Paraclete*, the Comforter, the Counselor—the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit serves as our great teacher. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, must have recalled what Jesus taught the disciples, including himself. It is known that John lived to a ripe old age and witnessed the growth of the Apostolic Church. Therefore, he had the authority to affirm that the Holy Spirit will continue teaching us everything essential for our spiritual well-being. The Holy Spirit will remind us of everything Jesus taught and commanded, guiding us to live as true disciples while we await Christ's Second Coming.

In essence, the Comforter enables believers to lead a worshipful life here on earth. Strictly speaking, the Holy Spirit's primary role is to teach and remind us. Many times, the act of reminding is confused with revelation. As we witness, preach, or evangelize, it's crucial to understand that the Holy Spirit reminds us of what is in the Living Word of God—the Bible. While acknowledging that debate on revelation should remain open, it's important to note that the concept of revelation is sometimes misused. In Christian contexts, one might hear scenarios where a young man confidently approaches a lady and declares, "The Holy Spirit has revealed to me that I should marry you." Such assertions should be met with skepticism. Matters of marriage should be guided by what is revealed in Scripture. Engagement as a

comprehensive process should be given due consideration, avoiding bombshell announcements that might surprise or confuse the other party. Life decisions should reflect the principles revealed in the Bible.

It is under this common life experience that I would agree with Charles Spurgeon that, the canon of revelation is closed. There is no more to be added.²⁷⁰ What is left with believers is the Word (*solascriptura*) which should guide human behavior, interaction, recreation, trade, politics, wealth creation and any other activity under the sun. Praise and worship of God, whether through song and dance, preaching, prayer, witnessing, fellowship, or in guiding courtship, should be grounded in biblical principles and inspired or guided by the Holy Spirit.

Returning to the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life and service, the great teacher continues to guide us in all truth as revealed in Jesus Christ. At the cross, Jesus declared "it is finished" and then released his spirit (John 19:30, NLT). His death marked the end of the sacrificial systems of the Jews for atonement of sin, as explained in the Book of Hebrews. Similarly, sacrificial systems observed among African peoples also found fulfillment, as they sought fullness of life that transcends death. Consequently, Christians are now able to approach God freely, both individually and collectively in

²⁷⁰ Charles Spurgeon, *Holy Spirit power*, (Springdale, Pennsylvania, Whitaker House, 1996), 20.

assemblies, where they are called to praise and worship the Trinity with the freedom provided by grace.

Therefore, let everyone be reminded that in personal devotional life and in church worship, any form of religious practice that mirrors mere ritualism, which the prophets condemned, must be abandoned. Believers cannot help but agree with Spurgeon when he asserts:

Even among professing Christians, while there is great amount of religion, there is too little godliness. There is much external formalism but too little inward acknowledgement of God, too little living on God, living with God and relying upon God. “The sad fact is that when you enter many of our places of worship you will certainly hear the name of God (and I add Jesus), but except in the benediction (and in ending a sermon – my addition), you will scarcely know that there is Trinity. The Holy Spirit is almost entirely neglected and very little is said concerning his sacred influence.”²⁷¹

Then, given this state of affairs in traditional, established, or mission-founded churches, are we not relegating the great Christian Teacher below His rightful place of action? There will be a lack of zeal, enthusiasm, and power to witness and preach as Peter did at Pentecost,

²⁷¹ Spurgeon, *Holy Spirit Power*, 56.

where three thousand people joined the new faith. The illumination, sound teachings, knowledge of prophecy, and prophetic utterances in the church and on societal issues are enabled by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He provides believers with the password to unlock the spiritual computer to access God's commands and admonitions for living holy lives, whereby we shall worshipfully live. We cannot run the race and win the coveted prize of eternal life in Christ if the source of Christian living is relegated to the backseat of our hearts and minds.

Believers should not look down on each other; Reformed theologians should not dismiss Pentecostals as strange worshippers who speak in tongues without interpretation. There is an urgent need to return to basics (I Corinthians chapters 12, 13, and 14). Pentecostals, too, must avoid the temptation to prioritize tongues, enthusiastic singing, and dancing above all else. Conversely, formalism should not be nurtured, as it can lead to decayed ways of praising and worshipping God.

Ecumenism provides an open channel to understand these different strands. In ecumenical conferences, there is no reason why Presbyterians, Anglicans, Episcopalians, Baptists, Lutherans, Congregationalists, evangelical ministries, African initiated churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, and others cannot come together to address divisions. A united church, founded in diversity and guided by the Holy Spirit, will effectively witness the

salvation in Jesus Christ to other faiths such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Islam, or traditional religions, with power from God, the maker of Heaven and Earth. The unity that Christ prayed for in John chapter 17 is of paramount importance in the Christian life and witness.

CHAPTER 12

Contextualizing Biblical Texts (Messages)

Indigenization/Contextualization are two areas that have been used in the previous chapters in a subtle manner. A lot of emphasis has been placed on faith and culture, including music and other aspects. The principle of Jesus' attitude toward Hebrew culture has been reiterated time and again. The relevance of the Old Testament as a continuous link with the New Testament in our age, our times, and biblical spirituality has been a key note all along. This chapter therefore discusses in detail these two concepts and highlights the offshoots and by-products within the ecclesiastical area of the Church of Christ in Africa. Efforts to emphasize that Africa was the seedbed of Euro-American Christianity before its re-importation have been underscored.

The two concepts, indigenization and contextualization, will be discussed for the benefit of non-theological readers. This discussion could also be useful to church ministers, pastors, and evangelists who may tend to overlook the traditional religious heritage that has continued to be fertile ground for preaching the gospel. This chapter serves as a guide to missiology and evangelization. It will conclude that God sovereignly reveals Himself to humanity; human endeavor alone cannot find God. The manner in which God has revealed

Himself aligns well with the revelation in the Incarnation. Emphasizing Africa as the seedbed of Euro-American Christianity will require even more that the African worldview be considered pivotal in understanding the teachings of the Bible. In the article *Old and the New*, Madipoane Musenya states that: “If present day Africans find it difficult to be at home with the Old Testament, they might need to watch out to see if they have not lost their Africanism in one way or another.”²⁷²

African Christians are attracted to the stories in the Old Testament because they see many affinities that enable them to appropriate it, recognizing parallels between African societies and the Hebrew Old Testament.²⁷³ Hebrew rituals find resonance in African sacrificial ceremonies. Practices like libation, initiation rites, and rituals during planting and harvesting times align well with African traditions. It becomes straightforward to illustrate to African individuals that, much like the Hebrews, Christ’s sacrifice was sufficient for the forgiveness of sins. This viewpoint is underscored by Mbiti’s characterization of Africans as inherently religious, a sentiment echoed by Okot P’ Bitek when he writes that:

An African King called Plankhi (751-715 B. C.),
conquered Egypt; and the record of the conquest

²⁷² Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, 42

²⁷³ Ibid.

shows that the black ruler was scrupulously attentive to religious rituals, respectful of temples and gods of Egypt. He refused to deal with conquered princes who were unceremoniously unclean, and was moderate in his relations with the vanquished.²⁷⁴

The terms Indigenization/contextualization emphasize the importance of incorporating a people's worldview when embracing the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. This principle is exemplified in the Incarnation story, where Jesus becomes both God and Man to deliver humanity from laborious sacrificial systems in their pursuit of closeness with God. While many world religions engage in strenuous efforts to attain unity with their creator, Christian faith reveals that faith in the triune God, facilitated by Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, has secured humanity's reconciliation with God.

Worldview refers to a life perspective that shapes how one understands and thinks about various aspects of life. For example, traditional views often uphold the belief that marriage is a lifelong commitment, which necessitates critical examination. Supporting this perspective are practices such as marriage negotiations, which historically extended beyond immediate families to involve entire clans. Dowries or bridal gifts, sometimes

²⁷⁴ Okot P' Bitek, *African Religions in Western Scholarship* 19.

misunderstood as bride's wealth by outsiders, serve as binding elements within this framework. In essence, worldview represents a system of values and beliefs that form a comprehensive framework guiding one's understanding of life. This framework encompasses the value of education, which encompasses acquired knowledge and ideals through formal, informal, and non-formal channels.

One has to have apparatus for acquiring and making sense of what one lives for. Social morality is part of a people's world-view. Beliefs are convictions which guide behavior and course of life. Some beliefs are deep enough to make one die for them. Indeed, one's beliefs constitute who you are. Beliefs have cognitive claims.²⁷⁵ We must remember that the fundamental beliefs of a people concern ultimate questions to which they seek answers and find solace. In both Christianity and Islam, African men and women, politicians and non-politicians alike, often turn to unlikely sources such as traditional medicine-men and astrologers in search of answers, particularly regarding their political success. Advertisements plastered along roadsides, on bridges, and even on tree trunks bearing titles like "Dr." and claiming to "cure" various ailments, illustrate how deeply ingrained some traditional beliefs are in society. These advertisements can be found across urban areas, from slums to middle-class neighborhoods, and even in upscale

²⁷⁵ Lecture notes by Dr. Samson Obwa on August 28, 2008, Daystar University.

areas such as Karen, Kileleshwa, and Lavington in Nairobi. Similar features are replicated in other towns. It is generally argued that even if a fundamental belief is disregarded, it still holds value for those who disregard it, unless replaced by a belief of higher value such as the Power of the Cross.

These fundamental beliefs become particularly evident in practical emergencies, especially in matters of sickness and healing. Here, beliefs that necessitate redemption are not being emphasized enough. Notions such as witchcraft and generational curses are to be nullified through the Cross, the Death, and resurrection of Christ, coupled with the power of the Holy Spirit, which enables believers to lead holy, regenerated lives. In traditional African society, health and healing were prioritized at individual, family, village, and broader levels. Medicine men, herbalists, and diviners diagnosed and treated various ailments, as early missionaries in Eastern Africa, for example, often had limited medical knowledge.²⁷⁶ As time went on, missionary societies got preoccupied by the professional medicines (biomedicine). As plagues swept the population along with pandemic influenza, the rural populations turned to traditional medicines.²⁷⁷

A people's scientific knowledge cannot simply be dismissed. The scientific knowledge referred to here is the

²⁷⁶ Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950*, Clarendon Press Oxford, 1994, Paperback Edition, 1996, 530

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

systematic understanding that people have of the physical or material world. Essentially, this knowledge affects their spirituality, whether traditional or modern. When an African reads the Bible and sees Jesus kneading mud to open the eyes of the blind or exorcising demons, it can prompt the African medicine-man to attract the sick to his practices.²⁷⁸ The Evangelist, Pastor, or Catechist must keep such knowledge in mind when teaching or preaching. Ethnic identity, which has often fueled negativity in political life, should be presented as a gift that can foster unity in diversity rather than as a recipe for chaos during political crises. Although missionaries were not directly involved, they could not prevent colonial administrators from implementing divide-and-rule strategies, which have had catastrophic consequences in many African countries.

In Kenya, for instance, ethnic clashes occurred in 1992, 1997/1998, and worsened during the near breakdown of the nation in the tribal clashes of 2007/2008. Church leadership and followers often aligned with their own ethnic groups, exacerbating tensions. Despite later attempts by the church to repent ecumenically, the damage had already been done. Worshippers in some churches began to view each other with suspicion, even among fellow believers.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁸ John 9:1-7

²⁷⁹ Discussion with Mrs. XYZ, in an Anglican church of Kenya in Nairobi. It is not prudent to write real name(s).

African life and culture have artifacts and architectural styles that can be incorporated into Christian worship. African fine art compares with icons/iconology in church history. The Roman Catholic Church has notably depicted Jesus in the way of the cross without necessarily portraying him as "white" in their places of worship. Caves and sacred trees in Africa resonate with those mentioned in the Old Testament, such as where Saul hid during his pursuit of David. The sycamore tree that Zacchaeus climbed bears resemblance to the "Mûgomo" tree (Fig tree), sacred among the Agĩkũyũ people. In the pre-Christian era, natural landmarks like trees and mountains played a significant role in the religious understanding of God.

In Genesis chapter 13:18, when Abram parted with Lot, he surveyed the land he was to settle in, and "so Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the Lord." In contemporary times, traditionalists encircle Mount Kenya annually on pilgrimage, but in the Christian Era (CE), such practices have been challenged. Christ informed the Samaritan woman that "a time is coming and has now come when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, not in this place or that mountain."²⁸⁰

Mount Kenya, where God was said to have temporarily resided, resonates with the Holy Mount Sinai

²⁸⁰ John 4:21

and its religious significance in Judeo-Christian tradition. The burning bush, where Moses received instructions to go and meet Pharaoh, finds equivalents in sacred groves such as the Kaya Forest in Mombasa, on the south coast. In Honduras, a fervent environmentalist named Berta Caceres was reportedly murdered for opposing the construction of a dam that her indigenous people believed had spiritual connections.²⁸¹ Two weeks later, Nelson Garcia, a member of civil council for popular and indigenous organization was murdered. (COPINH).²⁸²

In interpreting the Bible, African culture should carry significant weight. For example, when evangelizing among the Maasai, it would be pertinent to emphasize belief in "Engai" (God), who is capable of blessing them as He blessed Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13). There is no need for bloodshed over conflicts related to pasture and water. Abram (later named Abraham), allowing Lot to choose his settlement area, provides a biblical example of avoiding unnecessary tension among pastoralists. The Gospel message should be tailored to fit people's ways of life. Cattle rustling, which involves theft and often murder, must be addressed through faith in Christ. Stealing for dowry payments is unethical, unholy, and a societal issue that the Church and government should work to eradicate.

²⁸¹ [https://www.the-guardian.com/2016/march/16-murdered – fellow activist](https://www.the-guardian.com/2016/march/16-murdered-fellow-activist)

²⁸² Ibid.

Indigenization and contextualization of Christianity in Kenya (and Africa in general) recognize that culture is dynamic and learned. Dominance of one culture over another amounts to abuse, as everyone has a right to their own culture. This may be why UNESCO designates certain buildings, sites, mountains, and artifacts as having universal value. Religion is not culture but a fundamental aspect of cultural behavior, the heart of every culture, and the nervous system of life. Culture is a fundamental way of living, utilizing the rationality shared from God's supra-rationality and life experiences as instruments to discover wisdom, consistent with the fear of God.

Western epistemologists agree that this wisdom is inherited from Greek philosophy, while Hebrew thinking situates its epistemology in the love of God: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4), which integrates rationality and experience. The Good News revealed in the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) constitutes a significant revelation of the ultimate source of life and the universe (Genesis 1-2, Psalms 65). Hence, praise and worship of God should respect the local worldview, discouraging imposition of foreign worldviews (except the Biblical view) onto other cultures.

When preaching Christ crucified and the love of God as exemplified in Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, it's crucial to incorporate the primordial revelation by God. Missionaries' cultural trappings should

be avoided. Preaching Jesus and Him crucified is a factual presentation that enters a people's culture to purify imperfections and reclaim people for God.

God's revelation is super-rational. We share his image in rationality. We are rational for the sake of loving relations culminate it. Western epistemologists are limited when they emphasize it as inherited from Greek philosophy. Hebrew thinking situates its epistemology in that love of God. Hear all Israel the Lord the Lord our God is one (Deut. 6:4) which puts rationally and experience together. God has bestowed humans with a sound mind in order to love Him, serve Him, and live in love (Psalms 19:1-4). Man has no excuse for not knowing God because He has revealed Himself through creation. When you look at the scripture, you marvel at how encompassing the saving Grace of God is. We have already noted elsewhere in the book that man is a rebel, but a fighting rebel. Upon disobeying God, Adam and Eve gave excuses pointing a finger at the serpent and at each other, but God did not hear any of the excuses. However, the Savior, Jesus Christ, would come as God-man through Eve's seed (Genesis 3:15).²⁸³

In the New Testament, the stories of Abraham, the Exodus, the prophets, and the incarnation mean that the Kingdom of God mirrored in the Old Testament has been realized in Jesus of Nazareth. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus affirm that the Day of the Lord's

²⁸³ It is generally agreed in theological studies that this is the Messiah right in Genesis.

favor is with us here and now. As the unchurched are introduced to Christian life, it is important to help them understand the trajectory of life in Christ. The righteous people are those who have embraced the saving Grace of God. The genealogy of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter one attests to this. How?

In the Hall of Faith (Hebrews 11) we see Noah enlisted although in a drunken stupor he committed indecency of nakedness (Genesis 9:21). He must have repented. Sarai with all her doubts (Genesis 18:10-18) about God's promises is in the list. Abraham with his half lie about Sarai being his sister (a case of situational ethics) continued to find favor with God. Truly, Sarai was a step-sister of Abraham (Genesis 20: 11-13). Rahab the prostitute is also in the list. In her social condition her heart turned to God and protected the spies that Joshua had sent to spy the land of Canaan (Joshua 2). Samson, promiscuous as he was, through it all, turned his mind to God (Judges 16: 25-30). The Author of the Hebrews included him in the roll of faith. On further illustration of God's dealing with us humans, a closer look at Mathew's Christ's genealogy attests further to God's goodness in dealing with human's universal decadence due the sin of disobedience. Now see this that, although David murdered Uriah and committed adultery with Uriah's wife, nevertheless the Bible records that he was a man after God's own heart. He unreservedly repented as recorded in Psalms 51 and 25. It is through David's lineage that Christ was born. Writing to the Jewish audience Matthew

records Jesus' ancestors. This genealogy traces Jesus' ancestry from Abraham through Isaac, Ruth to David. In Matthew 1 vs. 3-6, human imperfection and shortcomings do not deter God's grace where there is obedience and repentance. In the realm of God's sovereignty, love and mercy, there is solace. For example Tamar and Rahab (already alluded to) raise ethical questions. Ruth and Bathsheba in the eyes of the Jews raises both ethical and race pointers as pertained to the race the son of man would emanate from (Daniel. 7:13-14). The Anointed One, (a Christological title of the Messiah) was for sure Jewish (Daniel 9:25).

Human failures are no impediment to God's salvation scheme. In our time, God continues to use ordinary people to accomplish His will. There are people who would not be mentionable in an ancestry tree of Jesus, but they are there. It is clear from the genealogy that God sent His Son as the Savior of all people: Jews, Gentiles, men, and women. Therefore, as we evangelize, let it be noted that what is needed is not mere churchgoing on Sundays. There is an absolute need for fellowship, Christian warmth, and doing things together. This is common among many small congregational churches. The inclusion of appendices (2 and 3), detailing new churches and ministries, serves as a wake-up call to mainline churches that Christians and believers need close fellowships and to do things together. Strengthening resident prayer groups is absolutely necessary. It has been stated elsewhere in this book that the New Testament

Church had three essential components, namely preaching (*kerygma*), service (*diakonia* — root of deacon), and fellowship (*koinonia*). The mega churches need to re-evaluate their mode of operation and ensure that they emulate Christ's ministry among those enslaved in sickness, death, and downtrodden by the yeast of the Pharisees. This yeast includes excessive external observance of rules and regulations that leave the inside of man dirty.

The short parable of a clean cup on the outside but dirty on the inside illustrates this point (cf. the six woes in Luke 11:37-53). These woes are directed at various people, exposing their hypocrisy. The Pharisees, lawyers, and their attitude towards God's messengers—prophets and apostles—are condemned through these pronouncements.

Indeed, the Church is a people called into being—an ecclesia—by the power and love of God to participate in His reconciliation by bringing men and women to Himself. Reflecting on the Genesis story (Genesis 3:1-7), where humanity desired to be "like God," resulted in estrangement from His sovereign grace. The consequence was The Fall. As the Gospel is preached, it must be conveyed with love. Understanding that in His sovereign grace, God raises awareness among people of different cultures about Himself is crucial. It forms a foundation on which evangelization and mission work should be based.

In West Africa, where Christianity arrived centuries before it spread to Eastern Africa in the mid-

18th century, West Africans observed that the Gospel message was often overlaid with European or American cultural influences. This phenomenon led to the displacement of their own worldview within African Christianity. As early as 1894, a man named D. B. Vincent chose to abandon his Western name and adopted the name Mojola Agbebi instead. He also refused to wear European clothing, even during visits to Europe. In Lagos, he went on to establish the Native Baptist Church.²⁸⁴

In a pamphlet, *African and the Gospel*, Agbebi had appealed to fellow countrymen not to hold at the apron strings, of foreign teacher.” The foreigner is not fitted to construct the African Church, he insisted in 1892.”²⁸⁵ Just a step back to West Africa, Mojola Agbebi's words would have enlightened the missionaries of the early 20th century, prompting them to reconsider their approach. In a sermon delivered in December 1902 at the inaugural celebration of the Lagos African Church, which had separated from the Anglican Church, he criticized various aspects of Western influence in African Christianity: "Hymn-books, harmoniums, pew dedications, church buildings, choirs in surplices, European names, and European clothing—these are all non-essentials, mere props and crutches that undermine the spiritual maturity of African Christians. In one of the churches I established inland, I found it necessary to advise that for at least seven years, hymn books should be replaced with original

²⁸⁴ Hastings, *The Church in Africa*, 494.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

hymns during worship."²⁸⁶ His vision of an African church (say African Christianity) found personalities like him in Eastern Africa and in Southern Africa. For example in Kenya, Independent Churches referred to African Initiated Churches (AICS) emerged. The independent ones are those that originated in Africa with no financial or ecclesiastical control such as the African Independent Pentecostal Church in Africa (AIPCA).²⁸⁷ Other examples include the Africa Israel Nineveh Church (AINC), Church of Bethlehem East Africa (COBEA), Jerusalem Church of Christ, Holy Ghost Church of East Africa, Jesus is Alive Ministries, and Roho Israel Church. These churches exemplify the diversity and indigenous roots of African Christianity, reflecting a departure from Western-dominated religious practices.²⁸⁸

A list of the many churches and ministries surveyed by the author is in appendices as indicated above. Mwaura categorizes these African instituted churches in East Africa as nationalistic churches, spiritual churches, and neo-Pentecostals. The reason Mwaura gives for the emergence of these churches is due to the tensions created by the process of colonization, the colonial state itself, as well as missionary methods and approaches in their Evangelization Enterprises colonization disrupted

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Philomena Njeri Mwaura, *Studies World Christianity* (The Edinburgh Review of Theology and Religion 10(2) 2004), 160-184

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

African traditional solidarity as the society was subjected to influences it could not comprehend or control, such as the monetary economy, new administrative structures, economic oppression through forced taxation, forced labor, racial discrimination, and social injustice.

Now back to Africanization and/or contextualization. These terminologies bear the same substance as their trajectory tilts to relevance, affirmation, and have the hallmark of liberation from oppression of some sort. Living a worshipful life remains crippled if the traditional ideals are demeaned.

Africanizing biblical tenets is simply bringing them in tandem with an African situation. For example, as the gospel was received, there were incidents where polygamous unions were denied baptism. Africans would not understand the scenario. The Old Testament had men of faith, Jacob, Solomon, and others who had more than one wife. Rather than warding off such families from receiving salvation in Jesus Christ, there was a need to embrace such families with the caveat that no more co-wives were to be entertained thereafter.

Credit should be accorded to the churches that embraced this nobility! Dispossession of children from their father from familiar socio-economic strands had no biblical strength. It only led to alienation from the Gospel's strength. After all, in his preaching at one time, Jesus dared the one who had never sinned to cast the first stone at the woman caught committing adultery. In the parable of the prayer by a Pharisee and the taxman (Luke

18:9-14), the lesson learned is that God is concerned with the "outcasts" in society, the unrighteous if they cry to him. On the other hand, He is not pleased with people who are proud just because they follow religious practices accompanied by good works that lead them to pride in self-sufficiency. Living a worshipful life requires that in Church activities, we act with humility realizing that it is by the grace of God that we profess salvation and lordship of Christ in our lives.

Africanizing biblical texts is very broad, since Africa is a large continent with diverse cultural configuration. For instance, North African countries have lost indigenous African image as the culture there is Arabic. This shortcoming invites a more friendly terminology, which is **indigenization** and, thus, **contextualizing**. When you indigenize, you aculturalize. When we scan through the Epistle of James and to some extent Peter's, their tendency was that Christianity remain Jewish. For Peter, direct heavenly vision changed his attitude on circumcision as a requirement to becoming a Christian (Acts 11:1-18). If Apostle John had not recognized the need to aculturalize the faith, the "platonic-stoic logos" would not have yielded "*in the beginning was the Word, and the Word becoming flesh and dwelling upon us*, would have been impossible (John 1:1ff). The Isaiah "Emmanuel" (God-with-us) came to rest upon the primeval Greek "logos" – the source of all intelligence and knowledge. John domesticated the "logos" in Greek philosophy and gave it biblical, messianic meaning.

However, theologically, the Greek meaning dominated the messianic meaning. After crossing the bridge, John's logos became truly Christocentric. He was no longer in the Greek philosophical world. The incarnate word is the subject, not the special knowledge as was in the Greek thought. Beyond the prologue, the whole gospel depicts Jesus Christ as God, the second person in the Holy Trinity. Paul has done a similar thing as already noted with the Greek "Altar to the Unknown God" at Athens. The following explanation by Manya W. Stephen is explicit on what contextualization entails:

When you contextualize the gospel you take seriously a specific context of each human group and person, on its own terms and in all dimensions – cultural, religious, social political, economic – and discern what the gospel says to the people in that context.²⁸⁹

Here, "context" and "text" become the basis of interpretation. The "text" refers to that passage from the Bible. Even in personal devotions, aside from broad interpretation, there is always a cardinal point: what is the passage telling me? Is it encouraging, rebuking, or admonishing me? "Context" in the gospel addresses

²⁸⁹ Stephen Wandeful Manya, *Contextualizing of the Gospel for Christian witness*, (unpublished paper, presented in memory of the life and ministry of Prof. Kwame Bediako, at the Department of Religious Studies, Daystar University, June 2009), I.

social, economic, and other areas of community life.²⁹⁰ Two worldviews engage each other. The "text," the Word of God, seeks to transform these worldviews, striving to remove imperfections. This statement looms large in this book. Throughout His ministry, Jesus used ordinary events to teach new truths. In attempts to indigenize, the Gospel texts metaphorically plant the Gospel in the locally fertile soil of diverse African religious contexts, expecting a plentiful harvest. Africanizing is not novel; it involves teaching the Gospel message to African peoples who are diverse in ethnic groupings yet generally share similar worldviews.

In concluding his paper, Manyá asserts, "one of the things this writer thinks is true is that God was and has been present in and throughout the universe. This is to say that He has been present within the African context... The Lord has always dwelt with the African people." Manyá echoes Mbiti's admonition that African traditional religions need pruning if their best values are to be preserved and integrated into Christianity. Once again, praise and worship of God in spirit and in truth naturally implies living a worshipful life. Careful examination incorporating virtuous traditional religious beliefs should not lead to syncretism. This means that beliefs incompatible with the Word of God in the Bible cannot be accepted. Traditional indigenous practices that do not contribute to the Gospel message and Christian faith in

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

general should be disregarded. There should be no mixing of faith in contextualization, whether in Africanization, acculturation, or indigenization, with the ultimate goal of making the message relevant in cross-cultural settings.²⁹¹

In addition to human efforts, scholarship requiring careful examination of a people's practices and beliefs, the Holy Spirit's leading and guidance are essential. "Appropriate language, symbols, and analogies will be found for use in any given worldview," concludes Manyá in his presentation. Before closing this chapter, it is compelling to give some facts in the book *How Africa shaped the Christian mind* by Thomas C. Oden subtitled *Rediscovering the African seedbed of Western Christianity*. The book was printed by Intervarsity Press under IVP Books in the year 2007.

Before summarizing the book, it's common biblical knowledge that in times of famine Abram and his wife Sarai moved to Egypt. They were welcomed by Pharaoh. Pharaoh was enchanted by Sarai's beauty and took her into his harem. Abram had told a half-truth that Sarai was his sister. Earlier, it was stated that it was a half-truth because indeed she was his half-sister (Genesis 20:12), but she was also his wife. The salvation story includes Mary and Joseph fleeing to Egypt to escape the massacre of children by Herod. Besides Moses liberating the Israelites in later years, many Hebrews had their abode in Egypt. In the exilic and post-exilic periods, many Jews

²⁹¹ Ibid., 10.

resided in Egypt. Since this is not a book review, the prose will assume it is Thomas Oden, stating what he has written about the fact that the seed of European Christianity was planted in Africa. Thomas Oden writes on Christianity in Africa. Here below, we share it in prose form:

Consider the famous theologians—Origen, Athanasius, Tertullian, Augustine of Hippo—and saints such as Perpetua and Felicity. They were born in Africa and intellectually flourished within the Mediterranean world. Yes, Northern Africa may have been separated from the rest of Africa by the hostile Sahara Desert, but this is no different from how part of Northern Asia is cut off from the south by the Himalayas! These great religious personalities cited above may have spoken Greek and wrote in Greek, but that was the *lingua franca*. They may have studied in Rome, but this did not erase their African identity.

The Alexandrian library profoundly influenced the Western concept of university education. Many fundamental doctrines, such as sin, grace, and predestination, were debated in Africa before spreading elsewhere. Christological debates, such as Dyophysitism and Monophysitism, were also pioneered by African theologians. The origins of monasticism can be traced to the desert dwellers of Egypt, spreading from there to Italy, Ireland, Scotland, France, and finding solid roots in Italy.

Pachomius established a strict regimen at his hermitage focused on Scripture study and practical skills. Each monk was required to learn a trade, such as weaving

baskets and mats, with proceeds supporting charitable endeavors like aiding prisoners in Alexandria. This form of monasticism in Egypt was not merely an escape but a genuine Christian life where monks sustained themselves and contributed positively to society, inspired by St. Paul's example of tent-making to avoid burdening fellow believers.

Monastic communities were pioneered by figures like Pachomius, contrasting with the solitary life of individuals like St. Antony, who sold his possessions to pursue monasticism in the desert, leaving his sister in the care of the church.

Africa also contributed significantly to rhetorical, dialectical, and Biblical exegesis, though much of this history remains untold and buried in the sands of the Nubian Desert. There is a call for African scholars to research and uncover these hidden treasures, with a plea for funding and governmental permissions, particularly from Sudan and Egypt, to conduct archaeological and paleontological excavations. Mastery of Arabic is essential for interpreting unearthed documents and artifacts.²⁹²

In North Africa—Libya, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Algeria—the rich heritage of early African Christianity lies buried beneath the earth. Unearthing this history would require permission from respective governments and careful consideration of the Islam-Christian dynamics

²⁹² Lecture notes

in the region. There is a call for North Africa to open up as a sacred land, potentially leveraging tourism to aid in this endeavor. While current political instability may pose challenges, hope remains for the future. A consortium of bold researchers, supported internationally and equipped with digital technology, will play a crucial role in discovering and sharing these treasures with universities and the broader Christian community.

Both Beigt Sundkler and Elizabeth Isichei, like Thomas C. Oden, emphasize the significance of Mediterranean African Christianity in shaping global Christianity. They argue that African Christians must recognize the Mediterranean as the birthplace and cradle of the church. Ignoring this historical reality undermines the foundational role African Christianity played in the development of European-American Christianity. The theological debates, ecumenical dialogues, and doctrinal formulations such as the Nicene Creed (325 CE) and the Chalcedonian Creed (451 CE) were pivotal moments where African theologians contributed significantly. These debates mirrored the apostolic pattern seen in the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), addressing critical issues between Gentile and Jewish believers. The Nicene Creed specifically clarified the divine nature of God the Son and His relationship with the Father, while the Chalcedonian Creed resolved disputes about Christ's dual nature, affirming His unity as both fully human and fully divine.

Global Christianity has benefitted incalculably from these meticulous works of African exegetes and

moral theologians (notably Athanasius, Augustine, and Cyril). Through their debate, the ecumenical councils were prepared to confirm universal patterns of Christological and triune reasoning that were first defined in Africa. Yes, Thomas states that Africa is the seed-bed of Christianity. The foregoing information attests to this. Furthermore, it is true, in that after St. Paul and St. Peter and the rest of the apostles took Christian witness seriously, in fact, Mark is said to have come to Africa (68 AD). Thomas moves to India from Alexandria which was a center of the Jews in diaspora. To this day, though mainly Muslim, Mediterranean Africa remains part of the continent. It is part of African Union.

Just as the Alps presented a barrier with the rest of Europe, so also is the case with the Sahara Desert, which cut off African South of Sahara. Sub-Sahara Africa isolation had its parallel in Asia as well. True to it, Africa has a major stake in the history of salvation. Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah talked about the land of Cush (Kush). There were Jews there whom they accused of syncretism (Isaiah 11:11, Jeremiah 36:14).

Thomas has in his book that; it is of great value for African Christians of all denominations to reclaim that lost treasure. The church is universal (catholic), but we need to share that catholicity with pride and not with shame that Christianity was a colonial faith since it came along the rest of Africa through commerce and the inhuman Trans-Atlantic slave trade. What is ours as African by origin will make us weather the waves of

modernity and consumerism so that as this faith is passed on to the coming generations, The Holy Spirit will enable it to flourish not only in Africa, but worldwide.

I think Thomas Oden would by and large agree that refusing facts, challenges and difficulties ahead would continue to bury historical facts. This in effect is an unhealthy situation for human civilization. It compromises African Christian heritage which makes African Christians think that Christianity is a Whiteman's religion which in effect is a fallacy gauged on primeval church molding. African Christians and African nations can work together by pulling resources together so that what is lost of Christian history or Christian-Muslim understanding can be brought to light. It would benefit both faiths and the purposes of God in general.

Thomas Oden has effectively highlighted Africa's integral role alongside the Middle East and the Near East in the story of the Incarnation. From the accounts of Terah and Abraham seeking refuge in Egypt to the narratives of Jacob and his sons, deeply intertwined with Joseph's story in Egypt, and Moses leading the Hebrews out of slavery, the typology pointing to Jesus liberating humanity from sin and decay resonates strongly with African contexts. The parallel of Mary and Joseph finding refuge in Egypt mirrors Jesus' escape from Herod's persecution, underscoring Africa's significant place in the biblical narrative.

When African Christians engage in reconstructing the faith from a biblical perspective, they are not

encroaching on others' spheres but rather reclaiming and emphasizing their rightful place in conveying the truth of the Incarnation story. This effort aligns with the global anticipation of the fulfillment of this Age.

Reflecting on Jesus' interaction with his disciples, particularly when he asked them who people thought he was (Mark 8:27), reveals varied perceptions—from John the Baptist to Elijah or one of the prophets. Peter's declaration that Jesus was the Christ underscores the pivotal question of how Africans perceive Jesus in their daily Christian lives and in contextualizing his mission within African worldviews.

Understanding Christology, the study of who Christ is, remains crucial for every believer. It forms the heart of faith and shapes how Jesus' identity and mission are interpreted and applied in diverse cultural and societal contexts. While writing her book *Jesus of Africa: Voices of contemporary African Christology* Diana Stinton did an interview with Marie Gachambi, a lecturer at Catholic University of Eastern Africa in Nairobi – “does our belief really touch our concrete life situation? Or Christian life is something put on which can be discarded at any moment? The answer was:

We may have not been able to help the believer to grasp the message completely – who Jesus is, the *Kerygma*, and not the Jesus that is given out there as an ideal. Otherwise we have to grasp who Jesus is, and the values that Jesus lives, then somehow

once we embrace the Christian life, a complete transformation, a conversion, a change of heart and mind and attitude should take place.²⁹³

The hymn – *How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sound*, by John Newton (1725-1807), is rich in Christology. It is no wonder that, it is found in at least five different major Hymn Books.²⁹⁴

In verse one, the name of Jesus resonates deeply in the believer's ear, bringing solace and healing to sorrows and wounds.

In verse two, the wounded spirit finds healing and wholeness in the name of Jesus. Troubled hearts are calmed, and the weary soul finds nourishment and restoration, likened to heavenly food.

Moving to the third verse, Jesus is portrayed as the foundation upon which life is built—a rock of stability and a shield providing safety and refuge. This echoes another hymn, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." Jesus is also depicted as the unwavering source of grace, intelligence, discernment, and salvation.

²⁹³ Diana Stinton, *Jesus of Africa: Voices in Contemporary African Christology*, 59.

²⁹⁴ Church Hymnary 3rd Edition Hymn No. 376; Hymn No. 322 in the Redemption songs; hymn No. 393 in Golden Bells (Scripture Union of Kenya, AIC Kijabe Press 1983 Reprint); Hymn NO. 29 English sections in Sing unto the Lord, Kenya Students Christian Fellowship, September 1999; and Hymn No. 46 in Praises to the Most High (A selection of Christian Hymns for East Africa (Revised Printing 1993)

Verse four describes Jesus as the Shepherd, Husband, Friend, Prophet, Priest, Life, Way, and ultimate End.

In verse five, John Newton's hymn proclaims that even in death, the melody of Jesus' name will refresh the soul.

John Newton composed this hymn in 18th-century England, drawing inspiration from the Bible to encapsulate who Jesus is and his significance in the daily lives of English Christians at that time. However, the challenge remains for African Christians to appropriately integrate Christ into their cultural, socio-economic milieu without being stifled by a purely missionary perspective. For instance, when an African Christian refers to Christ as his *mganga* (healer) it is seen as bordering on apostasy. Why? Traditional medicine was often stigmatized and viewed as evil during the era when missionaries were establishing hospitals and schools. Ironically, biomedical science itself was not as developed in Europe then as it is now. Therefore, perceiving Jesus primarily as a healer would have resonated more deeply with people at that time compared to today.

This historical context underscores the significance of Jenkins' perspective:

For a Northern world that enjoys health and wealth to a degree scarcely imagined by any previous society, it is perilously easy to despise believers who associate divine favor with full stomachs or

access to most, meager forms of schooling or healthcare; who seek miracles in order to flourish, or even survive. The prosperity gospel is an inevitable by-product of a church containing so many of the very poorest.²⁹⁵

In Newton's era, the 18th and early 19th centuries, his Christology referred to Jesus as "my husband," a title also familiar in African settings among widows in churches. This reflects biblical themes that show God's care for orphans and widows, as seen in prophetic passages. Jesus himself emphasized this promise through acts like healing the son of the widow at Nain, and Peter similarly raised Dorcas, known for her support of widows and women in general.

Mainline churches today would benefit from this example. Despite criticisms of prosperity gospel churches, they often provide support and recognition to their poor members. In contrast, while mainline churches discuss social responsibility, they frequently overlook their own impoverished members. Although programs exist for remote areas in countries like Kenya, the needs of local poor are often neglected. Consequently, many turn to Pentecostal or spiritual churches where they find solace and acknowledgment.

Furthermore, gender biases in talent recognition alienate women, prompting some to establish preaching

²⁹⁵Jenkins, *New Faces of Christianity*

ministries and advocate for African Women Theology to assert their presence and contributions. Such are educated women as Mercy Amba Oduyoye. She has written a book, *Introducing African Women's Theology*. There is Prof. Philomena Njeri Mwaura who together with Lilian D. Chiruire has written on “*Theology in the context of Globalization: African Women's response*.”²⁹⁶ As previously mentioned in this book, ignoring the role of women in church leadership is counterproductive. In times of crisis, such as war, women bear the brunt of upheavals, often moving with their children. In rural Africa, women perform labor-intensive tasks such as tilling the land, fetching firewood, and drawing water from distant points, with minimal acknowledgment from their male counterparts. Amid turmoil and economic hardships, women find solace in God. At the heart of social unrest, the self-sufficiency often displayed by the affluent has no place for them. It is not surprising that women outnumber men in churches, yet their representation in leadership roles remains limited. Jesus, who showed great concern for women, has profound admiration for African mothers.

In a globalized economy, advanced economies of the developed world often disadvantage developing countries by setting low prices for raw commodities. When these same commodities are processed and sold abroad, the prices become prohibitively high for those

²⁹⁶ Eatwot Women's Commission, *Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians*, Kenya Chapter, Nairobi, 2005.

who supplied the raw materials. Women, as primary caregivers, play crucial roles. In single-parent fellowships and special ladies' groups, mainly composed of widows, women's voices must be heard. Men who father children in these single-parent situations should be legally obligated to support and raise their children. Divorce or separation does not absolve anyone of their parental responsibilities. Children should not be labeled as "single" simply because their parents have separated. This practice is not in line with worshipful living and does not please God. Globalization has negatively impacted African families in developing economies, and thus, women's voices should be prioritized. Biblical calls for social and economic justice should be highlighted and acted upon.

In the context of health and wellness, historical plagues in Europe, America, and Africa have historically brought misery and prompted appeals for divine intervention. Today, diseases like HIV/AIDS continue to devastate populations, although advancements in retroviral drugs have made the condition more manageable and prolonged lives. Cancer remains a formidable challenge, exacerbated by the uneven distribution of medical resources. Access to quality healthcare is often determined by financial means, with public health facilities facing shortages of essential drugs and specialized personnel.

For instance, Kenya experienced prolonged strikes by nurses and later doctors in public health institutions

from December 2016 to January 2017. Issues such as inadequate salaries, insufficient drugs, and lacking equipment, including for cancer management and diagnostics, underscored the healthcare system's challenges.

In many African communities, Jesus is sometimes understood through the lens of traditional healers known as "mganga." In these cultures, herbs and traditional remedies have long been used to treat illnesses, a practice that persists despite its ancient origins. Importantly, there is no biblical prohibition against the use of these herbs or remedies. When a believer attributes their healing to Jesus, referring to him as their "mganga" (healer), it is an affirmation of Jesus' role as a healer. This perspective is echoed by the late Dr. John Gatu, former moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, who emphasized the deep meaning in the Kikuyu language term "mûrigiti," which refers to Jesus as the healer who not only cleanses but brings total healing. This understanding does not sanctify or demonize traditional practices but rather acknowledges the cultural context in which faith and healing intersect. It underscores the importance of holistic healing and the integration of traditional wisdom with Christian faith, particularly in addressing health challenges faced by communities across Africa.²⁹⁷

It is noteworthy that the hymn *The Great Physician Now is Here* (hymn no. 291 Church Hymnody

²⁹⁷ Diane B. Stinton, *Jesus of Africa: Voices in Contemporary African Christology*, 109.

3rd Edition) physician is translated as *mûrigiti* in the Kikuyu Hymn Book –*Nyĩmbo Cia Kûinĩra Ngai*, hymn no. 333. In an earlier Kikuyu Hymn Editions 1915 and 1935, the hymn was included and was quite popularly sung. Around the turn of the 19th century there was great famine in Kikuyu-land, dumped the famine from overseas (*Ng'aragu ya Rûraya*). It was thought to have been occasioned by the Europeans as they began occupying Kenya through British Imperial East Africa Company; there was also a great outbreak of small-pox. In the 1930s there was the plague menace. The famed *Nyaatha*, Irene the Catholic nun who was canonized in 2015 is said to have died from the illness as she devoted herself in the care of the affected. The Great hymn (*Mûrigiti ehaha Rĩu*) was so relevant then.

In the 1974 Edition of the Kikuyu Hymn Book – “*Mûrigiti ehaha Rĩu* (the Great Physician) was removed from the earlier edition along with all choruses for children. The removal and subsequent re-incorporation of hymns such as “The Great Physician” (*Mûrigiti ehaha Rĩu*) in hymnals reflect broader societal changes and shifts in religious expression over time, particularly in the context of Kenya's post-independence economic growth and improvements in biomedical care.

Initially, hymns like “The Great Physician” may have been deemed less relevant or less frequently sung as improvements in healthcare led to better physical health outcomes for many people. This could have diminished the immediate spiritual resonance of hymns focused on

physical healing. However, as societal perspectives evolved and the broader spiritual needs of congregations were reevaluated, there was a recognition of the hymn's enduring significance. Discussions with religious leaders, including prominent figures in the Presbyterian Church, highlighted the hymn's importance. These discussions underscored that hymns like "The Great Physician" are not only about physical healing but also address spiritual healing and the holistic well-being of believers. They remind worshippers that Jesus is the healer of both physical diseases and spiritual ailments.

In the context of praising and worshiping God in truth and spirit, the lesson extends to not placing undue emphasis on material wealth or earthly possessions, which are transient and vulnerable to loss. Instead, the focus should be on spiritual wealth and the eternal treasures found in a relationship with God. Thus, the re-incorporation of hymns like "The Great Physician" into hymnals reflects a deeper understanding of the comprehensive healing ministry of Jesus Christ, encompassing both physical and spiritual dimensions, which remains relevant in addressing the needs of congregations today. Jesus is the truth and the way to life. From readings in the books written by African writers such as *Facing Mount Kenya* by Jomo Kenyatta or *African Religions and Philosophy* by John Mbiti, one would rightly hold the view that traditionally; “*Mganga* is not one who will run to give you some concoction or do some magic. Of course, they had their paraphernalia as modern

doctors have their stethoscopes and white coats and all that. It's a question of the situation in which you are – they behave in the same way.”²⁹⁸

Here, be informed that my late father was one such a medicine-man. He used to send me to collect various plants early in the morning. I had seen him treat fevers which he called in Kikuyu “*bebo*.” As he aged and converted to Christianity he abandoned his medical equipment (paraphernalia). These gadgets were kept in a small “*kĩondo*” (Kikuyu basket). Some of the medical gadgets included a fly-whisk, some white earth (substance). I can't remember the rest. When he was baptized, he asked me to burn the items. The medical equipment were housed in a small “store” at the right side of the entrance to *thingira*, the man's hut. A kikuyu man, being polygamous, had his own hut which he used as a command post as he managed his household/home.

Whatever images the African believers may label Jesus with and are functional, the similar pattern is found in Newton's hymn cited above –*How Sweet the Name of Jesus sounds*. Diana B. Stinton, a Canadian woman comes out bold to declare the validity of African Christology. My encounter with her was during my graduate studies at Daystar University, Nairobi, where she headed the Department of Religious Studies. I had the privilege of being tutored by her on Biblical Spirituality, which in effect has infected my thinking in Biblical authority which

²⁹⁸ Jenkins, 109.

I have referred to in many instances in this book. Her Christological perspectives are treated, aside from others in this book.

Stinton's Christological titles are in large measure those that Newton used to compose –*How Sweet the Name of Jesus sounds*. Newton's "My life" matches with Stinton's Jesus is life– giver.²⁹⁹ The pattern continues sequentially as Healer is seen in the context of traditional healer who was so revered before the era of biomedicine. Other titles are Jesus as a friend,³⁰⁰ Jesus my king/chief (Stinton 200-214) with detailed discussion and finally Jesus as a liberator (of African women, liberator of theological thinking and reconstruction or liberator from social ills such as poverty and disease.³⁰¹

Now that the reader is made aware of making the Gospel texts understandable in local milieu through the theology of reconstruction (repairing and put right any distortion or neglect on the part of the missionaries), it is important to recapitulate what has been described in a roundabout manner.

Contextualization of the Gospel message (texts) is essential. Contextualization may be seen as indigenization and as Incarnation. In the Old Testament, God's revelation was within the context of one man, Abraham, on to the Hebrews till Jesus Christ is born. Then the

²⁹⁹ Stinton, *Jesus of Africa: Voices in Contemporary African Christology*, 72-123

³⁰⁰ Stinton, 186 – 191.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 215-216

salvation story crosses the Hebrew line at Obed –Boaz genealogical stage (Luke 3:32, Matthew 1:5). Boaz married Ruth the Moabite who bore a son Obed, who was the father of Jesse, the father of King David.

In the New Testament the Hebrew culture bequeathed the Gospel in a Greek cultural context as the Gospel spread to Rome and elsewhere in the Roman Empire. However, immediately after the Pentecost, Oden writes: “Christianity went immediately to Africa –recall where the Ethiopian eunuch was headed to when he encountered Philip headed to Jerusalem to worship (Acts 8:26-40). It spread quickly like prairie fire into known nation in 40s, 50s and 60s.”³⁰²

In those early decades Africa was a prime target for Christian witness, since a large number of Diaspora Jews had been long settled there. These were the first thirty years after Christ’s ascension into heaven. This explains the emergence of the theological giants already written about in a preceding chapter. New Testament efforts to contextualize the incarnation story climaxed at the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15 and 16). Finally, contextualization is not the same as syncretism. Contextualization does not fuse or adopt beliefs and practices that are incompatible with Christ’s teaching and the *Kerygma* the (apostolic preaching).

This chapter concludes with the words of Manya Wandeful Stephen in his unpublished address referred to

³⁰² 40-60 AD is the epoc.

above that borrows heavily from *guru* of African theology John Mbiti. He has quoted it in parts:

Contextualization must be based on the Bible. Though it seems to be risky on both sides, the communicator and the receiving community need to examine their cultural practices and beliefs in order to uphold the truth and eliminate those elements that are not supported by God's word. Through the Holy Spirit's leading and guidance that appropriate language, symbols and analogies will be found for use in any given world-view.³⁰³

Thus, we can stamp it that as you deliver the Gospel, it is paramount that you understand your constituents, their culture or human condition. However, whatever Christology you adapt within the local milieu, let us go along with what the beloved disciple John teaches. John lived with Christ; he saw, he witnessed all that Christ was. Any interpretation of Christ should go along what John writes in I John 5:20. The following notes in Life Application Study Bible tell it all:

John presents a clear picture of Christ. What we think about Christ is central to our teaching, preaching and living. Jesus is the God-man, fully God and fully human at the same time. He came

³⁰³ Manya Wandeful, ...

to earth to die in our place for our sins. Through faith in him, we are given eternal life and the power to do his will.³⁰⁴

Salvation story was initiated by God soon after The Fall at Eden (Genesis 3:15). John the Baptist as a forerunner of Christ was sent by God. Jesus died and was raised from the dead. The benefits of his victory over death bore universal benefits. As death entered humanity through one man, Adam, so also was life restored through the second Adam (Jesus Christ). This restoration bore universal imprint. It was not an Israel affair or church affair only. The salvific phenomenon is for all creation and of all nations. The incarnation of God therefore takes place in every culture enabled by the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all who spread the Gospel to take enculturation as a necessary input in preaching, teaching and when evangelizing. At pastoral level the ministers should realize that some theological research or learning is necessary. Then any research findings ought to be applied at the pastoral level.

³⁰⁴ Life Application Bible, 2154.

CHAPTER 13

African Christology

Having now vouched and advocated for interpretation of scriptural texts in a way different peoples will understand it better, this chapter will deal with two authors in form of reading reaction assignments on Advanced Seminar on Christian Theology presented to Dr. Julius Gathogo on June 12, 2009 on *An Assessment of “Charles Nyamiti and Zabron Nthamburi Analysis of African Christologies*. The centrality of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ through the virgin birth, his message during a three-year period, death, resurrection, ascension, and his Second Coming draws people into seeking deeper understanding not only in theological circles but also among individual believers. Having received a good grade in the analysis, it is hereby presented in full as my own assessment of the two scholars on African Christologies.

When one understands who Jesus is, that we should live as he lived, and practice what he taught and commissioned, it is possible to praise and worship God in awe and holiness. Having explained contextualization and the Christology as presented by Stinton, the reader is now invited to cultivate insights into how some theologians present the understanding of Christ in this age of self-awareness in our walk with the Lord.

Mark writes that Jesus began his ministry by appointing twelve disciples. The disciples closely watched his activities. At the onset, he declared that the time had come to proclaim the good news of God. The kingdom of God was near and required that people repent and believe in the Good News (Mark 1:15-16). The good news was accompanied by the casting out of evil spirits, the healing of many sick people including the paralytic, and the raising of a dead girl; the deaf and mute were also restored to health. The Twelve were sent out to practice what they had learned. Jesus interacted with all sorts of people: tax collectors (considered sinners), the rich, and the blind to whom he restored sight. He taught in parables and addressed issues such as divorce and taxation. After three years, he was accused, tried, and crucified. On the third day, he rose from the dead. Forty days later, he ascended to heaven. Before leaving, he charged his disciples to continue with the *Missio Dei*, the mission of God: to redeem humanity from corruption and decay.

A bird's view of Jesus' mission from the gospel of Mark is thus presented. However, we remind ourselves that initially, there was "a generation before Mark wrote his Gospel. Even before Paul wrote his first letter, the apostles were proclaiming the message of salvation."³⁰⁵ This is called *Kerygma* (proclamation, a message or announcement). In what was spread orally, the trend

³⁰⁵ A. M Hunter, *Introducing the New Testament Theology* (Bloomsbury Street, London, 1957 – Fourth impression, S CM Press Ltd, 1969), 65.

affirmed the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. They talked about events surrounding the life of Jesus. As stated above, in His Galilean ministry, Jesus declared that the appointed time had fully come (Mark 1:15). In the final analysis, as Luke, Peter, Paul, and John expounded on the primeval proclamations in later times, the tenets of the Apostles' Creed emerged. This also led to the development of the Athanasian Creed and the Trinitarian Doctrine, which Emperor Constantine "encouraged" the theologians of the time to adopt. As an emperor and a convert to the faith of the people of the Way (the Jesus way), he helped settle the argument on the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit being of one substance, signifying the Triune God.

Praise and worship of God require that all concerned truly take up the cross and follow the Master. If we are to live a worshipful life, it demands that we walk in the path that the apostles trod. "Tell me the old, old story." (Hymn 132 in Redemption Songs) echoes the primitive apostolic proclamation. Here is its chorus:

Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story,
Of Jesus and his love.

As indicated earlier, at the beginning of Christ's ministry, His love was manifested in healing, exorcising demons (evil spirits), mingling with outcasts in society

(tax-collectors), raising the dead, and ultimately dying on the cross to pay the penalty for humanity's sin, thereby superseding the elaborate Old Testament sacrificial systems. How we can enculturate Jesus and see Him among us is explained in Stinton's analysis, which explores various Christologies.

Below is a reaction to the readings on two African theologians who have written on Christology from an African perspective: Nyamiti and Nthamburi. As mentioned earlier, the first Christological question was posed by Jesus Himself to His disciples. After living with His disciples for some time, He wanted to hear firsthand what people, including His disciples, thought of Him (Mark 8:29-33, Luke 9:18-20).

The responses were diverse – some thought He was John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead. However, when Jesus asked His disciples directly, Peter replied that Jesus was the Messiah. It is not enough to know what others think of Jesus. A commentary on Luke's passages cited above admonishes believers on the importance of personal commitment and a solid stance on knowing Jesus: "The Christian faith goes beyond understanding what others say. It requires us to believe for ourselves. When Jesus asks, 'Who do you say that I am?' He wants us to take a stand, moving from curiosity to commitment, from admiration to adoration."³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶*Life Application Study Bible*, 1637 and 1702.

Immediately after Peter's confession, Jesus introduced more about Himself as the Son of Man, referencing Daniel 7:13. In this verse, the Son of Man is a heavenly figure with authority and power at the end times. Authentic praise and worship of God, whose true essence is revealed through a worshipful life, comes from genuine reverence. This is only possible when individual Christians, whether man, woman, boy, or girl, understand that Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man – truly human and Son of God. These are metaphorical terms that depict both human and divine qualities.

When we become authentically human, the divine qualities of grace, truth, and godliness manifest in us. Furthermore, His death, resurrection, and ascension into glory served as a ransom for all humanity (Matthew 26:64, Luke 21:27, John 1:51). John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, couldn't record everything he witnessed during his time with Christ. He noted that if he were to write it all down, the world wouldn't have enough books to contain it (John 21:25).

However, what he did write and present to both Jewish and Gentile audiences (primarily Greeks and Romans) had a singular purpose: that they might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing, receive life through His name (John 20:30-31, NLT). By believing this Good News, we receive eternal life, which empowers us to live, praise, and worship God – adoring Him in spirit and truth through His grace.

In Colossians 3:15-16, we find a concise statement about Christ's reign in a believer's heart, the indwelling of His message (the gospel), and its richness in Christian living. The subsequent singing of psalms and hymns with thankful hearts completes this expression. Reflecting on what Christ's rule means in verse 15, the believer understands that Christ enables holy living.

The word rule comes from the language of athletics. Paul tells us that let the Christ's peace be umpire or referee in our heart. Our heart is the center of conflict because, there our feelings and desires clash – our fears and hopes, distrust and trust, jealousy and love. How can we deal with these constant conflicts and live as what God wants? Paul explains we must decide between conflicting elements by using the rule of peace.³⁰⁷

In Philippians 4:7 through a comment we learn that:

God's peace is different from the world's peace (cf. John 14:27). True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing that God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ's kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and we can have victory

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 2035.

over sin. Let God's peace guard your heart against anxiety.

Now, with that biblical outline on the disciples' confession of who Christ was from their perspective, and having seen how individual believers can appropriate Christ's power in Christian doctrine and practice, it's appropriate to examine African Christian perspectives on who Jesus is. The understanding of Christ in the African context varies widely, much like the diverse names, titles, and descriptions given to Him in Scripture, which total eighty.³⁰⁸ In African Christologies, it's important to recognize that some of the titles mentioned, like "Daystar" (bright morning star), "Everlasting Father," "Faithful and True," "Great God," "Holy and True," "Life," "Man of Sorrows," "Son of the Blessed One," "Witness to the Peoples," and "Pure," originate from the New Testament writers. These titles were crafted as they described Jesus, initially witnessed and affirmed by Peter's declaration. Subsequently, they were revealed through divine inspiration. All Scripture is considered inspired and beneficial for teaching, reproving, and exhortation.

These titles and descriptions of Jesus' nature and actions were initially passed down orally but were later recorded in the canonical books of the Bible. For example, in 1 John, Christological titles such as "Word of Life," "Life Itself," and "Eternal Life" are articulated (1 John

³⁰⁸ Holy Bible (N. I. V) St. Andrew's Church Nairobi – Centennial Celebrations 2008)1486-7

1:1-2). These titles reflect the deep theological reflections on who Jesus is, and they resonate within African contexts as well, adapting to local cultures and understandings of Christ's role and significance.

We need also note that as the Old Testament prepared for the New Testament, Daniel bequeathed to us, *son of man*: prophet Isaiah yields to us *witness to the peoples* (Isaiah 55:40, *wonderful counsellor* 9:6, *Everlasting Father* 9:6, *Branch of the Lord* 4:2, *Commander of the peoples* 55:4, *mighty God* 9:6). Daniel also has The Anointed One. The prophets of old saw Jesus, the Messiah by faith through revelation and spoke of him. Thus, this becomes a treasure for Christians as we gaze with wonder at God's promises fulfilled in our times, though promised to Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, down the Incarnation history. Biblical Christological titles are thus inherited from Hebraic tradition. African Christians perceive Christ through the lens of their lived experiences and cultural contexts, both before and after their conversion to Christianity. In theological discourse, discussions often remain confined to academic circles, yet it's crucial to delve into why understanding who Christ is matters to African Christians. The African worldview and the interpretation of biblical teachings within the African physical, political, and socio-economic milieu profoundly influence how African Christians perceive God's intervention and guidance in their lives, especially as they anticipate Christ's Second Coming.

For instance, a Kenyan Christian might view Jesus as a unifier who can reconcile people from opposing political factions during heated general election periods. African women may seek Jesus as a savior who intervenes in ethnic conflicts that result in suffering for internally displaced persons. Philomena Mwaura's concerns about globalization's impact on women and children resonate closely with issues related to ethnic clashes and poverty.

These perspectives highlight that African Christologies are not merely abstract theological constructs but are deeply rooted in the concrete realities of African life. They shape how African Christians understand and apply their faith in addressing societal challenges and seeking divine intervention in times of crisis.

Charles Nyamiti a notable Tanzanian catholic theologian has written an article; African Christologies Today in Mugambi, N. K and Magesa L. (Eds), *Jesus in African Christianity: Experimentation and Diversity in African Christianity*, Nairobi, Action Press, 1998. Nthamburi Zabron has discussed his Christology under the title, *Christ as seen by an African: a Christological Quest in Mugambi*, J. N. K. and Magesa, (L (Eds) also in *Jesus in African Christianity*.

The two have done a good summary of African Christologies. They have reasoned accounts of what Jesus stood for and stands for as this is what Christology is basically about. Referring to Mbiti, *the guru* of African

Theology where Jesus is called Miracle Worker and risen Lord, the name “Son of God” finds parallel among African people. Servant of God, Redeemer, and Conqueror are terminologies found relevant in Christology.³⁰⁹ Nthamburi talks of John Phobee who among the Akan see Jesus as the Superior Ancestor.

J. Mutiso-Mbinda is accredited with showing ancestors as mediators and intermediaries.³¹⁰ Ambrose Moyo of Zimbabwe has put it that Jesus is a supreme universal spirit.³¹¹ The two scholars are not presenting new ideas but are expressing them in distinct ways. Their analysis of Jesus resembles that of Kofi Appiah-Kubi, who portrays Jesus as a mediator or intermediary, a savior, powerful redeemer, liberator, and healer.³¹²

Nyamiti explains that Christologies of enculturation aim to embody the Gospel within African culture. The thematic approach involves starting with biblical teachings about Christ and then contextualizing them to fit into relevant cultural settings. According to Nyamiti, the second group consists of Christologists who

³⁰⁹ J. N. K. Mugambi and Laurenti Magesa (Eds), *Jesus in African Christianity: Experimentation and Diversity in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Action Press, 1998), 17.

³¹⁰ Nthamburi, 1998, 56.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Appiah-Kubi, Kofi, “Christology”, in John Pratt (Ed) 1998. *A Reader in African Christian Theology* (London SPCK), 65-74.

begin with an African cultural theme or background and use it as a starting point for Christological reflections.³¹³

Professor John S. Mbiti, an evangelical and a prominent figure in African theology, employs a biblical-cultural mode of interpreting Christology to understand who Jesus is in the African context. Among various African peoples such as the Shona, Ndebele, Shilluk, and Dogon, Mbiti identifies parallels to biblical themes such as Servant of God, Son of God, and Redeemer Conqueror (over evil, sickness, etc.). He integrates these biblical themes into African reality, demonstrating how they resonate with and are meaningful within African cultural settings.³¹⁴ The second category is where African categories explain Christology, as with E. J. Penoukou's Christology.³¹⁵ Reference is made to Ewe-Maina tribe in Togo who see cosmotheandric vision of the world in which God, men and creation are tied symbiotically.³¹⁶ God, the spirit world and humans and the cosmos live in balance with each other. The author agrees with Nyamiti when he says that it is from the African worldview that Christology will be best understood. Nthamburi echoes the same message.

Christology has to begin with the praxis of Jesus of Nazareth; his person ministry, death, resurrection and ascension. The disciples proclaimed the Christ they knew

³¹³ Nyamiti, 1998: 17

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 18

³¹⁶ Ibid.

through personal encounter.³¹⁷ In the same way, Nyamiti says that incarnation is the highest fulfilment of personality as understood by the African. He further elaborates the significance of Jesus being God and truly human is; “for the African, to achieve personality. It is to become truly human and in a sense, authentically Black Man per excellence.”³¹⁸ In further exploration of who Jesus is to the African, Nyamiti says that:

There is therefore no genuine blackness or negritude outside him. As an instance of the fulfilment of personality in the African sense the incarnation is directly linked with the mysteries of the trinity, grace, the paschal mystery, Pentecost, Parousia and ecclesiology.³¹⁹

Here, God the Father, Jesus as the Mediator, and divinities or spirits bring to the African mind the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The paschal mystery, involving sacrificial lambs without blemish to appease God or ancestral spirits, may not seem mysterious to Africans familiar with such practices. Similarly, the Pentecost experience is understood, given the prevalence of spirit possession and mediumship in African traditional religions and initiated churches, where women often hold significant roles as priests or prophetesses.

³¹⁷ Nthamburi Mugambi, 1998, 57.

³¹⁸ Nyamiti, 1998, 20.

³¹⁹ Ibid.,

Ecclesiology, or the concept of church and community, aligns well with the extended family and kinship structures prevalent in African communalism. This communalism can strengthen the African church, contrasting with the fragmented denominationalism imported from Euro-American Christianity through 19th and 20th-century missionary efforts. The dependency on European or American Mission Funds perpetuates segmented Christian witness and awaits handouts rather than fostering local generosity for theological programs, particularly notable in mainline churches.

The belief in Jesus' return at Parousia resonates strongly among African Christians, who are part of the universal Church commissioned by Christ in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). Christological titles such as Chief, Elder Brother, Supreme Ancestor, Jesus as Healer, and Jesus as Liberator find deep relevance in African socio-religio-political spheres, representing primary Christologies. Minor Christologies like occupational, liturgical, or genealogical aspects are beyond the scope of this discussion, though their absence in Nyamiti and Nthamburi's works is noted. It's also noteworthy to mention the contemporary 21st-century Christology of Jesus as a reconstructionist, which has not been addressed by either Nyamiti or Nthamburi.³²⁰

³²⁰ Dr. Julius Gathogo, *Beyond Liberation and Enculturation Christologies: A Critical Appreciation of Diane Stinton's "Jesus of Africa" voices of contemporary African Christology*. The paper is unpublished.

Nyamiti does not merely present his Christologies and leave them unexamined. He goes further to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses inherent in these African perspectives on who Jesus is to African Christians. According to Nyamiti, these Christologies, when viewed from an African perspective, are genuinely Christian and African. He asserts that they possess the potential to contribute not only to African churches but also to the global Church as a whole. This indicates that Nyamiti sees these interpretations of Jesus within African contexts as not only valid but also valuable contributions to broader theological discourse and practice beyond Africa's borders.³²¹

Nyamiti highlights the strength of these African Christologies in their alignment with African traditional religious heritage and the ethnographic realities of African life. He acknowledges that these interpretations of Jesus resonate well within African cultural contexts. However, Nyamiti also expresses a concern about the future of these Christological models, particularly in relation to societal changes such as the decline in the veneration of ancestors.

Despite this concern, Nyamiti's apprehension is tempered by the recognition that cultures, whether African or Western, are inherently dynamic. He believes that there will always be a connection, no matter how tenuous, between the past and the present. Therefore, Nyamiti argues that as long as these Christologies

³²¹ Nyamiti 1998: 30.

maintain a high quality of theological rigor, originality, and relevance, they will endure. He acknowledges that they may remain as minor paradigms compared to more popular models, such as the reconstructionist Christology emerging in 21st-century Africa, which emphasizes Jesus' concern for marginalized groups.

This reconstructionist approach extends Jesus' care for children to encompass the marginalized youth in national, economic, and political spheres. It reflects a contemporary adaptation of Christology that addresses current social issues, suggesting that Christological discourse in Africa continues to evolve in response to changing social and cultural landscapes. The weaknesses Nyamiti finds is lack of connectedness of African Christologies with Trinitarian doctrine as mentioned above. For the purpose of emphasis, the figure Father, Son and Holy Spirit can be seen in the light of the fact that African communities recognize both the biological father and God as Father in the spiritual realm. Jesus as Elder-brother is the Mediator. He ensures that peace prevails in family relations just as the elder brother ensures justice is done to all in matters of family estate when their parents die. Divinities and spirit world is rich in African ontology. Therefore, the Holy Spirit as comforter and counsellor is easily conceived in African Christianity.

Nyamiti's assessment of African Christologies in African churches is sobering. He suggests that, apart from Black Christology in South Africa, most African Christological interpretations have not significantly

impacted the life of African churches. According to Nyamiti, many of these Christologies are either unknown to the majority of African Christians or, if known, they are rarely taken seriously.³²²

The author concurs with Nyamiti's perspective that African Christologies are often viewed as secondary to Christologies imported from abroad, especially within mainline churches. They argue that for Christ and his relevance to African Christians to be fully appreciated, these indigenous Christologies must be integrated into theological education at seminaries, Bible schools, and faith-based universities. Moreover, they emphasize the importance of incorporating these Christologies into sermons, doctrinal formulations during church conferences, and discussions at church synods concerning doctrinal and administrative church matters.

According to the author, the lack of familiarity with African Christologies among African Christians is primarily due to their absence from pulpit teachings. They assert that theological education should be central to pulpit ministry, ensuring that diverse Christological perspectives resonate within African cultural and religious contexts.

The author highlights that Jesus is described in numerous ways throughout the Old and New Testaments, with approximately eighty titles and descriptions documented in the Holy Bible. These biblical

³²² Ibid., 34.

Christologies, they argue, align with African traditional religious heritage and worldview, underscoring the theological notion that the Gospel can find resonance in every culture. They acknowledge the complexity of acculturation, suggesting that African theology's principal task is to assimilate elements that point towards Christ while rejecting those that deviate from the Gospel message centered on Jesus Christ, the incarnate Savior.

In conclusion, the paper aims to assess Charles Nyamiti's and Zablon Nthamburi's analyses of African Christologies, highlighting key insights through the lens of Professor John Mbiti and referencing contributions from other theologians like J.S. Fobee, J. Mutiso-Mbinda, Ambrose Moyo, and Kofi-Appiah Kubi.³²³

Nyamiti and Nthamburi's analysis of African Christologies is largely appropriate because it is through Christ that soteriology is possible. He is a healer and liberator of Africans—from colonialism, apartheid, crises such as Somalia, tribalism, and the deadly xenophobia of our times. He liberated South Sudan from the Khartoum Government and is hoped to liberate it from internal ethnic strife. This is the aspiration of the church in South Sudan. He is the Chief whose authority is indispensable in humanity. Chiefs in Southern Sudan are influential figures, but their power is subordinate to the chief of chiefs—Jesus Christ. To end civil war, these leaders should embrace the Gospel of the Prince of Peace. He is

³²³ Nyamiti in Mugambi (Ed.) 1998,18

the supreme mediator and initiator of humanity, having experienced all human life stages—circumcision, presentation in the Temple at age 12, baptism, victory over the devil, and remaining sinless. All humanity can emulate Him. He inaugurated new life in the Kingdom of God, symbolized by the Church (Ecclesia), of which He is the head. The Church is viewed as the continuation of this incarnation in history. However, the critical question remains: How closely is the Church following in the footsteps of its Lord, Jesus Christ?

Thus, having covered enculturation and liberation as a broad spectrum of African Christologies, Nthamburi and Nyamiti score highly in their endeavor. The functions of Christ are adequately addressed. In their discussion of Christologies, Nyamiti and Nthamburi have sought to contextualize the humanity and divinity of Jesus within the African situation. There is a general consensus in African theological circles that God has been present in African primeval cultures, using symbols within African culture to reveal His truth. In his book, *Joyfully Christian and Truly African*, John Gatu says that, “on the question of Christianity (read, Christologies) and culture, express symbols, whether they are in language, art, music, architecture, are the ones that contribute to the understanding of religious beliefs of any society. They may be ambiguous to a newcomer but they are very meaningful to the members of the society concerned.”³²⁴

³²⁴ John G. Gatu, *Joyfully Christian & Truly African* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2006), ix.

Just as appropriate technology is crucial in the construction industry, so too is appropriate Christology essential in the African Church as part of the global Church. Finally, to emphasize the fact that God has always manifested Himself through common revelation and general grace to humanity (Romans 2:14-15), it is prudent to agree with Manya W. Stephen when he concludes that:

One of the things this writer thinks is true is that, God was and has been present in and throughout the universe. This is to say that God has been within the African context. Though not seen through the Christian eye because Christianity had not been introduced yet, the Lord had always dwelt within the African people. This is because Africans like any other people the world over are a people of God.³²⁵

Regarding the Lordship of Jesus Christ as applied in the context of how He governs the lives of individual believers in African circumstances, one can discern the voice of God through preaching, personal devotions, and reading Scripture. When interacting with colleagues in employment or self-employment, Christ's dominion ensures integrity in life. In various life situations,

³²⁵ Unpublished paper presented in memory of the life and ministry of Prof. Kwame Bediako at Daystar University, July 2009.

individuals strive to live peacefully with others as much as possible.

At the family level, spouses understand each other through the strength drawn from Christ's sacrifice, fostering love and mutual respect. Social injustices, such as corruption and misappropriation of public resources, are reduced or eliminated as contentment and ethical behavior prevail among the redeemed. Moreover, if true servant-leadership prevails in the public sector, its positive impact will be widespread.

Family values inherent in African communal life are revitalized, thereby refocusing societal values. The negative aspects of globalization disseminated through ICT—internet, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms—are mitigated. Conversely, positive indigenous values can be promoted through these same media channels. There are numerous positive value systems within African Christian contexts from which the global Church can glean insights. Therefore, there is an exhortation to rise to this challenge. Upholding what is good, honorable, and pure in African cultures in alignment with Biblical teachings is encouraged.

CHAPTER 14

The Battle of the Sexes in Christianity

The God of the Bible, Yahweh, Jehovah, the Lord, revealed His name to Moses as *I am*.

Choice as a concept is very important in all matters of life. Choice always limits the scope of operation. When God decided to redeem humanity after The Fall, He began the Incarnation story through the choice of Noah. Noah was among many other people who lived then. He walked in fellowship with God (Genesis 6:9). He is recorded as being righteous and blameless, but as is always the case with human beings, it does not mean that he never sinned. In Genesis 9:20 ff., we see Noah getting into a drunken stupor. His estate produced good grapes, occasioning him to abuse alcohol. What followed was a fiasco whereby one of his sons, Ham, spread the news that his father lay in the tent naked.

Human actions have consequences. It is not lost to us that Noah's curse on Ham has created an ongoing theory of racial superiority to this day (Genesis 9:25). Ham's mocking of his father has had a chain effect, where Black people (Canaanites), people of color, are seen as inferior in contrast to the descendants of Japheth and Shem. It is most likely that if Ham had viewed his father's nakedness and kept it to himself, racial superiority as witnessed in South Africa through the Apartheid system

would not have occurred. White supremacists in the United States would probably not have emerged. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade would probably not have been fomented. The American Civil War between the southerners, who laid claim to slaves on a “biblical” basis, would probably not have occurred. Thank God that the Northern Christians had no cotton plantations and hence did not need to perpetuate human slavery. A similar line of thinking using Scripture and patriarchy has relegated the status of women below their male counterparts.

Living a worshipful life demands that we first love God sublimely and then love our neighbors as ourselves. You may sing and worship God ostentatiously, but God looks at the heart (that inner self that no human being can penetrate). Micah chapter 6 is a trial of the people of Israel. This is the Lord’s case against Israel. Despite God’s bounty on the people of Israel, they failed to live up to being carriers of God’s redemptive plan. It is dangerous to take God’s care for granted. As a worshipful people, we need to ponder what God has done. This will give us strength to be thankful for His goodness and look into the future with hope (Micah 6:5). Jewish society was highly patriarchal. Noah’s wife must have played big roles in the family, but none of her achievements is mentioned.

The salvation story moves on and focuses on Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. Then there is a paradigm shift from an individual personality to a nation, Israel. All other people associated with Abraham are set aside. The responsibility of God’s

revelation/salvation rests on Israel. Through this nation, a savior, Jesus Christ, is born. In Him, salvation becomes a universal entity. Through His teachings, male dominance, the patriarchy, is dissolved as in this kingdom there is no superiority between men and women. All are held equally accountable to God in the Incarnation (the Redemptive drama). We are Christians. The curtain in the Temple was torn apart when Jesus proclaimed that, "It is finished."

In the Church, we continue to see gender imbalance, a reflection of the societal picture in general. All over the world, women are crying for balance in the running of the Church, in equality of wages, in politics, and in all other areas of human endeavor. It is in this state of affairs that this chapter will deal with two-fold issues.

Firstly, due to Martin Luther's contribution to the Reformation of the Church and the emergence of Protestantism, the main issue he raised in relation to Women Anthropology (Doctrine on the human person) is questionable. Luther's influence on women's roles in the Universal Church, with particular reference to Africa, will be presented critically. In a critical/reflective paper titled "African Women's Theology" presented as a semester assignment in a graduate course on April 14, 2009, by the author, Martin Luther's position on gender is underlined. It is underscored because he fell victim to patriarchy and demeaned women in contrast to what the Bible reveals. Secondly, the representation of women in ecclesiastical ministry follows. It will mirror a feminist theological perspective showing its effects on men and women.

Now, one might wonder why a book titled "African Christian Worship Today" should deal with such an explosive religio-social sphere. Gender issues are main ingredients of worshipful living. God is to be honored and glorified in how men and women treat each other. If men and women are at war with each other, how can they worship together? At a micro-level, when a wife and husband are in discord, family prayer time is disrupted.

It is biblical that you cannot claim you love God (or worship God, adore God, give God ultimate reverence and respect with a thankful heart) unless you have done right, done good to the person, that human being you live with, or interact with at home, in places of work, or even in the street if you have an opportunity to interact or help him/her. Issues of faith need not be the preserve of academicians. In the African setting, society or the Church is going electronic. E-books are commonplace. There is a need to disseminate theological discussion by various means. An informed church is likely to mend loopholes in its administration and preaching, avoiding skewed doctrines that portray sexism.

The main issues raised by Martin Luther in relation to women's anthropology (Doctrine of the human person) and their reference to women's roles in the universal Church, with particular reference to Africa, are presented here below. The presentation was also a critical/reflective paper on African women's theology by the author. The paper is put down in a book for wider readership. It is to enable more people to come to the

realization that true worship of God cannot be realized if either men or women Christians belittle each other in matters of faith and/or roles, gifts, or talents each has. The fact that the discussion is in the context of a Christian setting does not exclude men and women in other religions such as African Traditional religions, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, or even Zoroastrianism.

In the family, the Pauline theology of headship, submission, and love yields one thing: the relationship must be that of mutual submission and responsibility. Even when children come into the scene in the family, the Bible looks into the totality of respectful living right from the Old Testament, especially in Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Proverbs, and in the New Testament, particularly in Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Timothy, and even in the Gospel of Luke (2:51). The Bible teaches that both mothers' and fathers' leadership should nurture, train, discipline, and teach their children, leading them to godliness. In such an atmosphere, praise and worship of God will be possible. If done in any other way, the name of the Lord will not be honored as expected. The core teaching of Ephesians 5:22 ff is mutual submission.

Martin Luther, a learned man, is well credited with picking up the Reformation agenda on justification by faith from Augustine and the rebellion from Orthodoxy by the Donatists of North Africa in the fifth century. Unfortunately, he seems to have taken up negative thinking about women from Tertullian and Augustine himself. It is to be recalled that St. Augustine lived a

skewed sex life through which he had a son out of wedlock before he became a monk. Tertullian was a married man who, through “a letter to his wife,” we learn of a classic appreciation of married love life. However, later on, as a widower and a Montanist, his loathing for women is evident in his description of women as the “gateway to hell.” Aquinas was even more blatant by stating that woman is defective and misbegotten. With this in mind, it becomes easy to critically reflect on Luther’s statement regarding the anthropology of women based on Genesis 3:16.³²⁶

On pregnancy and gestation (cohabitation), Luther asserts that cohabitation between male and female is literally a punishment to the woman. He is oblivious to the fact that the two were charged to multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 1:28). Both of them were given dominion over the earth. Luther must have known very well that we are justified by faith alone by the grace of God. Luther seems to have ignored all the Scripture where the rule of Christ in the hearts of women and men makes no distinction between sexes or race (Galatians 3:28). Luther’s ideology to take pregnancy and cohabitation as punishment from God, and justification for the subjection of a woman to man, is immediately weakened by a promised savior, through the woman’s seed (Genesis 3:15). Luther sides with Adam, forgetting that the two were co-sinners. The

³²⁶ Elizabeth Clark and Herbert Richardson, eds., *Woman and Religion: A Feminists source book of Christian thought*, (San Francisco: Harper and Collins, 1977), 147-148

two were created equal (Genesis 1:26-27) and both commanded not to eat the fruit. So “by eating it, they are responsible for their action.”³²⁷ They both disobeyed God and, as a result, both were exiled from the Garden. This "eating the fruit" story denotes disobedience.

Luther sees a blissful pregnancy term if the sin (disobedience) did not occur. It is difficult to see how he conceived this, but one thing is clear: men and women are interdependent, especially in the wife-husband relationship. Today, as in the 16th century (Luther's time), women worked in the fields, just as men. Men also carry the burden of bringing up a family. Just as the two share the result of the Fall, the woman is a co-heir to salvation.³²⁸ Salvation is for all in the household of faith, irrespective of sex or race. Furthermore, whoever the Son of Man makes free is free indeed (John 8:36). All receive the spiritual gifts equally, as illustrated by the Pentecostal experience and several other portions of Scripture, such as 1 Corinthians 12:13.

The lordship of man (husband) over the woman (wife) attributed to The Fall is also misplaced. Woman was created as man's equal. In Genesis chapter one, the creation of humankind is presented as one act, as already indicated above. As it is observable, when men and women are availed a conducive environment, one agrees with Patricia Gundry when she says that they (Adam and

³²⁷ Patricia Gundry, *Woman be Free: Biblical Equality for Women*, (Smith Gundry Productions, 1977), 23.

³²⁸ Ibid.

Eve) were not unequal in ability, position, and authority.³²⁹

History does not tell us how long Adam and Eve had lived happily for Luther to assert that before The Fall, Eve was free of Adam's subjection. If Genesis 5:2 is brought into the scene, God "created them male and female and blessed them. And when he created them he called them man." "Man" is the Hebrew word for Adam, so we can say Adam was not a proper name. Even if we bring in the second account of creation, the word "helper" or "helpmeet" has no connotation of subjection at all. God is referred to as the helper of Israel, which does not mean God is weaker than Israel. Even if the word "helpmeet" is taken, this draws in the notion of complementarity and that "human life in every sphere can be fully lived only as male and female, as they cooperate together."³³⁰ In the family, professions, politics, the church, and all areas of human endeavor, the notion of male-dominated jobs versus female domestic chores is outdated. Luther's stance that men should work in industry and politics while women remain confined to domestic chores is misguided. He draws his premise from Titus 2:5, ignoring the fact that Jesus tore the curtain dividing the sexes in Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures. Men and women are one when they obey Christ (Galatians 3:28). In the early church, women assumed roles as apostles (Matthew 28:7, Mark 16:7). Others were prophets, such as Miriam, Huldah, and

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid., 17

the wife of Isaiah (Exodus 15:20, Isaiah 8:3). In the New Testament, Anna was a prophetess (Luke 2:36-38), as were the daughters of Philip the evangelist. Women teachers included Priscilla, the wife of Aquila. Many women were church overseers, such as Phoebe, Euodia, Syntyche, Stephana, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Chloe, Lydia, Nympha, and Apphia (Romans 16, Philippians 1-2, 1 Corinthians 16:15-17, 1 Corinthians 1:11).

Luther ignores the New Testament teaching on the role of women outside the domestic confines. While women are biologically designed to carry pregnancies, this is not a limiting role. They are mothers of all the living but also sustain their children through farming, industry, the church, and the political realm where major decisions affect families and citizens. Asserting that women should be confined to procreation is distasteful. It is even worse when Luther claims that women are grumblers when trying to take on male roles. Luther was aware of the significant roles women played in the Bible and church history as missionaries, such as Theodora with her missionary work in Nubia. There were sterling examples of women like Perpetua and her maid-servant Felicitas. Mary Abbot led monasteries that included men and women. Luther also knew of inspiring women like Teresa of Ávila. As Mary Evans puts it, Genesis 2:24 depicts marriage as "an example 'par excellence' of the complementarity and partnership of the sexes."³³¹

³³¹ Mary J. Evans, *Woman in the Bible*, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1983)

However, due to patriarchalism, the verse suggests that it is the woman who would be leaving home and cleaving to her husband. In any case, when united after cleaving, they become one flesh, not two. Chemically speaking, they are compounded together. They henceforth live in a compounded union. They are chemically united in love.

Concerning familial identity, whether patriarchal or matriarchal, identity is a crucial factor for humans. This is why all persons have names for individual identity. The Genesis story does not deny a wife her identity. By taking on the husband's name, this again is within the patriarchal sphere. There are many societies that are matriarchal. This should not be seen as demeaning to the husband as that is the ontological orientation. In such societies, Luther's assertion that it is unnatural to be called by the wife's name is nullified. Today, we hear Christian men (husbands) introduce themselves as "I am so and so of (mention the wife)." Some renowned news presenters on FM stations in Kenya pride themselves on including their mothers' names in their identity. For example, "I am presenter John Kamau, son of Ng'ang'a (father) and Wairimû (mother)."

On the question of a married woman changing residence along with her husband, this is quite natural in the sense that both are one flesh and the decision to move to a new residence would be a family matter if they changed or acquired a house. The wife would not be following the husband as "her Lord!" This is cultural

etiquette as well as familial obligation that obliges the couple to cooperate and find meaning in life.

Adam naming Eve would not have been a license to subjection. Assuming that Genesis chapters one and two are accurate and that Genesis 5:2, where the two are named "man" (Adam) meaning humankind, reiterates the humanity in both of them, it is at the hope of restoration that Adam becomes a proper name (Genesis 3:20-24). For the generic designation of the woman becomes "Hawa," Eve, the mother of the living (Genesis 3:20). Through her seed, humankind would be restored to God through Christ (1 Timothy 2:15; Romans 16:20). Oblivious of the equality of the two in other references in the Genesis story of the creation of humankind, Martin Luther misses the point that his naming the generic female "Adam" Eve does not mean Lordship over her:

It is interesting to note that Eve is still honored here as the mother of all the living: an attitude to women not found elsewhere in the Near East. Perhaps this is an indication that although the woman was seen as secondary in the Israelite society she was nevertheless honored in her own place and misogyny as such was not unusual.³³²

Luther gives 'Adam' the authority of subjugation which he did not have in Genesis 1-2 as the two are

³³² Mary J. Evans, *Woman in the Bible*, 21.

different, male and female, “united to each other, forming the perfect complement of the other, each playing his or her role in the God-given tasks of filling and governing the earth” (Genesis 1:26-28).³³³

In conclusion, it is vital to state that Luther borrowed cues from the misogynistic predecessors of the church. He viewed women through the cultural lens of his time, which was heavily patriarchal. The perceived inferiority of a wife to her husband was a male construct, not a Genesis theology. Gestation and childbearing by the mother of all the living cannot be seen as a punishment. Both Adam and Eve committed the sin of disobedience. The tempter was the serpent, not Eve. Both Adam and Eve shared the sin and were punished for the corporate fall. Therefore, taking a male perspective on the role of women as being purely domestic and childbearing is misplaced. History has proved that women can excel in all professions just as men can, given equal opportunity in education and upbringing in a family. In society, there have been engineers, teachers, and scientists who are women. There have been, and there are, ruling queens, presidents, diplomats, peacemakers, and all.

It is wrong to label women as grumblers and to claim that they do so due to their inability. Androcentrism is so deeply embedded in patriarchalism that misogyny is taken as normal. No wonder feminism has been struggling in fighting for the “weaker sex,” a myth that even the

³³³ Ibid.

Bible seems to propagate through patriarchal hermeneutics. Feminine theology and, more so, African women's theology are steps in the right direction. A theology of reconstruction will lead to the restoration of human values that are so often denied to women due to being excessively "domesticated" by men in society and in the church.

Masculinity and femininity, from the biblical perspective, often contradict cultural norms.³³⁴ At one time, Jesus cooked (John 21:9-14). He also wept, as in the case of Lazarus' death. The permissions (dos and don'ts) placed on men and women are not from God. Tasks should be shared. Both men and women should pursue their careers while participating fully in family life and in raising children. Those called to priestly duties—both men and women—should exercise their talents without hindrance. In Kenya and many other countries, paternity leave is granted when a child is born, which is the right thing to do.

In our society, you may hear a girl being referred to as a tomboy if she appears aggressive, often implying she may lose her femininity. Similarly, a boy who loves cooking might be seen as losing his masculinity. Patricia Gundry tells us that "Femininity is an elusive quality women have that appeals to men. It is not to be denied but

³³⁴ Aida Besancon Spenser, *Beyond the Curse: Women called to the Ministry*, (U.S. A.: Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers 1977.

enjoyed. The same is true of masculinity, a quality men have that women appreciate."³³⁵

It's clear that our day-to-day perceptions often associate certain habits with either women or men, but neither can actually lose their inherent femininity or masculinity—it's intrinsic to who they are. Societal stereotypes limit what each gender can achieve and experience in their lives as full human beings.

When women are viewed as inferior in church life, it undermines the proper honoring of God. True praise and worship can't flourish in an environment tainted by gender bias. It's encouraging to see messages like "gender streamlining is not a request but a requirement" on T-shirts in South Sudan, emphasizing the necessity of overcoming gender biases and misconceptions so that both men and women can fully enjoy life and use their intellectual and physical abilities, gifts bestowed upon them by our Creator.

Having discussed the historical challenges that have pitted women against men, it's timely to review the current status of women in ministry within the church. Despite their majority presence in many congregations, women often face limitations imposed by kyriarchy and patriarchal structures that hinder their ability to fully utilize their gifts for the Church of Christ. There's a critical need to differentiate between the core biblical truth about

³³⁵ Patricia Gundry, *Woman be Free*, 31.

women's roles in the church and the traditional interpretations that have been added over time.

A significant disparity exists between how Jesus treated women and their actual participation in church life today. While women contribute extensively to church work, questions persist about their full integration and ordination. In the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, women serve as sisters in educational and health institutions, and some are theologians, yet they are not ordained as priests. Reasons cited include longstanding church tradition, the absence of any woman being considered by Jesus for priesthood in sacred scripture, and the belief that priests act in the person of Christ.³³⁶ It's clear that the position held by the Roman Catholic Church regarding the ordination of women lacks solid scriptural justification. The 1983 Code of Canon Law explicitly states that only baptized men can receive sacred ordination (Canon 1024), thereby excluding women from priesthood. Many within the Church question why this rule remains unaltered and why women are denied the opportunity to serve as priests or bishops, especially given historical and theological arguments.

Papal authority, based on Peter's confession as "the rock" upon which the church is built, is often cited to justify this exclusion, along with tradition and cultural

³³⁶ Disclaimer – As a protestant the author is not qualified to talk about ordination of women in the Roman Catholic Church. The few thoughts written down here should be only viewed from ecumenical angle.

norms. However, criticisms arise from theological, biblical, and historical perspectives, particularly in light of the Church's own history of reforms and the evolving understanding of gender equality.

In contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, Protestant churches exhibit greater diversity in their approach to women's ordination. While some denominations still restrict women from certain roles, many have embraced women in ministry, reflecting a more inclusive interpretation of biblical teachings. The participation of women in church ministry today reflects ongoing challenges and contradictions stemming from historical biases. Despite their majority presence in congregations, women often encounter limitations imposed by patriarchal structures, hindering their full utilization of their gifts within the Christian community.

Even in other Christian traditions such as the Orthodox Church, women are also not ordained as priests. Furthermore, certain charismatic, High Anglican, and Evangelical groups continue to resist the idea of women holding leadership roles in ministry, viewing them through lenses that may not align with biblical portrayals.

Scripture itself presents a more egalitarian view of men and women, depicting them as equals in the discipleship of faith (Genesis 1:26-27). The New Testament illustrates a diverse range of roles for women in early Christian communities, including apostleship, prophecy, and teaching. Despite historical shifts that once recognized women in these roles, subsequent doctrinal

developments have often marginalized their contributions.

For instance, Mary Magdalene, who witnessed and proclaimed Christ's resurrection, is recognized as an apostle by many biblical scholars. Junia, mentioned in Romans 16:7, is identified as an apostle alongside Andronicus, and Priscilla, along with her husband Aquila, is noted as apostles and teachers in Acts 18 and 26.

The diversity of roles exercised by women in the early church underscores their significant contributions to the ministry. However, misinterpretations and cultural biases have at times limited these roles, despite biblical evidence supporting their inclusion.

The prophetic role of women declined due to the rise of Montanism led by two women, Priscilla and Maximilla, whom Orthodoxy termed heretics. During the Last Supper, all four Gospels state that all disciples gathered together. "Disciple" was a general term for all those who followed Jesus, including women. Jesus never segregated or ordained anyone then. From Paul's occasion of breaking bread during the shipwreck incident (Acts 27:35), it is clear that apostles and teachers presided over the liturgical worship, including the Eucharist. Notably, this ship had a mix of Christians and non-Christians, making it likely that the Christians observed the meal with Eucharistic notions in such a difficult situation. Women were preachers and evangelists, as already elaborated. It is only from an androcentric perspective that exegetes

take for granted that leadership in early Christian communities was solely in the hands of men.

As the ministry of presbyters and bishops developed, women were excluded from the ministry they had previously participated in as teachers, evangelists, and deacons. In the second century, men took over the priestly role. Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) declared that no woman was allowed to speak in church, teach, baptize, or discharge any function of the priestly office. As the church aligned more closely with the state after the conversion of Emperor Constantine, kyriarchal justifications were used to exclude women from celebrating the Eucharist. Hierarchical authority became paramount. Bishop Cyprian, an ardent advocate of hierarchical church administration himself male, along with others, subjugated women, a pattern that has persisted to this day.

Exercising priestly ministry in Africa can be seen against the background of African Traditional Religious heritage, where priests and priestesses abound, as in the case of the Yomba of Niger. This could be used as a model for the enculturation of the priestly office in Mainline Churches. Mainline churches are notable because in African Instituted Churches such as the Aladura, the Zionists, and Spirit churches in West Africa, there are women leaders. South and Eastern Africa have many women priests, who are in most cases the founders. Among Pentecostals, where clericalism and kyriarchy are powerful, women are assigned ministries of counseling,

intercession, Sunday school teaching, and leadership of women's groups and parish councils.

Some Protestant churches, like the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, ordain women to the priestly ministry, but women priests do not rise to prominence. In some cases, members may avoid receiving Holy Communion from a female priest. Oduyoye has remarked that the issue of women's ordination is pivotal because the leadership of the community of believers and ordination are intertwined. It is worth noting that ordination is a term of Roman origin. Therefore, it is not justified to say that Jesus ordained anyone. Thus, claiming that Jesus ordained men has no historical basis. The disciples simply followed him; they were merely disciples. Jesus's message, enhanced by John the Baptist's introduction of repentance and forgiveness, attracted crowds to him.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that ordaining women without changing the culture and the belief that God created women as subordinate to men would not have much effect in averting the negative effects of patriarchy and kyriarchy, and its associated androcentric and misogynistic practices that limit women's participation in fostering Church growth. Throughout Africa, women gather for prayers, support groups, women's guilds, mothers' unions, and mother's councils, amidst leadership dominated by men. Their goal is not segregation but molding stronger Christian communities in which men and women together are the church, the assembly of the

faithful. Oduyoye calls upon the Church to break the silence on the subjugation of women, to act against sexism, racism, tribalism, and combat violence against women. The Church needs to be a household where all matter, where charisms (giftedness) are used without sex discrimination. Jesus's attitude towards women represents a theological basis for partnership, equality, and participation between men and women. In a sense, it is a reorganization of the dignity of women and men that forms the foundation of human rights, as men and women embody what it means to be human. What is clear from the Bible tradition is that cultural stereotypes of male/female roles must be challenged if we are to be faithful to the vision of Jesus of Nazareth.

Mercy Amba Oduyoye, a leading African woman theologian, stands for African Women's Theology as a theology of liberation, so that African women can experience full humanity. African theologians led by Oduyoye are saying that women have voiced their concerns and sorrow through songs, dances, novels, deep silence, and the marks on their backs.³³⁷

Living a worshipful life and praising God in spirit and truth necessitates the inclusion of women in church life, particularly in the realm of priestly duties. Excluding women from servant-leadership roles and teaching would verge on apostasy. It is on this premise that the next chapter will delve into a rarely discussed issue in Church

³³⁷ (Lecture notes – Prof. Philomena Mwaura Course Teacher, Daystar University, and January 2009).

circles: African Women Theology. Simply presenting an issue that hints at theological injustices regarding women's roles in the Great Commission in our time is not enough. It is crucial that we explore what women theological leadership is conveying to the Church.

CHAPTER 15

African Women Theology

Circle of concern Women Theologians was launched in Ghana in 1989 to reflect on the position of African woman Christian, her faith and experiences in Church, culture, politics and social-economic structures in Africa. Chief among many objectives of the group were inclusion of Women Theology in theological curriculum and collaboration with male theologians.³³⁸

It is reiterated that the Bible does not discriminate against women. The use of masculine gender to refer to God does not imply that God is male. No! God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in truth and in spirit, as the theological position asserts. God is "I am who I am," the "Beginning and the End" (Alpha and Omega). Assuming that the masculine pronoun signifies that man is closer to God is a mistaken notion and a distorted belief. After the Fall, it is emphasized that salvation would be made available through the seed or offspring of a woman. The Messiah Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, the Incarnate God, would restore salvation to humankind (mankind). The Apostle Paul was clear that

³³⁸ *Major challenges for African Women Theologians in theological Education (1989-2008)* <http://online.library.wiley.com/abstract> accessed on May 14, 2016

the fall into sin and deprivation came through one man, Adam, and through one man, Jesus Christ, restoration was accomplished. The fact that Eve took the initial step, as stated earlier in this book, does not mean that Adam was less guilty in disobeying God. The sin was equally shared, and so the guilt was equally laid upon both of them. Jesus rectified what Adam had disrupted. The damage caused by Adam was restored through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Setting aside different roles, the Bible is abundantly clear on gender equality. In the mind of God, there should be no subjugation of women, either at home or in church leadership. Contrary to what is often seen and experienced in the Church today, there are many scriptures that support this view. It remains a principle that is theoretically upheld. In the Old Testament, despite incidents that subjugated women, including instances of polygamy and apparent abuses such as Lot's daughters being thrown to sodomites, and the rape of Tamar, the Bible clearly re-establishes the position of women to one of equality with men:

His son, Jesus Christ, not only bridged the gap between God and man through his death on the cross, that made atonement for man's sin, he removed all barriers including that of gender, race and nationality (cf. Galatians 3:28-29). The

discrimination that women bump into does not come from the heart of God.³³⁹

Indeed, whatever is recorded about women in the Old Testament, even if it appears to discriminate or demean women, the negativity is only apparent. It's akin to the movement of the sun from East to West — an apparent movement, while in reality, it's the earth spinning on its axis and revolving around the sun. Similarly, when scriptural passages are examined systematically, one finds that the Bible, inspired by God, is inerrant. The word of God exhorts, teaches, or rebukes the believer. In this light, many passages in Scripture that seem to advocate gender discrimination do not truly do so. If they did, Christians would not be able to praise and worship God as expected by our Creator, nor would they be able to live a worshipful life. God is displeased when women are relegated below the level He set forth in creation. The doctrine that God made them "male and female" in His own image and likeness is fixed in the Bible.

In the New Testament, Jesus is born of a virgin through the power of the Holy Spirit, elevating women forever in God's salvation plan — the Incarnation. Joel's prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost, equally to both men and women (Acts 2:17). Women were among the initial believers, as attested in Acts (Acts 5:14, 8:12, 17:4, 12).

³³⁹ (<http://www.faithstreet.com/2007/01/17/>)

Notably, the first church in Europe was started by a group of women who met in the house of Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant who traded in expensive purple cloth (Acts 16:13-15). Further evidence of women's participation in the early church is found in Romans 16:12, mentioning Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis as workers of the Lord. In Philippians 4:3, two women, Euodia and Syntyche, are asked to settle their differences, mediated by a true partner of Paul whose name remains mysterious. Additionally, an early church co-led by a man and a woman, Aquila and Priscilla, is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:19.

From these examples, it is evident that in Scripture, the position is one of equality for women and men. The only role where men are surpassed by women is that of gestation and giving birth. Men share only in the conception, whereby God completes His design of individual formation and assigns each person the days of their life. Each individual is wonderfully made and knitted together.

Without further illustrations, as this chapter is not primarily about gender equality, the rest of it presents African women's theology. Their voices echo the experiences of women who continue to suffer abuse and violence not only in Christian communities but also across other world religions such as Islam and Hinduism.

When discussing African women's theology, theology is understood as discourse with God and the human person situated within societal webs influenced by religious, economic, and political factors, often male-

dominated. Issues such as the economy, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and globalization significantly impact women and children more than any other segment of the population. Ethnic violence and political uprisings expose women's vulnerabilities, leading to incidents of rape and desperate searches for food to sustain their children.

By defining theology as discourse with God, it becomes apparent that African women's theologies share common objectives with feminism, rejecting biological determinism as a reason for assigning specific roles to females and males alike.³⁴⁰ African women share the vision with feminism objective as outlined by Clifford, "Feminism brings to bear its vision of woman by raising questions about blatant and subtle stereotypes that inhibit women's health for self-determination. Feminism is by nature critical of the values and attitudes that cultures tend to unreflectively promote."³⁴¹

In the African cultural context, women have had no legal or social safeguards to own property. For instance, if a husband dies, the widow can only hold property in trust for the welfare of her child(ren). Feminism defined as quest for justice implies that it is not necessarily movement for women. We are told of John Stuart Mill who published his essay in 1869 titled "*The Subjection of Women*."³⁴² In day-to-day life, there are men

³⁴⁰ Anne M. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (Mary Knoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001) 17.

³⁴¹ Ibid

³⁴² *Lecture Notes* by Dr. Philomena Mwaura

who oppose the oppression of women, both within the family and in the church, often citing biblical statements. A common misconception widely accepted is the belief in churches that the man should act as the priest in the family, leading to wives refraining from leading devotions. This teaching has roots in the doctrines of ancient African theologians like Tertullian, as previously referenced. Despite his deep affection for his wife, Tertullian's later writings, particularly in "On the Trinity, 13:13," suggest a view of women that may surprise modern readers. He states: "For in reality, God's plan of salvation honored both sexes, the male and the female at the same time. God has made it plain that he does not care only for the sex which he took to Himself (male human nature). No, he also cares for that other sex by which he took the first to himself, because He bore the nature of man, and in the nature, He was born of a woman."³⁴³

Martin Luther, regarded as the father of Protestantism, viewed the pains of childbirth as a literal punishment from God for Eve's consumption of the forbidden fruit, as previously mentioned in the preceding chapter. This perspective is now revisited in the context of African Theology.

African Women Theologies emphasize the neglect of women's complete integration into the Church. Euro-American theology, when imported to Africa, is often gender-blind, as Clifford argues, stating that "Christian

³⁴³ Needham, 127

Theology is actually male theology."³⁴⁴ This Christian Theology in Africa was received from the missionaries with the Euro-American striplings and it is in this context that Africa is playing a key role in women's theologies.³⁴⁵ These theologies engage in biblical hermeneutics within the context of African culture. It is important to note that, as observed earlier, similar to Europe or America from where African churches imported "Christian Theology," the theological landscape in Africa remains predominantly male-dominated. African women theologies thus aim to become a theology of relationships, replacing hierarchies with mutuality, and advocating for a theology that is sensitive to societal contexts.³⁴⁶ African women's theology(ies) is liberating, as it seeks a gender-sensitive response to changes that challenge life in Africa. Some aspects of this theology are narrative, aiming to share the African perspective on issues affecting African women, with global implications, even if these issues are generated outside Africa. A case in point is the African women's response to theology in the context of globalization.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁴ Clifford, *Introduction to Feminist Theology*, 29.

³⁴⁵ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's theology*, (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 9

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 17.

³⁴⁷ Eds. Philomena N. Mwaura and Lillian D. Chirairo, chapter one, three, six and seven, *Globalization: A Challenge to Women's well – being. Globalization and the Women in Zimbabwe, The Life of Kenyan Women under Globalization*

Although a single statement may not fully define African Women's theologies, it is accurate to describe it as a theology that reflects on issues challenging women's experiences of achieving fullness of life. It calls upon the Church to lead in developing remedial measures through its message of liberation, reconciliation, and healing.³⁴⁸ Dr. Philomena Mwaura puts it lucidly:

The Church as the people of God and as hierarchy should address oppressive theology that reinforces marginalization of women. The church should recognize that poverty, economic constraints and limited resources are too often women's concerns in that women and children suffer disproportionately from these ills. Economic crisis and poverty should not be used to justify exclusion of women or violence against them.³⁴⁹

Mercy Oduyoye emphasizes that African Women Theologies draw on diverse sources, engage in varied tasks, and exhibit distinctive characteristics shaped by unique contexts. While feminism and its theological heritage from Europe and America, including womanist perspectives, may influence African women theologians to some extent, they are embedded within specific African

and Impact of Globalization on Women in Uganda respectively.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 72

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

contexts that shape their theological discourse. Oduyoye underscores that while their visions are unique, African women theologians are mindful of similarities and commonalities across race, religion, and nationality. The "we" in African women's theology encompasses the collective struggle of women to reveal God's presence in their lives and within the African communities where they are active participants.³⁵⁰

"Biblical hermeneutics that interpret biblical stories and events are key sources of African Women's theologies. Heroic stories such as that of Deborah inspire women in the book of Judges. The institution of marriage and its significance in lineage and kinship are sources of theology for African women. The role of the ancestor is crucial; the ancestor could be male or female.

"African communalism is another source of African women's theological voices. Mbiti says that African philosophy anchors on the notion that 'I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am.' In Kiswahili, there is a saying, '*mtu ni mtu kwa sababu ya watu*' (a human being is a person because of the people). A human is born into a human community. Women's theology finds room in women's groups, such as in the financial support system of 'merry-go-rounds,' which finance women's micro-projects. African women's theology questions the individualism seen among

³⁵⁰ Mercy Oduyoye, *Introducing African Woman's Theology*, 30.

menfolk, advocating instead for the church as a household of believers sharing life in agape love.

"Cultural practices seen among medicine men, a term recognizing both men and women concerned with sickness, disease, and misfortune, involve women in this important profession. Here we need to point out that in the world of Mercy Oduyoye, 'women's theology shows keen awareness of the fact that "the past" is often misused for the subjugation of women, while traditional values that are advantageous to women and ecology are overlooked.'"³⁵¹

This blocks women from sharing their perspective as well as reconstruct their self-esteem. Any cultural heritage involving heroic deeds by women is material for women theology. Critical norms of womanhood are another source of women's theology.³⁵² "What is at stake here is socialization, where African women are conditioned to believe that they are programmed to live for the child, family, and community. Sayings such as 'behind every successful man, there is a woman' are stereotypes that can imply women exist to please men by facilitating their social upward mobility. "Verbal violence against women found in songs, proverbs, folk talk, and even the popular use of biblical texts and advertisements promoting consumerism, debase the biological makeup of women. Repudiating these anomalies constitutes African

³⁵¹ Ibid., 29

³⁵² Ibid., 31.

women's theologies."³⁵³ Economic and social emancipation from globalization with its structural adjustment program is a focus on African women theology. An article, *Theology in the context of globalization: African Women's Response* as a book contains well-reasoned issues in social, political, cultural developments by both external and internal factors.³⁵⁴

"After discussing the contextual sources of African women's theology, it becomes easier to identify its tasks. These theological concerns include chief among them re-examining culture and reclaiming the humanity offered by both African religious heritage and Christianity, which should form the basis for relationships between men and women.

"Secondly, African women are also revisiting myths about creation, which reveal the unity and wholeness of nature and human nature. To maintain balance, ecology becomes a focus of African theology, demanding that ecological balance be maintained.

"The third task is to focus on Jesus of Nazareth as the restorer of harmony. It is evident in the New Testament that Jesus had a compassionate heart for women; he healed them and, in one instance, rescued a woman whom others thought deserved to die. He challenged those without sin to cast the first stone.

³⁵³ Ibid.

³⁵⁴ Philemon N. Mwaura, *EAT Women, s Commission*, Nairobi, 2005, 1-88.

Women theologians emphasize repeatedly that gender should not be used as a tool to oppress women.

"Fourthly, African women's theology takes on the concern for redemption from patriarchal bondage as a major task. The fifth task that African women theologians focus on is African communalism. They study the encroachment of individualism on communal spirit.

"The sixth front in their fight is against injustices faced by women, such as being taken for granted. These injustices include the non-recognition of housework in the Gross National Product or lack of rights to property ownership, which negatively impact women's efforts in nation-building. However, the legal system is slowly changing this situation. "The seventh task of women's theology is to rejoice with those who rejoice and walk alongside those who are hurting. Their prayer life focuses on the family and setting up homes for sick children suffering from HIV/AIDS.

"It is difficult to cover all the tasks of African women's theologies here. Only an overview of the general characteristics of this theology can shed more light. Mercy Oduyoye summarizes it this way: 'African women's theology is developing in the context of global challenges and situations in African religio-cultural settings that call for transformation.'"³⁵⁵ Characteristics such as women's participation in the economy, the quest for access to and control of the media, women's marginalization, and the

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 38.

status of women under customary and statutory laws are common features in the theology under discussion.

Theological reflections on texts from both the Old and New Testaments that address the poor, orphans, and the sick feature prominently in African women's theology. The stories of women in the Bible form a formidable catalogue of heroes. Eve, often viewed as "the genesis of sin," is also seen as the one through whom salvation is restored (Gen. 3:15). Mary, the mother of Jesus, redeemed fallen womanhood. Through her, figures like Mary Magdalene, Sarah, Miriam, Mary (the sister of Martha), Priscilla, and others, who are often overlooked in patriarchal Western Christian heritage, are highlighted by women theologians. These theologians are particularly interested in exploring these personalities.³⁵⁶ The words of Nthamburi are pertinent: "Feminists are reminding us of our role, which is to affirm each other so that together we can create an integrated community." African theology is thus called to be a liberation theology. It affirms and promotes the dignity and worth of every person, whether man or woman, and advocates for equal rights and opportunities within our communities.³⁵⁷

Therefore, dehumanization of men or women is theologically wrong. It is even worse for women when male domination through social and cultural patterns alienate women in decision making positions even on

³⁵⁶ Clifford, *Introducing the Feminist Theology*, 66.

³⁵⁷ Nthamburi, *African Church at the Crossroads*, (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1991) 21

issues affecting them.³⁵⁸ Such an issue as female circumcision (now termed female genital mutilation), despite being outlawed by the United Nations and national legislations in many countries, continues unabated. Male counterparts often justify it as a gateway to marriage. By dehumanizing women through this practice and early child marriages, the female redemption offered by the cross of Christ is hindered. The full expression of women's personalities and the realization of fullness of life are curtailed. The next chapter will discuss this issue in depth.

In conclusion, what African Women's Theology is asserting should be taken seriously. Life is meant to be lived in service to God using the gifts endowed to individuals, not confined by gender stereotypes. In creation and redemption, there is complete equality for both men and women (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:23, 5:1-2; Corinthians 11:11-12, Galatians 3:13, 28, 5:1).

The contrived dominance of Adam over Eve was a consequence of The Fall. This was not God's original plan. The Fall, seen through a systematic and holistic interpretation, shows that Adam and Eve were co-participants in sin, a fact reiterated throughout this book. It is likely what Paul meant when he stated that through Adam (man), death came, while through the second Adam (Jesus Christ), atonement and reconciliation were restored.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 20

In the community of believers, the Ecclesia, which sprouted phenomenally at Pentecost and thereafter, both women and men are to nurture spiritual gifts. These gifts are to be cultivated through the grace provided by God. Thus, as a holy priesthood of believers under Christ's authority, our praises and worship will be accepted by God. There are numerous scriptural passages that affirm this stance. In the Old Testament, the community of God is exemplified in Judges 4:4-14 with the story of Deborah and Barak, where a courageous woman encourages the hesitant Barak. Deborah, a prophetess, had the courage and wisdom to plan Barak's enemies' defeat.

The New Testament framework methodically addresses gender issues. As previously mentioned, the use of male pronouns to describe God does not authorize depicting God as male. Yahweh, the "I AM," is the author of life and creator of all that exists. Biblical authors, including Moses, Solomon, the major and minor prophets, the gospel writers, Paul in his epistles, and even Peter, all wrote with human limitations while recording God's revealed word. These writers exercised their prophetic, priestly, and royal functions as human beings. Consequently, while isolated texts may appear to restrict the cross' full saving and restorative power to liberate women as well as men from sin, sinning entails missing the mark. It's akin to failing to hit the "bull's eye" in darts. In such cases, repentance is necessary. Parts of Scripture may seem contradictory, but they should not be simplistically interpreted as conflicting with the rest of

Scripture. Their exegesis should consider other texts that clarify any hidden meanings. Their interpretation is expected to encompass the broader context in consultation with the rest of Scripture. Good examples include 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:33-36, and 1 Timothy 2:9-15.

The two passages in 1 Corinthians address the issue of proper worship. In the Corinthian church, the wearing of hats or head coverings had become contentious due to cultural clashes. A woman not covering her head was seen as morally loose, whereas Greek women found it acceptable to worship without head coverings. Aside from attire, Paul promptly discusses proper attitudes towards worship, marital relationships, and the role of women in the church. In the next passage, 1 Timothy (verses 9-10), Paul clarifies that it is not unbiblical for women to desire to appear attractive. He was not forbidding well-kept hair, gold, pearls, or expensive clothing but emphasizing modesty and inner beauty. The biblical definition of leadership involves empowering others for service rather than exerting power over them (cf. Matthew 20:25-28, 23:8; Mark 10:42-45; John 13:13-17; Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 5:2-3). It exemplifies servant leadership with five pointers.

Through a variety of gifts, corporate worshipful living is enabled. Each manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. In the African Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:7 reads, "To each individual, the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some to benefit."

It is necessary to point out that spiritual gifts are not operated by personal will. They are part of the very nature of God given to us for Him to use to fulfill His purposes in our lives and in the body of Christ by serving others. These gifts include apostleship, discernment, evangelism, exhortation, faith, giving, healing, interpretation of tongues, gift of knowledge, leadership, mercy, and teaching. The Spirit manifests God's power to humans through the person He chooses. The vessel used by the Spirit is merely a conduit. This is where problems arise when there are scheduled times of healing among neo-Pentecostals. While healings sometimes occur through God's mercies and abundant grace, there is much frustration when sick individuals are not healed despite efforts. The preacher has no power to activate a particular gift. Through prayer, supplication, and intercession, God graciously performs miracles.

God alone works miracles at will to manifest His power. For instance, if instantaneous healing occurs, it is because the Spirit causes it. Such manifestations include messages of special knowledge, instantaneous healing, other types of miracles, ability to prophesy (predicting the future or addressing what God desires in a church or societal issue), and discerning whether a message is from God or human manipulation. The ability to speak in unknown languages (tongues)—whether earthly languages or ecstatic languages unknown to anyone—and the ability to interpret what is being said are unique gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-11).

All these special gifts are not gender-based. Both men and women of God benefit from these spiritual gifts and special knowledge to build a strong professing community of witnesses and a strong Church where the righteousness of God is manifested.

CHAPTER 16

A Cultural Practice that Demeans Women

Women circumcision/cut, now has been termed female genital mutilation. It has been labelled mutilation because of the effect it has in dehumanizing women and girls who undergo the practice. Associated with the practice are medical complications and early (childhood) marriages, that hinder women and girls from realizing full human development and growth denying them full life due to curtailing maturity in form and in educational advancement.

Female genital mutilation is a prevalent issue in Africa, but it is also widespread in Arab countries such as Yemen and Indonesia. In Africa, countries like Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Guinea, and Egypt have high rates of this practice. However, this discussion will focus more on Kenya, the author's home country. Indeed, true praise and worship of God cannot be fully realized if there is a departure from biblical teachings that dehumanize women through cultural practices that even the world opposes. Below is a detailed discussion of this cultural practice viewed through a feminist theological perspective and its effects not only on women but also on men.

Female circumcision has long been practiced in Africa, starting from Egypt along the Nile and extending

into many countries south of the Sahara. Kenya is one such country where it is practiced among the Agĩkũyũ, Ameru, Maasai, Kipsigis, Nandis, Kuria in Nyanza, and is particularly prevalent among the Kisii community to this day. It is also practiced among Muslims, especially within the Somali community. This practice occurs in 26 out of 43 Sub-Saharan African countries.³⁵⁹ The reasons given for female genital mutilation vary from religion to culture.

In many societies, it is performed as a rite of passage into adulthood, often leading to early marriages. There are four main forms of FGM: clitoridectomy, excision, infibulation (the most severe, involving both excision of the female genitals and stitching to narrow the vaginal opening), and the fourth category, known as introcision or unclassified, which is also harmful despite its classification.³⁶⁰ There are many health complications associated with FGM, but its perpetrators are men who have subjugated women for the male selfish ends. In the article, *Africa: When Culture Harms the Girls – the globalization of female genital mutilation*, it is stated that:

In the communities practicing FGM, there is literally no place for a woman who has not gone through the procedure. Such societies are brought

³⁵⁹ UN Office, *Coordination of Human Rights, Africa: When Culture Harms the Girls – The Globalization of Female Genital Mutilating*, (accessed March 11, 2009),

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

to bear on the woman and her family ensuring that the woman's relatives enforce compliance. Other circumcised girls will no longer associate with her. "She is called derogatory names and is denied the status and roles of adult women...she is considered to be a child."³⁶¹

It is reported that among the Agĩkũyũ people in Kenya where the custom is dying, that some people still believe that, girls will run with many men if they are not circumcised.³⁶² This paper reports that the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) is justified on grounds of chastity, transition to womanhood, and ensuring "purity" for marriage, essentially aiming to control women's sexuality. Lina Kilimo, a former minister in the Kenyan government, has publicly criticized the practice on Family TV channel, urging parents to educate girls for a brighter future. She dismisses the notion that uncircumcised girls are unmarriageable, citing her own experience of escaping the practice and being happily married. In the New Testament, creation is redefined in terms of our identity in Christ as new beings. Initiates often face intense social pressure, and non-participation in FGM can lead to ostracization within many communities. The transformation from childhood to womanhood is seen

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Female Genital Mutilation in Kenya, [Http://www.women.on.the.run.se/node/42](http://www.women.on.the.run.se/node/42) (accessed on February 11, 2009).

through the lens of Christ, emphasizing that true womanhood is not defined by physical mutilation.

The cultural justifications for FGM can sometimes seem absurd. In Kisii, where the practice is prevalent, men advocate for female circumcision, arguing that it prevents promiscuity and HIV infection: "When a woman undergoes circumcision, she is less likely to become promiscuous and is protected from HIV." This perspective illustrates the societal expectations and beliefs that perpetuate the practice.³⁶³ Male prostitution and female prostitution is an intertwined human phenomenon which has nothing to do with FGM.

Here is the author's personal experience among the Kisii people. Among the Kisiis, even highly educated parents advocate the circumcision of their daughters. It is no wonder that the above-cited article puts the rate of circumcised women in Kisii at 97%. In the same document, the Kisii District Commissioner says that the fight against FGM is difficult because, due to fear of HIV infection, the practice is being carried out by nurses and midwives in hospitals and clinics. In Kenya, there is legislation prohibiting the circumcision of girls under the age of seventeen. By raising the age bracket, it is hoped that many would escape the 'cut'. However, although FGM in Kenya is outlawed, it has not been eradicated. Politicians from areas where the practice is rampant speak

³⁶³ Kenya FGM Touted as Panacea for HIV, [Http://www.plusnews.org.aspx.kenya](http://www.plusnews.org.aspx.kenya), (accessed February 11, 2009).

in hushed tones, fearing repercussions during general elections when they could be voted out of their political offices. Now, one may ask: who is to blame, the men or the women? Evidently, women and girls are victims of male domination over women's sexuality. Apart from Kenya, about 14 other countries have passed similar laws against FGM. Djibouti is the latest member to join the anti-FGM campaign on January 19th, 2009.³⁶⁴

Beth Mugo, a former Minister of Public Health in Kenya like Linah Jebii Kilimo, has been an anti-FGM campaigner. She is on record decrying the lack of legal protection for women over 18 to resist FGM.³⁶⁵ Maendeleo ya Wanawake, a leading women's rights group, is on record with a veiled message that an attack on FGM could endanger the cohesion of the entire society, asserts Rukia Subow, Vice Chairlady. She states, "FGM is considered the most significant rite of passage to adulthood, enhancing tribal cohesion and providing girls with important recognition from their peers." Pamela Mburia, a program coordinator at AMWK (an Association of Media Women in Kenya), notes that the fight against FGM often lacks commitment from those tasked with addressing it.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ FGM in Kenya: outlawed, Not Eradicated, [Http://www.womenose.news.org/article](http://www.womenose.news.org/article), (accessed February 11 2009).

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

These days, alternative rites of passage organized by churches have emerged. Among the Meru, Maasai, and Agĩkũyũ communities, these ceremonies allow girls to go through all the customary steps except the actual circumcision. Boys also undergo similar training before their circumcision. The teachings include understanding their bodies, relationships, sexual behaviors, and conception. Parents often enroll their girls in these church-sponsored programs during the end-of-year holidays as they transition from primary to secondary school.

Efforts have also been made to educate men against female genital mutilation (FGM) in Kenya. Between 1998 and 2000, the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) and Maendeleo ya Wanawake trained men in Gucha (Kisii) and Tharaka Nithi (part of the greater Meru region). It was believed that changing men's attitudes would help eliminate the practice. Upon completion of the training, these men were expected to become agents of change within their communities.³⁶⁷

Before drawing final conclusions, it is worth noting that the UN's Beijing Declaration (1995), which Kenya ratified, obliges signatories to combat violence against women, including FGM, which is euphemistically termed circumcision for diplomatic purposes by those seeking to eliminate the practice. The African Union's

³⁶⁷ Kenya Mobilizing men against Men against FGM in Kenya, [Http://www.forware.org.uk/pastprogrammes](http://www.forware.org.uk/pastprogrammes)(accessed, February 11the 2009).

Maputo Protocol binds all signatories to use legislative measures to prohibit and condemn all forms of FGM. However, it is observable that legislation alone cannot eliminate it; often, the practice goes underground, with parents having it done as early as age four. Complications may arise, and victims are often unwilling to seek proper treatment, sometimes leading to fatalities, including death.

The practice of FGM has also gained global attention. As the world becomes a global village, people move to countries where the practice has never existed. In response, laws have been enacted in countries such as Australia, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the UK, and the United States to address FGM due to the presence of migrant populations. Internationally, FGM is viewed as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, prompting many organizations to commit resources to educate against and eradicate the practice. The United Nations has declared February 8th as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation.

While this analysis has primarily focused on Africa and Kenya in particular, FGM is also prevalent in Asia, including countries such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and among the Canibos and Pano Indians in South America.

From a male perspective, circumcision is viewed as a way to "tame" girls and suppress sexual desire, preventing them from pursuing men. Among Somalis,

there are cases where corrective surgery is necessary after marriage due to complications from the stitching during circumcision. The Bible teaches that human beings are fearfully and wonderfully made, and mutilating the female sexual organs dehumanizes women. Medically, there are negative effects on sexual desire, childbirth complications, and the traumatic experiences women endure.

From a feminist theological perspective, female circumcision is seen as a profound degradation of women's sexuality. Considering biblical hermeneutics, no passage in Scripture supports the practice; instead, it is supported by patriarchal structures. In Islam, while a Quranic verse may reference it, the practice is not expressly sanctioned universally. Many sheiks, community elders, and Muslim women's groups refute the notion that FGM is sanctioned by the Quran. Some have clarified that infibulation violates Quranic principles, and a less severe form of FGM is being increasingly adopted.³⁶⁸ Female circumcision is a male device for the sexual exploitation of women, perpetuated by cultural stereotypes. Women often passively accept it as a rite of passage to womanhood, not by choice.

The churches have a significant role to play in combating this practice. Protestant churches such as the Presbyterian Church, the Anglican Church, and the African Inland Church have already made strides in

³⁶⁸ Gemma Richardson, *Ending Female Genital Mutilation?*
[Http://www.dominionpaper.ca](http://www.dominionpaper.ca)

reducing female circumcision in Central Kenya and Kamba-land. If churches intensify alternative rites of passage initiatives, there is hope for further reducing the prevalence of female circumcision. Taking a proactive role similar to organizations like UNDP, UNIFEM, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization would strengthen their efforts and supplement local resources effectively.³⁶⁹ In this article, there has been minimal use of the term "feminist" because men and women in organizations, NGOs, and international organizations, by advocating against injustice towards female sexuality, inherently embody feminist ideals. Anyone striving to end the injustice of female genital mutilation (FGM), regardless of gender, is considered a feminist.

Literature on FGM acknowledges it as a deeply entrenched cultural tradition intertwined with myths and taboos, but it is believed that it will eventually fade away. The timeline for its eradication remains uncertain. Efforts, especially in promoting alternative rites of passage, represent a clear pathway forward. There is an urgent need for increased lobbying and the establishment of rescue centers for girls who reject circumcision. In Kajiado District's Isinya, for instance, such centers provide safe accommodation for girls during holidays when their homes may not be secure.

³⁶⁹ UN Chronicle, Fall, 1999, *Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation in Kenya*-Fam-Brief Article, <http://findarticles.com>, (accessed February 11, 2009).

Lobbying efforts to engage boys and men are proving successful. "Men and boys are publicly supporting and participating in alternative rites of passage ceremonies," which celebrate girls' transition into adulthood without subjecting them to FGM.³⁷⁰ There is empirical evidence showing that feminist efforts involving boys and men can diminish cultural norms that promote female genital mutilation (FGM). It is anticipated that soon, an uncircumcised girl will command the same dowry and covenantal tokens as those who have undergone FGM. Although the alternative ceremony is gaining acceptance, not all regions have embraced it. Nevertheless, there are promising outcomes; villagers educated through these programs can now openly discuss the pros and cons of female circumcision, transforming it into a public debate.

According to a case study by Women Aid International, women have formed groups and public role models who openly declare their non-circumcision status. Health workers are addressing the issue in public forums, and notably, preachers are incorporating discussions on female circumcision during baptismal classes in churches, which marks a significant step forward.³⁷¹ There is even a more interesting finding that there is use of slang among young men that shows a change in attitudes. An

³⁷⁰ *Kenya Mobilizing Men Against Female Genital Mutilation*, <http://www.forwardduk.org.uk/what-we-do/pastprogrammes/kenya> (accessed/February 11, 2009).

³⁷¹ Family Planning Association of Kenya.

uncircumcised girl is referred to as *Manyanga* (Swahili word for young, new), while a circumcised one is nicknamed *mitumba* (second hand, or used).³⁷²

A time is coming when Kenyan girls, and women in general, should be able to experience and live their sexuality without the menace associated with FGM. From a feminist theological perspective, mutilating and demeaning female sexuality through selfish, male-crafted reasons contradicts God's plan. Women, like men, are called to praise God who formed their body parts, knitting them together in the mother's womb. They should praise God wholeheartedly, for they are wonderfully made (Psalms 139:13-14). God's design of female sexuality is perfect and should not be tampered with.

In conclusion, significant efforts are being made to eradicate FGM, but this goal will remain a pipe dream unless programs are sustainable and collaborative, involving both female and male feminists. These initiatives must be multi-faceted and tailored to meet the specific needs of each community, requiring substantial resources from respective governments and the international community.

True worship and praise to God are compromised if churches remain silent on a practice that lacks root in either the Old Testament or the New Testament. Virtually

³⁷² Irin/UN office, Kenya A Case Study of Modern Legislation against Cultural identity,
[Http://www.womenaid.org/press/info/fgm-Kenya.htm](http://www.womenaid.org/press/info/fgm-Kenya.htm)(accessed February 11, 2009).

no Christian Church or authority justifies FGM as a religious act. While some Christian denominations or religious groups may condone it, such leniency is often driven by male misogyny. Generally, the Church disapproves of female circumcision because it is physically harmful and lacks Biblical support.

The initiation rites into womanhood can continue alongside those for boys through symbolic acts that are not harmful to women's bodies. Practices like seclusion for a few days under the guidance of women's guilds, mothers' unions, women councils, or Catholic women associations can effectively initiate girls into womanhood, a practice already observed in many churches. It is essential for clergy to allocate funds for such programs, ensuring that parents are not burdened with the costs.

On an inter-faith level, Muslim brethren should collaborate with their Christian counterparts to affirm that FGM is not sanctioned by the Quran. There is also a need to adopt alternative rites of passage for girls. While some traditions (hadith) or advisory statements may justify the practice as *makruma* (meritorious or noble deed), such beliefs only exacerbate the situation. Men must take responsibility and acknowledge that endorsing the mutilation of women's body parts does not honor God.

Faith-based organizations must unite and develop theological reflections to raise awareness among their followers and correct the longstanding misrepresentation of religious or traditional cultural norms that harm women physically and mentally. These practices undermine their

ability to fulfill their roles as mothers, wives, and fully realized individuals, as intended by God.

Turning our attention closer to home, churches in regions like Kisii, Meru, Kuria, Nandi, Keiyo Marakwet, and central Kenya, where FGM persists in subtle ways, must unequivocally denounce the practice. Similarly, in countries outside Kenya such as Eritrea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Guinea, and Ivory Coast, silence on FGM could be seen as tacit approval. It's time for everyone to stand up and effect necessary change!

In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he prohibits the forced circumcision of men as a condition for becoming Christians, a practice sanctioned in Judaism but without harm. This contrasts sharply with FGM, which profoundly impacts a woman's sexuality, raises serious medical concerns, and perpetuates child marriages, denying girls the chance to mature into womanhood. FGM severely affects the wellbeing of women and girls.

There is an urgent need for churches—whether Protestant, Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Seventh Day Adventist, Church Ministries, or individual evangelists—to actively work towards ending child, early, and forced marriages, closely linked with Female Genital Mutilation.

CHAPTER 17

Praise and Worship at PCEA ST. Andrew's Church, Nairobi

Before the introduction of praise and worship, Sunday services in a PCEA congregation usually began with a scripture verse relevant to the theme of the sermon. The verse is usually given by the preacher of the day but read by the service –leader. The service began with a hymn and short prayers that sought guidance from the Holy Spirit, emphasizing attentiveness. Today, praise and worship involves singing choruses and gospel songs that proclaim the Good News, accompanied by bodily movements such as swaying from side to side, clapping hands, occasional shouts of "Amen" and "Hallelujah," and spontaneous prayers by the praise team leader.

It is also common for the same leader to invite the congregation to present themselves individually to God in prayer. Rarely would you hear audible prayers from individuals; instead, prayers are mainly silent. Some inhibitions persist due to the non-Pentecostal nature of the mission and established church traditions. Traditions, in general, are good as they form the foundation of sound teaching amidst the wave of prosperity gospel. However, traditions that inhibit a biblically sound worship experience require re-examination.

After the praise music session, prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession by the service leader take place. The leader then invites the congregation to join in reciting the Lord's Prayer.

The introduction of praise and worship in PCEA worship services gained momentum, as earlier noted, during the tenure of a former moderator of the General Assembly (GA), 2003-2009. Earlier, in 1985, Moderator George Wanjau of the General Assembly advocated for the youth in PCEA to adopt praise and worship in their services. When Wanjau joined PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi in 1997/98, praise and worship was introduced in the First Service, incorporating University of Nairobi students who worshipped at the church. PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi borders the University on two sides – halls of residence to the west and the main campus to the northwest – making it fitting for the young people to adopt contemporary musical praise. Praise and worship was then earnestly introduced.³⁷³

On a broader scale, during the first General Administrative Committee (GCA) of the seventeenth General Assembly held from 13th to 18th April, 2004 in Kihumbuini Presbytery, it was advised that leaping,

³⁷³ Rev. Wanjau belongs to the charismatic East African revival of the late Forties and the fifties. He therefore had the knack to allow spontaneity in worshipping and praising God. Tukutendeza Yesu – the anthem of the charismatic East African Revivals is always sung unreservedly by the wadugu (brethren). Rev. Dr. George Wanjau personal telephone conversation with Keiru on March 1, 2012.

clapping, and jumping, as seen in the Davidic way of praising and singing (2 Sam. 6:16-23; 1 Chr. 15:29), should be adopted as tools of evangelism—proclaiming and persuading people to accept the Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. The use of musical instruments in praise and worship was also recommended. Additionally, the importance of Keshas (night-prayer vigils), individual devotions, and lively worship "in spirit and in truth" were emphasized. These aspects were deemed necessary to revitalize evangelism and mission tools that were not emphasized at the founding of PCEA by the Scottish missionaries.

By the 19th General Assembly, toward the end of Githii's tenure as moderator of the GA, some of the changes implemented in PCEA since 2004 came under scrutiny. The primary concern was that issues such as praise and worship had not undergone the required scrutiny through the church process, as mandated by the Barrier Act. This act stipulates that any major changes in doctrine must be subjected to scrutiny by the General Administrative Committee and the Presbyteries before adoption.³⁷⁴

At PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, where the author conducted their study, the reception of changes varied between younger and older congregants. In the first service (8:00 am – 9:30 am), the praise session is not a brief affair. It is led by the Joyful Sounds worship team

³⁷⁴ PCEA, *Practice and Procedure Manual*, second Edition (Nairobi: Publishing Solutions, 1998), 415.

and is primarily attended by youth and young families. Dancing and bodily movements are prominent, with the praise session often extending beyond half an hour.

In the second service (9:00 am – 10:30 am), praise and worship are led by The New Song, another praise team that uses the keyboard exclusively, unlike Joyful Sounds, which incorporates keyboard, drums, guitars, and occasionally the flute and trumpet. Similar to the first service, gospel songs are sung, sometimes mixed with popular hymns picking one or two stanzas or more.

During the third service, the praise and worship segment is led by the Church Choir, distinguished by their blue robes. They typically accompany themselves with the organ and sing short choruses, focusing primarily on hymns from the hymn books. When leading the singing at the altar table, they ceremoniously march down the aisle to their station at the back of the church. At PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, the praise and worship segment is listed in the Sunday bulletin as "praise in worship."³⁷⁵ In the author's view, this is no surprising because worship goes beyond singing. One can theologically experience or see praise within the essence of worship. It is also pertinent to praise (sing) and simultaneously adore (worship) God. Theologically, therefore, singing would in essence be substantially a worship experience if there is no "show spirit" and thus devoid of hedonism, which is actually banal in regard to

³⁷⁵ PCEA, St. Andrew's Church, Nairobi, Sunday Bulletin of 03/07/2011.

the praise of God. Praise and worship of God is well spelt out in the Scripture. Whatever forces persuaded the General Assembly to adopt choruses (Gospel songs) from a purely “hymns only” mode of praise; Biblically, the adoption is in line with the Word! This will be elaborated fully in the next chapter.

Reference to the Old Testament continues to inform the discussion on today’s use of musical instruments. It has already been explained how understanding the Old Testament beliefs and practices yields into the New testament dispensation as the church of Christ manifests Gospel witness to humanity.³⁷⁶ In the Old Testament, Jews once sang and danced in praise of God to accompaniment of timbrel and Psaltery.³⁷⁷ The second Temple had brass ensembles and organ, but when Romans destroyed it, worship became less elaborate.³⁷⁸ Along with the instruments, human voice lifted up in singing was regarded as more important, as it was capable of offering lyrics of the heart in praising and thanksgiving to God.³⁷⁹ Over and over again, the Psalmist indicates his intention to sing to the Lord or to praise God with songs,

³⁷⁶ PCEA Resolutions of the 17th and 18th General Assembly (Nairobi: Office of the General Assembly 2007), 39.

³⁷⁷ Calving Johnson, *Discipling Music Ministry*, Twenty-First Century (Directions Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Pub.Inc 2002) 16-17

³⁷⁸ Http: [www, Christian faith.com/for Jesus/praise and worship](http://www.Christianfaith.com/forJesus/praiseandworship), accessed on March 30, 2010).

³⁷⁹ *The Topical Study Bible* (NLT), (Chicago: Illinois 1996), 464.

and inviting the whole creation to praise the Lord.³⁸⁰ This invitation serves as a balm or tonic, compelling missionary-established churches to adopt praise and worship practices akin to those in Pentecostal churches.

While not as pervasive as in previous years, there remains an undercurrent of opposition to the adoption of praise and worship. When such situations persist, it is prudent for the church to conduct research on the members' attitudes toward new choral praise. Godly blessings may struggle to manifest in a church that stands ambivalent towards modes of praise. This problem may stem from a misunderstanding of what worship of God truly entails. It could also arise from a lack of knowledge about the comprehensive elements of worship. Furthermore, expressions such as shouting and dancing may be viewed as unscriptural, despite their biblical basis as explained in a previous chapter. However, congregants might not be aware of their scriptural authenticity.

Nevertheless, for close to a decade and a half (as of 2017), the aspect of praise and worship has proceeded without significant upheaval to church life. Whatever challenges gospel and choral music may encounter, choral praise shows promise in the worship life of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, as well as in other PCEA congregations. As of 2017, the PCEA Practice and Procedure Manual and the Church Service Book have not

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

been revised to formally include choral music, despite its adoption.

The importance of studying the acceptance or rejection of new phenomena among members cannot be overstated. Scientific social research equips any church with the necessary tools for worship, evangelism, and fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). As praise and worship continue to gain acceptance in mainline churches, they have proven instrumental in fostering church growth due to their revitalizing effect on worship. Despite the appeal of choral and gospel music, hymns are unlikely to be abandoned. Hymnody typically lacks vibrancy because its beats and melodies align well with pianos and organs, instruments prevalent in Euro-American churches, which constitute a major segment of global Christian assemblies.

It is remarkable how hymn composers condense theological themes or summarize extensive biblical texts into simple, beautiful lines that not only glorify God but also stir the mind and soul, arousing religious affections in believers. For instance, the hymn "Let us with gladsome mind praise the Lord for He is kind." (found in Golden Bells No. 24 or No. 136, depending on the edition) is based on Psalm 136, which comprises twenty-six verses. This hymn condenses the entire Psalm into six stanzas in English and seven stanzas in the Kikuyu Hymn Book (No. 7 or No. 10, depending on the edition). When congregations sing this hymn and each worshipper surrenders their intellect to God in truth, blessings

inevitably overflow upon the believer in a profound way. Sacred music uplifts the soul, offering believers blessed and joyful moments with God.

During congregational singing, minds sometimes wander, preventing holy emotions or religious affections from reaching the intense pitch often found in short songs or choruses that swiftly express faith or affirmations, common in gospel and praise songs. Gospel songs frequently employ first-person pronouns ("I", "me") to affirm personal beliefs in Christ, bolstering individual faith. Such self-affirmation empowers believers to share the joy that flows from within. It is a reminder that one cannot share spiritual blessings they do not possess; what is hidden in the heart emerges from the mouth.

In prose form, the hymn "Let us with a Gladsome Mind," previously mentioned, extols God's kindness, praises His creative genius, glorifies His sustaining power, and emphasizes His care amidst human suffering in this fallen world. These attributes provide ample reason to praise and worship God. Psalm 136 consistently enriches congregational recitals, serving as a spiritually enriching piece of Scripture. Practically speaking, most hymns and gospel songs are scripture-based. Those who favor hymns and those who find spiritual exhilaration in praise and worship songs should mutually appreciate each other as members of the Church of Christ.

Age and spiritual upbringing through missionary efforts, along with the products of mission churches, have shaped preferences in music. Those accustomed to non-

digital age musical styles are expected to worship God with awe and reverence, avoiding ageism where the young may disregard the aged, and elders may view youth as disrupting orderly worship. Grace from Jesus Christ, the author of grace, can reconcile these generational differences. In the African context, theological reflections on hymnody include embracing traditional musical heritage with its drums, African tunes, lyrics, melodies, and rhythms, fostering vibrancy and bodily movement. However, any reforms in church practices should align with Biblical support from both the Old Testament and New Testament. Biblical examples such as King Asa's reforms (2 Chronicles 15) and the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) demonstrate God-directed revivals that justify the adaptation of worship practices. King Asa heeded God's message (2 Chronicles 15:8), and Pentecostal endowments were inclusive to all people. Similarly, contemporary musical genres common in praise and worship should find acceptance among congregants naturally.

PCEA churches, whether urban or rural, contend with a growing membership in the Global South, increasingly influenced by Pentecostalism, neo-Pentecostalism, and other new religious movements. Mainline churches are encouraged to revisit and rectify theological positions lacking integrated biblical support to accommodate diverse worship expressions. In the case of *Glossolalia* it should not be a precondition for Christian expression of joy in praise and worship. Joyful living is

biblically expected as in Deuteronomy 16. 15b and in Ephesians 4:4 which reads, “Your joy shall be complete and rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice respectively.”

It is foolhardy to assume that majority of the members in PCEA or any other mainline Church had not welcomed adoption of praise and worship in their congregations. What is observable in the PCEA is largely applicable to the Anglican Church of Kenya and even to the Roman Catholic Church which is adopting praise and worship in Church worship services, but the older members do not take dancing as necessary in worship.³⁸¹ Yet, to the youth this is contemporary and not against what the Bible teaches regarding praising and worshipping God.

³⁸¹ Source: Rev. John K. Kinyua (Anglican priest) and Mrs. Joy Nyambura Simiyu and Mrs. Evelyn Nyaguthii Mwangi (both Roman Catholic Members) – Telephone interview on April 1, 2012).

CHAPTER 18

Research Methods used on Praise and Worship. A Survey at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi

In the preface, it is stated that this book was born out of a research that was done about Praise and Worship in the PCEA, the focus being PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, as partial fulfillment of a master of Theology degree in African Christianity. African Christianity is an integral part of the universal church of Christ. African Christianity puts into cognizance Jesus High Priestly prayer (John 17).

Jesus prayed for the unity of all believers, which in the Christian worldview should not be perceived as a monolithic structure. From the New Testament and Apostolic Church onward, cultural values and worldviews of various peoples have proven invaluable in embracing the Gospel message of repentance, forgiveness, and grace, offering hope for abundant life on earth and eternal life.

Throughout history, positive cultural values have facilitated the integration of biblical revelation among diverse peoples worldwide. Early church councils such as those in Jerusalem (Acts 15), Nicaea (325 AD), and Chalcedon (451 AD) affirmed the importance of native value systems and worldviews. The papacy's influence and the split between Western and Eastern church

traditions in 1054 underscored the failure of imposing one group's ideas on others. These events, rooted in doctrinal disputes and revival movements, highlight the resistance to conformity during the Dark Ages. Many believers faced persecution, torture, and death for challenging established theological doctrines and seeking authority from the Word of God. They emulated earlier heroes of faith like Stephen, Peter, John, James, and Paul, who also endured persecution for their steadfast commitment to Jesus' teachings and life.

In the 15th century, John Huss was executed in what is now Czech Republic and Slovakia while praying through Psalms 31 and 51, exemplifying the steadfastness and sacrifice of early reformers in defense of their faith.³⁸² John was then a priest in what was until recent years Czechoslovakia. The sin for which he died was advocating for religious freedom and the right of individuals to have a personal relationship with God. He opposed religious leaders who did not live according to Christ's teachings and objected to the death penalty for those who disagreed with the established Church's doctrines.³⁸³

During the Medieval Period and the beginning of modern times, the church through the Inquisition, which was an ecclesiastical court, punished many Christians for alleged heresy. For example, Pope Innocent III had declared that, "Anyone who attempts to constitute a

³⁸² Toby Makeehan, *Jesus Freaks*, 233

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 232.

personal view of God which conflicts with church dogma must be burned without mercy.”³⁸⁴

In *The Dark Side of Christian History*, Helen Ellerbe describes how the same men who acted as both prosecutors and judges decided the sentences for heresy. Upon arrival in heresy-ridden districts, the inquisitor allowed a 40-day period for recantation of faith. In short, there was a time when church leadership resorted to murder in the name of defending church doctrines. The church had become an enemy to its own members. This introductory chapter's excerpt serves as a cautionary note to the broader church as praise and worship takes root in mainstream churches. While the church may be sincere about combating perceived false doctrines, we should be cautious not to repeat historical mistakes without systematic biblical evidence. Thanks to the Reformation, some order was brought to theological and spiritual formations. The Protestant Reformation helped counterbalance doctrinal pitfalls within the universal church. The 1453 schism between the Eastern and Western wings of the Church also contributed to a balance in doctrinal formulations.

In this chapter, the methodology for data collection and analysis is explained. A qualitative approach was used. The meanings and interpretations that people attribute to praise and worship fall under the

³⁸⁴ The Horrors of the church and its Holy Inquisition – <http://www.bibliotecapiedades.net/vatican29.htm#TheChurch>).

qualitative approach because multiple perspectives of the same reality exist.³⁸⁵ Therefore, the data gathered from various categories of participants proved to be diverse and rich, enabling sound conclusions and valid recommendations. The research methods and design used are detailed, including the categories of participants involved. The study population, samples, and sampling methods, along with the reasons for their selection, are thoroughly explained. The data collection and analysis plan implemented are also outlined. Ethical considerations, essential for research integrity, were carefully addressed.

A qualitative research method was chosen because it is best suited for data that cannot be easily quantified.³⁸⁶ Qualitative research has an interpretive character aimed at discovering the meanings that events have for the individuals who experience them.³⁸⁷ The qualitative phenomenon studied in this research is the adoption of praise and worship. The research aimed to explore people's understanding and positions on praise and worship activities, recording the outcomes for interpretation. The flexible design allowed the author to employ participant observation for triangulation purposes. Additionally, questionnaires were distributed to clergy,

³⁸⁵ Abel Mugenda Gitau, *Social Science Research: Theory and Principles; Applied Research and Technology*, (Nairobi: Kenya, 2008), 45-46.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 53

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 99

elders, and group leaders as a take-away exercise, accommodating characteristics such as freedom and presenting multiple realities. Acting as the data collection instrument, the researcher also gathered oral comments from two ministers and one elder who volunteered their perspectives during the questionnaire return.

The research strategy involved conducting a survey within a single PCEA parish. According to Colin Robson, a case study involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence. Robson emphasizes that studying individual cases has historically contributed to understanding human phenomena. Bruce Berg corroborates Robson's perspective by noting that a single case study can provide insights applicable to similar groups and events. Therefore, the research findings are likely to be broadly applicable within PCEA, and their generalizability to other mainline churches is probable. The researcher concurs with Damaris Selina's observation that "other mainline Protestant churches now hold youth services early on Sundays where youth can sing, dance, and worship in a Pentecostal/charismatic style, aiming to retain youth who might otherwise gravitate toward Pentecostal and Charismatic churches."³⁸⁸

³⁸⁸ Damaris Seleina Parsitau – Gospel music as a popular culture in the spiritual lives of Kenyan Pentecostal/charismatic Christians”, *Journal of Religion and popular culture* “vol. 14 (Fall 2006), 11.

In conducting the survey on the phenomenon of praise and worship at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, the study focused on the congregation as the population of interest. The church has approximately 3000 members attending its four main services on Sundays. The target population consisted of congregants, specifically the laity. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to clergy, group leaders, and elders as outlined earlier.

Among the clergy, the respondents included four full-time parish ministers, two associate ministers, and two retired ministers who had previously served in the parish. Ten elders out of a total of twenty-eight were also sampled to represent the Kirk Session. Additionally, fifteen leaders from five main church groups participated as respondents.

Questionnaires were distributed as follows: fifty in the First Service, where average attendance is 400; twenty-five in the Swift Service, with an average attendance of 100; and one hundred each in the Second and Third services, where attendance averages 1000 each. Sixteen trained assistants facilitated the distribution on a random basis, with each assistant handling up to seven respondents.

In total, 308 questionnaires were distributed, including those to ministers, elders, and group leaders. The sampling methods adhered to recognized research criteria. According to Robson, in flexible designs such as this, sample sizes are challenging to specify precisely, but

the aim is to continue data collection until reaching "saturation," where further data collection would contribute little or nothing new to the insights already gained.³⁸⁹ He affirms that if the nature of the topic is obvious and clear, fewer participants were needed.³⁹⁰ He advises that if participants find it difficult to talk about the topic one needed more people so as to accumulate sufficient data.³⁹¹ The researcher followed these principles while conducting the survey on praise and worship at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, utilizing purposive and random sampling methods. Purposive sampling was employed for clergy, group leaders, and elders, while random sampling was overseen by fifteen trained research assistants and their coordinator.

The questionnaire was chosen as the research instrument due to its appropriateness in collecting qualitative data on opinions and attitudes, which are essential for understanding worship practices. The questions were designed to explore respondents' understanding of worship, their knowledge of worship elements beyond praise, and their participation in activities such as dancing and singing loudly during worship.

Questionnaire sets were distributed across the four main services: 50 in the First Service, 25 in the SWIFT Service, and 100 each in the Second and Third services,

³⁸⁹ Robson, *Real World Research*, 198

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 198

³⁹¹ Ibid.

reflecting their respective attendance levels. Additionally, 15 questionnaires were issued to group leaders, 10 to elders, and 8 to ministers.

The response rate was robust: all 25 questionnaires from the SWIFT Service, all 50 from the First Service, 84 out of 100 from the Second Service, and 93 out of 100 from the Third Service were completed and returned. All 10 questionnaires distributed to elders and all 8 to ministers were also completed, along with 13 out of 15 issued to group leaders. In total, 283 completed questionnaires were received back out of the 308 distributed.

These responses provided comprehensive insights into the congregation's perspectives and attitudes towards praise and worship, focusing on choruses and songs as integral elements. The analysis of these responses is detailed in the subsequent chapter, presenting a clear understanding of praise and worship at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi.

Participant observation was also utilized to assess and validate data obtained through the questionnaire survey method. This observation was conducted across all services over a two-month period, ensuring careful avoidance of biases. The focus of observation included body movements such as raising hands, dancing, and uttering words like Amen and Hallelujah. An observation sheet was specifically designed to capture noteworthy praise gestures and verbatim statements.

Data analysis was centered on understanding the congregation's perception of worship, their comprehension of worship elements, and their active participation in activities considered integral to praise and worship. Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS), version 17.0, was employed for data analysis after thorough cleaning and coding. SPSS was chosen for its flexibility and capability in generating comprehensive explanations from the findings. It is adept at handling a wide range of statistical procedures designed for social sciences, ensuring accurate description, interpretation, and generalization of data characteristics from the study. Summary tables were generated and used to interpret and discuss the processed data.

Based on the analysis, conclusions and recommendations beneficial to parish leadership and members were formulated. These findings are expected to extend beyond the parish to other PCEA churches and mainline churches where praise and worship music genres are embraced.

Ethical considerations were paramount due to the study's focus on participants actively engaging in the praise and worship phenomenon within PCEA. The researcher ensured the integrity of data production throughout the study. Research objectives were clearly explained to all participants, with a written undertaking included in the questionnaire. Proper protocol was followed to gain access to conduct the research in the

parish, including obtaining a letter from the parish Moderator of the Kirk Session.

In the SWIFT and First Services, the Youth Director introduced the researcher and assured participants of the study's noble intentions (refer to Appendix 11 for current youth ministry structure - 2024). In the other services, the Session Clerk announced the researcher's presence and requested randomly chosen individuals to complete and return the questionnaires to the research assistants. Informed consent was obtained to eliminate suspicions, ensuring no inappropriate inducements were used to coerce participants. Confidentiality was strictly maintained for all information received. Gender indicators were anonymized using dual notations (he/she) to protect participants' identities, facilitating the sharing of study outcomes for general use without compromising personal or group identifiable data.

MacBurney highly recommends that "the concern of the subject continues after the data is collected." Participants in psychological and social studies have the right to expect that their data will never be publicly disclosed in a way that could identify them unless they explicitly agree to such publication. In this study, no respondent was required to provide their name. As mentioned earlier, where revealing gender could potentially identify participants, generic pronouns were used to protect anonymity, especially given the gender imbalance among ministers.

In summary, this research surveyed the adoption of Pentecostal-style praise and worship within PCEA, a church rooted in the Theology of Protestant Reformation. This theology emphasizes salvation by Grace through faith and the illumination of the Word of God by the Holy Spirit for Christian maturation. Pentecostalism, now influencing mainline churches in Africa for over a century, particularly impacts practices of praise and worship. The study provided a comprehensive understanding of Christian worship at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi based on gathered data. The qualitative paradigm and outlined methodology facilitated an in-depth exploration of praise and worship, focusing on music typical in Pentecostal-style worship, aiming at worship renewal.

CHAPTER 19

Praise and Worship Research Findings at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi (April 2012)

Presentation and discussions in the context of a book is likely to reach a larger readership.

Otherwise, in the form of a research document, circulation was limited to a copy for the clergy, a copy for the youth director, copies for two elders, and an electronic copy for a senior retired deacon. This is why research findings have been included as a chapter in this book.

In this chapter, research findings are reported in sufficient detail. The findings were categorized into three areas. The first one is on the congregants' understanding of worship at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi as per objective one of the study. The second was that of the congregants' understanding of elements of worship in relation to objective number two. The third is in regard to the members' attitude toward praise and worship activities such as dancing and shouting.

The analysis of the congregants' understanding of worship yielded the following results: In total, 308 questionnaires were issued to the congregants, out of which 283 were completed and returned. From the nine parameters in Table 1 below, it was observed that the

congregants' understanding of worship was good. Those in agreement far outweighed those who were not sure or disagreed in all nine areas where the questionnaire sought the congregants' understanding of worship. Parameter one on human understanding of worship of God through His initiative, which should result in obedience, had 268 (95%) of respondents in agreement. It was followed by worship as initiated by God with 261 (92%) in agreement. Except for the importance of kneeling in worship, all the other propositions had agreement rates between 175 and 250 (60% and 88%) out of the 283 respondents who completed and returned the questionnaire. Kneeling was considered important by 135 (48%) respondents, while 131 (46%) were unsure, and 17 (6%) considered it unimportant. This shows that there is a need for the church to address the area of reverential acts in worship, such as bowing and kneeling, fasting, covenant renewal calls, and expected decorum.

In general, however, it was evident that the congregants understood what worship entailed. Nevertheless, the weak areas in reverential acts require attention through sermons or any other appropriate forum. Reverential acts and expected decorum are common in day-to-day affairs of life, such as in courts of law or disciplined forces. So, if this language is understood and practiced in human affairs, what about before God?

Table 1: congregants' Understanding of Worship

Variable	In agreement		Not sure		In disagreement		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Worship is a response to God's revelation about Himself resulting in obedience	268	95	12	4	3	1	283	100
2. Call to worship by a worship service leader is commanded in the Bible.	182	64	72	26	29	10	283	100
3. The hosts of heaven (angels) worship God formally.	193	68	56	20	34	12	283	100
4. Reverential acts such as bowing and kneeling are elements of worship.	250	88	22	8	11	4	283	100
5. Worship is something God initiated.	261	92	14	5	8	3	283	100
6. All worship gestures and mannerisms must be informed (grounded) in the Bible.	175	62	56	20	52	18	283	100
7. Is it important to kneel when worshipping?	135	48	131	46	17	6	283	100
8. Silence (being still or meditational) is an important element of worship.	203	72	60	21	20	7	283	100
9. In St. Andrew's Church Services, praise in worship and praise and worship are interchangeably used.	186	65	71	25	26	10	283	100

From scripture, it is clear that worship is a response to God's revelation about Himself, and without God revealing Himself, we cannot know Him. God has done this through creation, as seen in the Old Testament, culminating in the Incarnation and salvation in Jesus Christ through His death, resurrection, and ascension into glory. The Hebrew words that describe worship convey notions of prostration and reverential fear (not terror) of God. Even the Greek word *Latreia* denotes prostrating before God in awe and wonder.

Of particular significance in this cluster of parameters is that despite the official use of "praise in worship" by the PCEA instead of "praise and worship," to the congregants, "praise and worship" and "praise in worship" meant one and the same thing. One hundred eighty-six (65%) stated so, while 71 (25%) were not sure. Only twenty-six (10%) disagreed.

This survey on praise and worship in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi also investigated the congregation's understanding of other elements of worship. Table 2 below shows the results of this investigation.

Upon reviewing this table, it was noted that the respondents had a good understanding of the elements of worship. Two hundred fifty (88%) agreed that reading Scripture is an element of worship, and 241 (85%) agreed that preaching is as well. Baptism and the Lord's Supper as acts of worship were acknowledged by 242 (86%) of the total 283 respondents, followed by Holy Communion

and baptism, listening to the word of God, and Benediction, all with high ratings of over 85%. These elements are noted as New Testament practices in Chapter 11.

Admitting and readmitting members to the church was considered an element of worship by 149 (53%) of the respondents. Eighty-seven (31%) were not sure, while 47 (16%) did not consider these acts as elements of worship. The lowest rating was on speaking in tongues as an obligatory element of worship, with only 57 (20.14%) in agreement. This demonstrates their knowledge of the gift of tongues. However, there is reason to look into the Pauline theology on *glossolalia*, as the Bible does not rule it out except that not all believers have the gift of the tongues. However, Apostle Paul includes tongues as one of many manifestations of gifts of the Holy Spirit. Eighty-one (29%) of the respondents were not sure about *glossolalia*. It is essential that the Church teaches the members about the Pentecostal phenomenon as in the Pauline Theology in 1 Corinthians Chapters 12 and 13. The Pentecostal phenomenon as in Acts chapter 2 seems to have been universally experienced. Each person experienced the happenings in their own language during the Pentecost.

In an earlier chapter, it was noted that among other characteristics, choruses and short songs in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi are typically fast-paced. There is usually uninhibited singing and dancing accompanied by glossolalia, more often than not. In the Presbyterian

Church of East Africa (PCEA), the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian differs from that in Pentecostal Churches. As observed in Table 3, only 18 (6.4%) respondents said they had ever witnessed speaking or singing in tongues during praise and worship at the church. Those who had never witnessed it were 236 (83.4%), while 29 (10%) were unsure. Although the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues are not emphasized much in the PCEA, there is an opportunity for clergy to teach the congregation that speaking in tongues is biblical. The Bible indicates that different people are endowed with different gifts. Therefore, those few who may have experienced the gift of speaking in tongues within PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi need to be given spiritual space to exercise that gift. Indeed, the Pentecostal experience should not be monopolized by Pentecostalism as a denomination.

Table 2. Congregants' Understanding on Elements of Worship

Variable	In agreement		Not sure	In disagreement			Totals	
	No	%		%	No	%	No	%
1. Reading scripture is an element of worship	250	88	27	10	6	2	283	100
2. Preaching is an element of worship	241	85	33	12	9	3	283	100
3. Listening to the word of God	240	85	33	12	10	3	283	100

constitutes worship								
4. Speaking in tongues is an obligatory element of worship	57	20	81	29	14 5	51	283	100
5. Falling face down in prayer and fasting are biblical elements of worship	190	67	56	20	37	13	283	100
6. Celebrating sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are elements of worship.	242	86	36	13	5	1	283	100
7. Admitting and readmitting members into the church are elements of worship	149	53	87	31	47	16	283	100
8. Religious oaths and vows are important elements of worship of God.	189	67	68	24	26	9	283	100
9. Benediction or Blessings at the end of a service is an element of worship.	239	85	39	14	5	1	283	100
10. Leaping, clapping, jumping and lively worship are good tools for evangelism and	201	71	53	19	29	10	283	100

mission for the PCEA.								
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The analysis of the Congregants’ Attitude on Praise and Worship Activities is presented as follows:

It has been stated time and again that the praise and worship phenomenon incorporates speaking in tongues. All visible actions in singing, such as leaping, jumping, and shouting, are driven by glossolalia. From Table 3 below, it was observed that 180 (64%) of the respondents always clapped during singing in praise and worship, while 54 (19%) did so half the time. Eighty-seven (31%) of the respondents indicated they always leaped or jumped during praise and worship. However, 132 (47%) did not approve of this activity during praise and worship. Dancing during praise and worship was done by 131 (47%) of the respondents. Sixty-six respondents (23%) did not dance or were unsure about its appropriateness, while 86 respondents (31%) had never done so during praise and worship. Lifting hands in praise was done by 110 (39%) out of the total frequency of 283. Eighty-five respondents (30%) lifted hands sometimes or were uncertain about its necessity, while 88 respondents (31%) did not raise hands during praise and worship in PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi; only 18 (6%) of the respondents stated that they had done so. Two hundred and thirty-six respondents (83%) out of the total frequency of 283 had not witnessed this Pentecostal phenomenon.

Regarding hypothesis one, 242 (86%) of respondents out of 283 stated that the introduction of praise and worship to retain youth in the Church was a noble idea. When it came to how often one danced, 131 respondents always danced, while lifting hands in praise registered 110 respondents. In the area of jumping and leaping while praising God, only 87 respondents stated that they do so. This shows that when it came to actual activities, there was a lesser degree of support compared to the percentage shown regarding the approval of the introduction of praise and worship in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi.

Table 3. Congregants' Attitude towards Praise Activities

Variable	In agreement		Not sure		In disagreement		Totals	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. How often do you clap your hands during praise and worship?	180	63.6	54	19.1	49	17.3	283	100
2. How often do you jump and leap while praising God?	87	31	64	22	132	47	283	100
3. How often do you sing loudly or shout during praise?	139	49	57	20	87	31	283	100
4. How often do you dance in	131	46	66	23	86	31	283	100

praise and worship?								
5. How often do you lift hands during praise?	110	39	85	30	88	31	283	100
6. How often do you witness speaking or singing tongues during praise and worship St. Andrew's?	18	6	29	10	236	84	283	100
7. Praise in worship (praise and worship) is a new liturgical component being adopted in PCEA	120	42	96	34	67	24	283	100
8. It is biblical to use variety of instruments in praise and worship in all services in the parish.	213	75	41	15	29	10	283	100
9. Sacred dance is said to be therapeutic as it energizes the body and the soul.	181	64	83	29	19	7	283	100
10. Praise and worship movement has enhanced Christian	238	84	33	12	12	4	283	100

music variety in the parish.								
11. African culture melody and rhythm is biblically acceptable for praising God.	209	74	60	21	14	5	283	100
12. Introduction of praise and worship by the PCEA General Assembly to retain the youth in the church is a noble idea.	242	86	26	9	15	5	283	100

It has been shown that leaping, jumping, shouting, and dancing in praise of God have biblical backing. However, the congregants might not have been aware of it. Upon analyzing the responses related to this hypothesis, the results showed that from Table 2, 201 (72%) respondents approved of this manner of worship. They agreed that it was good for evangelism and mission in the PCEA. However, as observed from actual participation in these activities, the figures varied across different activities. Parameter 12 in Table 3 above showed that 242 (86%) agreed that the General Assembly's introduction of Praise in Worship to retain youth in the Church was a noble idea. Yet, participation in the activities related to praise and worship was relatively low

compared to the high acceptance rating of their usefulness in retaining youth in the Church. The church needs to teach the congregants about these activities in relation to the Bible and their relevance to African culture, including music beats, melody, and rhythms.

Lawhead, Callahan, King, Webber, and Corbitt have ardently advocated for the inclusion of African music lyrics and tempo in church music. This would make singing participatory, emotional, festive, and interactive. Seventy-four percent of the respondents affirmed the use of African musical heritage in this context.

Regarding the use of a variety of musical instruments in all services, this was approved by 213 (75%) of the respondents. Musical instruments are sanctioned in the Bible, as clearly pronounced in the Psalms. Throughout church history, musical instruments have been banned and reintroduced at different periods of time. As to whether sacred dance was therapeutic, 181 (64%) agreed it was. Twenty-nine percent of respondents were unsure about it, while 7% disagreed with the idea of energizing the body and soul through sacred dance.

Two points came out strongly in the assessment of the congregation's attitude to praise and worship which contradicts the praxis as it is in the PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, as observed in the areas of jumping, lifting hands, or dancing. The first point is that two hundred thirty-eight respondents (84%) indicated that praise and worship enhanced Christian music variety in the parish. The second point was that two hundred and

nine respondents (74%) agreed that African culture, melody, and rhythm were biblically acceptable in praising God. From the Bible and the literature review, lifting of hands, shouting in praise, and jumping have biblical backing. African culture also embodies these characteristics that inject merriment into singing and dancing in praise of God. Christ did not come to abolish culture but to perfect the imperfections within it, in line with the supreme love of God and of fellow human beings. This notion has prominently stuck in various sections of this book.

There is affirmation that the youth were attracted by contemporary culture. In Kenya, Gospel music witnessed in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches was a big magnet drawing the youth. It has already been noted that the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s in the United States injected vibrancy into church music as some hippies embraced Christianity and introduced hip-hop beats into church music. The Jesus Movement, or “Jesus Freaks,” was a movement in the late 1960s and 1970s of former hippies, drug addicts, occult and eastern religion practitioners, rock and roll musicians who became born-again. Their outreach ministries were in coffee houses and inner cities. The new young converts were often disparaged as “Jesus Freaks” by non-Christian hippies. The hippie culture of the 1960s questioned authority and traditional values and later made inroads into the mainstream and spawned a cultural revolution that still resonates in clothing, music, and lifestyle in

general. It has also been observed that Lawhead, a proponent of praise and worship, states that incorporating rock 'n' roll beats was good for reaching the unchurched. Of special significance was parameter number 10 in Table 2, whereby (72%) of the respondents accepted that leaping, clapping, and lively worship were good for evangelism and mission for the PCEA, but again, only 31% ever jumped or leaped during praise and worship. As stated severally in the book, what one believes in should translate into action.

For three months, beginning February through April 2012, the author undertook participant observation to see how congregants participated in choral praising in all four main services on diverse dates. An observation schedule checking on various elements of praise activities was recorded in a notebook.

A special opportunity came about during the 20th General Assembly. For five days, from April 17th to 21st, 2012, the author observed the manner of praise during the devotion sessions. There were 1200 commissioners excluding guests and visitors to the Assembly. It was observed that in a congregation of over 1200 persons, only a handful matched the vibrancy expected by the worship leaders. Time and again, the leader would gesture to the commissioners, indicating that they should jump during the praise and worship session. The only exception was a session in which Maasai singers excited the crowd in the Plenary Hall with their usual Moran jumping style. Their coordinator danced and walked along the aisles waving a

Bible as they sang. The women singers systematically swayed their necks and shoulders, heavily adorned with traditional beaded necklaces. This performance prompted a member of the congregation, also from the Maasai community, to join the singers on stage. They had been slated for a single performance but ended up performing several. It was very exciting.

Observations in various services in many instances supported the results obtained from the respondents. Only about a third appeared to project activities that are usual in praise and worship in Pentecostal churches. In the Second and Third services, worship teams put in tremendous effort to enliven the congregants and make praising God glorious as indicated in Psalm 66:2, where people shout with joy all over the earth, making the praise glorious. Generally, worshippers in the front benches showed much enthusiastic response. One member of the pastoral team usually referred to these few front rows as the “Hallelujah” benches because this was where worshippers showed considerable action such as raising hands and dancing.

The author also observed the Woman’s Guild singers on two occasions. The Woman’s Guild singers met every Wednesday to sing Christian music and dance in folk styles. Great potential was evident towards adopting African tunes and rhythms in the worship in PCEA St. Andrew’s Church Nairobi. This group rarely participated in church services, but once a year, they performed and sang religious folk songs they usually win

while competing at the Presbytery level. However, in cases such as the receiving of a new minister in the Parish, they are given an opportunity to sing in the African way.

There are two music bands formed under the youth ministry known as the Kalesa Band and Terracotta Band. The leaders primarily perform outside the confines of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi but actively support Worship Teams in the youth ministry. Another important observation was that both the SWIFT and First Service had adopted an all-choral praise (praise and worship) mode of operating during Sunday services. There was hardly any hymn included in the praise session, which at times lasted for forty minutes instead of fifteen to twenty minutes as in the Second and Third services. Notwithstanding the length of the praise sessions, the excitement level fell far below the sound of the electric guitars, the modern drums, and the keyboard. The instrumental sounds appeared to drown out the human voices.

In view of the above general evaluation of praise and worship in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, it is vital to acknowledge that human emotions are part and parcel of the affective part of the human brain. Expression of faith on an intellectual level alone is not enough. Noble religious affections are part of Christian life. The actions normally exhibited in choral praise, namely, leaping, jumping, clapping, shouting, and dancing, are sanctioned in Scripture as has already been repeated several times earlier in this book. Indeed, the roots of some words in

Hebrew or Greek simply indicate so. For example, "yada" is associated with body action while "halal" denotes noise or shouting; this has been stated previously but is repeated here for emphasis (See Appendix 8 PCEA St. Andrew's – Music Week 22nd – 28th July, 2019 – Extracts from the Sunday Bulletin 28th July, 2019).

African music heritage is rich in dancing and merriment. A case in point is in Maasai culture within which PCEA St. Andrew's Nairobi has an outreach Ministry in Mashuru Division, Kajiado County. Whatever is good and honorable in Maasai culture, especially in the area of music, should be encouraged as the Gospel does not condemn culture. The Gospel only works on the imperfections that might contradict the Word of God. This point has been repeatedly emphasized in this book due to the misrepresentation that occurred during the Missionary Enterprise. Whether it was the case with Euro-American missionaries or what may happen today as the Church evangelizes in urban areas with people from varied cultures, or even in rural areas where the evangelist is likely to ignore the existing spirituality among the locals. In broad terms, Pauline wisdom of "the known to unknown God" serves as an evangelistic guide. A people may have knowledge of God but need instruction on God as revealed in the Holy Bible (Acts 17: 23-32).

NB: The current youth ministry is now structured as in Appendix 11

CHAPTER 20

Praise and Worship – The Way Forward

Having examined, discussed and analyzed praise and worship of God exhaustively, some conclusions and recommendations of the survey on the phenomenon at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi will be useful for the forward outlook. The future prospect of how praise and worship would be integrated in Sunday worship services would find the research outcome useful. The use of choruses at the beginning of worship services in mainline churches has found inroads in the traditional liturgies. Having participated in the research, the parish deserves to know the outcome. Those who participated through random sampling, and the targeted; clergy, elders, and group leaders statistically represented the congregation.

First among the hypotheses was that PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi members might not have embraced praise and worship as envisioned by the PCEA General Assembly. The second was that members might not have realized that lively worship involving leaping, clapping, jumping, and joyous shouting had biblical backing. The third one was that, since praise and worship phenomenon had been going on in the PCEA (St. Andrew's Church Nairobi being included), without much upheaval to the traditional liturgy there was a need to

enhance choral praise as it had the impetus of revitalizing worship of God. In revitalized worship, God is joyously admired, respected, valued, revered, honored, and appreciated in utter rejoicing in the direction indicated in Philippians 4:4. Holy religious affections are triggered. In this mood, words such as “Praise the Lord”, “Amen”, “Hallelujah”, “Thanks be to God”, “God is good”, “All the time God is good and that is his nature” become real. As these phrases punctuate musical praise, a lot of joy is visible among the worshippers. Praise of God is not limited to humans. All creation is called upon to praise God (Psalm 148). The big question then is that if inanimate are summoned to praise God, what about us human beings who share in his image and likeness? An overview comment on Psalm (Psalms 148: 4-14 aptly summarizes the whole scenario:

All creation is like a majestic symphony or a great choir composed of many harmonious parts that together offer up songs of praise to the Lord. Each part (independent, yet part of the whole) is caught up and carried along in swelling tides of praise. This is a picture of how a believer should praise God – individually, yet as part of the great choir of believers worldwide. Are you singing your part well in the worldwide choir of praise? ³⁹² *Range of Light* is a book subtitled the Sierra Nevada by Phil

³⁹² *Life Application Bible*, 997.

Schermeister and Noel Grove, National Geographic, is a must read in this respect!

This is a clear indication that hymns, choruses, praise songs, and spirituals all serve valuable purposes in worship and praise. African music orientation, Asiatic, Western, or Latin American music styles can all be used in the praise of God.

The purpose of the study was to find out the congregants' attitude towards the adoption of praise and worship in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi to enhance the worship of God. The analysis in Chapter 19 has shown that the congregation had a good understanding of the essence of worship. They also demonstrated wide knowledge of elements of worship. The respondents indicated their attitudes towards activities involved in praise and worship, such as dancing, lifting hands, and jumping. The research questions regarding the congregants' understanding of worship concepts, their attitudes towards actions like shouting and dancing in praise, and their knowledge of worship elements were adequately answered. From their responses, it was evident that the congregants had a good grasp of elements of worship beyond singing or praising God. These elements include reading Scripture, preaching, praying, giving offerings, celebrating the Lord's Supper and Baptism, altar calls, and benedictions/blessings.

Since its official introduction in 2003, praise and worship has become a part of the worship service in

PCEA, particularly at St. Andrew's Church Nairobi. Despite the challenges it faced in adoption, the phenomenon has good prospects in the parish's worship life. Its cardinal principles, such as its usefulness in retaining youth and its role in evangelism and mission work, were well embraced by the members. As widely stated in the general review, praise and worship songs are effective in evangelism and revival. Therefore, the praise session in worship should foster attraction and retention. Looking at the hypotheses, it was clear that the congregants had ample knowledge of the essence of worship, contrary to what the author postulated before the survey. The worshippers' knowledge of worship elements was generally robust. The survey revealed that the congregants agreed that praise and worship had enhanced music variety in the parish. They also overwhelmingly stated that praise and worship was effective in retaining youth in the church.

The survey also showed that the congregants agreed with the use of African tunes and rhythms as appropriate in praising and worshipping God. This aligns with King's assertion that through song, dance, and drama, Africans introduce additional ways to praise God to the Church. It also aligns with Corbitt, who praises Hispanic Worship for being participatory, emotionally festive, interactive, sensual, and moving. The survey also indicated that the introduction of praise and worship by the PCEA General Assembly in 2003 was well-received at St. Andrew's Church Nairobi. The fact that respondents

agreed (and in some cases disagreed) on areas such as sacred praise and dance being therapeutic for body and soul indicates the need to teach the value of music in evoking holy religious emotions. Other biblically supported gestures and expressions such as jumping and shouting also foster merriment in praise. This should inevitably take into account the elderly, physically challenged individuals, or any worshipper who may be indisposed due to illness. Those categorized as less enthusiastic in the background study about praise and worship could fall into any of these categories or may have valid reasons not widely known.

The following statements are conclusively written as findings derived from scientific social research tools and are therefore valid for practical application: Firstly, this study revealed a connection between attitudes towards praise and worship and what one perceives to be biblically supported. Secondly, where knowledge was lacking, for example, regarding the Bible's advocacy of dancing, leaping, and shouting, this could have contributed to less participation by the congregants.

Clapping and praising God were widely accepted among the majority of the respondents. This could be attributed to the fact that clapping resembles applause in many everyday events. However, activities such as jumping, leaping, shouting, raising hands, and dancing in praise were less popular. Many congregants may not have been aware that these actions are supported by the Bible. Therefore, it was deemed essential for the Pastoral Team

to initiate a program on the theology and practice of praise so that members could understand that some activities which appeared subdued during praise and worship have biblical support.

The respondents also affirmed the hypothesis that since praise and worship have been ongoing in PCEA (including St. Andrew's Church Nairobi) without significant upheaval, any deficiencies in using choruses—a sub-genre of Gospel music—and such forms of worship and adoration at the beginning of worship services have a promising future in the parish and in PCEA in general. The majority of congregants viewed praise and worship as good, aligning with the Scriptures.

This study also revealed that respondents approved of African tunes and rhythms as appropriate in worship. God reveals Himself to particular peoples in their own cultural settings. The Gospel did not come to abolish cultures but to perfect imperfections that do not conform to the Gospel of salvation obtained by Grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in this life and into Eternity. A recommendation was made that African tunes, beats, and rhythms could even be included in hymn singing.

While this study specifically focused on praise and worship, in order to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon, the concept of worship was comprehensively examined, including aspects beyond praise alone. The collected data eventually showed that the degree of congregational participation in praise and

worship activities was significantly less compared to what members perceived or considered valuable for the spiritual and numerical growth of PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi. It is hoped that other mainline churches may find useful insights from the recommendations articulated in the next section. Through segmented scrutiny of individual respondents among the laity, group leaders, elders, and ministers, the researcher noted theological gaps in specific areas regarding praising and worshipping God.

Based on the findings from data analysis and interpretation, the following five recommendations are articulated:

Firstly, there is a need to address Christian theology (Biblical Theology) of praise in PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi. The congregation, for example, needs to be reminded through church teachings that praise should be both a duty and a delight, as outlined in Psalms 63:3-8. There was overwhelming support for the reasons behind the introduction of praise and worship, which included lively worship being beneficial for mission and evangelism, enhancing music variety in the parish, and serving as a means of retaining youth in the church. However, elements such as jumping, leaping, shouting, and responses like "hallelujah" and "amen" received low ratings in terms of participation. What the congregants perceive as beneficial should be actively encouraged in practice. Therefore, there is a need for theological education to ensure that held beliefs are

translated into practice, thereby manifesting all biblical and theological principles in praxis.

Secondly, the survey revealed that respondents agreed that some aspects of African culture were biblically acceptable for praising God. Therefore, the parish should develop a program to incorporate African music beats, melodies, and rhythms during praise and worship. The survey also indicated that members agreed that the use of African musical heritage was not unbiblical. Indeed, God reveals Himself to particular peoples within their own cultural contexts, and the gospel does not seek to abolish cultures per se but to address imperfections that deviate from the Gospel of salvation through the Cross. It is essential to address any tendencies toward austere and rigid worship practices, as clarified in some comments on 1 Corinthians 14:15.

These recommendations aim to enrich the worship experience at PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi, fostering deeper spiritual engagement and broader inclusivity in worship practices:

There is proper place for intellect in Christianity. In praying and singing, both the mind and the spirit are to be fully engaged. When we sing we should also think about the meaning of words. When we pour out our feelings to God in prayer, we should not turn off our capacity to think. True

Christianity is neither barren intellectualism nor thoughtless emotionalism.³⁹³

Thirdly, there is a need for further teaching on reverential acts of worship, such as bowing and kneeling, because the survey revealed that a sizeable proportion (12%) of the respondents did not see their value in worship. Even in ordinary life, courtesy is expressed through visible gestures. While bowing and kneeling were accepted as biblical by 88% of the respondents, in the parameter assessing their practical implementation, 194 respondents (52%) were unsure or disagreed with the necessity of kneeling down in prayer. Surely, all worship acts should be embraced by worshippers for God to be truly honored for who He is. Additionally, a comment in the Application Study Bible on 1 Corinthians chapter 14:26 ff provides explicit guidance in this regard:

Everything done in worship services must be beneficial to the worshippers. Every worshipper ought to consider himself/ herself a contributor. This principle touches on every aspect – singing, preaching and the exercise of spiritual gifts. Contribution to the service (by singing, speaking, and reading, praying, playing instruments and giving) must have love as their chief motivation. As one prepares to lead or participate in worship

³⁹³*Application Study Bible*, (NLT, 2nd Edition, 2007) Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois, Tyndale House Publisher, 1951.

one should seek to strengthen the faith of other believers. It is only in this manner that God will be glorified as we too reap blessings.

Fourthly, theological education on possible misconceptions about the gift of tongues was necessary. *Glossolalia* continues to be a sensitive matter in the PCEA as the church subscribes to Reformed Theology where the teaching is that the Holy Spirit's power is seen working among believers through the Word of God. The few who might have the "gift of tongues" need some spiritual space in the parish. The experiences of the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) need not be monopolized by Pentecostalism as a Christian denomination. This point is reiterated multiple times throughout this book. PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi should not be overly influenced by John Calvin's and Westminster's confessions of Faith, which emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in illuminating believers' faith through the Word of God. While the Word is essential, outward manifestations such as speaking in tongues should not be suppressed if believers possess such gifts. It is crucial to incorporate the theological insights from Pauline teachings on speaking in tongues to counter biblically unfounded practices like the prosperity gospel, where blessings are supposedly acquired through monetary contributions.

The Trinity reflects the Personhood of God. An imbalanced emphasis on God the Father and Son, Jesus Christ, while neglecting or relegating the Holy Spirit, is a

misstep. As stated in this book, the Holy Spirit should not be marginalized ("an 'IDP'"). Credit should be given to preachers in the Reformed Tradition who have increasingly concluded their sermons with the invocation "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." This marks a departure from John Calvin's more reserved stance on the Holy Spirit's role in conviction. While we often pray in Jesus' name, it is vital to recognize that the efficacy of the Holy Spirit is essential in all prayers, requests, and supplications. In the Roman Catholic Tradition, the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is typically invoked at the beginning and end of prayers to maintain balance and reverence.

Fifthly, arising from the results of this survey, in spite of the Barrier Act that prohibited adoption or change of doctrines without due diligence, it was now time to revise *Practice and Procedures Manual* and the *Church Service Book*. There is then need to incorporate praise and worship in the *Church Service Book*. If this issue is left for too long it gives room for doubt and apprehension as to why the General Assembly would take so long without revising the *Practice and Procedure Manual* and insert praise and worship in the *Church Service Book* too. St Andrew's Parish may wish to recommend this to the Presbytery, for consideration by the General Administrative Committee and the General assembly.

The Church requires sound scholarship in its operations, in areas such as servant leadership, stewardship, mission, and ecumenism and inter-faith

contacts. This study showed that to worship God is not a single strand affair. The use of biblical tenets in combination with African worldview in the area of Africa music heritage and culture yielded a theological pointer. *Halal* a root word for praise in the Old Testament denotes noise while *yada* is associated with bodily actions. Roberta King, a Western ethnomusicologist supported song, dance and drama as additional ways the African Church could project to the Church worldwide as additional ways to praise God of all peoples, times and places. The respondents were for use of African music styles in praising God. The Christian life should be worshipful living. Worshipful life should be every time and everyday experience. It is in the African settings therefore, that the African Christian is expected to praise God in a participatory, intimate and intense manner. The worship of God in spirit and in truth is a cardinal New Testament teaching. In this regard to worship requires that God is approached and revered as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ in whom are hidden all wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2: 2-3). Examining the area of contemporary praise has revealed that there are many more components of praise and worship of God that need to be reviewed and adopted as necessary.

This survey has provided valuable insights into one aspect of worship but there are numerous other elements that merit deeper investigation to enhance the Church's mission and ministry. It is strongly recommended that PCEA St. Andrew's Church Nairobi

commission further research to explore how the abundant musical talent within the parish can be effectively utilized in praise and worship to honor God. Given the parish's substantial numerical and financial strength, there is ample opportunity to support and develop the musical gifts of its youth members.

In addition to music, there is a pressing need for research on other facets of worship such as crafting appropriate prayers for specific congregational settings, understanding the significance of tithes and offerings, the meaningful implementation of altar calls, and the biblical foundation of salvation and being born again. Specific spiritual gifts like healing and prayer also warrant thorough investigation, particularly in light of various claims regarding faith healing for diseases such as HIV/AIDS and cancer.

The concept of being born again, akin to the confusion it caused Nicodemus, requires detailed theological examination. This includes elucidating doctrines such as making a personal covenant with God, understanding the concept of salvation, taking up one's cross and following Jesus, and embracing Christ's lordship in one's life. Research across all levels of Christian life is essential to ensure clarity on these doctrines and beliefs, from catechetical instructions for catechumens and Sunday schooling for children, to basic instructions for adults preparing for baptism.

Furthermore, it is imperative for preachers and pastoral teams in every church to use their platforms

effectively, ensuring that sermon messages are comprehensible and conducive to sound spiritual formation among congregants.

Lastly, the issue of widows in church life deserves focused research attention. Scripturally, in Deuteronomy 5:11, there is a clear mandate to share freely with those in need, including widows. Today, misconceptions about poverty often overlook individual circumstances, attributing it unfairly to laziness or inaction. Families and communities are called to support those in need, ensuring that charity extends compassionately to fellow believers and beyond.

If there are poor in your towns do not be hard-hearted or tightfisted towards them. Instead be generous and lend them whatever they need. Do not be mean-spirited and refuse someone a loan because the year of cancelling debts is close at hand (Deuteronomy 15: ff).

The challenge here is that whatever has caused one to be poor the basic requirement is to help. As a community, the Church should identify who are poor in the congregation and aid them as a biblical responsibility.³⁹⁴ This however does not absolve the individual Christian from taking up his/her own

³⁹⁴ Aid need not be money or food as such, facilitating individuals to find gainful employment through cheap credit is just an example of how to come handy to those in need.

responsibility to the neighbor (anyone in need within ones reach). The nutty and gritty of the areas of further research will yield illumination if not spirituality that will give Christians *energy vitae* as we soldier on in the pilgrim's progress.

Chapter 21 is a summary/precis of biblical fundamentals of what the Bible teaches on worship. Christian faith will continue in the midst of new faces of Christianity. New faces indicate emerging approaches to worship and praise of God. Renewal or revival should be measured against the apostolic teachings, the law and the prophets as perceived in the Messianic or New Testament dispensation. Jesus quoted extensively from the Old Testament in his teachings. From Christ's teachings, the apostles drew their theological thoughts on Gospel message of the Kingdom of God, that is, the rule of God in the hearts of men and women.

CHAPTER 21

Summary of what the Bible Teaches about Worship

The contents of the preceding chapters are supported by biblical references or from works of Christian, theological or other relevant material. This chapter is written as a summary of what the Bible teaches about worship. It is a mirror or a gauge to measure the authenticity of all presentations, arguments and or conclusions reached on the area of living a worshipful life within the realm of praise and worship of God. What has been said in this book finds the litmus test as outlined below.

In his supreme wisdom and benevolence God has always taught human beings how he is to be worshipped. Prayer has always been an encounter with the living God. The Bible has a maxim that Yahweh, the Lord, is God of the living and not the dead. He is God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This means they are living waiting for the last day, the Day of Judgement at the end of this age. In Exodus 3:5, the worshippers were cautioned to take off their sandals as they stood on the holy ground. The Israelites were reminded that as they purposed to worship it was necessary that they consciously came to God, who was living and holy.

In traditional Africa, "in many and various ways African peoples responded to their spiritual world of which they were sharply aware."³⁹⁵ God is a friend, but is

³⁹⁵ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 58.

never to be approached frivolously, a mode that shows lack of respect and sincerity. Being casual and unconsciously going for worship or fellowship meetings does not fit the manner of approach to the awesome God! This is why African peoples such as the Abaluyia, Agĩkũyũ and Akamba have traditionally had formal occasions including time of birth, naming and circumcising a person, planting season and times of crop ripening.³⁹⁶ To show that Africans took worship of God with respect and awe we see that Agĩkũyũ people used a sheep of a particular color; while the Akamba used oxen, sheep or goat of one color.³⁹⁷

In Leviticus 7:28-38, we find biblical teachings that emphasize the authenticity of worship when worshippers actively engage in adoration. The Church's handling of tithes, offerings, and its treatment of ministers, pastors, evangelists, and church workers should reflect justice and nobility. Both personal gratitude and corporate thanksgiving to God and His ordained servants should flow freely. As the Israelites were instructed in rituals and practices, these instructions taught that worship is genuine when participants truly ascribe worth to God's majesty and sovereignty. Numbers 28:1-2 underscores that authentic worship is often the result of careful preparation for worship services. Offerings were to be given regularly and with intention, not haphazardly. In the New Testament, Paul taught that giving should be done cheerfully. Tithes recorded in membership rolls and other offerings, such as special collections, should be given with hearts full of gratitude. Special offerings during quarterly thanksgivings, Christmas, and New Year

³⁹⁶ Ibid., 59.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

celebrations should be offered according to established guidelines. As Leviticus instructs, people should be taught and given the opportunity to prepare their hearts for worship through sacrificial giving, furthering the *Missio Dei*, the mission of God, as embodied in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

Authentic worship of God requires Christians to seize every opportunity to praise Him. Psalms 81:1-3 clearly teaches this. Israelites were instructed to blow the ram's horn, sing, and play tambourines during festivals such as the full moon and new moon. They were to sing praises with strength and sweetly play the lyre and harp. In the New Testament era, Christians should avoid treating New Year's Day as merely a social event where people make resolutions out of custom, such as vowing to quit smoking or drinking. True commitment to Gospel ethics makes every moment a gift from God, calling believers to live righteously. Easter holidays should not be seen merely as breaks from work. Believers should rise to the occasion and celebrate the fact that we have been redeemed by Christ's blood. It is crucial to recognize that Christ's resurrection is the triumph of the Incarnation story. According to the Bible, without Christ's resurrection, Christianity would not exist; it would be as lifeless as many religions whose founders have long passed away. The vibrant musical praise and celebration during Hebrew festivals, such as the new moon, should inspire our celebration of Christian calendar festivals.

Believers should be cautioned that Christmas festivities must focus on the Nativity—the Logos, the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us. Christmas shopping sprees should never overshadow the celebration of the birth of the Son of Man, the Man of Sorrows,

Immanuel (God with us), and the wonderful Prince of Peace.

Praise and worship indicate that music and worship are intertwined. They go hand in hand. In 1 Chronicles chapter 25, we see David's leadership appointing from the families of Asaph, Herman, and Jeduthun to lead in proclaiming God's messages through instrumental music. Some of the music was directed towards offerings, thanksgiving, and praise to the Adonai (the Lord). There is indication that there existed instruments only—nonverbal pieces (1 Chronicles 25:6-7). Musicians of all ages, whether young or old, teachers or students, were incorporated in raising voices in praise to God. Music is a gift from God to humanity; therefore, human voices are apt instruments to honor and declare God's worthiness in singing or praising through music.

The Bible teaches us that we worship God with the best of what we have or what is within us. Matthew 2:11 teaches that just as the wise men worshipped Jesus and presented valuable gifts, a Christian's most precious gift to Christ is surrendering one's life to Him, allowing His lordship to guide and enrich one's spiritual standing. True worship in spirit and in truth leads to submission and obedience to the lordship of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 14:12 instructs on this fully. If one possesses musical ability, it should be utilized to uplift the worship of God. Worshipful living requires that we do not hide our talents. Scripture decrees that in corporate worship, every aspect or element should benefit everyone present in the congregation. Understanding Christ as revealed in Scripture ignites holy affections and holy joy. Matthew 17:5 instructs that Jesus, the beloved Son of God, brings great joy to the Father. It is our duty as humans to listen to Him, to obey Him, as obedience is greater than any

sacrifice one may offer. John 9:31 sends a clear message that "we know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will, God listens to him" (RSV).

Lastly, 1 Corinthians 14:40 in the Holy Bible calls for orderly worship of God: "Be sure that everything is done properly and in order." Even in glossolalia (speaking in tongues), there is no excuse for disorder. Speaking in tongues connects with God in a language intelligible to others, but disorderliness serves no purpose. The virtues of appropriateness and participation are strongly encouraged by Paul (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:6-39). Here are various instructions on prophecies, tongues and the Church, prophecies, tongues, and unbelievers, praising, worshipping in a fitting and orderly way, and warnings on disorder in worship services.

God's revelation to humankind on how He should be worshipped is a universal endowment. After describing the diverse ways Africans worshipped God before the Gospel was preached in Africa (and in some cases, these practices persist), Mbiti states:

They (Africans) have no creeds to recite; their creeds are within them, in their blood and in their hearts. Their creeds about God are expressed through concrete concepts, attitudes and acts of worship. The individual believes what others in his community believe: it is corporate "Faith" And this faith is utilitarian, not purely spiritual, it is practical, not mystical.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 67.

Here we note that Christian faith calls for practical application. In this book praxiology in relationship to belief or Christian principles is highlighted from time to time. Here is a word of caution as the church endeavors to reach the unchurched in its pursuit to fulfil the Great Commission – never ignore what people already know about God, as you introduce the Gospel as inaugurated by Jesus Christ that is the Gospel of the kingdom of God. The missionary or, the evangelist or any believer should avoid “the clean slate mentality.” It is prudent to move from the known to the unknown.

From the apostolic faith, through persecution and emergence of state religion championed by Emperor Constantine, Christianity has metamorphosed. In 1054 the Church divided into Western Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. While the Orthodox Church remains somehow intact in Orthodoxy (Russian Orthodox Church, Greek Orthodox Church, the Coptic Church in Egypt) the scenario in the west is quite different. The Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, Episcopal Church (USA), Methodist Church, Baptist Church and the Presbyterian Church pioneered the proliferation of denominations. Now there are myriads of church grouping, church ministries and fellowship bearing many names. Classical Pentecostalism has given rise to neo-Pentecostals and African initiated churches. The challenge is how to live Christianly in the forest of new faces of Christianity.

Epilogue

This book has been written from the African Christian perspective. Christianity is not a western religion. The Church of Christ comprises a tapestry of people. Just as Webster's Desk Dictionary of the English language defines tapestry as a heavy decorative woven fabric with a pictorial design, so too is the Christian Church on earth. Its diversity is as intricate as the multitude of cultures, customs, socio-economic structures, political systems, and geographical features—mountains, valleys, snow-capped peaks, caves, and ravines.

This complexity is further enhanced by individual faith, personal interpretations of the Bible in devotions, prayer groups (fellowships), and within one's church environment. Moreover, the church landscape includes numerous denominations: myriad Protestant denominations, the global diversity of the Roman Catholic Church with its orders such as Jesuits, Loretos, Holy Ghost Fathers, Consolatas, and friars. Additionally, there are African Independent Churches, individual-run ministries in America and Africa, and Pentecostalism, which rose to prominence in the early 20th century and significantly influenced the church in Africa, especially through neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria, Ghana, East Africa, and elsewhere on the continent.

In earlier chapters, it is recorded that the church originated in Jerusalem and spread to Asia Minor

(Turkey). The centers of early Christianity included Jerusalem, Alexandria, Damascus, and Antioch, where followers of Christ were first called "Christians." Mention has been made of African theologians such as Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasius (remembered for the Athanasian Creed), Augustine of Hippo (with his mother Monica, known for her devout prayer life), Clement of Alexandria, Donatus (associated with the Donatists, early Protestants), Tertullian, St. Anthony (associated with Monasticism), and Pachomius (known for his contributions to monastic life structures).

The Cappadocian Fathers—Basil the Great (330-379, bishop of Caesarea and younger brother of Gregory of Nyssa (332-395)) and Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389, bishop of Constantinople)—shaped early Christianity at councils in Nicaea, Chalcedon, Ephesus, and Constantinople. They addressed Arianism, a heresy denying the Deity of Christ, which was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325 where the Nicene Creed was formulated. Arianism was finally defeated at the Council of Constantinople in 381. The Council of Ephesus in 431, convened by Roman Emperor Theodosius II, reaffirmed and supported Christian doctrine as outlined in the Nicene Creed. At the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the Chalcedonian Creed affirmed the full humanity and full divinity of Jesus Christ as the second person of the Holy Trinity.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ <http://www.theopedia.com/council> of Chalcedon

As Christianity spread to Europe, it also moved to Iran and to India by the end of the second century (C.E). By the 4th century Georgia and Armenia had adopted it as a state religion.⁴⁰⁰ It has been noted that African Christianity differs significantly from Euro-American Christianity. South American Christianity also possesses distinct characteristics, while Asian and Australian Christianity exhibit their own unique qualities. Similarly, Christian faith among Papua New Guineans and American Indians differs notably from that practiced by Mexicans, Spaniards, Russians, Germans, Nigerians, Ghanaians, Laotians, and Samoans in terms of their worship practices and expressions of faith. Consequently, this book includes a chapter on musicology specifically dedicated to African beats. Within this chapter, concerns have been raised regarding the predominance of hymns translated from Euro-American hymnbooks in mainline churches. There has been a heartfelt appeal to embrace African tunes and incorporate the rich musical traditions of Africa into worship services. Inter-denominational committees have been urged to include music from local gospel musicians, with an additional appeal to these artists to allow churches to include their hymns or songs in church songbooks at a reasonable cost for royalties.

Furthermore, the book features a chapter on contemporary music in praise and worship, stemming from research conducted within the parish to assess the

⁴⁰⁰ ([http://blogs:Theological coalition.org.diversity](http://blogs:Theological%20coalition.org.diversity) look no further than the church)

understanding and integration of contemporary music in church worship services.

Praise has been extensively covered in this book because offering our voices as a sacrifice of our lips requires full engagement of the mind and heart. Our entire Christian lives should reflect who we are and what we do as witnesses to God's work in our lives through Christ, driven by grace—undeserved favor—fueled by faith and hope in eternal life. Below are the words of Mahatma Gandhi, previously cited but fittingly reiterated in this epilogue, concerning a Christian family he observed in South Africa:

In Durban Mr. Spenser Walton, the head of South African General Mission, found me out. I became almost a member of his family. At the back of this acquaintance was of course my contact with Christians in Pretoria. Mr. Walton had a manner of his own. I do not recollect his ever having invited me to embrace Christianity. But he placed his life as an open book before me, and let me watch all his movements. Mrs. Walton was a very gentle and talented woman. We knew the fundamental differences between us. I liked Mr. and Mrs. Walton's humility, perseverance and devotion to work, and we met very frequently.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰¹ Mahatma Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, 147.

Indeed through this contact he took intensive study of the *Gospels in Brief* by Tolstoy among other books.⁴⁰² Mahatma Gandhi is said to have shaped his life based on the Sermon on the Mount, embodying the principle of non-violence that permeated his existence.

Praise and worship of God require both relevant content and methods of delivery that resonate with the African setting. Preaching styles should be tailored to align with African cultural norms, just as music should adopt the vibrancy typical of African praise. The centrality of prayer and the prayer life should reflect the traditional African approach to God, grounded in biblical teachings as exemplified by Jesus Christ through parables, stories, and teachings.

Global voices on praise and worship should advocate for the embrace of diverse musical styles and compositions within churches. Without the enculturation, contextualization, or indigenization of all aspects of living a worshipful life, the Gospel cannot take root in the daily lives of people. Liturgy, which has largely been adopted from missionary practices, needs renewal to incorporate local melodies, songs, and praise dances that resonate deeply with African communities known for their love of singing and dancing.

A church that fails to recognize catechists as frontline soldiers of Christ misses an opportunity for church growth. Catechists should receive thorough

⁴⁰² Ibid., 148.

training that includes local stories, proverbs, and songs within their teachings. If ecclesiastical constraints make it difficult to elevate catechists to the level of clergy, talented ordained pastors should take on the crucial role of drawing people to the Assembly of God, thereby honoring God through humble service. The harvest is plentiful, requiring harvesters who are simply disciples—learners under the feet of Christ. This humble discipleship entails appropriating the Lordship of Jesus Christ and acting within the bounds of the Kingdom of God.

Living a life of worship demands that upon committing our lives to Christ's cause, we actively engage in the affairs of human society—whether in the family, neighborhood, church, or nation. Each day, whether in daily tasks, workplaces, markets, or prayer groups, faith and action (praxiology) should be intertwined. Praise and worship of God necessitates merging these two pillars—faith and action—for effectiveness and fruitful outcomes. Mahatma Gandhi eloquently articulated this principle: "A religion that does not address practical affairs and does not help solve them is no religion."⁴⁰³ On conversion into Christian faith and one's culture, under Christ's Lordship, cultural issues are scrutinized. Positive cultural values are to be enculturated in Christian living. This was adequately covered in chapter 16.

In the process of Church formation, it has been argued "as in communication and reception of the Gospel,

⁴⁰³ M. K. Gandhi, *Mahatma Gandhi's famous Quotations*, (Classic Library, A wilco Book, quote 105, 1925), 75

the question of culture is vital. If the Gospel must be contextualized, so must the Church.”⁴⁰⁴ The 19th century approach discussed in earlier chapters, “was almost exact replicas on church architecture, prayer Book, liturgies, clerical/choir dresses, hymns and tunes, all were exported unimaginatively.” This calls for indigenous church life that expresses own identity, selfhood within its culture in the context of its world-view.

On African women theological thoughts it is to be noted that African women believers need to be informed about the male domination in church leadership. Stereotyping of gender roles in church need review. On the cultural practice that is so oppressive on female sexuality not only in Africa but Asia except among Hindu, Buddhist and Confusianistic population, is a major concern if God is to be worshipped and adored in honesty and sincerity. This being an intra-religious phenomenon touching on traditional religious life, the Muslim practices as well as among Christian communities the words of Mahatma Gandhi a Hindu give apt admonition:

I will rather see the race of man becoming extinct than that we should become lowlier than beasts by making nobles of God’s creation, woman, and the object of our lust.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁴ <https://www.consultation.org> on Gosp) accessed on 5/06/2016.

⁴⁰⁵ M. K. Gandhi, *Mahatma Gandhi’s Famous Quotations*, Quote 9u (1921) p. 59.

Feminists (female and male) who oppose FGM do so because, in this the practice, men as its architects are to blame. The devastating consequences on health, sex life at the behest of men's thinking that it would tame wives from being unfaithful to their husbands due to subdued sexual desires need concerted remedy from the Church and or mosque, society and the governments where the cultural practice is present.

Finally, African Christologies should be respected unless any one aspect negates the Scripture. Jesus wanted people to identify who he was. By understanding who Jesus was, one would understand the Father. The Third person of the holy Trinity is understood in the context of Jesus farewell messages. He promised the Holy Spirit as *paraclate*, the counsellor; God-active-in the world who would remind us all things including what he taught and commanded while he was on earth; that which, was document by the Apostles and canonized in later years.

As a final word, it is to be re-emphasized that Christian commitment requires involvement in true worship of God in spirit and in truth. Praxiology is a key test of Christian life. True praise of God and adoration should be visible in real life situations – in the family life, gender inclusivity, sensitivity shown in whatever we say, do and hope for through faith and love with the ultimate hope being eternal life in the Age to come (Luke 18: 29-30) Scripture asserts that this will not remain a mirage, if we rely on the Grace of God; fight the good fight while

glorifying God in all things as spelt out in I Corinthians 10:31. The end result will be living a worshipful life.

Appendix 1

The Hymn Books source of Kikuyu Hymn Book,
“Nyĩmbo Cia Kũinĩra Ngai” (33 Hymn Books in total)

Alexander Hymns (AH) No. 3
Hymns Ancient and Modern (AM)
Consecration and Faith (CF.)
Church Hymnal (1960 Edit) CH
Church Hymnary (Rev. 1927) CHR
Christian Praise (CP)
Children’s Songs (CS)
Children Special Service Mission (CSSM)
Golden Bells (GB)
Great Hymns of Faith (GHF)
Gems of Praise (GP)
Hymnal Companion (HC)
Hymnal of the Church of god (HCG)
Hymns of Faith (HF)
Hymns for Todays Church (HTC)
Inspiring Hymns (IH)
Keswick Hymn Book (KHB)
Mission Praise (MP)
The Oxford Book of Carlos (OBC)
Redemption Songs (RS)
South African General Mission Hymn Book (SAGM)
Songs of Glory (SG)
Songs of Worship (SOW)
Songs of Praise (SP)

Scottish Psalter Hymnal (SPs)
Sacred Songs and Solos (SSS)
The Church Hymnary (TCH)
The English Hymnal (THE)
Tabernacle Hymns No. 3 (TH3)
The Hymnal 1982 (TH82)
The Service Hymnal (TSH)
Victory Songs (VS)
Youth Praise (YP)

Appendix 2

Churches and ministries along Ongata Rongai–Kiserian–Ngong–Karen–Nairobi Satellite area. The distance is in kilometers (km), and it totals to 32 km.

1. Miracle Revival Fellowship (Pentecostal)
2. Global Harvest Centre
3. Overcomers' Caring Ministry
4. Kings Outreach Church (Ministry of Repentance and Holiness)
5. A. T. G. Chapel Rongai (Apostle Sita)
6. African Christian Churches and Schools (ACCC & S)
7. Green Pastures Tabernacle (with bishop Stanley Mwalili of Pastors Joshua and Anne Mbugua)
8. Jesus Celebration Centre (JCC) Ongata Rongai
9. Good Light Christian Church (GLCC) Ongata Rongai (with Rev. Simon Muthondu)
10. Chrisco Church: Christ Co-workers Fellowship, Ongata Rongai
11. Deliverance Church Ongata Rongai
12. ACK St. Faiths Parish – Ongata Rongai
13. Hope Worship Centre (The Healing Pool with Rev. Jane W. Ngururi)
14. PCEA, Ongata Rongai Church
15. New Tabernacle Victory Church (with Prophetess Asher Segel)
16. New Life Ministry Church Ongata Rongai

17. Light Arena (The Place of Shining Believers) John 1: 4-5 with Bakara Olatunde & Kay
18. WOLF Ministries
19. Apostles of Jesus Ministries (with Pastor Nicholas Mwatha of a House of Prayer for All Nations
20. Jesus Exaltation Centre with Apostle John Greatness
21. Waymakers Foundation Church, Ongata Rongai Branch – God shall make a way, Isaiah 43: 19b
22. Mega Prayer Sanctuary Church Ongata Rongai
23. Deliverance Voice Ministry with Pastor Emmanuel and Esther Maroa
24. International Glory Jesus Ministries
25. Word of Faith Church (Abundant Grace Sanctuary)
26. The word of the Lord endures for Ever, Ministry and Church with Pastor Annie Mbugua and Bishop Samuel Mbugua
27. Christ Mercies Church (CMC) with Pastor Charles and Esther Gachanja (Bringing Transforming Hope)
28. Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
29. Jesus Winner Ministry
30. Word of Destiny Chapel (Restoring people, families, cities, and nations to their God-given Destinies with Pastor Paul and Jane Mbugua
31. Kenya Assemblies of God (KAG)
32. House of Grace, Rongai (The City of Champions)
33. Kingdom Life Centre

34. Nairobi Baptist Church Ongata Rongai
35. Voice of Fellowship Jesus Church
36. Seventh-day Adventist Church (East and Central Africa HQ)
37. Clarence Matheny Ministries
38. Deliverance Church – Nkoroi
39. PCEA Church – Nkoroi
40. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, Nkoroi Branch
41. Apostolic Faith Church – Kiserian
42. Life Celebration Centre (Deliverance Church Upper Room) with Simon Peter Rumba and Pastor Millicent
43. Church of God, 7th Day, Kiserian Branch
44. AG, Nkoroi Christian Centre
45. Heart of Christ Reconciliation Church and Prayer Centre
46. Tabernacle Testimony Church
47. Seventh Day Adventist Church – Rimpa
48. Jesus Miracle Centre – Kahuho
49. Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kiserian Parish
50. Hall for Jehova Witness (Chumba Cha Mashahidi wa Yehova)
51. Mars Hill Baptist Church
52. Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM)
53. Deliverance Church Kiserian
54. Bible Believers Kiserian (Kenya Local Believers)
55. World Celebration Centre with Apostle Saninnate Musyoka

56. Seek the Lord Ministries (Pray until something Happens)
57. Jesus Tabernacle
58. Church of Restoration – Kiserian
59. Kisima Gospel Church
60. Reflection Christ Ministries, Kiserian (RCM, Head Quarters) with wife and husband no names
61. Pentecostal Fellowship of Kenya – Kiserian
62. Jesus Life Centre Church – Kiserian
63. The Truth Worship Centre
64. Christian Outreach Ministries
65. Royal Life Gospel Church
66. Emmanuel Exodus Twenty Church
67. PCEA Charles Roimen Memorial Church
68. AIC Kiserian Church
69. Jesus Strong Tower Church (JST)
70. World Restoration Centre – Roimen
71. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – Roimen
72. All Nations Gospel Church – Matasia
73. Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses
74. Season of Hope Ministry, Matasia Branch
75. Bethsaida Jesus Ministry
76. Kingdom Life Centre (KLC)
77. KAG Matasia Christian Centre
78. PCEA Enoomatasia Church
79. Christian International Matasia (House of Prayer)
80. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya Enoomatasia
81. Deliverance Church – Matasia
82. St. Barnabas Catholic Church

83. ACK St. Paul Enoomatasia
84. Better Life Chapel (where Divinity meets with Humanity)
85. Seventh Day Adventist, Mount Olives
86. African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa (AIPCA)
87. PCEA Olkeri Church
88. Faith and Miracle Ministry – Ngong
89. ACK Church – Ngong
90. Kingdom Focus Church
91. Nairobi Chapel – Ngong Hills
92. Christ is the Answer Ministries (CITAM) – Ngong Church
93. Methodist Church – Ngong
94. St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church
95. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – Ngong
96. Deliverance Church, Ngong – metro (Church of Destiny)
97. PCEA Enchorro Emuny Church
98. Apostolic Faith Church – Ngong
99. Mercy Ministry (Prayer and Fasting Centre)
100. Calvary Baptist Church
101. Hour of Prayer Ministry
102. Ark Centres International – El Paso
103. ACK Olepolos St. Barnabas Church
104. Deliverance Church, Olepolos (A Visionary Church)
105. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – Embul-bul
106. Seventh Day Church – Embul-bul

- 107. PCEA Kerarapon Church
- 108. Eagles Christ Church with Dr. Stephen Mutua and
Pastor Gladys Mutua
- 109. PCEA Karen Parish – Muteero
- 110. Regina Caeli Catholic Church
- 111. Faith Evangelistic Ministry (Family Church)
- 112. Eternity Gospel Church and Ministries
- 113. Christian Ministries in Africa, Church on the
Rock, Langata
- 114. Dominican Frairs
- 115. St. John the Evangelist Parish – Karen

Appendix 3

Churches along Karen Shopping Centre–Kikuyu–Limuru–Kinale–Kinungi–Naivasha–Gilgil–Ol Kalou–Mawingu–North Kinangop (Ndunyu-Njeru)–Engineer–South Kinangop (Njabini)–Fly Over. The distance totals to 255 km.

1. House of Glory Blessed Church
2. Mount Gospel Church
3. PCEA – Kamandura
4. Praise City (Deliverance Church Kamirithu)
5. ACK – Kamirithu
6. AIC/PCEA Beberion Church
7. Bethel Church/Headquarters – Ngarariga
8. First Baptist Church of Kenya – Ngarariga
9. Seventh-Day Adventist Church – Murengeti
10. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (Highway Worship Centre Nyambari)
11. Kingdom of Jehovah Witnesses
12. Full Gospel Church of Kenya – Ha-Mathore
13. Kenya Assemblies of God
14. Agape Fellowship Centre – Kimende
15. Catholic Church – Kirenga
16. PCEA – Magina
17. Victory in Christ Church (VIC) – Magina
18. Roman Catholic Church – Magina
19. Kenya Assemblies of God – Magina
20. African Inland Church
21. Akurinu Holy Ghost Church
22. Roman Catholic Church – Soko Mjinga
23. PCEA – Kinale
24. PCEA – Fly Over

25. PCEA – Kinungi
26. AIC – Ihindu
27. ACK St. Paul – Kinungi
28. Kenya Assemblies of God
29. PEFA – Kinungi
30. VIC Church – Kinungi
31. PCEA – Kinungi
32. ACK Church – Kinungi
33. AIPCA Naivasha
34. Vision Victory Church – Naivasha
35. AIC Maryland
36. ACK – Highway
37. African Christian Churches and Schools (ACC & S) – Naivasha
38. PEFA – Gilgil
39. AIC – Gilgil
40. AIC – Gilgil (2)
41. AIC Good Hope Church
42. St. Mary’s Catholic Church – Gilgil
43. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – Gilgil
44. PCEA Church – Gilgil
45. ACK – Gilgil
46. Orthodox Church
47. PCEA – along the road
48. SDA Church – Ol’ Kalou
49. ACK – Emmanuel Church
50. PCEA – Ol’ Kalou
51. Deliverance Church – Ol’ Kalou
52. Church of Restoration – Ol’ Kalou
53. King’s Outreach Church – Ol’ Kalou
54. PEFA Gospel Church – Ol’ Kalou
55. JEC Church – Ol’ Kalou
56. PCEA – Ol’ Kalou
57. AIC – Karunga

58. PCEA – Kiganjo
59. ACK – Kiganjo
60. AIPCA – Kiganjo
61. ACK – Rironi
62. KAG – Rironi
63. PCEA – Rironi
64. Holy Trinity Catholic Church
65. St. Peter and Paul Manunga Church
66. ACK – Makutano
67. KAG – Githioro
68. Full Gospel Churches of Kenya – Mawingu
69. St. Teresa Catholic Church – Mawingu
70. St. Baptista Catholic Church – Mawingu
71. Apostolic Church – Mawingu
72. Deliverance Church – Tigoni
73. Visions in Christ Church – Mawingu
74. Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witness – Mawingu
75. ACK – Engineer
76. Israel Assemblies of God – Engineer
77. PCEA Kahamba
78. Apostles of Faith Church – Tulasha
79. Full Gospel of Kenya – Njabini
80. PCEA – Munyaka
81. Catholic Church Good Shepherd – Njabini
82. AIPCA – Sasumwa
83. Happy Spiritual Church – Njabini
84. All Nations (PEFA) – Njabini
85. African Independent Church of Africa – Kinamba
86. Mount Zion Worship Sanctuary
87. House of Glory Blessed Church
88. Mountain Gospel Church
89. Victory in Christ Church
90. Jesus Newlife Ministry
91. Rise and Shine (House of prayer Magumu)

92. Fountain of Life International Church
93. African Independent Church of Africa (Mwenda-Andu)
94. Sacred Heart Catholic Church
95. African Independent Church of Africa – Magumu
96. KAG – Bamboo
97. PCEA – Magumu
98. ACK – Magumu
99. PEFA – Magumu
100. AIC – Imani
101. Pentecostal Church of One Faith
102. Worldwide Gospel Church of Kenya
103. Amazing Christian Fellowship
104. AIC – Kimende
105. New Mount Zion Ministry

Appendix 4

APT Definitions on soul, heart, mind and strength (Luke 10:27)

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Soul | - The principle of life, feelings, thought; an entity resulting from the heart. (Emotional state) as influenced by the mind (the intellectual influence), that emanates from the rationality endowed to human beings by God. No other creatures share this gift that enables humanity to share fellowship with our creator, God (Deity, Supreme Being, Alpha and Omega – The Beginning and the End, The Prime source, the I AM Who I AM, Yahweh (Jehovah, the Adonai (Lord) |
| Heart | - This is the Centre of total personality. It is an element of the soul. The heart carries with it – intuition, feeling or emotions. |
| Mind | - Is part of human being that reasons, understands...It embodies sanity. Sound mind is reason to thank God for in our daily living |
| Strength | - Simply means bodily or muscular power |

to work, move and carry out errands here and there. With the physical strength, the heart, soul and the mind will be propelled into action. The body that is said to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit encases all the four attributes that enable us to live a holy life, a worshipful life that pleases not only God, that also fosters human fellowship and interaction in a pleasing manner in all areas of life.

Appendix 5

Dichotomy of worship

Dichotomy (division) of worship into exclusive areas is a hard nut to crack. Drawing a clear distinction between life activities. As Christians we should live worshipfully towards God in every aspect of life in the African context/culture as guided by the gospel. The whole life—eating, thinking, sleeping, working, clothing, studying, loving, playing and even Joking (no course jokes)—all should relate to God

Appendix 6

Abbreviations

PCEA	- Presbyterian Church of East Africa
ACK	- Anglican Church of Kenya
SDA	- Seventh Day Adventist
PEFA	- Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa.
JEC	- Jesus Exaltation Church
AIC	- African Inland Church
KAG	- Kenya Assemblies of God
AIPCA	- Africa Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa
OT	- Old Testament
NT	- New Testament
KNUT	- Kenya National Union of Teachers
KBC	- Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
GA	- General Assembly (of the PCEA)
SAFE	- Students at the Feet of Immanuel
SWIFT	- Sunday Worship in Faith and Truth
FISHERS	- Fellowship, Instructions, Service of Stewardship Honor Evangelism and Relationship (or Relevance)

Appendix 7

Church Ministers (Pastor's Bishop's Biblical
guide/support model

Paul who is considered as the minister per excellence tapped the silent talents in his ministry of the word. Colossians 4: 7-18 show it. Tertius as a scribe gave Paul a strong written voice (Rom. 16:22). This man was Paul's amanuensis (scribe) who wrote the words Paul dictated to him. Epaphras was a prayer warrior behind the scenes. Luke, the beloved physician supported his ministry. Tapping talents within a parish energizes the ministry. Paul's work would not have been possible without aid from his spiritual lieutenants. John Mark who m he rejected at his second missionary journey that caused a rift with Barnabas later in his ministry (2 Tim. 4:11). In ICT language use "human tabs" for Gospel/mission-Dei delivery. A humble minister of the word should avoid a one-man /one-woman show in the parish. Recognition that there are myriads of spiritual gifts on the congregation will enable individual worshipper to build the fellowship and note expecting credit.

Appendix 8

Some Bible Versions (Translations)

Luther Bible 1545

- 21st century King James Version (KJ21) American
- Holman Christian Standard Bible (HC5B) 2004
- International Standard Version (ISV) 2011
- Jerusalem Bible (JB) 1966
- New Living Translation (NLT)
- Berean Study Bible
- Berean Literal Bible
- New American Standard Bible 1973
- King James Bible
- Christian Standard Bible
- Contemporary English Version
- Good News Translation
- International Standard Version
- NET Bible
- New Heart English Bible
- God's Word Translation
- Jubilee Bible 2000
- King James Version 2000 Bible
- American King James Version
- Douay – Rheims Bible
- English Revised Version
- Webster's Bible Translation
- Weymouth New Testament
- World, English Bible

- Young's Literal Translation
- Good News Translation 1992
- New Jerusalem Bible 1985
- The message msg

Reasons for using various translations adopted from Rick Warren –What on Earth Am I Here for. The Purpose Driven Life expanded edition, Oasis International ltd, Wheaton, Illinois, 2002, 353.

- i. Any translation has its own lingual terminology limitation as there are nuances and shades of meaning that can be missed; need for comparison.
- ii. Familiarity with certain verses that might breed contempt such that we know it and does not give it a second thought, thus missing its message in a certain context
- iii. Verse divisions and numbers were not included in the Bible until 1560 ad – one may not quote a whole verse to make a point by just a part of it.

Appendix 9

Development of Music Ministry – PCEA's and Andrew's Church since 2012 to 2019 and into future

In 2012 only Joyful sounds, Women's Guild singers and main Church choirs and the New Song existed. Today as seen in the music week extracts stands praise Team, youth choir and Zion team praise team (for the dumb members), the children's choir and French choir has been added for music synergy under one director of music. It is fascinating to hear musical pieces when majority of them make a combined presentation.

PCEA ST. ANDREW'S PARISH MUSIC
COMMITTEE
Invites you to

Music Week

22ND – 28TH JULY
2019

THEME: GROWTH IN SERVICE AND WORSHIP
Colossians 3:16

Music Ministry's Role as a transformational agent using the Parish 7S model: -

STYLE: Inclusive leadership through valued engagement and participation as provided by the Parish Music Committee (the Committee), which heads the Parish Music Ministry. Composition: Mercy Wambugu Chairperson and Parish Music Director and the Directors of; the Church Choir—Dr. Duncan Miano, Joyful Sounds—Erick Maina, New Song—Susan Mathai, Stands Parish Praise Team—Caroline Mathai (Treasurer) and the Youth Choir—Eric Laban Mugutu (Secretary). Style symbolizes unity in diversity. Elder Engineer James Muriithi provides Session Liaison whilst the Chaplain provides spiritual support and guidance.

SHARED VALUES: The Ministry is guided by the Parish core values.

STRATEGY: Reporting in line with the strategic model will be done by the Parish Music Committee through a synthesized template. What are we doing? Mission – (International, Regional and National); Leading Worship through Music, Ministry; Spiritual and technical Growth; Member's support (at both group and Parish level) and Institutional Capacity building.

STRUCTURE: The Director is at the topmost leadership level of each Choir/Music Group and sits on the Parish Music Committee. The Chairman, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Deputy

Secretary and Treasure provide support to the Director and manage non-technical matters I consultation with the Director.

SKILLS: These are harnessed and nurtured through training models/needs identified by the Director. Practice times are at least bi-weekly and increase depending on demand.

STAFF: Repertoire showcasing during music week other special seasonal services. All groups would benefit from more committed members. Skills gap assessment is continuous and training is provided or outsourced as identified by the Director.

SYSTEMS: Committee Meetings are held at both the Parish and Group level. Ad hoc Committees and co-option of members is applied from time to time as required. Delegated authority is invoked to establish special offices for effectiveness and efficiency.

Some Hebrew words in support of vibrancy in Praise and Worship

Yadah

To wave the hands, to use the hands to throw.

To worship or revere with extended hands,
or moving hands.

Towdah

To extend the hands, by implication avowal,
usually adoration, a sacrifice of praise,

thanks giving and offering.

Shaback

To shout in triumph to God,
to address in a loud tone

Zamar

To touch the strings or parts of a musical
instruments to make music accompanied by
voice,
to celebrate in song and music to God.

Halal

To be clear; to shine; to boast;
and thus to foolishly celebrate.

Barak

To bless God, to kneel, to bow as an
act of reverence and adoration,
with an attitude to receive.

Tehillah

To sing in the spirit;
the praise that God inhabits to celebrate with
song,
from halal, a hymn.

Appendix 10

Some extracts from Church Bulletin of July 28, 2019

Health Benefits of Music

Listening to music has several health benefits among them includes:

1. Improves mood: helps regulate emotions, and creates happiness and relaxation.
2. Reduces stress: Listening to music has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety in healthy people and in patients undergoing medical procedures.
3. Lessens anxiety: Listening to music has been shown to reduce anxiety in patients undergoing treatment for cancer.
4. Improves exercise: Music can enhance aerobic exercises, boost mental and physical stimulation.
5. Improves Memory, eases pain, provides comfort and improves cognition
6. Helps children with autism spectrum disorder to improve social interaction, communication skills and attention skills.
7. Soothes premature Babies: Live music and lullabies may impact vital signs, improve feeding behaviors

and sucking patterns in premature infants. we join our
choirs I celebrating the gift of music that keeps us
healthy to the glory and honor of God

From the Healing Ministry of Health Professionals
PCEA St. Andrew's Church, Nairobi, Kenya.

Appendix 11

PCEA ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH YOUTH MINISTRY

CURRENTLY	PREVIOUSLY	DESCRIPTION
CROSSROADS	-	CLASS 8 & YR 8
FISHERS	-	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
TRANSITION TEAM	-	FORM FOUR LEAVERS
SAFE (STUDENTS AT THE FEET OF EMMANUEL	-	COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
YOUNG ADULTS' MINISTRY	ABLAZE	POST COLLEGE/YOUNG ADULTS
YOUNG FAMILIES	-	NEWLY WEDS, RECENTLY MARRIED 10 YRS & BELOW
WARIDI DADA	ESTHER GENERATION	YOUNG LADIES
KAKA MINISTRY	-	YOUNG MEN
BIBLE STUDY & PRAYER	-	
DISCIPLESHIP	-	
DAY BREAK	-	
CHRISTIAN DEBATERS' CLARITY	-	
JOYFUL SOUNDS	-	

STANDS FUN CLUB	-	
STANDS E-CHURCH	-	
HOSPITALITY	-	
MEDIA	-	
MISSIONS	-	

SERVICE		TIMINGS
8:30 AM SERVICE		8:30 - 10:00 AM
IGNITE SERVICE		11:30 - 1:00 PM
CROSSROAD SERVICE		9:00 - 10:30 AM
FISHERS SERVICE		9:00 - 10:30 AM

Appendix 12

SOME NAMES, TITLES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF JESUS

Jesus is described in many ways throughout the old and New Testament. Just some descriptions are printed on the page showing the Bible verses they are drawn from. The publishers invite you to do Bible study by reading these Bible verses for yourself making sure that you read the context in which they were written.

Almighty	Revelation 1:8
Alpha and Omega	Revelation 1:8
Amen	Revelation 3:14
Anointed one	Daniel 9:25
Apostle and high priest	Hebrews 3:1
Author and Perfecta of our faith	Hebrews 12:2
Author of life	Acts 3:15
Begging and the end	Revelation 21:6
Blameless	Hebrews 7:26
Branch of the Lord	Isaiah 4:2
Bread from heaven	John 6:32
Bride groom	Mark 2:19
Bright morning star	Revelation 22:16

Chief shepherd	1Peter 5:4
Chosen one	Isaiah 42:1
Christ	Luke 9:20
Commander of the peoples	Isaiah 55:4
Everlasting father	Isaiah 9:6
Exalted	Hebrews 7:26
Faithful	Revelation 3:14
Faithful and true	Revelation 19:11
First and the last	Revelation 1:17
For ever praised	Romans 9:5
God over all	Romans 9:5
God with us	Mathew 1:23
Good shepherd	John 10:11
Great God	Titus 2:13
Great high priest	Hebrews 4:14
Head of the church	Ephesians 5:23
High priest for ever	Hebrews 6:20
Holy and righteous one	Acts 3:14
Holy and true	Revelation 3:7
Image of the invisible God	Colossians 1:15
Immanuel	Mathew 1:23
King	Mathew 25:34

King of Kings	Revelation 19:16
King of the Jews	Mathew 2:2
Lamb of God	John 1:36
Life	John 14:6
Lion of the tribe of Judah	Revelation 5:5
Lord	John 13:13
Lord God	Revelation 1:8
Lord of all	Acts 10:36
Lord of lords	1Timothy 6:15
LORD OF LORDS	Revelation 19:16
Man of sorrows	Isaiah 53:3
Mediator	Hebrews 9:15
Messiah	John 1:41
Mighty God	Isaiah 9:6
Passover Lamb	1Corinthians 5:7
Precious cornerstone	Isaiah 28:16
Prince of Peace	Isaiah 9:6
Pure	Hebrews 7:26
Rabbi	John 1:38
Radiance of Gods glory	Hebrews 1:3
Resurrection	John 11:25
Righteous	1John 2:1
Righteous judge	1Timothy 4:8
Rock	1Corinthians 10:4
Root of David	Revelation 5:5
Ruler of God's creation	Revelation 3:14
Savior	Titus 3:6
Servant	Isaiah 42:1

Son of David	Mathew 1:1
Son of God	Revelation 2:18
Son of Man	Mathew 16:27
Son of the blessed one	Mark 14:61
Son of the Living God	Mathew 16:16
Son of the most high	Luke 1:32
Source of eternal salvation	Hebrews 5:9
Sure foundation	Isaiah 28:16
Teacher	John 1:38
The way	John 14:6
True light	John 1:9
True vine	John 15:1
True witness	Revelation 3:14
Truth	John 14:6
Witness to the people	Isaiah 55:4
Wonderful counsellor	Isaiah 9:6
Word	John 1:1

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